



AMBROSE  
UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

# Readings in Alliance History and Thought

Compiled by

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2009



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# Part 1

## Alliance History



Binghamton Convention, 1921  
Binghamton, New York



## Living Tradition

Kenneth L. Draper

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In an age when everything is new and improved, tradition seems to have taken a backseat. It is still evoked nostalgically; to create an illusion of stability in an otherwise chaotic world. Reference is made to the traditional turkey dinner or to that semi-mythical age when things were simpler and children were better behaved. Tradition in this sense may generate some good feelings but is not something to give direction to our lives.

In the business world and sometimes in churches, “tradition” is commonly used to dismiss something as backward-looking and stodgy. This rejection of tradition grows directly out of an eagerness to distance ourselves from our own pasta central characteristic of western culture since the Enlightenment of the eighteenth century.

Whether we like the feelings associated with tradition in the sense of the turkey dinner, or regard it as something which blinds us to current needs, it is perhaps time we reassessed the role of tradition in our society. Tradition has the potential to play a more powerful role by providing a clear identity for us as individuals and communities of faith. If tradition is to serve such a purpose, we must understand it as a living part of us, rather than something dead and past and commemorated on plaques.

An important part of my teaching role at Canadian Bible College is to teach a course called Alliance History and Thought. This course has developed a rather unenviable reputation over the years. Believe it or not, it has been commonly referred to by students (in hushed voices and with furtive, over-the-shoulder glances to ensure the offending professor is out of earshot) as “Alliance Misery and Rot.” This was rather shocking to a new teacher and enough to make one nostalgic for whenever it was that students were better behaved.

Reflecting on this, it seemed to be a significant thing that the least popular course at an Alliance Bible college was the one course on what it meant to be Alliance. After recovering from the blow to my self-esteem, the clear message was that students didn't like this course because they felt it had nothing to do with who they were or who they were hoping to become. Theology students want to know who God is and what God is doing in the world. Biblical studies at the Bible college

are popular. Students see the relevance of learning how to read and interpret Scripture well. Sociology, psychology and literature can help students understand themselves and their world more clearly. But what is the point of denominational history? After all, this “stuff” happened long ago and only serves to remind us that we are pretty small fish in the big pond of church history. Would it not make more sense to spend time on things that really matter?

In asking these sorts of questions, my students were clearly in a broad stream of thinking flowing out of the Enlightenment which views particular traditions, like denominational histories, as irrelevant. Worse still, such traditions are held to actually distort truth and thus must be abandoned. The Enlightenment approach is perhaps best typified by the seventeenth century French thinker René Descartes. Descartes regarded knowledge based on any tradition or authority as suspect. He decided he must discover a firm foundation for knowledge and so resolved to disbelieve anything and everything that could be disbelieved. This systematic process of doubt led to the speculation that God might be an evil joker and thus nothing, not even Descartes' own existence, could be sure. At this point Descartes discovered his foundation for all true knowledge, for even in doubting all, he was aware of the working of his own mind. His famous conclusion *cogito ergo sum* (I think, therefore I am), was the beginning of the modern view of truth in the western world.

Now the free use of reason unencumbered by any preconception or tradition has become the sure guide to the truth. Descartes was convinced that this truth could be found and with it the solution to all human problems if we would just shed our traditional biases. This promise of salvation required that each individual be freed to think and act on the basis of reason alone. A rootedness in tradition and community was sacrificed in the modern age to the right of the individual use of reason.

However, reason unbounded by tradition has not proven to be the salvation of humanity. The cost of this great modern experiment is still not fully calculated. One of these costs has been the neglect of the spiritual needs. A quest for a renewed spirituality seems to be one of characteristics of our age. Recent cover stories in

## Preface

Canada's Macleans Magazine and the United States' Newsweek reveal a sincere hunger for spiritual depth. People are willing to speak openly of their spiritual quests that are taking a wide variety of directions. To many, Christianity lacks the spiritual vitality they are seeking.

Beyond this spiritual poverty is a loss of community. The individualism, which accompanied the right of individual choice, is far reaching in our culture. Rather than being connected into significant networks of relationship, the experience of most North Americans is alienation from one another. As part of this modern culture we are conditioned to protect our own interests at all costs and resist the claims of community or commitments that would limit the exercise of our personal freedom. At the same time, there is an urgent human need to be connected and committed which is at odds with this. Rising unwanted pregnancy and divorce statistics probably have less to do with the "joy of sex" than an unshakeable sense of aloneness.

The kind of tradition that I have suggested we need to consider, answers these cries of need. A tradition that is alive serves to orient us to what is ultimately of value and to ground us in a wider community that shares these values.

But this is rather abstract. Let's return to Alliance History and Thought. If my students are to feel this course is worthwhile they need to be able to see how it connects with who they are and what they feel called to do. When understood as a living tradition, Alliance history and thought is more than something to be read about in a textbook or studied for an exam. It is who we are, what we teach and preach, and how we live our commitments. We are Alliance because this tradition, expressed by Albert B. Simpson as the Fourfold Gospel, has continually witnessed to the fact that Christ's work has implications for us right now. It calls us to, and empowers us for holiness, it affirms God's interest in the physical as well as the spiritual and it points to the hope of our calling.

What I have discovered is that these core values of the Alliance are tremendously attractive to students. Alliance history and thought is now not some dead system they have to somehow fit themselves into, but an expression of who they want to become and the message they want to proclaim. In this tradition there is something which can provide focus for their ministry and their lives no matter what the vocation to which God has called them.

The course has taken on new life as it ceased to be a recounting of what is past and became a dialogue between the tradition and those individuals and communities seriously committed to living this tradition. It is essential in this process to understand the vision and

insights of A.B. Simpson and other great Alliance leaders in their context; then to distil the spiritual, theological and pastoral resources from them and finally discover ways to embody these in our lives and communities today.

At Canadian Bible College we have tried to fully integrate these aspects of our tradition into the life of an academic community. Our weekly schedule includes times of pause for prayer and worship. This is not an interruption of the academic agenda, but an essential part of it. Worship reminds us who God is and who we are and this serves as a foundation for what we do as a learning, thinking community.

Two days in each semester are specifically dedicated to prayer and the centerpiece of this day is a communion service at which we experience together the wonder of God's love, the forgiveness in Christ's sacrifice and unity by the Holy Spirit's presence. A significant aspect of this service is an invitation to trust the Lord for healing. Many of our students, even those from Alliance backgrounds, have never participated in such a service before. Our tradition is made alive to them as we profess together and for one another that Christ is indeed our healer.

Once during each semester there is an opportunity for reaffirming our tradition's distinctive connection between a vital spiritual life and our mission to the world. For three days our attention is turned from assignments and readings and classes to the wider reason for our life together, that of being made more fully into the character of the indwelling Christ and more fully committed to the task He has set for us. These are simple and perhaps obvious things, but they provide a grounding for our work of bringing the spiritual resources of the Alliance to a new generation.

Simpson himself may stand as a guide for how tradition may be given life. He inherited the rich resources of nineteenth century North American evangelicalism but was troubled by what he perceived as a lack of spiritual vitality. His solution was not some new message. Simpson was not a theological innovator but took the evangelical tradition and framed it in new language and practices that were alive to his generation.

Tradition cannot live by our being content with precise doctrinal definitions and well-worn methods. It will come alive as we take the central insights of an indwelling Christ who awakens us to the needs of our world and embody them in new ways. Simpson connected with people by modeling how the Holy Spirit works in lives to remake them into the character of Christ by a daily, moment-by-moment abiding in Him. The measure of the Alliance as a living tradition will be how well we are able to live this out in our generation.



To conclude this consideration of tradition it might be useful to return to the needs of this generation for spirituality and community mentioned above. Our Christian tradition, and the message of the Alliance in particular, provide direction for addressing these needs. The full salvation, which Simpson encapsulated in the Fourfold Gospel, was a clear call to the full experience of Christ's work and the transforming grace of the Holy Spirit in each Christian life. We need to model and to teach a vibrant spirituality which a new generation of spiritual seekers will see as the true alternative to the spiritual vacuity of the modern world.

Spirituality is too often seen as an entirely private and individual pilgrimage. This I believe is the influence of modern individualism. Community is essential to an authentic spirituality. The transforming power of the Holy Spirit and Christ's call to mission are experienced in the community of God's people. If there is one area in our tradition that needs careful thought it is our understanding of the Church. Let's call one another to a full experience of God's work in our churches so we can offer a true alternative to the false spiritualities and loss of community characteristic of the late twentieth century.

Reading 1.1

## Simpson Anecdotes\*

Compiled by Miss Emma Beere

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When I was a child, I became intensely interested in a luxuriant apple tree that was growing on my father's farm, and I asked to have this little tree given to me for my own. I took great care in cultivating it. My brother also had an apple tree which he got from a nursery. It was so small compared to mine that I scoffed at it. After several years I saw the first blossom on my tree. But it did not amount to anything that year. But the next year there were one or two dozen blossoms, and three or four of them became apples. Oh, how I watched them, trying to keep the birds away and the boys from stealing them. My brother did not have any apples that year, and I laughed. Finally the time for my apples to ripen came. They seemed to stay green and had no color. After the cold weather began I harvested them. I was sure they would do better next year. There were a lot next year, but the same kind, however. They would not ripen. But my brother had a few beautiful large apples, and you should have seen the look of inexpressible triumph on his face as he handed me one. I had the tree, all right, but he had the fruit. My tree could not bring forth good fruit. I never forgot that lesson of my childhood--the wasted years, the wasted hopes upon the thing that was worthless in its essential nature.

When I was a young pastor, I had no acquaintance with sorrow. I was superficial and shallow like all young men; and I used to go to sorrowing mothers and friends with words of sympathy which were honestly meant, and yet which I felt did not touch one responsive chord. I tried to do my duty, but, oh how empty and useless it was. But when sorrow came to my own life, how it changed everything. I could go then with a full heart. I did not speak many words, but a silent grasp of the hand expressed my heartfelt sympathy and I knew there was comfort in it.

I shall never forget the first time death entered my family circle. [Simpson's first son, Melville, died at the age of four.] I had held the little one in my arms for two nights, his mother having fled in agony and collapse from the room, choking with croup. I saw that little life panting in the arms of death and I felt myself helpless to hold him back or help him. It was our first bereavement. At last we summoned from a distant city our old family

physician. I remember as I waited for him at the station, I walked up and down the platform under the cold winter sky as I looked up into the heavens, and shall never forget the thought that came to me; how can I let that spirit that has never gone from my reach, never been trusted alone, how can I let him wander out into that vast immensity; how can he ever find his way, and those heavens seem so cold and infinite? Oh, that I could go with him or keep him longer. Then it seemed to me, and I never lost the vision, that two great arms of love reached down through the sky, and Jesus whispered to me, "Suffer the little children and forbid them not to come unto me." And I saw Him there taking that little spirit from my arms and guarding and guiding better than I.

I went back with a lightened heart and looked upon his shining face as at last he passed through the gates with one little message, as I asked him where he was going--"To heaven, papa." And from that hour the passing of these lambs has never been sad to me. I have never had a regret or heart pang, because the Forerunner is there to take care of them. You will have no trials of faith but will fit you to be a blessing if you are obedient. I never had a deep trial, but as soon as I got out of the river, I found some poor pilgrim on the bank whom I was able to help by that very experience.

Never shall I forget, eighteen years ago, I was awakened one night from sleep, trembling with a strange and solemn sense of God's overshadowing power, and on my soul was burning the remembrance of a strange dream through which I had that moment come. It seemed to me that I was sitting in a vast auditorium, and millions of people were there sitting around me. All the Christians in the world seemed to be there, and on the platform was a great multitude of faces and forms. They seemed to be mostly Chinese. They were not speaking, but in mute anguish were wringing their hands, and their faces wore an expression that I can never forget. I had not been thinking of the Chinese or the heathen world; but as I awoke with that vision on my mind, I did tremble with the Holy Spirit, and I threw myself on my knees and every fiber of my being answered, "Yes, Lord, I will go."

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\* from C. Donald McKaig ed. "Simpson Scrapbook," (CBC/CTS archives), pp. 229 - 241.

In the beginning of this life of faith God gave me a vision which to me was a symbol of the kind of life to which He had called me. In this dream a little sail boat was passing down a rapid stream, tossed by the winds and driven by the rapids. Every moment it seemed as if it must be dashed upon the rocks and crushed, yet it was preserved in some mysterious way and carried through all perils. Upon the sails of the little ship was plainly painted the name of the vessel in one Latin word, *Angustiae*, meaning "Hard Places." Through this simple dream the Lord seemed to fortify me for the trials and testings that were ahead, and to prepare me for a life's voyage which was to be far from a smooth one, but through which God's grace would always carry me in triumph.

I remember travelling a thousand miles once to attend Mr. Moody's conference in Chicago. On the evening I arrived I went to the big tent, and, not making myself known, sat down quietly. It was a testimony meeting. One minister rose, and, with broken voice and tears running down his cheeks, said, "Friends, I came here to get something from the meeting; but God took me out alone with Him, and I have had such a sight of Jesus that I will never need anybody or anything again." His words smote my heart. I took the train the next morning for home. As I entered my office, the face of Jesus was awaiting me there to receive me; and there came such a flood of His presence and grace and His glory that it seemed I could say, "I have had such a vision of Jesus that it seems as if I could never fear again." Yes, I have failed many times, but it has been because I took my eyes off Jesus; but we need not fail if we see Him.

Many years ago, the life of the great Hildebrand became an inspiration to me, especially when I learned that he had chosen a patron saint as the guardian of his life, and attributed all his success to the care of Saint Peter to whom he had devoted his life. Blessed be God, there is a greater and a better than he! And when I read the story, I said, "I, too, shall choose a patron saint." But it was none other than the blessed Son of God. Thanks to His dear name, whatever I have known of strength for soul and body, of blessing in the Master's service, it has been through His care and friendship.

A dear friend once sent me a picture from Rome, with a prayer that it might be fulfilled in me. It was a photograph of the old painting of John leaning on Jesus' breast. As I studied it, I noticed that I could not see the face of John at all. The form of his head was visible, but his face was buried in the bosom of Jesus, and the master's face was beaming over him and covering him with its light and love.

Yes, that was John. He was lost in Christ. His personal consciousness was merged in his Master's

person, and he had found that the true secret of the death of self is the love of Jesus. I go back in memory to the time when He first came to me in this way and taught me to trust His presence and lean in prayer upon Him every moment. I came to realize it quietly, for there was nothing startling about it. Day after day the consciousness became clearer that God was here. I did not have to mount up to the sky to find Him. I never whispered to Him but He answered, "Here am I." Oh, how precious it is to be overshadowed thus by the cloud of His presence!

Once at Clifton Springs, N.Y., dear George Muller was there. I was broken down in health. I knew George Muller years before, and I went to him and said, "I would like you to pray for me." He prayed. As I went out from his presence, there came to me this humbling thought: "Why did you not ask Jesus to pray for you? He is better than Muller, and He is nearer. Don't you think there was a little thought in your mind that that was discrediting to your Master?" I knew there was, and I received such a blessing out of George Muller's prayer that I never asked him again!

Years ago a friend placed in my hand a little book which became one of the turning points in my life. It was "True Peace." It was an old medieval message, and it had but one thought--that God was waiting in the depth of my being to talk with me if I would only get still enough to hear Him. I thought this would be a very easy matter, so I began to get still. But I had no sooner commenced than a perfect pandemonium of voices reached my ears, a thousand clamoring notes from without and within, until I could hear nothing but their noise and din. Some of them were my own voice, some of them were my own questions, some of them my own cares, some of them my own prayers. Others were suggestions of the tempter and the voices of the world's turmoil. Never before did there seem to be so many things to be done, to be said, to be thought; and in every direction I was pulled and pushed and greeted with noisy acclamations and unspeakable unrest. It seemed necessary for me to listen to some of them, but God said, "Be still, and know that I am God." Then came the conflict of thoughts for the morrow and its duties and cares; but God said, "Be still." And then there came the very prayers which my restless heart wanted to press upon Him; but God said, "Be still."

As I listened and slowly learned to obey, and shut my ears to every sound, I found that after a while when the other voices ceased, or I ceased to hear them, there was a still small voice in the depth of my spirit. As I listened, it became to me the power of prayer, the voice of wisdom, and call of duty; and I did not need to think so hard, or pray so hard, or trust so hard, but that the "still, small voice" of the Holy Spirit in my heart was

## Section 1. Simpson: His Life

God's prayer in my secret soul, and God's answer to all my questions.

Standing once on the shore of the mighty St. Lawrence River, and watching the rushing current as it flowed rapidly down to the gulf, I was surprised one day to notice that sticks and straw near the shore were moving in the opposite direction. At first I could not account for it but soon perceived that it was only the eddy. And I also saw that the things which seem to be so much against us are only the eddies near the shore. God's great river of love is carrying, not driftwood that yields to every current, but the precious ship of life on His eternal purposes of love.

I am reminded of a woman whom I once met in the course of a pastoral visit, and to whom I tried to tell of the love of God to poor sinners. She met me with the blank and amazing statement that she did not comprehend what love meant. She had never seen nor felt any such thing. Her life had been a fight for existence, her hand against everyone, everyone else against her. She was perfectly sincere and responsive but utterly helpless to understand the gospel. I ceased preaching to her and invited one or two of the tactful women of my church to institute a school of love for her benefit, by showing her such delicate attentions as won her heart, and awakened the lost sense of love. One day she said to me with considerable feeling, "I think I understand now what love means, and I will be glad to have you tell me something about the love of God." She became a humble and devoted Christian, but she had to receive first the new faculty of love. The reason that many do not enter into the blessed ministry of the cross and the atonement is because our hearts and lives are too selfish to comprehend that sacrifice. If we would live out more fully the spirit of atonement, we would have fewer doubts about the doctrine.

One night I was called to see a colored woman who was dying close by where we were holding tent meetings. Entering her room and kneeling by her bedside, I talked to her a while about Christ, and then learned from her lips that she had been a terrible sinner, living a life of shame herself and dragging others down with her. At first she could scarcely believe that Christ would save such a sinner as she, but I told her about the Lamb of God and begged her to lay her hand upon His head and just roll over on Him all her burden of sin. The vivid picture seemed to appeal to the strong imagination which is peculiar to this race, and after a while she reached out her hand as though to put it on some invisible head. Then she began to confess and confess and confess until it seemed as if she would never end. Year after year she went over her sinful life telling it all out as though I were not there, rolling the burden over on Jesus as though it was an infinite relief.

As she rolled it out, her bosom heaved and sighed like the rolling of the sea, and her voice rose and fell in strange cadences of agony and comfort. Several times I tried to stop her and finish with a word of prayer for my meeting was waiting for me. But she said, "No, hold on; I'm not through yet." So I let the meeting go as the burdened soul unloaded its burden at the cross. It must have been more than an hour before she seemed at last to be emptied of her awful load, and began to shout her gratitude and thanks to the Saviour who had taken it all away. As we softly sang, "There is a fountain filled with blood," it seemed as though a white and spotless Lamb was standing by that bed, and a black hand was passing over to Him a still blacker stream of lifelong sin; and it seemed as though that precious blood had washed it all away, and that the once guilty woman was whiter than the driven snow.

And let me tell you now of another experience I had ministering to one on his deathbed. This time it was a lad raised in a good home, but with no religious teaching. His life was wasting away and no spiritual comforter had ministered beside his bedside. A friend of the family asked me to come. A few questions were asked, and it was soon apparent that the lad had no conception of the Bible or the Saviour, but felt that he was all right because he had tried to live a good life. How could I explain to him his need of Jesus Christ? Suddenly there flashed into my mind a simple illustration. By the bed was a beautiful canary which had such an attractive song, and I said, "What a pretty bird, and what a sweet song!" "Oh yes," he said, "I love to hear it; it is my constant companion." "But you cannot talk to it," I continued, "nor can you make it understand your thoughts." "Of course not," he replied, "it is only a bird." Then I made my application. I told him if he were to die and pass into the presence of God in heaven, he would be unable to understand the conversation, the songs, or the joy. He would be a stranger and out of place. He would not be happy because he was not a member of God's family.

This seemed to bring a flash of light to the mind of the lad, and he saw eternity with a new understanding. Even if he had not done anything wrong, he did not have a spiritual nature and would not be at home in heaven. "What shall I do? They tell me I cannot live," he cried, "and I see that I am not prepared to die. How shall I receive this new nature that I have never known?" Then we told him that Jesus Christ came into this world just for the purpose of giving us a new birth, a new heart, a new nature that could know Him, love Him, enjoy Him, and enable us to become His very own children. We further encouraged him to pray asking God to give him this new life in Christ. And never shall we forget that simple prayer, the tears slowly trickling down that wan

face. A new light "that never shone on earth or sky" came over his face and we know that God had met him, and that the miracle of grace had been performed. It was all so simple and brief, but it was real. The next morning he was gone.

And now a missionary story. Some years ago I went to the Far East on an important missionary commission to arrange many matters of importance in connection with the work of evangelization. After a few weeks in India, in which God signally blessed and helped me in all my plans, something happened which called for a very different kind of testimony. Through the carelessness of some friends who had failed to send on my baggage I had to go on without it. There were many valuable papers in those trunks and most of my personal effects. Far from home and among strangers, perhaps it was only natural that I should for a moment feel utterly depressed and be tempted to be tried with the careless friends who were responsible for this serious disappointment.

Then the Lord spoke. Never will I forget how the Spirit met me with this question, "Are you going to fail in that which is more important than all your work, your own personal victory? Or are you going to trust Me and triumph through My grace and take all this from My hand?" It was a keen but decisive struggle, and in a few minutes the Holy Spirit gave me strength to commit it all to God and to go on my way in peace. Hastily purchasing a few necessary articles of apparel in Calcutta, I sailed away to Burma and left the trunks with God. A strange peace filled my heart, even though I was told I would never see those trunks again, and presently I finished my visit and left for Rangoon with a happy heart.

In a meeting with thirty or forty missionaries, I was led to tell them among other things of the peculiar test which had come to me, and how much it meant to hold my victory through Christ. At the close of that meeting missionaries came to me privately and told how much harder they had found it in a heathen land to keep sweet before the natives under trial than even to learn a foreign language and preach the gospel to the heathen. With tears they asked for prayer and took the Lord Jesus for victory.

I sailed away from Rangoon, and as my ship left the harbor another ship came in with my trunks aboard--but too late for me to get them. The same thing happened in Singapore a little later, and still later in Canton; and it was not until I had been in Shanghai for two weeks that another ship brought the belated trunks to my hands at last. My friends said, "You will be fortunate if you find anything but the leather." But the Lord had travelled with those trunks every mile of the way and been captain and baggage master, and

everything was beautifully right. There was not an ant to be seen inside, and every old familiar article seemed to look into my face and say, "Praise the Lord!" It may seem a trifle to some, but that incident, like others since, meant to me quite as much real service as the writing of tracts on the life of victory and the preaching of sermons about entire consecration.

And speaking of losing things, I remember once having lost a ten dollar gold piece which I had in my pocket. I was going along one night in a hurry toward my home; and as I got to the corner of the street, I took out my keys to find the right one before reaching the door, to save time, and out dropped the gold piece. I discovered my loss, and knowing about where I lost it, I returned to look for it. I looked hard, but it was gone. Then I trusted it to the Lord and asked Him to bring it back in His own way.

Just the next week a dear friend called on me and told me how marvelously God was caring for her home. She said her husband had been out of work, and that on the last Saturday night he was walking along the street, and at a certain corner found a ten dollar gold piece. I did not tell her who lost it, but I thanked Him for letting her husband find it. Now every time I lose a little money, I just say, "Lord, pass it on to the right one and make it a blessing to some needy heart." God is in these little things, and we may trust His providence and care and know that He is always thinking of us.

I recall on one occasion how our steamer arrived in New York towards evening, and all hearts were beating high with the thought of soon being at home when suddenly our steamer grounded on the bar off Sandy Hook. The engines toiled and strained to lift her off, and the crew tugged with all their might; but at last they had to give up all thought of getting in that night, and anchored where they were.

The next morning I rose early and was looking across the bay towards home when I felt the vessel give a little movement as she rose from off the bar and floated upon the water. What had lifted her? God had done her, and we were free. This is how God works, when we cease our toilings and rest solely in Him. And it certainly worked this way with my brother. Let me tell you of him.

He was very rigid and conservative in his ideas of religious experience, and looked upon all demonstrations of feeling as sentimental and unscriptural. He was much disgusted with many of the manifestations of spiritual power and earnestness connected with the early days of our own work. At length his health broke down, and he was manifestly drawing near to a crisis. The writer endeavored in vain to bring him to that place of tender spiritual feeling where he could take Christ as his Healer or even as his

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Comforter. My efforts only met with recoil. Then the case was committed to God in believing prayer, and I waited.

Several months later a letter came from that brother telling of a marvelous change. The day before, while reading a verse in his Bible, a flood of light had burst upon his soul. For hours he could only pray and

praise and wonder. Yes, he too had become a fanatic--if this were fanaticism--and God had done exceeding abundantly above all that he could ask or think. His cold, intellectual nature was submerged in a baptism of love, which never ceased to pour its fulness through his being until when, a few weeks later, he swept through the gates of glory shouting the praises of his Redeemer.

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### Reading 1.2

## My Own Story\*

A.B. Simpson

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I have been asked by some of my Christian friends to put in permanent form the story of the things which the Lord has done for me. There is perhaps a sense in which each of us is a "living epistle, known and read of all men," but the most sacred story of every life is the hidden record which lies back of our words and actions. If there is anything in this story which can be used to help the children of God, I am willing to overcome the natural reticence which has made it always a pain even to publish my photograph, and let God use the testimony in any way in which it may please and glorify Him.

The first recollection of my childhood is the picture of my mother, as I often heard her in the dark and lonely night, weeping and wailing in her room, in her loneliness and sorrow, and I still remember how I used to get up and kneel beside my little bed even before I knew God for myself, and pray to Him to comfort her. The cause of her grief I afterwards better understood. She was a sensitive and high-spirited woman, who had come of a good family in the little island where I was born, and where her father was one of the public men of the island a honored member of the legislature, and she had a great number of friends. In their earlier married life my father had been engaged in the shipbuilding business, but had suffered a financial blow in one of the terrible panics that had struck the island, and had been obliged to close his business, saving but a few hundred dollars out of it, and had determined to seek his fortune in what was then the far west, that is, the most western portion of the province of Ontario, Canada. With little knowledge of the country, he had purchased a farm in one of the dreariest regions that could be imagined, and had taken his sensitive wife and his little family of four children into this wilderness. Before reaching our home

the youngest child had been torn from its mother's arms by sickness and death, largely the result of the trying journey of that day when there were no railroads or steamboats, and our journey of fifteen hundred miles had been slowly and painfully made on canal boats and stages. Burying her precious babe in a little town some distance from our home destination, my brokenhearted mother at length reached the dreary log cabin which was to be her future home.

Our nearest neighbor was a godly Scotch Highlander, who used to come and see us and pray with us in Gaelic, but could not speak one word of English. There was not another Christian friend within a circuit of miles. In that lonely cabin and that desolate wilderness, separated for the rest of her life from all the friends she held so dear, and from the social conditions to which she had been accustomed, was it a wonder, with her intense and passionate nature, which had not yet learned to know God in all His fulness as her all-sufficient portion, that she should often spend her nights in weeping and wailing, and perhaps in passionate upbraidings, because of her cruel lot, and that her little boy should find his first religious experience come to him in trying to grope his way to the heart of Him, who alone could help her.

My next reminiscence has also a tinge of religion about it. I had lost a boy's chief treasure, an old jack-knife, with which I was playing, and I still remember an impulse came to me to kneel down and pray about it. Soon afterwards I was delighted to find it. The incident made a profound impression upon my young heart and gave me a lifelong conviction, which has since borne fruit innumerable times, that it is our privilege to take everything to God in prayer. I do not mean to convey

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\* from C. Donald McKaig ed. "Simpson Scrapbook," (CBC/CTS archives), pp. 5-20.

the idea that I was at this time truly converted. No one had ever spoken to me about my soul and I only knew God in a groping, far away sense, but I can now see that God was discounting my future and treating me in advance as if I were already His child, because He knew I would be His child later. This explains why God does so many things even in answer to prayer for persons who do not yet fully know Him. He is treating them on the principle of faith and calling "the things that are not as though they were."

The truth is, the influences around my childhood were not as favourable to early conversion as they are today in many Christian homes. My father was a good Presbyterian of the old school and the belief in the Shorter Catechism and the doctrine of foreordination, and all the conventional rules of a well ordered Puritan household. He was himself a devout Christian and most respected for his intelligent mind, his consistent life, and his strong practical sense. I can still remember his rising long before daylight and with his lighted candle sitting down in the cheerless sitting room to read his Bible and tarry long at his morning devotions, and the picture filled my soul with a kind of sacred awe. On the Sabbath days we were brought up according to the strictest Puritan formula. When we did not go in the family wagon to church, which was in a town miles distant, we were all assembled in the family circle and sat for hours while father, mother, or one of the children read in turn from some good old book, that was beyond our understanding. It gives me a chill to this day to see a cover of these old books, such as Boston's *Fourfold State*, Baxter's *Saints' Rest*, Doddridge's *Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul*, for it was with these that my youthful soul was disciplined. The only seasons of relief came when it happened to be our turn to read. Then we felt immense and prided the young orator so as to forget the weariness of the volume. Then in the afternoon we had all to stand in a row and answer the questions of the Shorter Catechism. There were about one hundred and fifty in all, and our rule was to take half each Sunday and finish the next Sunday, and then start over again, and so year after year as the younger children grew up and joined the circle.

One of the few whippings which I got in my childhood was because one sunny Sabbath I ventured to slip out of the house and was seen by my father scampering around the yard in the joy of my ungodly liberty. I was speedily brought back and with great solemnity told that I would get my whipping next morning before breakfast, for it was not considered quite the thing to break the Sabbath by even a whipping. I believe I got the whipping that was coming to me the next morning, but I still remember how my older brother, who had a much wider experience and wiser

head than I took me aside that day and told me that if ever I was again condemned to a whipping he knew a way of getting out of it. And then he told me with great secrecy to get up the next morning before daylight, about the time my father was accustomed to rise, to light the candle and go and sit down in a corner of the sitting room with the Bible before me and show proper spirit of penitence and seriousness, and he was quite sure my father would take the hint and let me off. I am sorry to say that I was enough of a hypocrite to practice this trick, and sure enough, one morning, when a whipping was coming to me, I stole out of my bed, and sitting down with a very demure and solemn face to practice my pretended devotions, I can still see in my imagination my quiet and silent father casting side glances at me from under his spectacles, as though to make quite sure that I was in earnest, and after finishing his devotions he quietly slipped away to his work and nothing more was said about the chastisement.

Looking back on these early influences I cannot say that I regret the somewhat stern mode in which my early life was shaped. It taught me a spirit of reverence and discipline for which I often have had cause to thank God since. It threw over my youthful spirit a natural horror for evil things which often afterwards safeguarded me when thrown amid the temptations of the world. And the religious knowledge, which was crammed into my mind even without understanding it, furnished me with forms of doctrine and statements of truth which afterwards became illuminated by the Holy Spirit, and proved to be precious vessels for holding the treasures of divine knowledge. In our later family history these severe restraints were withdrawn from the younger members, as a more liberal age threw its influence over our home, but I cannot say that the change was a beneficial one. I believe that the true principle of family training is a blending of thorough discipline with much loving, true Christian liberty.

My first definite religious crisis came at about the age of fourteen. Prior to this I had for a good while earnestly desired to study for the ministry. I think that this was rather a conviction of duty than a spiritual impulse. I knew that my parents had dedicated my elder brother, four years my senior, to the ministry. Indeed, they had done this before he was born, and he was always looked upon as the chosen one for this high honor. I may have occasion later to show the sorrow which this brought into his life. The desire and resolve grew up in my heart without the kindly cheerings of my parents. I still remember how my carnal heart rebelled against the ministry because of the restraints it would put upon me. Naturally I wanted to get many things which I felt a preacher ought not to have. One thing particularly I had a great fascination for, that was to

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shoot and hunt game, but then, I reasoned, if I were a minister it would not be the thing for me to be going hunting, and for a time my little soul waged a big battle over this. During the conflict I remember I had saved up a little money, from funds that I had earned by special work, and one day I stole off to the town and invested the whole of it in a shooting gun, and for a few days I had the time of my life. I used to steal out to the woods, concealing as best I could this forbidden idol and then smuggling it back to hide it in the garret. One day, however, my mother found it and there was a scene. Her own brother had lost his life through the accidental discharge of his gun, and I knew and should have remembered, that guns were things proscribed in our family. It was the day of judgment for me when that wicked weapon was brought down from its hiding place, my mother standing at a safe distance, wringing her hands and pouring out the vials of her wrath while I sat confounded and crushed. The next day my sentence was to march back to the town and take that gun to the place from whence it came, and with deep humiliation return it to the man from whom I had wickedly bought it, and see, not only the gun, but the good money that I had paid for it go too. That tragedy settled the question of the ministry. Soon after I quite decided to give up these side issues and prepare myself, if I could only find an open way, to be a minister of the Gospel. But as yet, the matter had not been mooted in the family. One day, however, my father in his quiet, grave way, with my mother sitting by, called my elder brother and myself into his presence, and began to explain how my elder brother had long been destined to the ministry, and the time had now come when he should begin his studies and go in special training. My father added that he had a little money, rescued from the wrecked business of many years before, which was now slowly coming in, and which would be sufficient to give an education to one of his boys, but not to both, and therefore, he quietly concluded, that it would be my duty to give place to my brother, while I would stay at home and help them on the farm, and he would go to college. I can still feel the lump that rose in my throat as I stammered out my consent to my brother's being educated at the family expense, for I could clearly see that he had been foreordained to be a minister, at least by my father and mother, if not by the Lord; but I ventured to plead that they would consent to my getting my own education if I could. I asked no money, no help, but only my father's blessing and consent, and I still remember the quiet, trembling tones with which he at last yielded and said, "God bless you my boy, even if I cannot help you."

So the struggle began and I shall never cease to thank God that it was a hard one. Someone has said, "Many people succeed because success is thrust upon

them, but the most successful lives are those that began without a penny." Nothing under God was ever a greater blessing to me than the hard places which began with me nearly half a century ago, and have never yet ceased. For the first few months we took lessons in Greek, Latin and Higher Mathematics from our kind pastor who was a good scholar and anxious to help us in our purpose. I had already had a good, common school education. Then I secured a certificate by dint of hard work as a common school teacher, and at the early age of fifteen I found myself teaching a school of about forty boys and girls, one quarter of whom were grown men and women, while I looked even younger than my years. How much I would have given in those days for a few stray whiskers, or anything that would have made me look older. I often wonder how I ever was able to hold in control those rough country fellows, any one of whom could have thrashed me with his little finger, but I can now see that it was the hand of the Lord, and that He was pleased to give me a power and control that did not consist in brawn or bone. Of course, my object in teaching school was to earn money for my first session at college, and along with my duties as a teacher I was studying between times every spare moment to prepare myself for the opening examination of my college course.

But the strain of all this terrific work upon a young and yet undeveloped brain and body was impossible to sustain long, and one night there came a fearful crash, in which it seemed to me the very heavens were falling. After retiring to my bed I suddenly seemed to see a strange light blazing before my eyes and then my nerves gave way and I sprang from my bed, trembling and almost fainting, and immediately fell into a congestive chill of great violence that almost took my life. To add to the horror of that night there was a man in the house where I was boarding, suffering from *delirium tremens* and his horrible agonies, shrieks and curses seemed to add to my own distress the very horrors of hell itself. Next morning I was forced to ask for a leave of absence, and returned to my father's house a physical wreck. The physician told me I must not look at a book for a year, that my whole system had collapsed and that I was in the greatest danger. Then began a period of mental and physical agony which no language can describe. I seemed possessed with the idea that at three o'clock on some day I was to die and every day as that hour drew near I became prostrated with a dreadful nervousness, watching in agonized suspense till it was passed, wondering that I was still alive. One day as the hour came near there fell upon me that awful sense of approaching death which could not be gainsaid. Fainting and terrified I called my father to my bed side, telling him I was dying. Worst of all I had no hope and



no Christ. My whole religious training had left me without any Gospel. I had a God of great severity and a theology which provided in some mysterious way for that great change called regeneration or the new birth. O how I was waiting for that change to come to me and it had not yet come. O how my father prayed for me that day, and I fondly cried in utter despair for God to spare me just long enough to be saved. After a sense of sinking into bottomless depth constantly, rest came and the crisis was over for another day. I looked up at the clock and it was past three. It seemed to me then that God was just going to spare me for one day, and that I must strive and pray that day for salvation as a doomed man, who never would have another chance. O how I prayed and besought others to pray and almost feared to go to sleep that night lest I should lose a moment from this intense and tremendous search for God and eternal life. But the day passed and still I was not saved. It now seems strange that there was no voice there to tell me the simple way of faith, but I suppose it was the result of the old stern theology that looked upon salvation as the work of God's sovereign work with which we have but little to do. Day after day passed. My life hanging on a thread, but I seemed encouraged with the idea that God would spare me long enough to find salvation if I only continued to seek it with all my heart. But how often since then has it been my delight to tell poor sinners that they do not need as the old lines say,

To knock and weep, and watch and wait,  
for God is waiting and wondering we do not open the  
gate and enter in. Since then God has given to me these  
lines,

We do not need at Mercy's gate  
To "knock and weep, and watch and wait,"  
For Mercy's gifts are offered free,  
And she has waited long for thee.

At length, one day I stumbled, in the library of my minister, upon an old Scotch book, called Marshall's *Gospel Mystery of Salvation*, and as I turned over the leaves I came to a sentence which opened my eyes, and at the same time opened for me the gates of life eternal. In substance it was this, "The first good work you will ever perform is to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. Until you do this all your works, prayers, tears and resolves are vain. This very moment it is your privilege and your duty, and the very first duty above all others, to kneel down and take the Lord Jesus as your Saviour, and tell Him you believe according to His word, that He then saves you here and now. Believe this in spite of your doubts and fears and you will immediately pass into eternal life, will be justified from all your sins and receive a new heart and all the gracious operations of the Holy Spirit." Light, why this was supernal light to

me, and I threw myself on my knees and at once, looking up in the face of the Lord in spite of all my doubts and fears I said, "Lord Jesus, Thou has said, that him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out. Thou knowest how long and how earnestly I have wanted to come, but I did not know how. Now I come the best I can and I believe because Thou hast commanded me to believe that Thou dost receive me, that Thou dost save me, and from this moment I am Thy child, forgiven and saved, simply because I have taken Thee at Thy word, and I now dare to look up in the face of God and say, Abba, Father, Thou art mine."

In that moment there came to my heart the assurance that always comes to the believing soul, "he that believeth hath the witness in himself." I had been seeking the witness without believing, but from the moment I dared to believe, the Spirit answered to the word and told me I was born of God.

The months that followed my conversion were very full of spiritual blessing. The promises of God burst upon my soul with a new and marvelous light, and words that had been empty sounds became divine revelations to my soul, and every one seemed especially for me. There was, perhaps, in my temperament a vein of imagination and it clothed the glowing promises of Isaiah and Jeremiah with a strange and glorious radiance and I can still remember the ecstasy with which I used to read, "I have sworn that I will never be wroth with thee nor rebuke thee. For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee." When I heard through Christian's talking of their failures and fears, I wondered if a time should ever come when I should lose this supreme joy of a "soul in its earliest love," and I remember how I used to pray that rather than let me go back into the old life the Lord would take me at once to heaven. I remember one day especially, of which I still have the record, when I was about fifteen years of age, a day which I had wholly devoted to fasting and prayer, with a view to entering into a personal covenant with God in a very solemn and formal way. [The covenant is dated January 19, 1861, see Reading 2.1. Simpson was 17 at the time.] I had been reading Doddridge's *Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul* and had determined to follow his suggestions to young Christians to enter into such a covenant, and I wrote out at considerable length a detailed transcription, in which I gave myself wholly to God and to Him for every promised blessing, and especially for the grace and power to use my life for His service and glory. I remember a certain special blessing, which I included in my requests and specifications, and I have often wondered since how literally God has fulfilled them in

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me in His gracious providence through my life. Before the close of the day I signed and sealed this covenant just as literally as I would have done a human agreement and laid it away.

Two incidents of my Grammar school career are very vivid in my recollection. One was a providential escape from drowning. I had gone with one of my school mates to gather wild grapes on the banks of the river. After a while I was tempted by my companion to go in swimming, an art which I had never attempted and which the slightest reflection would have made me avoid. In a few moments the water had got beyond my depth, and with a sense of agony, which I never shall forget I found myself choking painfully under the surface. In that moment, I still recollect, how the whole of my life came before me in a vision and I can well understand the story told by drowning persons whose past histories seem photographed in an instant before their minds in the act of losing consciousness. I remember even seeing, as clearly as if I had read it from the printed page, the notice in the local paper, telling of my accidental drowning. But God mercifully saved me. My companion was not able to rescue me, but his shouts were heard by some men in a little boat a hundred yards away, and they pulled me out and lay me on the river bank when black in the face and about to sink for the last time. As I came back to consciousness afterwards, it seemed to me that a million years had passed since I was last on earth. I am sure that experience greatly deepened my spiritual earnestness.

The other incident was less grave. I was usually very ambitious to win all the prizes possible, and it was my good fortune to secure a very large and handsomely bound book, a sort of cyclopedia. My chum, who had been defeated in the examination, had set his heart on getting that book from me, and finally succeeded by arousing my cupidity to get possession of an old violin belonging to him, and on which he used to practice his wiles on my too responsive heart, until, at last, I consented to exchange my splendid prize for his old fiddle. I took it home afterwards and made night hideous during the following summer, and myself a general nuisance, without ever succeeding in playing anything worth listening to. But there was a latent vein of music somewhere in my nature, which the strange sounds that I was able to extort from the catgut seemed to satisfy if they did not edify anybody else.

My childhood and youth were strangely sheltered and guarded by divine providence. I recall with a sacred awe and thankfulness the many times in which my life was preserved. I have already referred to my narrow escape from death by drowning. On another occasion, while climbing up on the scaffolding of a building in the course of erection, I stepped upon a loose board and

slipped and fell. Instinctively throwing out my hands I caught hold of timber and held desperately for some time, calling for assistance. When just about to let go through exhaustion, my father, who was some distance away, rushed to my aid and caught me just before I fell. The fall would have either maimed or killed me.

Another time I was thrown headlong over my horse's head, as he stumbled and falling under me, and when I came to consciousness I found him bending over me, with his nose close to my face, as though he would have spoken and encouraged me. Many times was I delivered from danger, and I believe God was keeping my life for Himself in some gracious way. Especially do I praise Him for the longsuffering kindness in which He bore the backslidings of my youth, and the spirit of selfish ambition which to so great an extent controlled my life.

At length the time came for me to leave home and commence my college course in Knox College and the University of Toronto. A special course had been arranged for students for the ministry, by which they took certain classes in Knox College and certain lectures in the University. It would be of little interest to recite the ordinary experiences of a college student, and it is only necessary to sketch a few of the special pictures that come back to memory from these early years. My deep religious impressions still continued and they kept me from the temptations of city life. There was a sort of horror associated with the saloon, or a house of infamy, which put an effectual barrier across my sensitive heart, and such things never appealed to me. But I was thrown with a roommate in the first year of my college course, whose influence over my heart was most disastrous. He was a much older man and although a theological student and a very bright and attractive fellow was a man of convivial tastes and habits. It was his favourite custom once or twice a week to have what he called an oyster supper in our room, and to invite one or two of his friends, who happened to be medical students, and whose habits were worse than his. On these occasions both beer and whiskey would be brought in, and the orgie would go on until very late at night with laugh and song and story, and many a jest that was neither pure nor reverent. I had not firmness nor experience sufficient to suppress these entertainments, and I was compelled to be a witness and in some measure a partaker, although, the coarse amusement was always distasteful to all my spiritual life. My roommate was cynical and utterly unspiritual. At the same time he had a fine literary taste and was fond of poetry, which he was always reading or repeating. There was a certain attraction about him, and altogether his influence over me was bad. I did not cease to pray, or to walk in some measure with God, but the sweetness and preciousness of my early piety was already withered. I am sorry to say that I did not

recover my lost blessing until I had been the minister of the Gospel for more than ten years. I do not mean to imply that I went into open sin or turned away from God, but my religious life was chiefly that of duty, with little joy or fellowship, and my motives were intensely ambitious and worldly. In a word my heart was unsanctified and I had not yet learned the secret of the indwelling Christ and the baptism of the Holy Ghost.

At the same time there must have been a strong current of faith, and a real habit of prayer in my college life, for God did many things for me, which were directly supernatural and to me at the time very wonderful. My careful savings had only been sufficient to take me through the first year of college, and for the following years my way was unprovided. But there was a system of scholarships or bursaries consisting of considerable amounts of money, which were given to the successful student in a competitive examination. I set my heart on winning some of these scholarships, not merely for the honor, but for the pecuniary value, which would be almost sufficient to meet what was lacking in my living expenses.

One of them required the writing of an essay on the subject of baptism, and after much hard study, and I am glad to say very much prayer, I wrote an essay proving to my own satisfaction that children ought to be baptized, and that baptism should be by sprinkling and not by immersion. Through God's great goodness I won the prize, but in later years I had to take back all the arguments and doctrinal opinions, which I so stoutly maintained in my youthful wisdom. My next venture was for a much larger prize, amounting to \$120 and for which an essay was to be written on the difficult historical and philosophical subject, "The Preparation of the World for the First Coming of Christ and the Setting up of His Kingdom." While I studied hard and long for the materials of this paper, I deferred the final composition until the very last moment. I am afraid that my mind has always had a habit of working in this way, namely, of leaving its supreme efforts until the cumulative force of constant thought and recollection has crystallized the subject into its most intense form. And so I found myself within two days of the final moment for giving in the papers and the entire article yet to be written out in its final form from the crude first copy, which had been prepared. The task proved to be a longer and harder one than I dreamed, and when the last day had ended and the paper had to be given in by the following morning at nine o'clock, there was still seven or eight hours work to be done. Of course, the night that followed was a sleepless one. Toiling at my desk and literally tearing along like a race horse for the goal, I wrote and wrote and wrote, until my hand grew almost paralyzed, and I had to get another to write for me while

I dictated. But soon my brain began to fail me and I found myself literally falling asleep in my chair. Then I did something for the first and last time in my life, which I can understand professional men doing until they fall under the power of the most dangerous opiates. I sent out to a drug store for something that would keep me awake for six or seven hours at any cost, and as I sipped it through the night my brain was held to its tremendous task; and as the light broke on the winter morning that followed the last sentences were finished and the paper folded and sealed and sent by a special messenger to my professor, while I threw myself on my bed and slept as if I would never wake. Some weeks passed during which I prayed much for my strenuously prepared paper. I found there were about a dozen competitors, many of them students in advanced years of the course. Naturally there seemed little hope of my success, but something told me that God was going to see me through. At length the morning came when it was announced that the name of the successful candidate should be declared. But I could not stay in the class room, I was too much excited to stand the strain, and I slipped away into the college yard to a lonely place where I threw myself on my knees and had the matter out with God, and before I rose from my knees, I dared to believe somehow that God had heard my prayer and given me my prize, which was so essential to the continuance of my study. Then I spilled back into the class room and sat down in my place. I instantly noticed that every eye was turned on me with a strange expression which I could not understand. Nothing was said about the prize during the lecture hour. It had all been said just before I came in. But at the close my professor called me to his room and congratulated me on my success, and I learned for the first time that, while I was out praying in the yard, he had told the class that the prize had come to me. This explained their strange glances at me as I went in. I mention this instance especially to show how God all through my life has taught me, at least has been trying to make me understand, that before any great blessing could come to me I must first believe for it in blind and naked faith. I am quite sure that the blessing of believing for that prize was more to me than its great pecuniary value, which enabled me to continue my study for the next two years.

During the summer vacation, after my second year, as I was a theological student, I was sent out to preach in mission churches and stations. In this way I also earned a little money, besides gaining a much more valuable experience in practical work. But I remember well the look of surprise with which the grave men of the congregations, where I preached, would gaze at me as I entered the pulpit. I was extremely young and looked so much younger than I really was, that I do not

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wonder now that they looked aghast at the child that was presuming to preach to them from the high pulpit, where he stood in fear and trembling.

The greatest trials of all these days was my preaching for the first time in the church in which I had been brought up, and in the presence of my father and my mother. In some way the Lord helped me to get through, but I never once dared to meet their eyes. In those days preaching was an awful business, for we knew nothing of trusting the Lord for utterance. The manuscript was written in full and the preacher committed it to memory and recited it verbatim. On this occasion I walked the woods for days beforehand, repeating to the trees and squirrels the periods and paragraphs which I had so carefully composed. The misfortune sometimes was that the forgetting of a word would blot out from the frightened brain of the poor preacher all the matter that followed. One of the most pathetic stories of Professor Wilson Tales, is that of the student minister, a poor wight, who like me had

presumed to preach before his minister and parents, and then I am happy to say, unlike me, had stuck in the middle of his discourse and after trying vainly to recall his sentences and murmuring over and over again, "My brethren, my brethren," finally stuck his fingers in his hair and tearing, like one half mad, fled from the pulpit in the church and was never seen in those parts again.

My social and religious surroundings were not of the helpful kind. The church and college life with which I was associated, was not deeply spiritual, but cold and conventional. There was no teaching about the deeper work of the Holy Spirit and the life of consecration, and I rose no higher than the level about me. When I entered later upon my regular ministry, I knew but little of the Holy Ghost and the life of faith and holiness, and while conscientious and orthodox in my pastoral work and preaching, and really earnest in my spirit, yet I fear, I was seeking to build up a successful church, very much in the same spirit as my people were trying to build up a successful business.

### Reading 1.3

## A.B. Simpson Chronology

1843	Dec 15	Born on Prince Edward Island	1864		Graduation from Knox College - High Honours
1844		Baptized and dedicated to missions by Rev. John Geddie, first Canadian Presbyterian foreign missionary	1865	Sept 10	Inaugural sermon, Knox Church, Hamilton, Ontario
1847		Moved to Ontario, near Chatham	1865	Sept 12	Ordination
1852		Read Rev. John Williams' missionary biography, consecrated his life to God's work	1865	Sept 13	Marriage to Margaret Henry
1858		Conversion	1866	June 27	Birth of Albert Henry
1859		Teaching school	1868		Birth of Melville Jennings
1861	Jan 19	"Solemn Covenant" dedicating himself to God	1870	Aug 31	Birth of James Gordon
1861	Oct	Entered Knox College	1871		Trip to England and Europe
1862		Prize essay, "Infant Baptism"	1871		Death of Melville Jennings at age 3
1863		Prize essay, "Second Coming of our Lord"	1872	Nov 17	Birth of Mable Jane
1864		Prize for proficiency in classics	1873	Oct	Attends Evangelical Alliance Convention in New York, Preaches in 13th Street Presbyterian Church
			1873	Dec	Resigns his Hamilton charge
			1874	Jan	Begins ministry at Chestnut Street Presbyterian, Louisville, Kentucky

## Section 1. Simpson: His Life

1874		Crisis of sanctification	1885	Oct	John Salmon meets Simpson in Buffalo, Salmon experiences healing and becomes early promoter of Alliance in Canada
1874		Whittle-Bliss evangelistic meetings			
1875		Begin construction of Broadway Tabernacle	1886	Aug	Convention at Old Orchard, Maine - emphasis on missions leads to call for a new organization to promote Deeper Life and missions.
1876		Simpson's missionary call			Berachah Orphanage opened
1878	April	Birth of Margaret May	1887	Jan - June	Draft constitutions of the Christian Alliance and Evangelical Missionary Alliance are circulated.
1879	Nov	Resigns his Louisville charge			
1879		Mrs. Simpson disagrees with decision to move to New York	1887	July 31	Convention at Old Orchard, Maine. Organization of the Christian Alliance and Evangelical Missionary Alliance.
1879	Dec 9	Installed as Pastor, 13th Street Presbyterian, New York			William Cassidy of Toronto, first missionary of the Alliance to be ordained and sent out.
1880	Feb	Published first issue of <i>Gospel in All Lands</i>	1889	Oct 29	Incorporation of the International Missionary Alliance
1880		Birth of Howard Home	1891		15 missionaries are overseas Simpson calls for 100 new missionaries to advance the cause First public offerings for missions, first use of the pledge
1881		Relinquishes <i>Gospel in All Lands</i> to Methodist publisher, Eugene R. Smith	1891		Young Men's Crusade organized
1881	July	Simpson experiences healing	1891		Junior Missionary Alliance organized
1881	Oct	Baptized by immersion	1891		Door of Hope mission (for girls) organized
1881	Nov 7	Resigns his New York charge	1891		<i>Hymns of the Christian Life</i> published
1881	Nov 20	Begins independent ministry in New York	1893	Jan	Simpson tours mission fields
1882	Jan	First issue of new publication, <i>The Word, the Work and the World</i>	1895		Approximately 300 Alliance missionaries overseas.
1882	Feb 10	Gospel Tabernacle organized as a church	1896		Death of Albert Henry
1882		Home for "fallen women" opened	1897	April 2	Christian and Missionary Alliance formed by a merger of the Christian Alliance and the Evangelical Missionary Alliance
1882		Informal Missionary Training classes begin			
1883		The Missionary Union for the Evangelization of the World is organized	1897		Berachah Healing Home and Missionary Training Institute moved to Nyack, New York
1883	May 16	Berachah Home for healing opened	1902	July 1	First issue of <i>Living Truths</i> monthly
1883	Oct 1	Missionary Training College is officially opened			
1884	Sept	First fall Convention			
1884	Nov	Five missionaries sail for Africa			
1885		Rescue missions organized			
1885	June	Bethshan Conference, London, England on Deeper Life and Healing, Simpson delivers "Himself" sermon			

## Section 1. Simpson: His Life

1906	May 25-28	Conference for Prayer and Counsel: Respecting uniformity in the testimony and teaching of the Alliance	1912	May	Constitution revised, new organizational structure, reversion clause
1907		Death of James Gordon	1919	Oct 29	Simpson dies
1910	Jan	Simpson's second tour of mission fields			

Reading 2.1

## A Solemn Covenant\* The Dedication Of Myself To God

A.B. Simpson

O Thou everlasting and almighty God, Ruler of the universe, Thou who madest this world and me, Thy creature upon it, Thou who art in every place beholding the evil and the good, Thou seest me at this time and knowest my thoughts. I know and feel that my innermost thoughts are all familiar to Thee, and Thou knowest what motives have induced me to come to Thee at this time. I appeal to Thee, O Thou Searcher of hearts, so far as I know my heart, it is not a worldly motive that has brought me before Thee now. But my "heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked," and I do not pretend to trust it; but Thou knowest that I have a desire to dedicate myself to Thee for time and eternity. I would come before Thee as a sinner, lost and ruined by the fall, and by my actual transgressions, yea, as the vilest of all Thy creatures. When I look back on my past life, I am filled with shame and confusion. I am rude and ignorant, and in Thy sight a beast. Thou, O Lord, didst make Adam holy and happy, and gavest him ability to maintain his state. The penalty of his disobedience was death, but he disobeyed Thy holy law and incurred that penalty and I, as a descendant from him, incurred that penalty. I acknowledge the justness of Thy sentence, O Lord, and would bow in submission before Thee.

How canst Thou, O Lord, condescend to look on me, a vile creature? For it is infinite condescension to notice me. But truly, Thy loving kindness is infinite and from everlasting. Thou, O Lord, didst send Thy Son in our image, with a body such as mine and a reasonable soul. In Him were united all the perfections of the Godhead with the humility of our sinful nature. He is the Mediator of the New Covenant, and through Him we all have access unto Thee, by the same Spirit. Through Jesus, the only Mediator I would come to Thee, O Lord, and trusting in His merits and mediation, I would boldly approach Thy throne of grace. I feel my own insignificance, O Lord, but do Thou strengthen me by Thy Spirit. I would now approach Thee in order to covenant with thee for life everlasting. Thou in Thy Word hast told us that it is Thy Will that all who believe in Thy Son might have everlasting life and Thou wilt raise him up at the last day. Thou hast given us a New

Covenant and hast sealed that covenant in Thy blood, O Jesus, on the cross.

I now declare before Thee and before my conscience, and bear witness, O ye heavens, and all the inhabitants thereof, and thou earth, which God has made, that I accept the conditions of this covenant and close with its terms. These are that I believe on Jesus and accept of salvation through Him, my Prophet, Priest, and King, as made unto me of God wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption and complete salvation. Thou, O Lord, hast made me willing to come to Thee. Thou hast subdued my rebellious heart by Thy love. So now take it and use it for Thy glory. Whatever rebellious thoughts may arise therein, do Thou overcome them and bring into subjection everything that opposeth itself to Thy authority. I yield myself unto Thee as one alive from the dead, for time and eternity. Take me and use me entirely for Thy glory.

Ratify now in Heaven, O my Father, this Covenant. Remember it, O Lord, when Thou bringest me to the Jordan. Remember it, O Lord, in that day when Thou comest with all the angels and saints to judge the world, and may I be at Thy right hand then and in heaven with Thee forever. Write down in heaven that I have become Thine, Thine only, and Thine forever. Remember me, O Lord, in the hour of temptation, and let me never depart from this covenant. I feel, O Lord, my own weakness and do not make this in my own strength, else I must fail. But in Thy strength, O Captain of my salvation, I shall be strong and more than conqueror through Him who loved me.

I have now, O Lord, as Thou hast said in Thy Word, covenanted with Thee, not for worldly honors or fame but for everlasting life, and I know that Thou art true and shalt never break Thy holy Word. Give to me now all the blessings of the New Covenant and especially the Holy Spirit in great abundance, which is the earnest of my inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession. May a double portion of Thy Spirit rest upon me, and then I shall go and proclaim to transgressors Thy ways and Thy laws to the people. Sanctify me wholly and make me fit for heaven. Give

\* quoted in A.E. Thompson, *A.B. Simpson: His Life and Work* rev. ed., (Harrisburg: Christian Publications, 1960) pp. 19-23 (excerpts).

## Section 2. Simpson: Spiritual Crises

me all spiritual blessing in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

Place me in what circumstances Thou mayest desire; but if it be Thy holy will, I desire that Thou "give me neither poverty or riches; feed me with food convenient, lest I be poor and steal, or lest I be rich and say, "Who is the Lord?" But Thy will be done. Now give me Thy Spirit and Thy protection in my heart at all times, and then I shall drink of the rivers of salvation, lie down by still waters, infinitely happy in the favour of my God.

-Saturday, January 19, 1861.

September 1, 1863. Backslidden. Restored. Yet too cold, Lord. I still wish to continue this. Pardon the past and strengthen me for the future for Jesus' sake. Amen.

Louisville, KY., April 18, 1878. Renew this covenant and dedication amid much temptation and believe that my Father accepts me anew and gives me more than I have dared to ask or think, for Jesus' sake. He has kept His part. My one desire now is power, light, love, souls, Christ's indwelling, and my church's salvation.

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### Reading 2.2

## Personal Testimony - Sanctification\*

A.B. Simpson

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*The following testimony was given in substance by Rev A.B. Simpson on Sunday night September 12th [1915], in connection with the fiftieth anniversary of his ordination.*

An occasion so unique as this may justify a personal testimony, and the opening up of the holiest and most sacred confidences of one's Christian life. Fifty years ago the one who addresses you this evening was ordained in this sacred place. He was a young, ambitious minister of twenty-one, and had not yet learned the humbling lessons which God in His faithful love is pleased to teach us as fast as we are willing to learn. God was pleased to give him a loyal and united congregation and what would ordinarily be called a successful ministry. He was sincere and earnest up to the light he had received and had not learned any other gospel than the old story of the cross. God had graciously given to him a very true conversion, and, notwithstanding the temptations of college life and the ambitions of his intense nature, he was according to the ordinary standards an earnest, sincere, and successful minister, and the measure of blessing that God was pleased to bestow upon him in this dear old church was far in excess of anything he had a right to expect.

But even after nine years of his active ministry in Hamilton he had not yet learned the deeper lessons of spiritual life and power which God was pleased to open to him after taking him from this place. There is a remarkable passage in Isaiah telling us that when the

Spirit is poured out from on high, the wilderness shall become a fruitful field, and the fruitful field shall be counted for a forest. When that experience came to him, the field of his former ministry, which had seemed so fruitful, suddenly appeared barren and withered, and he felt as if his true ministry had scarcely yet begun. It may not be out of good taste to testify to the things which God has been pleased to show to him in the more than forty years that have passed since his last official relations with this Church.

In the first place, He took care to show him very thoroughly, very patiently, very inexorably his own nothingness. In a crisis hour of his spiritual experience, while asking counsel from an old, experienced friend, he was shocked to receive this answer, "All you need in order to bring you into the blessing you are seeking, and to make your life a power for God, is to be annihilated." The fact is, the shock of that message almost annihilated him for the time, and before God's faithful discipline was through, he had learned in some adequate measure, as he has been learning ever since, the great truth which our text expresses, "I am not sufficient to think anything of myself."

Second, the next great lesson the patient Master was pleased to begin to teach him was the all-sufficiency of Christ. Never shall he forget the morning that he spent in his church study reading an old musty book he had discovered in his library on the subject "The Higher Christian Life." He had struggled long and vainly with

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\* A.B. Simpson, "A Personal Testimony," *The Alliance Weekly*, 45(Oct. 2, 1915):11.



his own intense nature, his strong self-will, his peculiar temptations, and his spiritual life had been a constant humiliation. He had talked to his people about the deeper things of the Spirit, but there was a hollow ring, and his heart was breaking to know the Lord Jesus as a living bright reality. As he pored over this little volume, he saw new light. The Lord Jesus revealed Himself as a living all-sufficient presence, and he learned for the first time that Christ had not saved us from future peril and left us to fight the battle of life as best we could, but He who had justified us was waiting to sanctify us, to enter into our spirit and substitute His strength, His holiness, His joy, His love, His faith, His power, for all our worthlessness, helplessness, and nothingness, and make it an actual and living fact, "I live, yet not I but Christ liveth in me." This was indeed a new revelation. Throwing himself at the feet of that glorious Master he claimed the mighty promise, "I will dwell in you and you in me." Across the threshold of his spirit there passed a Being as real as the Christ who came to John on Patmos, and from that moment a new secret has been the charm, and glory, and strength of his life and testimony. And he shall never forget how he longed to come back to the land of his birth and the friends of former years, and tell them that magic, marvelous secret, hid from ages and generations, but now made manifest in the saints, which is Christ in you, the Hope of glory. Henceforth it was not his struggles, his character, his ethical culture, his moral goodness, but his constant dependence upon the living One who has said, "Because I live, ye shall live also." And whatever has been accomplished these forty years in personal victory or public service, he counts it a great privilege to stand here today and say, "Not I but Christ." "I have learned the secret, I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."

This is not only the secret of spirit victory, but of mental efficiency and physical strength. It is such an identification with the incarnate Christ that His intellectual force passes into our limited capacity, and we can say, "We have the mind of Christ"; and His physical vitality quickens our failing strength, lifts us above disease and infirmity, and enables us to say, "The life of Jesus is made manifest in our mortal flesh."

Yes, "we are not sufficient even to think anything as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God." And although we are daily delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, yet the life also of Jesus is made manifest in our mortal flesh."

Furthermore, this divine sufficiency extends to all our service for Christ and makes us efficient in the Master's work. It is a great thing to learn that we do not have to go on our resources or fight on our charges. Our good works are prepared for us that we should walk in

them, and "God is able to make all grace abound toward us, so that we, always having all-sufficiency in all things, may abound unto every good work." Christian usefulness is not the exploiting of Christian talent, but witnessing in the power of the Holy Ghost and doing the works of Jesus because He works in us. The Holy Spirit is our power for service. He quickens the mind in the apprehension of the truth. He stirs the heart with love for souls. He inspires the preacher with faith, authority, and divine efficiency. He convicts the world of sin, righteousness and judgment, and not only works in the preacher but in the hearer, giving efficacy for the word of His grace and using often the humblest instruments to accomplish the greatest good. The following lines sum up the testimony of the speaker and many others who have learned the secret of a living and indwelling Christ.

Once it was my working,  
His it hence shall be

Perhaps the most wonderful experience of this deeper revelation of Christ is in the realm of answered prayer. This great secret opens heaven and puts in our hand a checkbook which only needs the endorsement of faith to give us fellowship with all the wealth of God's providence and grace. How wonderful the answers to prayer which gild the memories of difficulty with celestial and eternal light.

Third, the third great light which God has permitted to fall upon these forty years is the glorious light of prophetic truth and millennial hope. Once the vision stretched away into a human horizon, the golden age to which one was looking forward was to be brought about by evolution, human progress, modern civilization, the spread of Christianity, man's best endeavors. But a generation ago there came a new revelation and a new hope, not of a slow and uncertain evolution of human progress, but a glorious revelation of prophetic fulfillment, a kingdom coming not from the earth but from the skies, the New Jerusalem coming down from God out of heaven, the promise of the Coming One, who some glad day will supersede the poor counterfeit kings of earth and will fulfill His glorious promise, "This same Jesus shall so come again." It is glorious indeed to be working for a cause that cannot fail, not struggling to convert the world, but gathering out of it a little flock to meet the King and welcome Him back to end the tragedy of human failure,

And make this blighted world of ours  
His own fair world again

Oh, how it dries our parting tears when our loved ones cross the threshold, etc. Oh, how real it makes our redemption, not some far-off mysterious heaven, but this old green earth restored, and these mortal frames clothed in immortality and glory.

## Section 2. Simpson: Spiritual Crises

And finally, has come the vision of the world and its evangelization, the sacred trust which widens our horizon, makes every man our neighbor, and gives us a bishopric as wide as the human race. That is the glorious renaissance of modern church history, the new missionary movement, the splendid watchword, the evangelization of the world in the present generation.

Let us thank God together, dear friends, for the wonderful new revelation which God has given us in the opening years of the twentieth century. He is short-sighted indeed who allows himself to miss this holy calling and fails to have a part in these stupendous days upon which the end of the age has come and which look out already into the eternal morning.

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### Reading 2.3

## A Larger Christian Life\*

A.B. Simpson

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I look back with unutterable gratitude to the lonely and sorrowful night when, mistaken in many things and imperfect in all, and not knowing but that it would be death in the most literal sense before the morning light, my heart's first full consecration was made, and with unreserved surrender I first could say,

'Jesus, I my cross have taken,  
All to leave and follow thee;  
Destitute, despised, forsaken,  
Thou from hence my All shall be,'

Never, perhaps, has my heart known quite such a thrill of joy as when the following Sabbath morning I gave out those lines and sang them with all my heart. And if God has been pleased to make my life in any measure a little temple for His indwelling and for His glory, and if He ever shall be pleased to use me in any fuller measure, it has been because of that hour, and it will be still in the measure in which that hour is made the key-note of a consecrated, crucified, and Christ-devoted life.

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\* A.B. Simpson, "Death to Self," *A Larger Christian Life*. (Camp Hill [PA]: Christian Publications, 1988), pp. 83-4.

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Reading 2.4

## The Gospel of Healing\*\*

A.B. Simpson

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All that I know of Divine Healing and all that I have written in the preceding pages, the Lord had to teach me Himself in my own life, and I was not permitted to read anything but His own Word on this subject until long after I had learned to trust Him for myself and, indeed, had written much that is in this little book.

For more than twenty years I was a sufferer from many physical infirmities and disabilities. Beginning a life of hard intellectual labor at the age of fourteen, I broke hopelessly down with nervous prostration while preparing for college, and for many months was not permitted by my physician even to look at a book. During this time I came very near death, and on the verge of eternity gave myself at last to God. After my college studies were completed I became the ambitious pastor of a large city church at twenty-one, and plunging headlong into my work, I again broke down with heart trouble and had to go away for months of rest, returning at length, as it seemed to me at the time, to die. Rallying, however, and slowly recovering in part, I labored on for years with the aid of constant remedies and preventives. I carried a bottle of ammonia in my pocket for years, and would have taken a nervous spasm if I had ventured without it. Again and again, while climbing a slight elevation or going up a stair did the awful and suffocating agony come over me, and the thought of that bottle as a last resort quieted me. Well do I remember the day in Europe when I ventured to the top of the Righi in Switzerland, by rail, and again when I tried to climb the high Campanile stairs in Florence, and as the paroxysm of imminent suffocation swept over me, I resolved that I should never venture into such peril again. God knows how many hundred times in my earlier ministry when preaching in my pulpit or ministering by a grave it seemed that I must fall in the midst of the service or drop into that open grave.

Several years later two other collapses came in my health, of long duration, and again and again during these terrible seasons did it seem that the last drops of life were ebbing out.

I struggled through my work most of the time and often was considered a hard and successful worker, but my good people always thought me so "delicate," and I grew weary of being sympathized with every time they met me. Many a neglected visit was apologized for by these good people because I was "not strong." When at last I took the Lord for my Healer, I just asked the Lord to make me so well that my people would never sympathize with me again, but that I should be to them a continual wonder through the strength and support of God.

I think He has fulfilled this prayer, for they have often wondered these recent years at the work I have been permitted to do in His name.

It usually took me till Wednesday to get over the effects of the Sabbath sermon, and about Thursday I was ready to begin to get ready for the next Sabbath. Thanks be to God, the first three years after I was healed I preached more than a thousand sermons and held sometimes more than twenty meetings in one week, and do not remember feeling exhausted.

A few months before I took Christ as my Healer, a prominent physician in New York insisted on speaking to me on the subject of my health, and told me that I had not constitutional strength enough left to last more than a few months. He required my taking immediate measures for the preservation of my life and usefulness. During the summer that followed I went for a time to Saratoga Springs, and while there, one Sabbath afternoon, I wandered out to the Indian campground, where the jubilee singers were leading the music in an evangelistic service. I was deeply depressed, and all things in life looked dark and withered. Suddenly, I heard the chorus:

My Jesus is the Lord of lords:  
no man can work like Him.

Again and again, in the deep bass notes, and the higher tones that seemed to soar to heaven, they sang it over and over again:

No man can work like Him.  
No man can work like Him.

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\*\* A.B. Simpson, "Personal Testimony," *The Gospel of Healing*, (Harrisburg: Christian Publications, 1915), pp. 156-161 (excerpts).

## Section 2. Simpson: Spiritual Crises

It fell upon me like a spell. It fascinated me. It seemed like a voice from heaven. It possessed my whole being. I took Him to be my Lord of lords, and to work for me. I knew not how much it all meant; but I took Him in the dark, and went forth from that rude, old-fashioned service, remembering nothing else, but strangely lifted up forevermore.

A few weeks later I went with my family to Old Orchard Beach, Me. I went chiefly to enjoy the delightful air of that loveliest of all ocean beaches, and went occasionally to the meetings on the campground but only once or twice took part in them, and had not, up to that time, committed myself in any full sense to the truth or experience of Divine Healing.

At the same time I had been much interested in it for years. Several years before this I had given myself to the Lord in full consecration, and taken Him for my indwelling righteousness. At that time I had been very much impressed by a remarkable case of healing in my own congregation. I had been called to see a dying man given up by all the physicians. I was told that he had not spoken or eaten for days. It was a most aggravated case of paralysis and softening of the brain, and so remarkable was his recovery afterwards considered, that it was published in the medical journals as one of the marvels of medical science.

His mother was a devoted Christian; he had been converted in his childhood, but now for many years had been an actor, and, she feared, a stranger to the Lord. She begged me to pray for him, and as I prayed I was led to ask, not for his healing but that he might recover long enough to let her know that he was saved. I rose from my knees, and was about to leave, and leave my prayer where we too often do, in oblivion, when some of my people called, and I was detained a few minutes introducing them to the mother.

Just then I stepped up to the bed mechanically, and suddenly the young man opened his eyes and began to talk to me. I was astonished and still more so was the dear old mother. And when, as I asked him further, he gave satisfactory evidence of his simple trust in Jesus, we were all overwhelmed with astonishment and joy. From that hour he rapidly recovered, and lived for years. He afterwards called to see me, and told me that he regarded his healing as a miracle of Divine power. The impression produced by this incident never left my heart. Soon afterwards I attempted to take the Lord as my Healer, and for a while, as long as I trusted Him, He sustained me wonderfully, but afterwards, being entirely without instruction and advised by a devout Christian physician that it was presumption, I abandoned my position of simple dependence upon God alone, and so floundered and stumbled for years. But as I heard of isolated cases I never dared to doubt them, or question

that God did sometimes so heal. For myself, however, the truth had no really practical or effectual power, for I never could feel that I had any clear authority in a given case of need to trust myself to Him.

But that summer I speak of I heard a great number of people testify that they had been healed by simply trusting the Word of Christ, just as they would for their salvation. It drove me to my Bible. I determined that I must settle this matter one way or the other. I am so glad I did not go to man. At His feet, alone, with my Bible open, and with no one to help or guide me, I became convinced that this was part of Christ's glorious gospel for a sinful and suffering world, and the purchase of His blessed Cross, for all who would believe and receive His Word. That was enough. I could not believe this and then refuse to take it for myself, for I dare not hold any truth in God's Word as a mere theory or teach to others what I had not personally proved. And so one Friday afternoon at the hour of three o'clock, I went into the silent pine woods, and there I raised my right hand to Heaven and in view of the Judgment Day, I made to God, as if I had seen Him there before me face to face, these three great and eternal pledges:

1. As I shall meet Thee in that day, I solemnly accept this truth as part of Thy Word and of the Gospel of Christ, and God helping me, I shall never question it until I meet Thee there.
2. As I shall meet Thee in that day I take the Lord Jesus as my physical life, for all the needs of my body until all my life work is done; and helping me, I shall never doubt that Thou dost so become my life and strength from this moment, and wilt keep me under all circumstances until Thy blessed coming, and until all Thy will for me is perfectly fulfilled.
3. As I shall meet Thee in that day I solemnly agree to use this blessing for the glory of God, and the good of others, and to speak of it or minister in connection with it in any way in which God may call me or others may need me in the future.

I arose. It had only been a few moments, but I knew that something was done. Every fibre of my soul was tingling with a sense of God's presence. I do not know whether my body felt better of not -- I did not care to feel it -- it was so glorious to believe it simply, and to know that henceforth He had it in hand.

Then came the test of faith. The first struck me before I had left the spot. A subtle voice whispered: "Now you have decided to take God as your Healer, it would help if you should just go down to Dr. Cullis' cottage and get him to pray with you." I listened to it for a moment without really thinking. The next, a blow

seemed to strike my brain, which made me reel as a man stunned. I staggered and cried: "Lord, what have I done?" I felt I was in some great peril. In a moment the thought came very quickly, "That would have been all right before this, but you have just settled this matter forever, and told God you will never doubt that it is done." In that moment I understood what faith meant, and what a solemn and awful thing it was, inexorably and exactly to keep faith with God. I have often thanked God for that blow. I saw that when a thing was settled with God, it was never to be unsettled. When it was done, it was never to be undone or done over again in any sense that could involve a doubt of the finality of the committal already made. I think in the early days of the work of faith to which God afterwards called me, I was as much helped by a holy fear of doubting God as by any of the joys and raptures of His presence or promises. This little word often shone like a living fire in my Bible: "If any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him." What the enemy desired was to get some element of doubt about the certainty and completeness of the transaction just closed, and God mercifully held me back from it.

The next day I started to the mountains of New Hampshire. The next test came on the following Sabbath, just two days after I had claimed my healing. I was invited to preach in the Congregational Church. I felt the Holy Spirit pressing me to give a special testimony. But I tried to preach a good sermon of my own choosing, but it was not His word for that hour, I am sure. He wanted me to tell the people what He had been showing me, but I tried to be conventional and respectable, and I had an awful time. My jaws seemed like lumps of lead, and my lips would scarcely move. I got through as soon as I could, and fled into an adjoining field, where I lay before the Lord and asked Him to show me what He meant and to forgive me. He did most graciously, and let me have one more chance to testify for Him and glorify Him. That night we had a service in our hotel, and I was permitted to speak again. This time I did tell what God had been doing. Not very much did I say, but I tried to be faithful, and told the people how I had lately seen the Lord Jesus and His blessed gospel in a new way, as the Healer of the body, and had taken Him for myself, and knew that He would be faithful and sufficient. God did not ask me to testify of my feelings or experiences, but of Jesus and His faithfulness. And I am sure He calls all who trust in Him to testify before they experience His full blessing. I believe I should have lost my healing if I had waited until I felt it.

I have since known hundreds to have failed at just this point. God made me commit myself to Him and His healing covenant, before He would fully bless me. I

know a dear brother in the ministry, now much used in the gospel and in the gospel of Healing, who received a wonderful manifestation of God's power in his body and then went home to his church but said nothing about it, and waited to see how it would hold out. In a few weeks he was worse than ever; and when I met him next time, he wore the most dejected face you could imagine. I told him his error, and it all flashed upon him immediately. He went home and gave God the glory for what He had done, and in a little while his church was the centre of a blessed work of grace and healing that reached far and wide, and he himself was rejoicing in the fullness of Jesus.

I am very sure that Sabbath evening testimony did me more good than anybody else, and I believe that if I had withheld it I should not now be writing pages of the Gospel of Healing. Well, the next day the third, the test came.

Near by was a mountain 3,000 feet high; I was asked to join a little party that were to ascend it. I shrank back at once. Did I not remember the dread of heights that had always overshadowed me, and the terror with which I had resolved in Switzerland and Florence never to attempt it again? Did I not know how an ordinary stair exhausted me and distressed my poor heart?

Then came the solemn searching thought, "If you fear or refuse to go, it is because you do not believe that God has healed you. If you have taken Him for your strength, need you fear to do anything to which He calls you?"

I felt it was God's thought. I felt my fear would be, in this case, pure unbelief, and I told God that in His strength I would go.

Just here I would say that I do not wish to imply that we should ever do things just to show how strong we are, or without any real necessity for them. I do not believe that God wants His children needlessly to climb mountains or walk miles just because they are asked to. But in this case, and there are such cases in every experience, I needed to step out and claim my victory sometime, and this was God's time and way. He will call and show each one for themselves. And whenever we are shrinking through fear He will be very likely to call us to the very thing that is necessary for us to do to overcome the fear.

And so I ascended that mountain. At first it seemed as if it would almost take my last breath. I felt all the old weakness and physical dread; I found I had in myself no more strength than ever. But over against my weakness and suffering I became conscious that there was another Presence. There was a Divine strength reached out to me if I would have it, take it, claim it, hold it, and persevere in it. On one side there seemed to

## Section 2. Simpson: Spiritual Crises

press upon me a weight of Death, on the other an Infinite Life. And I became overwhelmed with the one, or uplifted with the other, just as I shrank or pressed forward, just as I feared or trusted; I seemed to walk between them and the one that I touched possessed me. The wolf and the Shepherd walked on either side, but the Blessed Shepherd did not let me turn away. I pressed closer, closer, closer, to His bosom, and every step seemed stronger until, when I reached that mountain top, I seemed to be at the gate of heaven, and the world of weakness and fear was lying at my feet. Thank God, from that time I have had a new heart in this breast, literally as well as spiritually, and Christ has been its glorious life.

A few weeks later I returned to my work in this city, and with deep gratitude to God I can truly say, hundreds being my witnesses, that for many years I have been permitted to labor for the dear Lord in summer's heat or winter's cold without interruption, without a single season of protracted rest, and with increasing comfort, strength and delight. Life has had for me a zest, and labor and exhilaration that I never knew in the freshest days of my childhood. The Lord has permitted the test to be a very severe one. A few months after my healing He called me into the special pastoral, evangelistic and literary work which has since engaged my time and energy, and which I may truthfully say has involved fourfold more labor than any previous period of my life. And yet I desire to record my testimony to the honor and glory of Christ, that it has been a continual delight and seldom any burden or fatigue, and much, very much easier in every way than the far lighter tasks of former years. I have been conscious, however, all the time that I was not using my own natural strength. I would not dare to attempt for a single week what I am now doing on my own constitutional resources. I am intensely conscious with every breath that I am drawing my vitality from a directly supernatural source, and that it keeps pace with the calls and necessities of my work. Hence, on a day of double labor I will often be conscious, at the close, of double vigor, and feel just like beginning over again, and, indeed, almost reluctant to have even sleep place its gentle arrest on the delightful privilege of service. Nor is this a paroxysm of excitement to be followed by a reaction, for the next day comes with equal freshness. I have noticed that my work is easier and seems to draw less upon my vital energy than before. I do not seem to be using up my own life in the work now, but working on a surpluse of vitality supplied from another source. I believe and

am sure that is nothing else than "the life of Christ manifested in my mortal flesh." Once or twice since I took the Lord for my strength I have felt so wondrously well that I think I began to rejoice and trust in the God-given strength. In a moment I felt it was about to fail me, and the Lord instantly compelled me to look to Him as my continual strength, and not even depend upon the strength He had already given. I have found many other dear friends compelled to learn this lesson and suffering until they fully learned it. It is a life of constant dependence on Christ physically as well as spiritually.

I know not how to account for this, unless it be the imparted life of the dear Lord Jesus in my body. I am surely most unworthy of such an honor and privilege, but I believe He is pleased in His great condescension to unite Himself with our bodies, and I am persuaded that His body, which is perfectly human and real, can somehow share its vital elements with our organic life, and quicken us from His Living Heart and indwelling Spirit. I have learned much from the fact that Samson's physical strength was through "the Spirit of the Lord," and that Paul declares that although daily delivered to death for Jesus' sake, yet the very life of Christ is made manifest in his body. I find that "the body is for the Lord, and the Lord for the body," that "our bodies are members of Christ," and that "we are members of his body, his flesh, and his bones." I do not desire to provoke argument, but I give my simple, humble testimony, and to me it is very real and very wonderful. I know "it is the Lord." I know many of my brethren who have entered into the same blessed experience. I only want to consecrate and use it more and more for Him. I feel what a sacred and holy trust it is. And I so wish that my weary, broken-down and overladen brethren could but taste its exquisite joy and its all sufficient strength. I would like to add, for my brethren in the ministry, that I have found the same Divine help for my mind and brain as for my body. Having much writing and speaking to do, I have given my pen and my tongue to Christ to possess and use, and He has so helped me that my literary work has never been a labor. He has enabled me to think much more rapidly and to accomplish much more work, and with greater facility than ever before. It is very simple and humble work, but such as it is it is all *through* Him, and I trust *for* Him only. And I believe, with all its simplicity it has been more used to help His children and glorify His name than all the elaborate preparation and toil of the weary years that went before. To Him be all the praise.

Reading 3.1

## Rediscovering the Music of A. B. Simpson

Eugene Rivard

### Introduction

"ALBERT B. SIMPSON'S HYMNS ARE UNSINGABLE!" is an opinion shared by many members of the Christian and Missionary Alliance today. Forty-four of his songs are included in the present *Hymns of the Christian Life* but are rarely used in congregational singing. Why have they fallen into disuse? Were they always considered "unfit" to sing? Is the Alliance losing a legacy of its founder, or is it merely allowing substandard hymnody to die a natural death?

A contemporary Alliance church-goer might well wonder if Simpson's hymns were regarded with the same general disdain during his lifetime. If this were the case, it would be difficult to understand why any were included in the following edition of the society's hymnal. Were they retained solely for the depth, intensity and call for Christian commitment in their lyrics?

The hymns do effectively reflect the distinctive theology of Simpson and the Alliance: the Spirit-filled deeper life, world evangelization, and the gospel of Christ as Saviour, Sanctifier, Healer and Coming King. This is no coincidence, since the songs were often the poetic essence of a poignant writing or an impassioned sermon. Moreover, the early publications of the Alliance and the writing of Simpson's contemporaries indicate that his songs were held in great favor. Not only were they eagerly received, but they became dear to the hearts of those who sang them and carried them throughout the world.

### The Gospel Song

The "gospel song" was the form of music most closely associated with the revivals and evangelistic meetings of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It is, therefore, not surprising that A.B. Simpson employed it (and with great success) as his own musical medium. The gospel song differs from the traditional church anthem with its focus on the individual, its lively rhythms and tuneful, easily-remembered refrains. In addition, unlike the hymn, it is intensely personal and immediate in nature, and is often written in the first person as a testimony.

Since Simpson was, above all, an evangelist, he

stressed the need of the individual to respond to the will of God and saw the gospel song as an ideal means of calling sinners to repentance, educating them in sound doctrine, deepening their life in the Spirit and challenging them to live in a Christ-like manner. He also considered the gospel song as the best means of expressing his own love for Jesus Christ in music.

"What ministry today has been more honored than gospel song?" he wrote. "How God has shown in a Bliss, Sankey or a Phillips, the honor He still will put on this simple taste to draw millions by the power of the consecrated melody of the gospel!"<sup>1</sup> A.W. Tozer wrote of early Simpson meetings where the "popular" gospel song was used:

...they joined in mass singing of old time church favorites and the recent Gospel Songs, composed by Sankey, Bliss, Crosby and others of the gospel musicians of the day. Popular? Sure, it was popular and it was frowned upon by many of the sterile scribes of the synagogues, but to Mr. Simpson, the word "popular" carried no terrors. It meant "of the people" and it was people he was interested in...so the singing went on and the crowds loved it and kept coming back week after week to enjoy it.<sup>2</sup>

Despite his preference for the gospel song (for largely pragmatic reasons), Simpson never disparaged traditional hymnody because his Scottish Presbyterian upbringing had given him a deep appreciation for its richness. Indeed, in his preface to the first edition of *Hymns of the Christian Life* (1891), he cautioned against going to the extreme of "relegating all the old hymns to the dusty past."<sup>3</sup> The first Alliance hymnal included many such hymns, with Simpson's gospel songs serving as a contemporary supplement to them.

From *Birth of a Vision*, ed. David Hartzfeld and Charles Nienkirchen (His Dominion Supplement No. 1, 1986), pp. 75-105.

1. A.B. Simpson, *Wholly Sanctified* (New York: Christian Alliance Publishing Co., 1893; Harrisburg, PA: Christian Publications, 1982) p. 58.

2. A.W. Tozer, *Wingspread: Albert B. Simpson, A Study in Spiritual Altitude* (Harrisburg, PA: Christian Publications, 1943), p. 53.

3. R. Kelso Carter and A.B. Simpson, comps., *Hymns of the Christian Life* (New York: Alliance Press, 1891), preface.

### The Music of the Simpson Songs

Simpson's musical background was not extensive. Although he attempted to learn the violin as a youth, he was unsuccessful and never learned more than to pick out a melody on the piano with one finger. Others provided the harmony. In spite of this, he composed many of the melodies for his own hymns, an unusual accomplishment for hymn-writers of the day. Of the forty-one hymns that bear his name in the first *Hymns of the Christian Life*, he is credited with the music for thirty-two. Of the 162 hymns credited to Simpson in the seven editions of *Hymns of the Christian Life*, fully 119 were set to music of his own writing.

Always a poet, he began writing hymns while a pastor at the Chestnut Street Presbyterian Church in Louisville, Kentucky, from 1873 to 1879. He made no pretence of being a composer of stature, as his unpolished melodies readily confirm. They reveal, rather, an intense involvement with other business, as well as an urgency that did not allow for careful revision. Later in his career, Simpson relegated the melody writing to others, including his daughter, Margaret. By that time, the first hymn tunes had become so closely associated with the Alliance that they could never be changed. Often his daughter was called at the spur of the moment to help him with a song. Long after his death, she recalled some of the songwriting methods her father had used:

...he used to call me often and say, 'I have a message for you for my sermon tomorrow. Meet me at the piano soon.'...there we labored together till he was satisfied it carried his inspiration. Sometimes he would say, 'Here, take this. I can't do a thing with it, but this is what I want.' And where it was crescendo [loud], he would demonstrate it by singing out loudly enough to be heard down the hill, with obvious punctuations and emphasis. When you grasped his idea, he would glow with ecstasy and say, 'You've got it, there, that's fine.'<sup>4</sup>

Several songwriters were used to set his texts to music. J. H. Burke, Minister of Music at the New York Gospel Tabernacle from 1889-1891, is credited with many melodies for Simpson's words, including his best-known lyric, "Yesterday, Today, Forever." Others included the Methodist teacher/author Captain Russell Kelso Carter, co-editor of the first Alliance hymnal and an associate of Simpson in the conventions and at the Gospel Tabernacle; James Kirk, a member of the "Ohio Quartet" which sang at the Old Orchard (Maine) missionary conventions; Louise Shepherd, soloist at Old Orchard and member of the Missionary Training Institute faculty from 1897-1899; May Agnew Stephens, pianist and songleader of the Gospel Tabernacle;

4. Margaret Simpson Buckman, "The Hymns of Dr. Simpson," *Missionarian* (1945): 17.

Winfred Macomber, Missionary Training Institute graduate and missionary to the Congo; and George Stebbins, associate of Moody and Sankey, who was commissioned to set some of Simpson's poetry to music for the 1936 hymnal.

### Musical Difficulties

There is no doubt that some of the music to which Simpson's hymns were set, whether written by himself or others, was difficult to sing. The early Alliance overlooked these problems and probably developed their own traditional ways of rendering the songs. Later generations were not as generous.

Perhaps the most widely quoted critic of Simpson's hymns was A.W. Tozer, who wrote, "...it is in the music that his songs suffer the most. A few of his compositions can be sung, but the most of them can be negotiated by none except trained singers."<sup>5</sup> While Dr. Tozer's credentials as a music critic have been questioned, it is true that some of the tunes present irksome rhythmical and melodic problems.

For a hymn to be sung well by a congregation, several musical factors need to be considered. First, the range cannot be too great, as the average church-goer cannot generally sustain high pitches for long. Second, the rhythms of the melody must match the rhythms of the words. The phrases must be balanced and stressed syllables fall on the stressed beats (ex. "O God our help in ages past"). The words cannot have too many syllables if they are to lend themselves well to simple melodies. Third, the melody must be tuneful with few large jumps, easily remembered without being trite. Fourth, the hymn cannot be too long, and finally, the music must express the mood of the text. Hymn-writers are well aware of the intense amount of work needed to fulfil these requirements. Furthermore (in common evangelical performance practice), all four parts are usually sung, making good harmony another musical consideration. If the music has problems in any of these areas, the congregation will have difficulty singing, no matter how profound the words may be.

The music of some of Simpson's hymns fell short in one or more of these areas. Attempts were made to revise and re-harmonize much of the original music of his songs in the 1936, 1962 and 1978 Alliance hymnals, but some of the tunes still require complete rewriting to become more acceptable to today's musical tastes. Only the Simpson hymns in the latest (1978) hymnal were considered in the analysis that follows, because the others are not widely used today. All numbers shown are from this hymnal. Not all have great difficulties. "Thy Kingdom Come" (472), "I Take, He Undertakes" (290), and "Step By Step" (349) are as "singable" as any

5. Tozer, *Wingspread*, p. 118.



of the tunes of other 19th Century songwriters. Other Simpson tunes, while not great music, can prove, with repeated use, to be as acceptable as that of any gospel song. Alterations as simple as lowering the key have saved some songs from oblivion. "I Take, He Undertakes," among others, has been lowered since its original appearance in 1891.

Rhythmic and metrical problems mar some of Simpson's hymns. Gospel songs characteristically contain a great number of words in a verse and have a quick tempo, making it imperative that the syllables match the rhythm of the tune. "The Joy of the Lord" (280) is one of the most popular and triumphant hymns in the Alliance tradition, but many congregations will trip when they get to the middle of the third verse--"like the nightingale's notes it can sing in the darkness." This beautiful imagery is lost when "the" receives a stressed beat rather than the more open and important syllable "night" in "nightingale."

"Launch Out" (259) challenges believers to experience the supernatural provision of God if they will only step out in His name. However, many congregations will find it difficult to sing the words in measure three: "boundless and fathomless" because the musical rhythm does not logically follow the natural rhythm of the words. As a result, the instrumentalist will be playing something other than that which the congregation is singing, and unless practised, the congregation will stumble. Even such small problems may cause a congregation to quickly judge a hymn "unsingable."

"I Will Say Yes to Jesus" (217) expresses unreserved consecration to Christ, but the first verse is very difficult to sing because of its rhythmic discrepancies. The opening two measures are in fine rhythmic agreement, but when the words "oft it was no before" are sung, it is obvious that "oft" should have been placed on a strong beat rather than "it," and that perhaps "oft it was no" should have matched the rhythm of "I will say yes" in the first measure. This discrepancy not only causes a "hitch," but is followed too quickly by the next phrase, giving the congregation and songleader no chance to recover. In fact, the entire first verse allows the singer no opportunity to recover because it is so filled with words that the singer can hardly take a breath. Moreover, the syncopated rhythm of the melody on "ever" of "whatever" at the verse's end, constitutes an unexpected and illogical break in the rhythmic pattern and provides yet another stumbling block. A loyal congregation with a strong songleader could sing this song effectively with much repetition, but most will not try a second time.

Rhythmic problems and forgettable melodies certainly characterize Simpson's lesser-known hymns,

but his well-known ones present some phrasing problems as well. "Search Me O God" (239) is a beautiful hymn of consecration, but the chorus has two measures too many. The entire song consists of a pattern of balanced four measure phrases, but ends on an unbalanced phrase of six measures that requires an unusual hold on the "away" of "cannot pass away." Such lack of balance invariably makes the congregation feel ill at ease because they can sense the lack of synchronization between the lyric and the melody. "Christ in Me" (166) is a tremendous statement of love for Jesus Christ and a testimony to the joy and hope that Christ is to us, but the melody on the refrain rambles without a clear musical or poetic phrase, and seems to end twice before the final measure.

Here it must be mentioned that although Simpson's gospel songs contain potentially life-changing truth, they are often too long. Most of the hymns in an average hymnal take three minutes or less to sing. Some of Simpson's compositions take five minutes or more, thereby straining an untrained voice, especially when the songleader urges the people to "sing out" all the way through. The songleader must therefore lead judiciously, leaving out the refrain at the end of one or more verses or using other creative means to avoid vocal strain on the part of the congregation.

The final consideration in this condensed musical critique concerns the style of Simpson's music. Simpson wrote almost all of his in march style, as did most contemporary gospel song writers. Simpson found this style well-suited to the intention of the missionary society, viz. to march throughout the world with the "banner of Christ held high." In an age of nationalism and imperialism, the imagery of war, battle and victory was easily understood and spiritualized. Titles like "I Have Overcome," "Be True," "Go and Tell," "Go Forward," "Fill up the Ranks," "Jesus Giveth Us the Victory," "March On," "Christ is Conqueror," "Hallelujah," "Burn On," "Launch Out," "To The Regions Beyond," and "Send the Gospel Faster," were set to suitably aggressive music. Even the hymns that told of the person of Christ or the Deeper Life were set to melodies with march-like beats. "Himself," "The Joy of the Lord," "Jesus Only," "I Will Say Yes to Jesus," "I Want To Be Holy," were all written to stimulate rather than to soothe.

A.W. Tozer attributed most of this aggressive style to Simpson's close musical associate, R. Kelso Carter. He wrote that Carter's tunes, "while marked with traces of superior gift, were nevertheless too militant and boisterous for the average Christian to enjoy."<sup>6</sup> J. H. Burke could be accused of the same thing. He is

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6. Ibid., p. 117.

### Section 3. Simpson's Hymns and Alliance Hymnody

responsible for the most disastrous combination of music and words in the present hymnal, "A Missionary Cry," which is the theme song of the Alliance. Although the lyrics express the deepest and most solemn desire of Simpson's heart, the melody is in a major key and is as lively and happy as any Disneyland march. The song begins with the words,

"A hundred thousand souls a day  
are passing one by one away"

but by the time the singer reaches the refrain

"they're passing to their doom"

it sounds more like joyous proclamation than solemn reflection. Militant themes and march-like tunes have gone out of fashion and do not appear in the works of today's peace-conscious songwriters, all of which suggests that the melodies of a bygone era may be a hindrance to using Simpson's compositions effectively in the church of the late twentieth century.

#### The Words of Simpson's Gospel Songs

Despite musical and stylistic problems associated with A.B. Simpson's gospel songs, many Alliance members grew up singing them and found them uplifting. One of these was A.W. Tozer, who at the end of his critique of Simpson's music, writes:

After saying all this, I would yet confess that hardly a day goes by that I do not kneel and sing in a shaky baritone comfortably off key, the songs of Simpson. They feed my heart and express my longing, and I can find no other's songs that do this in as full a measure. While not many have gained wide popularity it is my sober judgement that Simpson has put into a few of his songs more of awful longing, of tender love, of radiant trust, of hope and worship and triumph than can be found in all the popular gospel songs of the last hundred years put together. Those songs are simply not to be compared with his. Simpson's songs savor of the Holy of Holies, the outstretched wings of the cherubim and *Shekinah* glory. The others speak of the outer court and milling crowd.<sup>7</sup>

One can catch the vision of A.B. Simpson, his honesty, depth and fervor for Christ in the words of his hymns. "The essence of Simpson's hymns is not in the music but in the words,"<sup>8</sup> Tozer wrote.

Most of Simpson's hymn texts are actually outlines of sermons he had preached, or condensed thoughts from articles he had written. His congregation would sing these hymns before or after he preached the sermons which inspired them, thereby reinforcing the points he had made. Simpson was a powerful preacher, eloquent in style and delivery, and he used poetry well in his sermons. His poetry grew out of a writing style that often began in point form, much like a sermon. He

would make an opening statement and begin to expound upon it, ever building in intensity, expanding and developing a thought or scriptural truth until it "overflowed" into a more concentrated and expressive means of communication: poetic verse. The verse he chose would be the logical culmination of the thought. The pamphlet "Himself"<sup>9</sup> is an example of this style of writing as well as the "Joyful Life" chapter of his book, *A Larger Christian Life*.<sup>10</sup> "The Joy of the Lord" is the distillation of this chapter [actually a sermon] and verses from the hymn are quoted throughout it.

Simpson's hymns expressed the deepest desires of his heart. May Agnew Stephens wrote about this in her memorial tribute:

He was a prolific writer of hymns but none were [sic] mechanical. They all came from a hidden fire and bore a definite message. And none ever satisfied him unless they expressed the full scope of the fourfold gospel. Especially the hope of the return of our Lord he felt must be added to every hymn of salvation or service, if at all possible, and he often commented on the failure of many a gospel song to carry its message to the highest point--the coming of Christ.<sup>11</sup>

Simpson had not always used music extensively in his services. He first became convinced of the effectiveness of using music as an evangelistic tool in 1894, when he was pastor of the Chestnut Street Presbyterian Church in Louisville, Kentucky, a city still divided from the American Civil War. He joined with other local pastors in inviting evangelist Major Daniel Whittle and gospel singer Phillip Bliss to hold a campaign in their city. The singing of Bliss "convinced Mr. Simpson of the wisdom of giving a large place to the ministry of song, and in all his subsequent work, not only chorus and congregational singing, but solos were special features."<sup>12</sup>

Bliss influenced evangelist D.L. Moody in the same way: "...according to their mutual friend, D.W. Whittle, Bliss crystallized Moody's sense of the power of singing in gospel work."<sup>13</sup> Gospel music was meant to stir people, convict them of sin, show them the beauty of Jesus, invite them to receive Him as Saviour and praise Him with full voice. Many people were moved more by

7. Ibid., p. 119.

8. Ibid.

9. A.B. Simpson, *Himself* (Harrisburg, PA: Christian Publications, n.d.).

10. A.B. Simpson, *A Larger Christian Life* (New York: Christian Alliance Publishing Co., 1890; Harrisburg, PA: Christian Publications, n.d.).

11. May Agnew Stephens, "Dr. Simpson's Ministry in Song," *The Alliance Weekly* 53 (December 20, 1919): 206.

12. A.E. Thompson, *A.B. Simpson, His Life and Work* (Harrisburg, PA: Christian Publications, 1960), p. 56.

13. J.C. Pollock, *Moody, a Biographical Portrait* (New York: MacMillan Co., 1963), p. 77.

the music than the preaching, and those whom the preaching convicted, the music moved to action.

As far as the subject matter is concerned, the most distinctive of Simpson's hymns treat the Fourfold Gospel, the deeper Spirit-filled life, divine healing and world missions.

The Fourfold Gospel is encapsulated effectively in the hymn "Jesus Only." This hymn is instructive as well as devotional, and was used to teach the new Alliance that Jesus is Saviour, Sanctifier, Healer and Coming King. "Jesus Only" reveals Simpson's deep personal love for Christ as well. The title may have been derived from the opening statement delivered at his first sermon in the Chestnut Street Church in December, 1873.

In coming among you, I am not ashamed to own this as the aim of ministry and to take these words as the motto and keynote of my future preaching: 'Jesus only.'<sup>14</sup>

The same hymn was printed in its entirety on the front cover of the special memorial issue of the *Alliance Weekly* shortly after his death in 1919. "Jesus Only" truly was the motto of A.B. Simpson's life.

1. Jesus only is our message,  
Jesus all our theme shall be.  
We will lift up Jesus ever,  
Jesus only will we see.
2. Jesus only is our Saviour,  
all our guilt He bore away.  
All our righteousness He gives us,  
all our strength from day to day.
3. Jesus only is our Sanctifier,  
cleansing us from self and sin.  
And with all His Spirit's fullness,  
filling all our hearts within.
4. Jesus only is our Healer,  
all our sicknesses He bears  
and His risen life and fullness,  
all His members still may share.
5. Jesus only is our power,  
He the gift of Pentecost.  
Jesus, breathe Thy power upon us,  
fill us with the Holy Ghost.
6. And for Jesus we are waiting,  
listening for the Advent call;  
But 'twill still be Jesus only,  
Jesus ever, all in all.

Refrain:

Jesus only, Jesus ever,  
Jesus all in all we sing;  
Saviour, Sanctifier and Healer,  
Glorious Lord and Coming King.

"Jesus Only" was included in the very first Alliance hymnal in 1891 and remains one of the most distinctive songs of the denomination.

"Himself" is the other Simpson hymn that encompasses the theology of the Christian and Missionary Alliance. Although Simpson wrote many books and articles, and preached fervently on each truth contained in "Himself" and "Jesus Only," it was through singing that the Alliance affirmed, memorized and endeared them to their hearts. The tract "Himself" contained the entire song at its conclusion. Both song and tract were broadly distributed and Simpson reported in an editorial on October 6, 1893, that on his recent world tour, "the hymn 'Himself'" was met with by its author in almost all of the countries he visited, and was being sung in the languages and homes of those heathen people."<sup>15</sup> A further testimony to this hymn's popularity can be seen in an incident recalled by May Agnew Stephens:

At the Old Orchard Convention many years ago, the convention soloist sang a number of times from manuscript: 'Once it was the blessing, now it is the Lord,' etc. In the audiences sat a clever pirate, pencil in hand, and before the convention was over, it had been taken down and printed unknown to Dr. Simpson and was being sold; and it was with some difficulty rescued from its unlawful promoter.<sup>16</sup>

Its message is direct and appealing:

1. Once it was the blessing, now it is the Lord;  
Once it was the feeling, now it is His Word;  
Once His gift I wanted, now the Giver own;  
Once I sought for healing, now Himself alone.
2. Once 'twas painful trying, now 'tis perfect trust;  
Once a half salvation, now the uttermost!  
Once 'twas ceaseless holding, now He holds me fast;  
Once 'twas constant drifting, now my anchor's cast.

After three more verses, the refrain echoes the same sentiments as "Jesus Only":

All in all forever, Jesus will I sing,  
Everything in Jesus, and Jesus everything.

Lyrics of a general and inoffensive style certainly do not characterize Simpson's songs. He assumed that those who sang his songs desired the deeper Spirit-filled life as much as he, and that by singing them, the singers would be able to testify to that desire. Who could sing the words to "Burn On!" without meaning them?

1. O fire of God begin in me,  
Burn out the dross of self and sin.  
Burn off my fetters, set me free,  
And make my heart a heav'n within.

15. A.B. Simpson, "Editorials," *The Christian Alliance and Missionary Weekly* 11 (October 6, 1893): 209. (Hereafter cited as CAMW).

16. Stephens, "Dr. Simpson's Ministry," p. 206.

14. Thompson, *A.B. Simpson*, p. 53.

### Section 3. Simpson's Hymns and Alliance Hymnody

2. Burn in, O fire of God, burn in,  
Till all my soul Christ's image bears  
And every power and pulse within,  
His holy heavenly nature wears.

"Breathing Out and Breathing In" uses the graphic imagery of the Holy Spirit as the very life-sustaining air we breathe, necessary for existence:

1. Jesus breathe Thy Spirit on me,  
teach me how to breathe Thee in.  
Help me pour into Thy bosom  
all my life of self and sin.  
I am breathing out my own life,  
that I may be filled with Thine,  
Letting go my strength and weakness,  
breathing in Thy life divine.

These are not vague or superficial requests. One of the distinctives of Simpson hymns is that they require action, not mere intellectual assent. "I Will Say Yes to Jesus" is no hymn for the uncommitted Christian:

1. I will say "yes" to Jesus,  
oft it was "no" before,  
As He knocked at my heart's proud entrance  
And I firmly barred the door.  
But I've made a complete surrender  
and given Him right of way,  
And henceforth it is always "yes"  
Whatever He may say.
2. I will say "yes" to Jesus  
to all that He commands;  
I will hasten to do His bidding  
with willing heart and hands,  
I will listen to hear His whispers  
and learn His will each day,  
And always gladly answer "yes"  
Whatever He may say.

Other hymns appearing in the early hymnals had an urgency that told of Simpson's own burning desire to deepen his life in Christ, growing and making himself available for God's service. "Anywhere Everywhere," "I Want To Be Holy" and "Search Me, O God" are hymns requiring action and deep commitment.

Many of Simpson's hymns were written to encourage believers already living the deeper life. "Burn On" was one of the several hymns written especially for Nyack Missionary Training Institute graduates, calling on the "fire of God" to cleanse and prepare them for service. "Be True" was the first of these graduation hymns, written for the 1894 class in the "call and answer" style:

1. We are going forth from the school of Jesus,  
we have sat at His blessed feet;  
We have drunk from truth's celestial fountain,  
we have tasted its honey sweet.  
We are witnesses for our blessed Master  
in a world where friends are few;

And He sends us forth with the watchword holy,  
whatsoever it costs, be true.

Refrain:

Be true (We'll be true) Be true (We'll be true)  
Let the holy watchword ring,  
Be true (We'll be true) Be true (We'll be true)  
Be true to your glorious King.  
Be true (We'll be true) Be true (We'll be true)  
Whether friends be false or few.  
Whatsoever betide ever at His side  
Let Him always find you true.

Simpson's songs of healing are no less lacking in intensity or commitment. He desired to help other Christians to realize the same truth he had experienced, and was sorrowed at the rejection of this trust by some and the inability of others to step out and claim Christ's healing by faith. The hymn with the most pathos in this regard is "Stretch Forth Thy Hand." It is a hymn that exhorts believers to exercise faith, to reach out and touch Jesus as the sick did in His day:

1. When Christ of old with healing power  
Went forth through all the suffering land  
His word so oft was wont to be  
"Stretch forth thy hand, stretch forth thy hand."  
And though the palsied arm might shrink  
And tremble at the strange command  
The healing touch was only felt  
While stretching forth the withered hand.

Refrain:

O suffering one, stretch forth your hand  
Upon His promise take your stand  
At His command stretch forth your hand  
And Christ shall make you whole.

Although many of Simpson's hymns are testimonial in nature, he intended them to be instructive as well. "Step By Step," "Only Wait," "The Joy of the Lord," "Power From on High" and "My Grace Is Sufficient for Thee" are all examples of songs of faith meant to instruct believers in their walk with Christ. Though the words of exhortation could be fiery, they could also be tender.

Simpson believed the Christian had been saved to live life in obedience to God, an obedience that would issue in the spreading of the gospel to the world. He deeply desired the Lord's second coming and was convinced that Jesus would not come again until the world had first heard the gospel (Mark 13:10). His greatest ambition was to spread that gospel so that the Lord would return. The first and sixth verse of "Go and Tell Them" (1978 hymnal) carries this message:

1. Send the Gospel of salvation  
To a world of dying men,  
Tell it out to every nation  
Till the Lord shall come again.

6. Give the gospel as a witness  
To a world of sinful men,  
Till the Bride shall be completed,  
And the Lord shall come again.

The third verse of "A Missionary Cry" expresses his vision with the same urgency:

The Master's coming draweth near;  
The Son of Man will soon appear;  
His Kingdom is at hand.  
But ere that glorious day can be,  
The gospel of the kingdom we  
Must preach in every land,  
Must preach in every land.

He wrote missionary songs to inspire those at home and to encourage those abroad. Hymns about exotic places like "The Dark Soudan," "Beautiful Japan," "In the Land of the Congo" endeavored to impart his vision for the millions who were without a Saviour in those foreign lands. "Go and Tell Them," "Who Will Go?," "To the Regions Beyond," "Send the Gospel Faster" were sung with great zeal by the early Alliance. In February, 1889, writing on the subject of missions, Simpson declared:

One hundred thousand souls are dying without Christ every twenty-four hours in heathen lands. What are we doing to save them? American Christians are giving on an average, one cent a week for mission and sending one Christian in every ten thousand to save them.<sup>17</sup>

A short while later, this declaration became a hymn, "A Missionary Cry":

1. One hundred thousand souls a day  
Are passing one by one away,  
In Christless guilt and gloom.
5. ...O Church of Christ what wilt thou say  
When in the awful judgment day  
They charge thee with their doom?

"A Missionary Cry" was possibly the first hymn Simpson ever wrote.<sup>18</sup> He wrote it while still in Louisville, but its first publication was delayed until 1891, when his new *Hymns of the Christian Life* was published. He wrote it with the intention of stirring believers to action, rather than soothing their consciences and his intention was fulfilled. Many a farewell service included "A Missionary Cry" as part of the program. At one such service in August, 1891, Simpson spoke after the hymn had been sung:

The hymn that has been sung is my heart's desire and thought for everyone of you to realize: that with every breath I draw, a soul unsaved is passing into the presence of God and accusing someone of neglecting its

salvation. There is no subject that so overawes me and overshadows me with its solemnity as this.<sup>19</sup>

One night, while still a young pastor, he had a vivid dream of a desperate and lost people, mostly Chinese, mutely wringing their hands and looking imploringly to him for the hope of salvation. This dream so moved him that he sought to go to China as a missionary. Although unable to go, he nevertheless carried to his death the vision of evangelizing the unsaved of the Orient. The hymn, "A Macedonian Cry," was inspired by that dream:

1. A cry is ever sounding upon my burdened ear  
A cry of pain and anguish, a cry of woe and fear.  
It is the voice of myriads, who grope in heathen night  
It is the cry of Jesus to rise and send them light.

Refrain:

O hear the pleading message from every land and nation  
O haste and send the answer, ye heralds of salvation  
'Come over, come over,' I can hear it every more  
'Come over, come over, come over and help us.'

Simpson made the emotional pitch of his missionary songs intentionally high. The 1897 hymnal contained many such missionary songs, but none was so moving as "Only a Little Baby Girl." This song was the direct result of an experience he had had on a trip to China in 1893. He actually saw the body of a baby girl floating in the river near some houseboats, ignored by the people nearby. When he asked why no one had tried to save the girl, he was confronted with the Oriental philosophy of "fate." It was her "fate" to drown, and no one wanted to "interfere." Had she been a boy, they might have tried to prevent the death, but since she was only a girl, she was abandoned to drown.

Shaken by this and other similar experiences in "heathen" countries, Simpson was stirred to write an account in the June 23, 1893 *Christian Alliance Weekly*, and later, a poem in the August 25th edition. The poem was set to music and appeared in the 1897 hymnal. Verses 1 through 5 describe the hopelessness of the situation, and verse 6 concludes with an especially heart-rending challenge:

Only a little baby girl dead by the river side;  
Only a little Chinese child drowned in the floating tide;  
But it has brought a vision vast,  
dark as the nations' woe;  
Oh, has it left one willing heart, answering "I will go?"

How many answered that call? One who did was missionary Alice Landis. She recalled the pathetic hymn when she encountered the same cruelty and death in China in 1901. Her experiences were much the same as Simpson's, and she quoted the song in an impassioned

17. A.B. Simpson, "Editorials," *CAMW* 2 (February 1889): 17.

18. David J. Fant, "Genealogy of a Hymnal," *The Alliance Witness* 113 (April 5, 1978): 9.

19. A.B. Simpson, "Editorials," *CAMW* 7 (August 28, 1891): 141.

### Section 3. Simpson's Hymns and Alliance Hymnody

report in the November 30, 1901 *Christian Alliance Weekly*.

#### Hymns of the Christian Life

There have been seven editions of *Hymns of the Christian Life* since the first in 1891, each distinct in purpose and content.

The preface of the first hymnal states its purpose:

The musical taste of our day is in a state of transition. Beyond controversy, the people will have new tunes and hymns that move in a more spirited time than those our fathers sang....Between the Scotch Psalter and the Salvation Army Song Book, there is a wide stretch of territory in which the careful explorer *will* find much that is good, and possessing that rare quality, endurance....with the belief that a book has been at last prepared that is fully suited for a modern church hymnal, and at the same time adapted to the needs of the prayer meeting, and general gospel work, we present *Hymns of the Christian Life* for the service of our common Lord and Saviour, praying His blessing upon it for His name's sake.<sup>20</sup>

The publishers and editors were A.B. Simpson and R. Kelso Carter.

Hymn requests were solicited from members throughout the country before the first Alliance hymnal was compiled. With "cautious optimism" Simpson announced its release in August, 1891:

We have received the first copies of our new hymnal, and we are sure that our readers will agree with us that it is at least cheap. It is as large as most of the church hymnals which cost a dollar or more, and yet it is offered at the low price of fifty cents.<sup>21</sup>

By September, 1891, it had been introduced at the Old Orchard Missionary Convention, and the review was more confident: "We are gratified to find that all who have examined it are much pleased with *Hymns of the Christian Life*, and it is beginning to be circulated somewhat widely."<sup>22</sup>

In the May 18, 1892 magazine, Simpson reported "highest approval" of the new hymnal, and in December 22, 1893, eighteen months after its release, he announced that "they [the office] were receiving testimonies from all directions of the high appreciation with which many of the hymns have been received."<sup>23</sup> Simpson noted at the same time that "a good many" of the hymns were being republished in Great Britain and he trusted that God would send them "over the world as messages of His grace and Love."<sup>24</sup>

The formal introduction of each of these new hymnals usually took place at the Old Orchard

conventions in August, and they were well received by all reports. The new hymns by the founder were especially popular, being sung by both special musicians and congregations. Simpson wrote the following about the 1897 convention:

One of the most delightful additions to the Convention was the introduction of our hymn book, which was received with universal favor and gave a pronounced inspiration to the service of song, which was better than any previous conference.<sup>25</sup>

The early Alliance identified strongly with its hymnody and its distinctive hymnal. No other hymnal was so tailored to the theology of the Alliance as was *Hymns of the Christian Life*. Several smaller, more specialized Alliance songbooks have been compiled, but *Hymns of the Christian Life* still represents the main body of Alliance hymnody. The first hymnal contained 455 hymns and was subtitled, "New and Standard Songs for the sanctuary, Sunday schools, prayer meetings, mission work and revival services." It included forty-one Simpson hymns, the greater part of which dealt with sanctification, joy and peace. This hymnal did not include a section specifically identified as "Missions," although "A Missionary Cry" and "Who Will Go?" were included, as was "Trust," one of Simpson's first Missionary Institute graduation songs.

The second hymnal, *Hymns of the Christian Life* #2 was published in 1897. Seventy-two of the 385 hymns credit Simpson with either words or music. Nine of these seventy-two were carried over from the first hymnal, and eighteen were classified "Work and Missions" hymns. The missionary zeal of that particular stage of Alliance growth is represented by the significant inclusion of forty-seven songs in the "Work and Missions" category. Here was the first appearance of "The Dark Soudan," "Beautiful Japan," "The Land of the Congo," and the plaintive "Only a Little Baby Girl."

Seven years later, in 1904, Simpson announced that the need for a new hymnal had been fulfilled, and that this latest hymnal had an "unusual number of new pieces" with a "richer blessing to the household of faith than even the previous numbers, which have been so widely used."<sup>26</sup> The subtitle for *Hymns of the Christian Life* #3 read: "For church worship, conventions, evangelistic services, prayer meetings, missionary meetings, revival services, rescue mission work and Sunday School." Simpson had written the text for sixty-two of its 270 hymns, and composed a tune for "Not I, But Christ." Most of these were new, and only seven had appeared in either of the first hymnals.

20. Carter and Simpson, *Hymns*, preface.

21. A.B. Simpson, "Editorials," *CAMW* 7 (August 7, 1891): 82.

22. Simpson, "Editorials," *CAMW* 7 (September 18, 1891): 178.

23. Simpson, "Editorials," *CAMW* 11 (December 22, 1893): 385.

24. Ibid.

25. Simpson, "Editorials," *The Christian and Missionary Alliance Weekly* 19 (August 11, 1897): 156 (Hereafter cited as *CMAW*).

26. A.B. Simpson, May Agnew Stevens and Margaret M. Simpson, comps., *Hymns of the Christian Life*, 3rd ed. (New York: Alliance Press Co., 1904), p. 27.

More than half of them fell into the categories of "Deeper Christian Life" or "Christian Work and Missions." Simpson proudly wrote that "no other book contains so many mission hymns,"<sup>27</sup> and it was the first to contain the well-known hymn, "To the Regions Beyond." Margaret Simpson's name appears more often in this hymnal as well; she is credited with the music for forty-eight hymns.

The fourth hymnal, *Hymns of the Christian Life* #1, 2 and 3, was published in 1908, and remains the "magnum opus" of Alliance hymnals, containing 946 selections. These were compiled from the first, second and third editions, although four new Simpson songs were included. In an editorial comment in the August 1, 1908 Weekly, Simpson wrote of the new hymnal:

It is being rapidly adopted in the various states, districts and branches as the permanent hymnal of the Alliance work, so that every member should have a copy, and there is little prospect of any change for many years to come.<sup>28</sup>

The long subtitle of *Hymns* #3 was retained, but the largest section of hymns (161) was devoted to "Salvation and Invitation." The 1908 hymnal contained 154 of Simpson's songs. Of these, most had to do with salvation and invitation, Christian work and missions, trial, trust and comfort, deeper life and the Lord's coming. Five of his hymns appeared for the first time, including "Launch Out," which was retained in the following three editions.

This 1908 hymnal was the standard denominational hymnal until 1936, when the fifth edition was published. David J. Fant, one of the editors of the hymnal, recalled that "a new singing era had been introduced by Billy Sunday and Homer Rodeheaver,"<sup>29</sup> [because of their revival and crusade songs] and in response to this change, the Alliance Board of Managers asked him to prepare a replacement for *Hymns of the Christian Life* #1, 2 and 3, containing some of this type of music. Neither the 1936 edition nor the succeeding hymnals included an identifying number in their title. The 1936 hymnal contained 504 hymns, fifty-seven of which were Simpson's. Five of these were poems which had been posthumously set to music. (See appendix.) The subtitle of the 1936 revision was less pretentious than the last two: "A Book of Worship in Song, emphasizing Evangelism, Mission and the Deeper Life." Several Simpson hymn tunes had been rewritten, adapted or arranged. The "Evangelism" section, listed under "Evening Service" was the largest category, containing 130 hymns, thirty by Simpson. Only nine of Simpson's mission hymns were included among the

considerably decreased total number of missionary songs.

For twenty-six years, the 1936 hymnal was the official songbook of the Alliance. In 1962, the sixth hymnal was published. Much more sophisticated than the earlier editions, this one included cross-referenced indexes and reference guides. There were 566 hymns, fifty-one of which were Simpson's. Harmonic changes were again made in an attempt to appeal to contemporary worshippers, and few of his hymns remained unchanged, with original words and music. Twenty-three Simpson hymns appear under the categories "Consecration, Sanctification and the Deeper Life," "Divine Healing," and the "Overcoming Life," but only seven of his missionary hymns are included. The 1962 edition used some Simpson hymns from earlier hymnals which the 1936 edition did not include. As well, a new hymn "Jesus Interceding," with music by J. Buchanan MacMillan was published; it was a poem which had never been set to music in Simpson's lifetime.

The most recent *Hymns of the Christian Life* is the seventh hymnal by that title, and was published in 1978. It contains 612 hymns, forty-four of which are attributed to A.B. Simpson. "Not I, But Christ" remains the sole hymn for which he composed the tune only. This hymnal includes greatly expanded indexes, scripture readings and worship aids, making it the most sophisticated Alliance hymnal to date. Four Simpson hymns appear in the 1978 which were not included in the 1962 hymnal, and ten which were in the 1962 edition were not selected for the present one. Ten of his hymns fall into the "Deeper Life" category, six each into the categories "Divine Healing," the "Overcoming Life," and "Missions," and the rest are evenly distributed. Of the forty-one Simpson hymns which were printed in the very first hymnal, fourteen remain in the 1978 edition. Of these fourteen, only "Himself" and "I Will Say Yes to Jesus" still appear with the original, unrevised music.

In all of the seven Alliance hymnals, Simpson received credit 162 times for words, 119 times for both words and music, and six times for music only. Many others of his hymns were published in Alliance magazines and elsewhere during his lifetime, but were not selected for the hymnals.

Probably the last hymn he wrote before his death was one entitled "The Upward Calling," and it appeared as a tribute in the 1945 (Nyack) *Missionarian*. It was set to music by his daughter, Margaret, but was never distributed. The words depict clearly the Christian's final meeting with Jesus, coming from a man who had looked forward to that meeting all of his life.

1. A voice is calling me, a hand has grasped me;  
By cords unseen my soul is upward drawn;

27. Simpson, "Editorials," *CMAW* 34 (June 3, 1905): 350.

28. Simpson, "Editorials," *CMAW* 30 (August 1, 1908): 296.

29. Fant, "Genealogy," p. 10.

### Section 3. Simpson's Hymns and Alliance Hymnody

My heart has answered to that upward calling;  
I clasp the hand that lifts and leads me on.

4. And in my heart I hear the Spirit's whisper;  
"The bridegroom cometh, hasten to prepare;"  
And with my vessels filled and lamps all burning;  
I'm going to meet Him in the air.

#### The Effect of His Music

Did the hymns of A.B. Simpson truly inspire people, or did those who sing them do so merely out of courtesy to a prominent spiritual leader? May Agnew Stephens wrote:

If it were possible to marshal together all the people to whom Dr. Simpson's hymns have been an inspiration and a blessing, what a mighty host they would be! All around the world they have carried their sweet fragrance; into the jungles of Africa and India, China, Japan, Palestine, Europe, South America and the islands of the sea.<sup>30</sup>

A.W. Tozer emphatically stated that the songs of Simpson "became a powerful factor toward the success of the Christian and Missionary Alliance."<sup>31</sup> Yes, he did inspire people with his music.

He wrote hymns of instruction, hymns of challenge, hymns of testimony and of great longing. He wrote hymns of the Fourfold Gospel, hymns that called for a filling of the Holy Spirit, hymns of healing and of missions. He wrote hymns that delighted in the beauty of the person of Jesus Christ. He presented a call to holiness, urged people to replace the self life with the Christ-life, showed the hopelessness of the lost world and encouraged believers to sing of the hope of Christ's return. He wrote hymns of Christ's sufficiency and the scope of His love, writing not merely for one denomination, nor for his own sphere of influence, but for the universal priesthood for all believers. He wrote of his vision, and continually directed attention to Christ. He wanted the faithful to sing about their faith and to sing heartily.

Are Simpson's hymns really unsingable by today's voices, unfit for a contemporary service? Perhaps. The gospel song itself may be unsuitable for today's worshipper, out of style and out of favor. If such is the case, the great majority of evangelical hymnody is obsolete. A more interesting question might be, "Would

Simpson himself frequently use his original hymns one hundred years later?" Perhaps not. To such a question, he might respond with this statement from the preface of his first hymnal:

The musical taste of our day is in a state of transition. Beyond controversy, the people *will* have new tunes and hymns that move in a more spirited time than our fathers sang....<sup>32</sup>

We may need to rewrite the music to some of Simpson's hymns. Tunes have been changed before: almost none of the hymns of Isaac Watts and Charles Wesley are sung to their original obscure melodies. But more likely, we need new and fresh hymns, hymns which flow from a vision shared with the founder of our denomination. Were Dr. Simpson alive today, I believe he would be calling for new songs, songs that would stir this generation.

The early Christian and Missionary Alliance sang their theology. They shared the vision of their founder expressed through his preaching, writing and music. Today's Alliance congregations are not able to listen to A.B. Simpson's preaching and few will study his writings, but in a day when this denomination needs to remember its distinctives, Alliance constituents can see his view of Christ and share his concern for a lost world through his songs.

Until we see the words of new Alliance hymn writers, we can sing of Christ as Saviour, Sanctifier, Healer and Coming King in the hymns of A.B. Simpson. We can read the words in our devotions. We can take "Jesus Only" as our theme. We can sing of world missions, the consecrated Christian life, and the power of the Holy Spirit in the yielded heart. It may be that our singing will help us to share the life-changing vision of the founder of the Christian and Missionary Alliance.

30. Stephens, "Dr. Simpson's Ministry," p. 206.

31. Tozer, *Wingspread*, p. 119.

32. Carter and Simpson, *Hymns*, preface.



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Reading 4.1

## A Story of Providence\*

A.B. Simpson

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A Paper read at the Quarter Centennial of the Gospel Tabernacle Church, New York, Feb. 11, 1907.

The history of the Gospel Tabernacle Church for the past quarter of a century divides itself into seven sections.

### I. The Causes That Led Up To This Work

These involve a brief reference to the personal history of the senior pastor. Thirty-one years ago he received a profound spiritual blessing in the midst of an ambitious and half consecrated ministry. The baptism of the Holy Spirit that followed, awakened in this heart an intense longing for the salvation of souls and simpler methods of reaching the masses with the Gospel. After attempting for several years to accomplish this purpose in a fashionable Presbyterian church in a western city, during which something was accomplished, but much was hindered by the social exclusiveness and the conventional religious methods about him, he accepted a call to the city of New York in 1880, with the explicit understanding on the part of his new church officers that they should unite with him in a popular religious movement to reach the unchurched masses. After an experience of two years in this city church pastorate, marked by unbroken harmony between himself and his church, and much spiritual blessing every way, he became convinced of the impossibility of reaching the masses by the old conventional church methods, and determined, after much prayerful consideration, to retire from his pastorate and begin an evangelistic campaign along undenominational lines and by simple methods of church work and life, on the principle of a free church without pew rents, where all classes and denominations would be equally welcome.

Two incidents occurred which hastened his decision at that time. One was his own experience of divine healing, after years of physical weakness and suffering. Another was his being led to accept for himself the doctrine of baptism by immersion, which, while not demanding his ecclesiastical separation from his brethren, by joining a close communion Baptist church, yet made it embarrassing for him to continue to

act as a Presbyterian pastor. In consequence of this decision he quietly announced to his congregation his purpose, and at the same time requested them not to follow him or leave upon him the odium of having broken up the church to which he had ministered. The parting was most friendly and the church has continued to prosper along the old lines until this day. The following Monday morning he announced his resignation to the New York Presbytery and was released by a kindly resolution, on motion of Dr. Howard Crosby, seconded by Dr. John Hall, who both expressed much affection, and the hope of his early return to the church of his fathers. It is pleasant to look back to a crisis of so much importance, passed without any strain whatever. As he left the Presbytery that morning a beloved brother expressed to him his sympathy and best wishes, but added, "you will never succeed without keeping your work under the auspices of the Presbyterian church." He felt, however, much freer and much stronger in simple dependence upon God alone. It was a cutting off of every earthly cable of dependence, and one of the oldest friends of his life, a distinguished minister, who twenty years later came back to his fellowship and help, wrote to him in those early days, that he had made the mistake of his life. That morning the elders of his church called at his home to express to his wife their profound sympathy, and they remarked, as they condoled with her, that "they felt as though they were attending his funeral," and it is possible she may also have felt that he might as well be dead.

### II. The Transition Days

The new work was immediately started by a Sabbath afternoon meeting in a cheap hall in the vicinity, at which he announced through the press an address on the spiritual needs of the city and the masses, and invited all in sympathy with an aggressive spiritual movement to come. There was an encouraging attendance, and the first step was taken by calling a meeting for conference and prayer during the week on the part of all who were willing to help. It might be added, that the secular press gave a wide advertisement to the new movement and the reporters wanted to know

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\* *Living Truths* 7 (March, 1907), pp. 150-165.

## Section 4. The Founding of the Alliance

how he expected the work to be supported. His answer was, "that just as in business, anything that was worth succeeding always found people enough to sustain it, so in the work of God if anything was worth doing God would see that it was supported." In this spirit he announced at the meeting, above referred to, that trusting in God alone to supply the means and the workers, he would not personally ask any man to join the movement, or to give a dollar to it. During these years God has graciously supplied both the workers and the means and honored the simple trust with which it was begun. On the appointed day the meeting for Conference and Prayer was held in that cold and cheerless dance hall, and as we huddled around a little stove, there were just seven of us and as we opened God's word for His message it was this, "This is the work of the Lord unto Zerubabel, Not my might, nor my power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts. For who hath despised the day of small things."

So the work started and only two of those seven are here today, but they are here to bear witness that the word of the Lord has not failed.

The next Sabbath evening, evangelistic services were begun in the old hall, and the first convert was saved and is still a member of this church. The week evening services were held in the pastor's house, and were attended by the workers and converts, their chief purpose being the teaching and training of the little flock. At first there had been no thought of forming a church, but simply the carrying on of an evangelistic work, leaving the converts free to join various churches. But a conversation with Dr. Judson at this time first suggested the idea of an independent church. He asked the pastor what he intended to do with his converts, and being told, "I expect to send them to you and other ministers to look after them," the good Dr. replied, "I have enough children of my own to nurse and don't want any of yours. The mother is always the best nurse of her own children." The matter was taken to God in prayer and soon the little flock was clamoring for a church home. Some wanted to be baptised, all wanted the Lord's Supper and none wanted to be sent away, so it came to pass that a little church of less than twenty members was organized, with not enough men to go round and fill the various offices, so that some of our first trustees had to be "elect ladies."

### III. The Work at Eighth Avenue and Twenty-Third St.

The evangelistic meetings had been removed in the meanwhile to a larger place, and under circumstances for which this brief summary allows no time to give details, the first large popular service was held in the Academy of Music. At the opening meeting

we received valuable assistance from Dr. George F. Pentecost and Mr. Stebbins. Later the meetings were removed to Steinway Hall, and still later to Abbey's Park Theatre, where large crowds continually came, and the saving power of the Gospel and the Holy Spirit were continually manifested. It should be added that Rev E.W. Oakes had at the very beginning volunteered his services and for a considerable time rendered efficient help in the evangelistic and other services. The rental of these large buildings was expensive, and for the first few months the pastor stood alone in trusting God for the supply of these needs. But after the organization of the little church, the members asked the privilege of taking hold with liberal hands and self-sacrificing love, and a system of weekly offerings was begun, which up to the present has supplied the financial resources of the work. So bold was the faith of the little company that within two months after the organization of the church, they dared to undertake the lease of the Grand Opera Hall, Eighth Avenue and Twenty-third Street, at a rental of \$2,000 a year, and they nobly met it from the beginning. For a considerable time this commodious hall became the headquarters of our work, and a regular Sunday morning and evening service, with meetings every night in the week, except Saturday, was started. The hall was filled from the beginning on Sunday evenings, and the work of salvation went steadily on. This hall was pastor's office, auditorium, printing house, Sunday School room, and almost everything that the needs of the work required. The Friday meeting, for special testimony and teaching in connection with divine healing was also organized here, and has never ceased for the past twenty-four years to be a centre of deep and even world-wide blessing. During the ensuing summer a splendid evangelistic work was carried on in a large Gospel tent on Twenty-third Street, on the site now occupied by the Chelsea apartment house. During this year more than three hundred souls were led to Christ in the tent and most of them united with the church. These were days of great blessing. Services were held every night in the week and our young people had no trouble about settling the question of amusement, for they wanted no better recreation than a Gospel meeting. They were accustomed to go out on Saturdays in little bands and scatter invitations to the services so that the following Sunday the meetings were crowded with multitudes of souls, who were unconnected with any church. One cannot look back on those days of blessing without tears of grateful memory and loving appreciation of the noble workers who gave themselves wholly to this work. It is a great joy that this fruitful field has not been allowed to pass into neglect, but is still occupied so faithfully and successfully by the

Eighth Avenue Gospel Mission, under the direction of our dear sister, Miss Wray.

#### **IV. Our First Tabernacle**

The time had now come when we began to feel the need of a permanent home, and to watch and pray for the Lord's leading regarding a tabernacle building. Our first idea was an extremely cheap edifice of corrugated iron, costing from \$1,000 to \$2,000, and holding a large audience on one floor. For this purpose four lots were secured on Thirty-second Street, on the site now occupied by the new Pennsylvania Railroad station, with connecting lot, entering from Eighth Avenue. A payment was made on this property, but the property was afterwards lost, chiefly through the dishonesty of a wicked attorney, who had been entrusted with a considerable sum of money for the purpose of making a payment on the property and absconded. Soon after our attention was directed to a better location on Twenty-third Street, near Sixth Avenue, an old Armory building, but at that time unoccupied. This, we found could be leased for a moderate sum, and while rude and plain, would accommodate a large crowd and was in the very best location in the heart of the city. After much prayer, we felt led to enter into an arrangement with the proprietor, but before the lease was signed he sent us word that a theatrical company had appeared at the last moment and offered him a lease for the property, the amount we had agreed to give, and a promise to expend nearly a hundred thousand dollars in improving the property, for the purpose of the exhibiting a religious drama, known as Passion Play, a representation of the crucifixion of Christ. His partners insisted upon his accepting this larger offer, and as the papers were not signed, we were helpless.

The morning after this a good woman, a member of the church, called upon the pastor and asked "if he had heard the good news." He was at a loss to understand how this could be good news, but she proceeded to explain to him that the Lord had sent these people to fix up this old ruined building for us, as we were poor and without means, and that just as soon as it was all ready, she added, "see if He does not give it to us." This was a little staggering at first, but this is exactly what came to pass. After waiting a few months, while this company expended \$75,000 in making a little gem of the old Armory, and all in ecclesiastical style for a religious play, with seven golden candle sticks for lamps and decorations to match, the city authorities refused to allow them to perform this sacrilegious play, and as the building was unsuited for a worldly performance they could not use it for ordinary theatrical purposes. The result was the company broke down, the president committed suicide, his partner was burned out

the same week, and the owner let us have the building at the same rental that he had offered it several months before, with all the improvements thrown in. It is needless to say that we entered this little sanctuary on Twenty-third Street with awed and thankful hearts and that we felt that nothing was too hard to claim from our Almighty Master. For three years He permitted us to work and worship in that place, the old Twenty-third Street Tabernacle. It was there that the Christian Alliance was organized and our first conventions held, and all the things which have since been vouchsafed to us in our home and foreign work inaugurated. This became a great evangelistic centre. The doors were always open every night in the week, and the one business of the church was to seek and save the lost.

#### **V. The Beginning of Our Institutional Work**

Before this time the work of divine healing had taken quiet, but powerful hold of the hearts of many of our people, and the pastor was led in the very first year of the work to announce the opening of a home on Thirty-fourth Street, near where the Manhattan Opera House now stands. A few days after this purpose was formed, a gentleman contributed \$2,000, quite unsolicited, and this enabled us to begin the work of Berachah. Many delightful parlor meetings were held in that home and many Christian men and women from other churches were attracted to the work by this deeper spiritual teaching and intense life and power. A year later a generous friend, who is still with us, contributed a larger sum toward the purchase of a permanent home on Twenty-third Street, for the Berachah work, where again God was pleased to manifest His presence for many years in healing and blessing. A little later one of the workers in Berachah invested a few thousand dollars in building lots up town for the Lord. Within a year the value of these lots had multiplied so rapidly that they were sold at a large profit, which, with the amount already contributed, enabled us to purchase our next Berachah Home, Sixty-first Street and Park Avenue. Still later, when the present Tabernacle was building, this property was disposed of and the larger building, 250 West Forty-fourth Street, was erected for the work of Berachah.

Shortly after the work was begun a number of the young men converted in the meetings offered themselves for missionary work, and requested some regular means of Bible teaching and training for their work. The result of this was the beginning of the Missionary Training School, which has since grown so rapidly and of which another paper has given us the fuller and deeply interested details.

The spirit of rescue work was always predominant among our people. One result of this was

## Section 4. The Founding of the Alliance

the forming of various missions. One of the earliest was Twenty-seventh Street Midnight Mission, and later Berachah, West Twenty-second Street, both under the direction of Mrs. Henry Naylor, now Mrs. Henck.

From the very beginning the work of publication had a prominent place. Our first periodical was "The Word, Work and World," a monthly, followed later by the "Christian Alliance," which afterwards became "The Christian and Missionary Alliance," and has been published as a weekly journal, with a large circulation, for about eighteen years. Various publications were added from time to time, and the printing press has been as widely used in the Alliance work as any other agency.

The consecration of many young lives to the missionary field led very soon to a call for some foreign missionary agency. As long ago as 1884 several independent missionaries went out from the Tabernacle to the Soudan, but the unsatisfactory results of that movement showed the necessity of a thoroughly organized society, and in 1887, just twenty years ago, the first definite steps were taken for the organization of our present missionary work, first under the name of International Missionary Alliance, and now the Christian and Missionary Alliance. The results of this movement and its world-wide extent have been fully described in one of the special papers of this series.

From an early date many Christian friends were attracted from all parts of the country to visit the work in the Tabernacle, and became deeply interested and much blessed, and they expressed an earnest desire that the same truths might be proclaimed and the same blessing communicated to other parts of the land. The result was many invitations to hold conventions and conferences in various cities and summer resorts. One of the earliest of these was the Old Orchard Convention. Others followed in many places. The pastor became increasingly embarrassed by the strong personal aspect, which these meetings necessarily had, and feeling that if the work was to be recognized as his work in any special or exclusive sense, it could never have God's fullest blessing, or the most lasting influence, he earnestly advised the forming of some society which would take away this personal character from the meetings and conventions, and make all the workers equal partners in this new spiritual movement. It was this that led to the founding of the Christian Alliance in the year 1887 at Old Orchard, Maine, for the purpose of uniting Christians of various denominations in a common testimony for the fullness of Jesus as our Saviour, Sanctifier, Healer and Coming King. This society was afterwards united with the missionary branch of the work and now they together form the Christian and Missionary Alliance, which God has been pleased to use for a much wider work than any single church could

ever have accomplished, but which the Gospel Tabernacle Church should never cease to regard as one of her many spiritual children.

## VI. The Second Tabernacle

After three years of blessed work in the old Twenty-third Street Tabernacle, an opportunity offered to purchase a large and valuable church property, known as the Hepworth Tabernacle on Madison Avenue and Forty-fifth Street, at an extremely low price, and on very easy terms. A cash payment of only a few thousand dollars was required and the interest on the mortgage was no greater than we were paying out for rent, and the building was large, commodious and central. Besides, it brought us into a new neighborhood, and added to us a new constituency. Here we continued to work four years longer, but we gradually found that the neighborhood was entirely too fashionable for the simple Gospel work to which God had called us, and it was somewhat difficult to draw the masses to our meetings. To offset this we spent our summers in Gospel tent work occupying for two seasons the vacant lot still used for tent work on Fifty-sixth Street and Broadway. The conviction gradually fastened itself upon us that God would have us settle permanently on a more popular thoroughfare and within reach of the masses, especially on the West side, where our work had begun. In 1888 the Madison Avenue Tabernacle was sold at a considerable advance on the price paid for it, and the present site was purchased along with the adjoining site on Forty-fourth Street for Berachah Home. A joint arrangement was made for adding the rear portion of the Berachah lot to the Tabernacle property, while Berachah built and used the upper floors and the Tabernacle the ground floor of this rear lot. This gave to us sufficient capacity for our present commodious building, and steps were immediately taken for the erection of the present Tabernacle. The congregation meanwhile worshipped in Wendell Hall, Forty-fifth Street, near Ninth Avenue.

## VII. Our Present and Third Tabernacle

We had now compassed the city, having really moved entirely round in a circle from Caledonian Hall to the Academy of Music, thence to Twenty-third Street Tabernacle, thence to Forty-fifth Street and Madison Avenue, and finally back to Eighth Avenue. It was with great rejoicing that the corner stone was laid in the fall of 1889 and the work committed to the ownership and blessing of our God. The entire building was a triumph of architectural skill, in bringing the largest possible accommodations out of the smallest space, including an auditorium holding over a thousand persons, with three chapels affording room for several hundred more, a

store on the street from our publication work, a Training Institute on Eighth Avenue with accommodations for forty persons, and the home of Forty-fourth Street, with accommodations for nearly one hundred.

At length, in May, 1889, the buildings were dedicated to God in connection with a large convention, gathered from various parts of the United States and Canada. The financing of these buildings was a task whose difficulty can only be understood by one or two, who were permitted to stand in the place of responsibility during those trying months. Their experience, if it could be told, would be a story of divine providence and simple trust, that could not fail to fill all hearts with wonder and praise. If the rules that control this commemoration service permitted, it would be a pleasure to mention, at least, one honored name in this connection, but to God alone be all the praise.

The early years of our work in the new Tabernacle will never be forgotten by the few who still survive. The principal services were our evangelistic meetings, which for a long time were held every night in the week and constantly gathered in the sinful and the sad, and brought new testimonies continually of salvation and blessing. We were greatly aided in this evangelistic movement by a beloved brother, who, with his dear wife, has gone to be with Christ some years ago. We refer to Mr. Burke, our Gospel singer, whose efficient leadership of our chorus choir and earnest devoted work for the salvation of souls and the service of praise can never be forgotten. The Tabernacle was crowded on Sunday evenings from year to year, and well filled most of the week nights, while the Sunday morning service was at first much smaller and was slowly built up to its present importance.

Meanwhile the growth of the Alliance movement in all parts of the country and the world demanded more and more of the senior pastor's time, both in official work and the visitation of our numerous conventions throughout the country. In those days we had no field workers as now, and the burden of convention work fell chiefly upon him. It was his privilege in this connection to visit from year to year the principal cities of the United States and Canada, holding conventions and organizing the work where it was practicable. This necessitated additional help in the Tabernacle work and led to the calling of our beloved brother, Dr. Wilson as associate pastor, along with Mr. Funk, who acted in this capacity from the beginning, but whose duties largely confined him to the Missionary Training Institute, and left him only a little time for church work. Dr. Wilson will give in his own words the story of his precious and fruitful ministry amongst us, nor are we permitted, by the restraint properly imposed upon us at this meeting, to give adequate expression to the appreciation and love

which his character and labors have called forth from us all. For the same reason we are constrained to be silent also regarding the quiet, but ever faithful and efficient ministries of Pastor Funk. It is not out of place, however, to mention another quiet ministry, which, during the past ten years, has grown more and more helpful in connection with the Tabernacle, namely, the little four o'clock meeting and its beloved and venerable leader, who is one of the little company of not more than a dozen now living who have been with us from the beginning.

During these years the Tabernacle became the scene of many wonderful gatherings, especially our Alliance conventions. Here also have been heard the voices of many of God's honored servants, including such names as Henry Varley, Pastor Stockmeyer, Hudson Taylor, Dr. Guinness, F.B. Meyer, Andrew Murray, Dr. Scofield, Mrs. Baxter, Mrs. Brodie, Frances Willard, and many more.

The increasing needs of the Alliance work had been making such inroads upon Dr. Wilson's time that the need was deeply felt for a pastor who could give his whole time exclusively to the Tabernacle work. For this purpose Rev. Milton M. Bales was called as associate pastor in the year 1901, and for three years faithfully ministered in this place and was honored by the Master, leading many souls to Christ and many others into the fullness of the Spirit. At length promotion came to him also, and he too was added to the increasing list of the Field Superintendents of the Alliance, and once more the church was called to pray for an under-shepherd. This need was finally met by the call of the Tabernacle to Rev. F. E. Marsh of Sunderland, England, our present Acting Pastor, whose work amongst us began in November, 1905, and is still being continued in manifold labors and increasing blessing.

The recent history of the Tabernacle is too near to form good material for the historian's task. It will suffice to say that the year recently closed has been, spiritually and financially, one of the most prosperous and successful in the history of the church, and the time seems again at hand, when, with a great increase in the value of our property and the need for a building more fully adapted to the various departments of our Sunday School, church and convention work, we may be called once more to move forward and change our local habitation.

It will be sufficient, therefore, to sum up in a few general remarks the leading lessons which God has been emphasizing in the story of the Gospel Tabernacle.

1. The work has always been pre-eminently evangelistic, the salvation of souls has ever been, and we trust will ever be, its supreme business. It was born in

## Section 4. The Founding of the Alliance

this atmosphere and without it, it will languish and decay.

2. It has always been a free church and its financial and social methods have aimed to conform to the principles of God's Word and the Apostolic Church. The system of pew rents has been abjured, and all classes have been equally welcome and all seats free. Religious entertainments have been studiously avoided, whether with or without admission fees, and our people taught to give voluntarily for the support of God's work on principle only. Before commencing this work, the pastor was often told by his former officers that a free church never could be sustained in New York City. The success of the Tabernacle is a sufficient answer and this church is a monument of God's blessing on Scriptural methods of church finance.

3. The Tabernacle has always stood for the deepest spirituality and the highest standard of Christian faith and life. While not demanding a deep experience as a condition of membership for God's little ones, it has aimed to lead them on into all the fullness of Christ, and we thank God, above almost every blessing, for the sweet and holy lives which He has linked with us in this blessed fellowship. Many of them have gone to be with Christ, many of them are with us still, but we believe that after all the most potent force of our work has been the godliness of its little flock.

4. The Tabernacle has aimed to combine in the work of a Christian congregation all the gifts and ministries of the Apostolic Church. Not only have we the work of the evangelist, but the deeper teaching of God's Word, the training of Christian workers, the ministry of healing, the work of the pastor, and the great work of foreign missions, besides all those loving ministrations to the poor, the sick and the destitute, which constitute the sweet credentials of a Christ-like ministry. We have given a place for the ministry of women, we have had no more beautiful department in all our work than the training of the King's children, and there is scarcely any line of Christian activity in which our people have not some part. We believe today that more of our members are engaged in the various charities and rescue missions of New York City than ever in the work of the Tabernacle church, and there is scarcely a religious movement in the community in which some of them have not a part.

5. Perhaps the supreme glory of the Tabernacle work has been that which has already been fully referred to, its relation to the evangelization of the world.

Hundreds of its members have become foreign missionaries, and perhaps there is no church on earth that has so large a proportion and so large an aggregation of its actual communicants on the mission field, while the gifts of its people to foreign missions are much greater than their contributions to their own church work.

6. The spirit of sacrifice, especially in giving to God, has been from the beginning a striking feature of our work. In the very beginning of the work a beloved sister brought her bank book, with the accumulated savings of her life, amounting to more than a thousand dollars and insisted on giving them for the needs of the work in the days of its poverty and trial. Another dear woman brought \$500 which she had saved for her funeral and laid it at the Master's feet. Again and again has the story been repeated of the poor woman in the Gospels that gave her all. Humble house workers, with moderate wages, have actually undertaken the support of a foreign missionary, and for years it was true of a single Bible class in our Sunday school, consisting of working girls, that it contributed more for foreign missions than many of the wealthiest churches in the land, actually supporting five missionaries at one time on the foreign field.

7. Perhaps the most significant feature of the Tabernacle work is the one that would be the most difficult to describe, namely, its silent, indirect influence in stimulating faith in God and earnest, aggressive work for our fellowmen among other Christian organizations as well as individuals. Like the salt and like the light, its pervading power has been stealing silently through human hearts and only the final day will measure the value and fruition of that "sweet savor of Christ" which has gone forth through its humble and consecrated people to the uttermost parts of the earth.

8. Above all else the aim and call of the Gospel Tabernacle has been to exalt and glorify the Lord Jesus Christ, and to write high above all human names, on the hearts of men and the pages of the Nineteenth and Twentieth Century, the name which has always been its motto and its glory--Jesus only.

9. And finally, it has been its constant aim to witness to His personal coming and God grant that some glorious day it may be its high honor to welcome back our King.

And to Him of whom and for whom and by whom are all things, be the glory, both now and forever. Amen.

Reading 4.2

## Constitution of the Christian Alliance (1887)\*

The Christian Alliance is designed to be a simple and fraternal union of all who hold in common the fullness of Jesus in His present grace and His coming glory. It is not intended in any way to be an engine of division or antagonism in the churches, but, on the contrary, to embrace Evangelical Christians of every name who hold this common faith and life....At the same time there are special truths which...need to be doubly emphasized, and there are chords of spiritual unity more deep and dear than any denominational affinities. And these truths the Alliance is called to witness to and these ties to cherish and deepen....The following constitution was adopted after careful and prayerful conference by a large body of ministers and evangelists:

### I. -- Name

Its name shall be "The Christian Alliance"

### II. -- Attitude

It shall be, not an ecclesiastical body, but a fraternal union of believers, in cordial harmony with Evangelical Christians of every name.

### III. -- Objects

1. To bear united testimony to these four great essential truths of the Gospel of Christ, viz.:
  - A. *Salvation* through Christ for all who believe.
  - B. *Complete Sanctification* through Christ for all who fully yield themselves to Him.
  - C. *Divine Healing* through the name of Jesus for those who believe and obey Him.
  - D. Christ's Personal and Pre-millennial coming.
2. To promote the wide diffusion of these great truths and principles, and lead all the children of God into the practical experience of all the fullness of Jesus.
3. To afford a bond of union and fellowship for all who hold this common faith and life.
4. To pray for each other daily for the sanctification of believers, the progress of Christian truth, the

evangelization of the world, and the speedy coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

### IV. -- Organization

Its organization shall embrace a National Association with general officers and executive control over all the general work of the Alliance, with subordinate branches in the several states or other large sections of the country, and provision ultimately for a larger international organization as soon as it shall be deemed expedient and seasonable.

### V. -- Officers

Its general officers shall consist of a President, Vice-Presidents, Secretaries, Treasurer and Executive Committee which shall include the other officers.

### VI. -- Members

Its membership shall consist of all professing Christians who shall subscribe to these principles and enroll their names as regular members, and who are approved by the local Association where they reside. Inasmuch as many persons who desire to become members of this Alliance and are in full accord with its principles in other points, cannot yet fully accept the doctrine of Christ's Pre-millennial Coming, it is agreed that such persons may be received into full membership, provided they receive the first three points of testimony, and are willing to give this subject their candid and prayerful consideration.

### VII. -- Work

The work of the Alliance shall include the holding of an annual convention for the National Association, and as far as possible district conventions in every State and district; and in conjunction with the State Associations, the formation of branches in every locality where its influence can properly be extended.

\* *The Christian Alliance Yearbook* (1888): 48ff.

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Reading 4.3

## **Constitution of the Evangelical Missionary Alliance (1887)\*** ***A New Missionary Alliance***

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At the close of the convention of Old Orchard Beach, Maine, in the summer of 1886, all our hearts were touched and overwhelmed by the presentation of the claims and needs of the great neglected mission fields of the world, and an informal movement was begun, with a view to the encouragement of some new missionary effort to reach some of the yet unoccupied fields.

It has seemed to some of God's children that it would be well at the next meeting to give this a fuller consideration and a more definite and practical form; and, with a view to this, it has been arranged to devote the last two days of the convention to the great work of Foreign Missions, and see if the time has come and way is clear for a simple, spiritual and undenominational movement to send the full gospel--which has proved such a blessing to us--to the neglected millions of heathen lands.

With this in view, the following papers, containing a rough draft of a proposed basis of organization and action, have been submitted for prayerful consideration in advance of the meeting, that the best suggestions and methods may be reached as the result of mature and careful consideration on the part of all concerned.

### **Draft of the Constitution**

1. *Name.*--The association shall be called "The Evangelical Missionary Alliance."

2. *Aim and Object.*--The object of the Alliance shall be to carry the Gospel "to all nations," with special reference to the needs of the destitute and unoccupied fields of the heathen world.

3. *Scope.*--Its scope shall be universal, and its character and spirit catholic and unsectarian; and it will seek to unite Christians of all evangelical denominations in its work.

4. *Missionaries.*--The workers the Alliance contemplates sending forth shall include consecrated persons of both sexes--lay as well as clerical--without regard to their denominational preferences; the qualification specially kept in view shall be entire consecration and practical adaptation to the various forms of missionary work.

5. *Self-support.*--The Alliance proposes to encourage and foster the principle of self-support, in whole or in part, wherever practicable, in the foreign field.

6. *Dependence.*--The Alliance will require in all its labourers a spirit of absolute reliance upon God alone for support, guaranteeing no fixed remuneration to any missionary after reaching his or her field, but simply acting as a channel through which such aid may be sent, from time to time, as the resources at command may render available.

7. *Methods of Work.*--In the prosecution of its foreign work, and the formation of native churches, the Alliance will leave each missionary and native community free to adopt such form of church government as may be preferred, only requiring in every case that the doctrinal basis and practice shall be in strict accordance with the Word of God, and in harmony with evangelical truth.

8. *Resources and Funds.*--In looking for means to prosecute its work, the Alliance will depend entirely upon the promises and faithfulness of God, through voluntary gifts of His people, as He may dispose them to contribute. In addition to publishing reports of the work of the Alliance from time to time, well matured methods for presenting the claims of the work to the Christian public throughout the land, probably by distributing its organization through local auxiliaries and little bands of seven, will later on be inaugurated.

9. *Membership.*--All evangelical Christians who shall regularly contribute to its resources will thereby become members of the Alliance.

10. *Board of Management.*--The administration of its affairs will be under the management of a Board elected at each annual meeting, to consist of a President, Vice-Presidents, a Treasurer, a Recording Secretary and Directors.

The Board shall appoint and direct the missionaries employed, but any local auxiliary may, with the approval of the Board, select a special field or laborer to sustain in whole or in part, as may be mutually arranged with the General Board. Moneys designated for special fields or persons shall be so applied whenever practicable consistently with the interests of the work.

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\* *The Word, Work and World*, 9(Aug/Sept., 1887): 365ff.



**Statement of the Reason for Proposing Such an Organization**

1. Our Lord's last commands, recorded in all the four Gospels, must ever render the work of foreign missions the supreme and paramount ministry and obligation of the Christian Church in a far higher measure and degree than has ever yet been realized.

2. The present condition of the world, and the marvelous working of God's providence in opening almost every heathen country to the Gospel within the present century, furnish the most authoritative, significant and encouraging call to this work.

3. The awful need of the human race in prospect of an eternal future without Christ, and the utter inadequacy of all that has yet been done to meet that need, adds tremendous force to the appeal and calls for a yet wider multiplication of agencies and efforts in this direction. Out of a population of 1,500,000,000, 120,000,000 are nominal Protestants, and perhaps 10,000,000 or 1 in 150, truly saved. One hundred thousand perish every day, and horrors and miseries untold fill up the story of their short and sinful life. Even in heathen lands, while perhaps 2,000,000 have been converted to Christ in the past century, the heathen populations have increased during this time by 200,000,000, or one hundred to one; and during the same period three whole generations of heathens, or a population of 3,000,000,000 have passed into eternity without Christ. Two millions saved, 3,000,000,000 lost in one hundred years--*one to fifteen hundred!*

4. The blessing and prosperity which God has bestowed upon the work of foreign missions is a peculiar seal of its importance and encouragement to extend it. It is but half a century since there was any considerable number of converts in any heathen fields, and yet in that time China has been covered with stations, India planted with three hundred stations, Japan evangelized, Madagascar overspread with light and gladness, the Hawaiian, Fiji and Malaysian islands changed from habitations of cruelty to scenes of blessing as well as beauty, and Central Africa opened up to Christ. The ratio of increase in the mission churches has always been three or four times as great as in the home churches, and some years even ten or twelve times. From time to time God has poured out His Spirit on these fields in a manner and measure unequalled since apostolic times. Even commerce, science and earthly governments have acknowledged their obligations to the missionary, and in every way the work has been recognized as the object of God's especial favour and blessing.

5. The special features proposed in this movement have also been peculiarly owned and emphasized by the great Head of the Church.

a) The work of laymen is one of God's chosen instrumentalities in this age. The urgency is so great that there is not always time for long technical preparation. The qualities especially needed are plain, practical energy and adaptation and entire consecration, and these are not found exclusively or always in the highest degree in professional ministers. We do not disparage the ministry, but God is calling His Church to use all her resources and agencies.

b) The ministry of woman is another prominent token of our time, both in the home and foreign field, and we believe He desires to emphasize and utilize it still more. The foreign mission needs 100,000 women today, and has place for everyone. At the Midway Conference, the other day, 1,000 were called for North Africa alone, and this would only give one woman to every 10,000 heathen women and children in the field.

c) The principle of economy of administration, self-support and dependence upon God has been proved to be practicable in many fields, and is fitted to produce a higher type of self-denial, practical wisdom and faith in God in the workers.

d) The undenominational principle is the most satisfactory and adjustable by far in heathen lands, and surely most in accordance with the highest principles of Christianity. The devoted churchman cannot wish to fasten on the simple minds of these people the old bigotries of our unfortunate divisions, and the tendency in all missionary lands is to union and primitive catholicity and simplicity.

e) The financial results of such societies have been found most satisfactory in Great Britain. There within the past few years a great number of undenominational missionary agencies have sprung up. But they have in no sense weakened the old societies, but only stimulated and strengthened them, while they have reached new constituencies and called forth new treasures for God's work. The result is that the average missionary contribution of English Christians are more than double those of their wealthier brethren in America. There are millions of dollars in this land awaiting the touch of God's consecrating fire, and the church has not even begun to learn the meaning of the necessity of consecrated giving.

6. Is it not fitting that the great multitude whom the Holy Ghost has called in these days into the closer union with Jesus, and a deeper revelation of His fullness, should unite in some work for the evangelization of others which would be a worthy expression of their gratitude and love, and in turn a bond of delightful union and a means of yet higher blessing to their own soul? Can we even keep our blessing if we do not share it, and has not God given us a secret which the world needs and

#### Section 4. The Founding of the Alliance

which the world is not receiving? Freely ye have received, freely give.

7. And finally, those of us who love to look forward to the speedy coming of our dear Master and Lord cannot forget that this is His own appointed way of hastening that event. For "this Gospel of the Kingdom must first be preached in all the world as a witness unto all nations *and* THEN SHALL THE END COME."

Has He not even given into our hands the very key of the Bridal Chamber, and shall we let it rust in our selfish indifference and neglect?

Shall we, then, beloved, instead of criticizing, instead of thinking what we or others are doing, instead of waiting to see what will become of it, at once yield our hands and hearts to help in this added endeavor to save the lost, to obey our Lord's most tender command, to unite our efforts with our brethren in other lands and to hasten His appearing?

Reading 5.1

## The Story of the Christian and Missionary Alliance\*

The two societies which were afterwards merged into the Christian and Missionary Alliance were organized at Old Orchard, Maine, in the summer of 1887, for the purpose of uniting in Christian fellowship and testimony, in a purely fraternal alliance, the large number of consecrated Christians in the various evangelical churches, who believe in the Lord Jesus as Saviour, Sanctifier, Healer and coming Lord, and also of uniting their effort in the special aggressive work of world-wide evangelization.

They were known for many years as the Christian Alliance and the International Missionary Alliance. In the spring of 1897 they were united as the CHRISTIAN AND MISSIONARY ALLIANCE.

Within the past quarter of a century especially, God had been calling large numbers of His people into a deeper life, and Christ has been revealing Himself, personally, to them as a complete Saviour and united Himself to them through the Holy Ghost as an indwelling presence and an all-sufficient Sanctifier, Healer and Keeper.

### The Christian Alliance

In order to give a more emphatic testimony to those great principles which might well be called at this time present truths, that we might encourage and strengthen each other's hearts by mutual fellowship and prayer and that we might unite in various forms of aggressive work to give wider proclamation to these truths and prepare for the coming of our Lord. With this view the Alliance was formed and founded upon the especial basis of the Fourfold Gospel, as above expressed. In all other respects, and with reference to all other doctrines not expressed in the Fourfold Gospel, its attitude is strictly evangelical, holding most firmly to the verbal inspiration of the Holy Scriptures, the doctrine of the Trinity, the atoning sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the necessity of the regenerating and sanctifying work of the Holy Ghost. It is not an ecclesiastical body in any sense, but simply a fraternal union of consecrated believers in connection with the various evangelical churches. It does not organize distinct churches, or require its members to leave their present church connection, but helps them to work

together in the broader fellowship of sympathy, testimony and service.

The seal of God has rested upon it in an extraordinary manner. While comparatively slight efforts have been put forth to extend the organisation as such, yet its membership has increased very rapidly and numbers many thousands in all parts of the land and world. The Chief efforts of the promoters have been made in the direction of publishing the truths which form its basis, and promoting a deeper Christian life in all the churches, and in this respect the work that has been accomplished is far beyond the apparent results, as shown by the organization.

There is no antagonism whatever in the Alliance to any of the evangelical churches, but a desire to help them in every proper way, and to promote the interests of Christ's kingdom in connection with every proper Christian organization and work.

Its chief methods of work are through local conventions and its printed publications. "The Christian and Missionary Alliance," is circulated very widely and read by many thousands throughout the world. The various tracts and publications of the Alliance have been circulated in repeated editions, and several of them have been translated into various foreign languages, especially into German, Swedish, French and Japanese.

Conventions have been constantly held in the chief centres of population in almost all parts of the country, and the call for such meetings is very much greater than can be met. . . .

An important work has been done through the Alliance among the neglected classes at home through the formation of Rescue Missions. A number of these have been directly formed and sustained by the Alliance, and a much larger number promoted indirectly through its members. Scores of rescue missions are carried on throughout the country, whose helpers are members of our Alliance although the work is either independent or in connection with other organizations. Many of the mission workers throughout the country are either members of the Alliance or in full sympathy with it.

\* (New York: Alliance Publishing Co., 1900), pp. 3-28.

## Section 5. The Work of the Early Alliance

### **The International Missionary Alliance**

The object of this Society was the immediate evangelization of the whole world by sending out missionaries to unoccupied and neglected fields, conducting the work on evangelistic, economical and spiritual lines. The movement went on quietly for the first three years, and missionary centers were established in India, Africa, China and Palestine. As the principles of the Society became better known, God was pleased to awaken a profound and widespread response in the hearts of many of His people, and the work began to receive a liberal and remarkable support from Christians of all denominations. In the past few years it has moved forward with unusual rapidity, and has been sealed with God's peculiar blessing, until now there is a large force of about three hundred workers scattered over almost all portions of the world.

### **The Christian and Missionary Alliance**

The union of the two societies consummated in April, 1897, was the natural evolution of the work. The two branches had long been practically identical in their constituency although distinct in their organization and executive government. The Christian Alliance formed the sustaining constituency of the missionary work and the Missionary Alliance was the natural outlet of the faith, love and activity of the Christian Alliance. The new organization has been able to greatly simplify the executive machinery and promote the efficiency of the entire work. . . .

In several states and districts of the United States and Canada there are auxiliaries and branches organized under a strong State Committee with a State or District Superintendent in charge of the field while in each locality there are local branches under the care of a Committee and Superintendent as far as possible. The work is promoted chiefly by means of numerous conventions held in all parts of the country. . . .

### **The Distinctive Principles of our Missionary Work**

The standpoints of our missionary work are distinct and strongly marked, and we trust are fitted to commend the work to the special sympathy and support of a large number, if not all of the people of God.

1. The work is projected from the pre-millennial standpoint. We believe in the personal return of the Lord Jesus Christ and that the evangelization of the world is the best way to hasten His coming. According to the program so clearly marked out in the 15th chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, the Lord is visiting the Gentiles in this dispensation to take out of them a people for His name and when this shall have been accomplished, we may expect the Lord's immediate

return, the restoration of Israel and the opening of the millennial age. We believe that the Gospel is to be preached "in all the world as a witness unto all nations and then shall the end come." So far from paralyzing missionary effort this blessed hope has been found to be a most powerful and practical incentive to it.

2. The Alliance emphasizes the special agency and superintendence of the Holy Ghost in the work of missions, seeking only for wholly consecrated missionaries and holding the work under the constant direction of the Spirit of God. It goes without saying to add that the testimony of the Alliance is a full Gospel and the converts of our missions are led to know the Lord Jesus in His fulness and to expect the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

3. Along with this it naturally follows that the work should be a work of faith and that it should be maintained by a spirit of prayer and continual dependence upon God. Having no ecclesiastical constituency the workers on the field and the executive officers at home are led to look more directly to God for all their resources and supplies.

4. The Alliance missionary work is evangelistic and aggressive rather than educational and institutional. We do not attempt to establish educational institutions and transplant our denominational organizations to heathen soil, but to give the Gospel as rapidly as possible to all races and tongues.

5. Our chosen fields are the "regions beyond," the unoccupied portions of the heathen world, and so our missionaries have been led into the most difficult and remote regions and enabled to introduce the Gospel to many sections where Christ had not been named. . . .

6. The principle of economy is rigidly aimed at. The expenses of home administration are reduced to the lowest possible figure. Missionaries on the field are not promised regular salaries, but simply their expenses, and all the workers unite to make the means at our disposal accomplish the largest possible results without sacrificing or crippling the work.

7. The principle of sacrifice is the deepest element of power in the work. Again and again has it been displayed upon the field by the missionaries themselves and not less by the self-sacrificing gifts of those who sustain them at home. One of the latest gifts received by us for missions, was ten dollars from a farmer in Oregon, who had intended to use this money to can and preserve his crop of fruit, but who felt that he must sacrifice this and send it all to give the Gospel to the world. We are glad to say that the farmer afterwards got his sugar from another source and his money also went to spread the Gospel, but while such a spirit of self-sacrifice lives the work can never die.

### **Institutional Work**

Several important institutions have grown up in the past few years in connection with the work. The most important of these are the Gospel Tabernacle, New York, the Missionary Institute, the Home School for the training of evangelists, Berachah Home, the Alliance Home, New York; Berachah Orphanage, Christian and Missionary Alliance journal, the Christian Alliance Pub. Co., New York and Nyack. A brief notice of these is essential to the record of our work.

#### **The New York Missionary Training Institute**

**Foundation.** The New York Missionary Training Institute was founded in 1882, by Rev. A.B. Simpson. The school was born in an atmosphere of faith and grew up in a spirit of self-denial and prayer. From the beginning, the seal of God's approval rested upon the undertaking. From some years, like the tent in the wilderness, the Institution was removed from place to place as the providence of God directed, until 1890, when, in connection with the Gospel Tabernacle, a suitable home was provided in a five-storey brick structure at 690 Eighth Avenue, New York City. Here the Institute was located for six years. From its opening this building, with a capacity of fifty, was overtaxed, so that at every session students had to secure outside accommodations. Indeed, the attendance increased so rapidly that in the winter of 1896-97, over two hundred students were enrolled and many applications had to be refused. Thus the necessity for a larger building became apparent. The cost of land in New York and the distractions to student life in the city, led to the choice of a rural site for the school. South Nyack was selected, and here the new Missionary Institute was erected. The corner stone was laid in April, 1897, and the building formally opened in October the same year.

**Location.** Nyack, New York, is situated on the right bank of the Hudson River, about twenty-eight miles from New Jersey City. Here in the charming suburb of South Nyack, and on a mountain side at an elevation of about four hundred feet, stands the Institute building, commanding a view of the Hudson for twenty miles.

**The Building.** It is a plain, substantial structure of noble and graceful proportions, simple in plan and impressive in style of architecture, and presenting a striking and beautiful appearance. The building is two-hundred and fifty feet long, four stories in height and has an extreme depth of about seventy feet. It is composed of a central part flanked by two wings. On the first floor of the central part is a large and well appointed Library Room, which already had the nucleus of a good working theological and missionary library. Above this is the chapel with a seating capacity of four hundred, in which the usual daily lectures are held. Over the chapel are

four small class rooms. Including single and double rooms there are ample and comfortable accommodations for two hundred and fifty students.

The Institute is a co-educational school, the ladies occupying the southern and the gentlemen the northern wing, and having separate dining rooms. The students meet together in the freedom of home life at morning prayers, in lecture and class rooms, and at other public exercises; but there is maintained at the same time that wise and prudent oversight which in an institution of such character is both desirable and necessary.

**Object.** The past generation has witnessed a new movement which has for its object the speedy evangelization of the world through channels entirely distinct from, yet in friendly co-operation with the recognized and conservative denominational agencies. To carry forward this evangelistic and missionary movement both at home and abroad the need has arisen for young people, who without an elaborate classical and theological education, but with a simple Biblical training, and with the baptism of the Holy Spirit, will go forth like flaming evangelists to proclaim the whole Gospel to the whole world. Moreover, in response to this need God is calling from office and store, from work bench and farm, from the school and the home many who are offering themselves in deep consecration and in holy enthusiasm for this work. These young people have the spirit of true missionaries, but are without the necessary training, and to prepare them for efficient work for Christ, both at home and abroad, is the object of the Institute.

The school aims also to meet the need of older students who feel called to some special form of Christian service, but who have not had the advantages of good education.

**Course of Study.** In accordance with its object to prepare students for efficient service for Christ in mission lands and in the Word of God, and a practical and experimental training in the various forms of evangelistic and Christian work, the Bible is the main text book. Instruction is given chiefly by the lecture method. The courses of study are confined to the Scriptures and subjects closely related to the Bible and Christian work.

In order to give training in city mission work a Midnight Mission has been opened in New York City at 291 Eighth Avenue. The students go from Nyack in parties of ten, men and women, alternatively, boarding in the Home School at 690 Eighth Avenue and assisting in the mission. There is a Gospel Mission in Nyack which has been opened by the Institute and is conducted largely by the students, giving them practical training in Christian work.

## Section 5. The Work of the Early Alliance

The most thoughtful and loving attention is given to each student, individually by the Resident Superintendent and Secretary, and earnest spiritual counsel continually offered. Opportunity is provided each day for private devotion that each one may have the privilege for a certain length of time of being alone with God.

The term begins the second week in October and closes the first of the following May. Students are admitted at any time, but it is desirable that they shall remain if possible for at least the entire period of each term.

Expenses. The tuition is absolutely free. Text books are furnished at cost. The price of board is \$4.00 a week including room, heat and light. Other personal expenses depend upon the economy of the student.

Requirements for Admission. The Institute is unsectarian and open to all men and women called of God to engage in Christian work at home or abroad. Special attention, however, is given to the equipment of foreign missionaries and securing their adaptability to their various fields of labor. The students are entirely free to choose their future work as the Lord may lead them in connection with an evangelical church or providential field at home or abroad.

The principal qualification for admission is a consecrated heart, a special fitness for, and a distinct call to, direct work for Christ and souls. . . .

### School for Home Workers

The building formerly occupied by the New York Missionary Institute at 690 Eighth Avenue, New York, has been used since the removal of the Institute to Nyack as a Training School for home workers, and a Missionary Home. A short course of Bible study and missionary training lasting about six weeks is conducted in this place and students are chiefly employed in missionary work and house-to-house visitation in the neighbourhood. The expenses of the course are nominal and the advantages are very great.

In connection with this school a Rescue Mission has been opened near the corner of Eighth Avenue and Twenty-fourth Street. This mission while, accomplishing a blessed work for the salvation of souls, is at the same time an admirable training school for our home workers. It is under the care of Miss M. Agnew. In connection with this mission a kindergarten has been established and much excellent local work is done in the neighbourhood. During the first year of the mission, a large number of souls have been led to Christ and some of them are already students under preparation for future missionary work. The workers trained in this institute are expected to be employed in the home field as superintendents of Alliance branches, evangelists, city missionaries, and rescue workers. . . .

### Berachah Home

This home was opened in the year 1884 for the purpose of offering a place of rest and instruction for persons coming from various parts of the country in order to attend the meetings of the Tabernacle, and receive instruction with reference to their spiritual and physical life. It is the oldest of the various institutions that have sprung up in connection with the work of the Gospel Tabernacle. The subject of divine healing, in a simple and Scriptural form, has been one of the teachings of this work from the beginning. Very early God began to manifest His power and seal the work by many remarkable cases of healing.

The first Home was No. 331 West Thirty-fourth Street. Then No. 328 West Twenty-third Street was given for the purpose and occupied for several years, after which it was moved to 100 and 102 East Sixty-first Street, a much larger building, which was filled for several years with a delightful household.

In 1887 the new Home at 250 West 44th Street was erected. It is a commodious building holding about 100 guests and specially adapted to the purposes of the work. In 1897 it was deemed best to remove the special work of Berachah Home to the new building at South Nyack where it has since been carried on. The Nyack Home is delightfully situated on the west bank of the Hudson about twenty-eight miles north of New York City. The building is commodious and most comfortable and the surroundings in every way delightful and appropriate. It is reached by the Erie Railroad from the foot of West 23rd Street or Chambers Street. About thirty trains a day communicate with Nyack. The New York Home is now used as a place of entertainment and rest for our Alliance people as they pass through the city or sojourn there for a longer or shorter time. It is in a sense a family hotel under Christian influences and auspices and is constantly filled with friends of the work, returned missionaries and others from all parts of the country and the world. Daily devotional services are conducted in the chapel in the rear under the direction of Mr. J. Pulis and others. The work both in the Nyack and the New York Homes is under the personal direction of Miss S. Lindenberger, our first deaconess, assisted by several other workers.

### The Work of Publication

This work has now been in existence since 1883. It originated in the need of a work of publication for the Alliance. The first periodical was, "The Gospel in All Lands," which is now the organ of the Methodist Missionary Society of this country. The next magazine was "The Word, Work and World," which was continued as a monthly for several years. The present organ is the "Christian and Missionary Alliance," a paper with a larger and increasing circulation, reaching

tens of thousands of people throughout the land and the world.

Many tracts and books have been issued during the past eight years, some of them reaching large editions. The work has not been carried on as a business enterprise, but as a channel of usefulness, and we believe, more good had been accomplished in this way than by any other single instrumentality in connection with this work.

The retail book and tract room of the company is at 692 Eighth Avenue, and the wholesale and manufacturing department at South Nyack, where special buildings have been erected for the purpose and a large and complete printing, stereotyping and embossing plant has been established, and most of the books, tracts and mottoes sold by the Publishing Company are manufactured there. The printing house is known as the Alliance Press. The principal publication of the work is the "Christian and Missionary Alliance Weekly," an illustrated journal of twenty pages, having a large subscription list in the United States, Canada, and almost all foreign countries. While not strictly the organ of the Alliance, as it is an independent journal, yet it is the channel through which the work is most widely known, and God has been pleased to use it as an important instrumentality in building up the cause of holiness and the work of missions. . . .

Another important publication is the Alliance Colportage Library, a semi-monthly series of volumes on various lines of advance truth by a large variety of writers, and sent through the second class mails as a special effort to counteract the false literature of the day and circulate the highest religious truth in a cheap and popular form. Volumes averaging about 125 to 150 pages are sold, in lots of ten, for ten cents each, and to annual subscribers at a still lower price. . . .

#### **Berachah Orphanage**

The work of the Orphanage formerly carried on at College Point, N.Y., is now transferred for the most part to South Nyack, where the girls of the Institution have a separate home, the boys having been transferred for the present to the care of an independent Boys' Home, an excellent institution which has rented and may purchase the property at College Point, formerly used for the Berachah Orphanage. It is extremely desirable that all the work should be in as close touch as possible, and it is expected that a permanent home will be ultimately built at Nyack. In connection with the Orphanage a bright little paper, "Echoes from the Valley of Blessing," is issued monthly at the low subscription price of twenty-five cents a year. The Orphanage is under the direction of a Board of Trustees and is incorporated under the laws of the State of New York.

Reading 5.2

## The Social Interest and Concern of A.B. Simpson

John V. Dahms

Albert Benjamin Simpson's foremost concern was to bring man to Christ. Evangelism was his primary interest. Closely bound up with this was his emphasis on the deeper life. He realized that the effectiveness of evangelistic effort was largely proportional to the quality of the spiritual life and experience of those who preached, laboured and prayed for the salvation of those men and women who needed to become members of God's kingdom.

Because he was so concerned with the calling of the lost to repentance and the redeemed to the deeper life, he could so express himself as to leave the impression that Christians should not be involved in social welfare activities. In 1897, he urged,

Philanthropic schemes and social reforms are absorbing the interest and enthusiasm of thousands of redeemed men and women who ought to be giving their strength and wealth to do the best things and not the second best. We admit there is something good in these enterprises. They have a place and a value, but let the world take care of them....There are...plenty of people to run social reform and temperance societies; plenty of people to fight the political battle. God wants you to give the gospel to the world, to rise to the highest calling, to do the best things.<sup>1</sup>

There is considerable evidence, however, that this was an overstatement. Though they are not numerous, there are occasions when Simpson expressed himself somewhat differently and implied that it was right and proper that Christians devote time, energy and financial support to philanthropic and welfare activities.

In 1882, he lauded the missionary efforts overseas of various churches, which had resulted not only in souls being saved, but also in "hundreds of Christian colleges and schools, hundreds of benevolent and charitable societies, disbursing millions to the suffering and the poor." And added that "the heart

would be false to every Christian instinct if it did not bless and thank the Lord of Harvest."<sup>2</sup>

In 1886, he wrote,

We should give for the relief of God's poor and suffering children...allowing no true child of God to be in want or suffering....Nor should the unworthy poor be altogether neglected, but so aided as to prevent the abuse of our gifts for sinful indulgence, and so as to promote industry, independence and trust in God.<sup>3</sup>

It was probably the same year that he also stated,

He (Christ) wants His church to be complete in every department of work; He wants us to have not only the mere preaching of the Gospel, but work for the poor and lowly, work for the destitute and the sick; work for the rich and worldly. He wants us to be a people who will combine every department of Christian beneficence which is right for the church of God to sustain.<sup>4</sup>

In 1889, he affirmed that the Parable of the Good Samaritan "in its first application...is...designed to exemplify the duties of humanity and kindness to our neighbour,"<sup>5</sup> a statement he repeated in a sermon preached on December 10, 1905.<sup>6</sup> Also in 1889, he wrote that the Parable of the Great Supper in Luke 14 urges us to do "all that sympathy and consideration can do" for those suffering physical ills and material want, and, in this connection, promoted "the Christian philanthropies and blessed agencies of consecrated evangelism."<sup>7</sup> It is reported further that in 1895, he interpreted that same parable to imply that Christians should be involved in meeting "the physical needs and

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From *Birth of a Vision*, ed. David Hartzfeld and Charles Nienkirchen (His Dominion Supplement No. 1, 1986), pp. 49-75.

1. *The Christian and Missionary Alliance Weekly* (October 27, 1897); 417 (hereafter, *CMAW*.) Cf. *The Christian Alliance & Foreign Missionary Weekly* (October 2, 1896): 303 (Hereafter, *CAFMW*); *The Heavenly Vision* (1896): 88.

2. *The Word, The Work & The World* (January 1882): 23 (hereafter *WWW*). For reports of social welfare activities in the New York area published by A.B. Simpson during this period see, e.g. *WWW* (1882): 122; (October 1886) 241.

3. A.B. Simpson, *The King's Business* (New York: The Christian Alliance Pub. Co., 1886), p. 134. In an article published in *WWW* (1885), W.S. Rainsford declared, "You cannot present the Gospel to a hungry man with any hope of success until you have ministered to his physical wants...Jesus Christ means His church...to feed the hungry, shelter the homeless, clothe the naked, visit the sick, bury the dead, and, above all, preach the Gospel...." (p. 313) A.B. Simpson was the editor of *WWW*.

4. A.B. Simpson, *The Fullness of Jesus* (New York: The Christian Alliance Pub. Co., 1886), p. 25.

5. A.B. Simpson, *Christ in the Bible*, Vol IX (New York: The Christian Alliance Pub. Co., 1889), p. 227.

6. *CMAW* (December 23, 1905): 805.

7. Simpson, *Christ in the Bible*, Vol. IX, p. 237.



material miseries" of mankind by providing "real help for human suffering as well as human sin."<sup>8</sup>

In 1896, Simpson stated, "The law of Christ is the bearing of others' burdens, the sharing of others' griefs, sacrificing yourself for another."<sup>9</sup> Also in 1901, he interpreted the exhortation in James 2:15-16 as follows:

It is doing things to relieve and help the temporal needs of our suffering men....Our acts of love and help may be His links in bringing them to see the attraction of His love and listen to the Gospel of His Grace.<sup>10</sup>

In 1905, he encouraged "charitable relief for the orphans and the helpless."<sup>11</sup>

Perhaps Simpson's most significant statement relative to Christian social action was published in 1893:

We should aim to bring all the work of God within the sphere of the church of Christ....There is room not only for the worship of God, the teaching of sacred truth and the evangelization of the lost, but also for every phase of practical philanthropy and usefulness. There may be, in perfect keeping with the simple order and dignity of the church of God, the most aggressive work for the masses and the widest welcome for every class of sinful man; the ministry of healing for the sick and suffering administered in the name of Jesus; the most complete provision for charitable relief; industrial training and social elevation for the degraded classes, workshops for the unemployed, homes for the orphaned, shelter for the homeless, refuges for the inebriates, the fallen and the helpless; missions for the heathen; Christian literature for the instruction of the people, and every agency needed to make the church of God the light of the world and the mothering of the suffering and the lost. And there is no work that will be more glorifying to God than a church that will embrace just such features and completeness.<sup>12</sup>

Even more eloquent than such statements is the testimony of Simpson's activities. Three months after resigning as pastor of Thirteenth St. Presbyterian Church

in New York City, he and thirty-five others met in February, 1882, and founded the Gospel Tabernacle Church "for the especial purpose of Gospel work, particularly among the neglected classes, both at home and abroad."<sup>13</sup> That "the neglected classes" were especially in view is evidence of great social concern. Even if it was only the evangelization of such classes that was envisaged at that time--and we are not sure that it was--Simpson was well aware that there is nothing so powerful to effect social uplift, at least in the long term, as the experience of Christ's regenerating grace followed by walking in the Spirit. Indeed, he himself said, in elaborating on the Parable of the Great Supper recorded in Luke 14,

The provision of the Gospel for the temporal needs and physical in humanity is surely set forth in this picture....It (the Gospel) alleviates their physical condition. It is of infinite value even in improving the material condition of the poor, and leading to prosperity and success in temporal things.<sup>14</sup>

Worthy concern for the spiritual welfare of people cannot long be divorced from active concern for their physical, material and social deprivations, however much the spiritual concern may be primary, as it ought to be. Such proved to be the case in the early years of the Christian and Missionary Alliance, years in which A.B. Simpson was its guiding light and its towering inspiration.

Due to the influence of the Alliance and its leadership, the ministry in "hospitals, almshouses and charitable institutions" in New York City was so considerable by 1894, that it was said that even A.B. Simpson would have been at a loss to tell "how much the Alliance was doing for all (such) agencies of Christian work in that city."<sup>15</sup> At the turn of the century, the annual report of the Gospel Tabernacle in New York City, the "mother" congregation of the Christian and Missionary Alliance where Simpson was himself in charge, contained the statement that members of the congregation were involved in "much useful work...in nearly all the missions and charitable institutions of the city."<sup>16</sup> And in 1907, it was reported in *The Christian and Missionary Alliance Weekly* that many of the charitable institutions "within the limits of New York City, and, indeed, for many miles around" had benefited from the influence of the Gospel Tabernacle, and that

8. Norris Magnuson, *Salvation in the Slums* (Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1977), p. 44, apparently quoting *CAFMW* (November 27, 1895): 345, which has not been available to me.

9. *CAFMW* (September 25, 1896): 227. In 1899, P.W. Philpott, in an address to Alliance people, declared, "A good way to test your love to God is by the way you treat your brother...God is more concerned about my conduct toward my brother than by my prayers to Him." This address was reported in *CMAW* (August 19, 1899): 188.

10. A.B. Simpson, *Practical Christianity* (New York: Christian Alliance Pub. Co., 1901), p. 80. It is noteworthy that Simpson seems to have considered that the value of charitable and philanthropic activities lay in their power to make people more receptive to the Gospel of spiritual salvation.

11. *CMAW* (December 23, 1905): 806.

12. *The Christian Alliance & Missionary Weekly* (March 13, 1893): 165 (hereafter, *CAMW*), cf. *CMAW* (October 31, 1908): 78. It should be noted, however that in *CMAW* (July 14, 1897): 54, he objects to "humanitarian schemes and social reform movements to better the human and social condition of men without regard to the supreme spiritual and immortal needs." And his social interest seems to decline not long after the turn of the century.

13. G.P. Pardington, *Twenty-five Wonderful Years, 1889-1914: A Popular Sketch of the Christian and Missionary Alliance* (New York: Christian Alliance Pub. Co., 1914), p. 26.

14. *CMAW* (December 23, 1905): 806. See *CMAW* (August 3, 1907): 51, for similar statement.

15. Report by Dr. S.E. Furry in *CAFMW* (August 17, 1894): 160.

16. *CAMW* (January 20, 1900): 41.

## Section 5. The Work of the Early Alliance

many of their leaders were adherents of the Christian and Missionary Alliance.<sup>17</sup>

Highly influential in this connection was the annual Rescue Day which grew out of the Gospel Tabernacle's monthly "all-night prayer meeting...for the city mission workers of New York." The Rescue Day program, which included reports and presentations concerning welfare agencies and institutions of various kinds, generated widespread interest and support.<sup>18</sup> It must be added, moreover, that the sample and inspiration of the Gospel Tabernacle and its pastor spread with the Alliance throughout North America and overseas so that, along with a mighty evangelistic enterprise, there developed social enterprises of various kinds in many of the places where the representatives of the Alliance made their influence felt.

From such general statements concerning Simpson's impact of welfare work, we turn now to more specific material.

### Rescue Homes for Women

Though the Alliance as such did not establish or maintain homes for fallen women, Alliance people closely connected with the movement did so.<sup>19</sup> Indeed, there is a report of such a home as early as 1882, under the direction of a Mrs. Henry Naylor.<sup>20</sup> It is also reported that the following year (1883), the ministry of the Gospel Tabernacle inspired a Miss Margaret Strachan to open a home for women in a section of New York City where there were many houses of ill fame.<sup>21</sup>

In 1889, the Alliance "'solemnly set [Mrs. Emma Whittemore] apart' for a special rescue ministry to girls," and on October 25, 1890, she established in New York City, the Door of Hope, "a refuge and a home for girls of the better class who have been tempted from home and right."<sup>22</sup> Dr. Simpson's support of the venture is evidenced by the fact that he gave the address at its dedication. As a result of her efforts, by 1903, sixty-one Doors of Hope missions were established in various

parts of the United States of America.<sup>23</sup> One of these was opened in Fort Worth, Texas in 1891 by a Mrs. Delia Collins, a member of a family prominent in Alliance work in that city.<sup>24</sup>

Alliance support for such ventures is further evidenced by the fact that Henry Wilson, who became associate pastor at the Gospel Tabernacle in 1891, and field superintendent for Alliance work in the United States in 1901, an office he retained until his death in 1908, became chaplain of the Magdalene Home for Women in 1894, and thereafter promoted that home and other institutions of the kind at the annual Rescue Day described above.<sup>25</sup> From 1893 to 1902, the Alliance gave its support to what was known as the Rescue Band, which provided temporary lodging for many girls, and, beginning in 1895, provided training for girls in an industrial department.<sup>26</sup> Indeed, the relationship of Alliance branches and members with homes for "fallen" women in a number of cities is reported.<sup>27</sup>

### Orphans and Orphanages

One of the welfare institutions most closely connected with the Alliance was the Berachah Orphanage,<sup>28</sup> opened in 1886 at College Point on Long Island, New York, and later relocated in Nyack, New York. It provided a ministry to needy children beginning in 1888.<sup>29</sup> In an 1897 article, apparently by Simpson, it is stated, "The work of caring for the little ones, and especially the orphaned ones, is a fully recognized and important department of our Alliance work."<sup>30</sup>

17. *CMAW* (March 9, 1907): 111-112.

18. Magnuson, *Salvation in the Slums*, p. 17. See also *CMAW* (October 20, 1897): 404-406. *CMAW* (October 20, 1900): 225, reports on Rescue Day presentation with respect to Florence Crittenden Homes, Bowery Mission, Salvation Army, Dr. S.E. Furry's Midnight Mission on Doyer Street, New York, and Mr. Raws' Industrial Home in Germantown, PA.

19. Magnuson, *Salvation in the Slums*, p. 83.

20. Pardington, *Twenty-five Wonderful Years*, p. 29.

21. A.E. Thompson, *The Life of A.B. Simpson* (Harrisburg, PA: Christian Publications, Inc., 1920), p. 100. *WWW* (1885): 307, contains a report of the Florence Mission which included, among its ministries, a temporary refuge for fallen women. The relationship of this mission to the Alliance is unclear to the present writer.

22. Magnuson, *Salvation in the Slums*, p. 82, and E. Whittemore, *Record of Modern Miracles*, pp. 18-31.

23. See *Year Book of the Christian Alliance and the International Missionary Alliance*, 1893, p. 51; Magnuson, *Salvation in the Slums*, p. 82, in dependence on the *Christian Herald* (September 9, 1903): 750.

24. See *CMAW* (June 10, 1892): 370; *CAFMW* (March 30, 1894): 351; *CMAW* (January 22, 1897): 89; *CMAW* (October 20, 1897): 405; *CMAW* (September 2, 1899): 220.

25. M. Wilson and A.B. Simpson, *Henry Wilson, One of God's Best* (New York: The Alliance Press Co., 1908), p. 78, 112-113, 147; *CAFMW* (October 16 & 23, 1896): 346; *CMAW* (October 20, 1897): 405.

26. For a description of the work of the New York Rescue Band, see *CAFMW*, (May 8, 1896): 446-447.

27. Such a home in Denver, CO, *CMAW* (June 8, 1898): 544; and in Pittsburgh, PA, *CMAW* (July 2, 1904): 76-77. The Denver home was but one of the complex of social services making up the "Haymarket." Simpson encouraged financial support thereof.

28. There was also a Berachah Mission and Berachah Rest Home.

29. See Pardington, *Twenty-five Wonderful Years*, p. 96; *CMAW* (December 9, 1899): 445; *CMAW* (December 30, 1899): 492; *CMAW* (June 6, 1908): 157.

30. *CMAW* (October 6, 1897): 356. *The First Annual Report of the Christian and Missionary Alliance*, 1897-8, p. 84 contains the statement, "The Committee would recommend that the advisability of establishing orphanages in connection with our work to be taken up by the Board and commended to the liberality of our people...That the matter of homes, orphanages and schools under proper limitations be recognized as part of the Alliance on the foreign field."

Other orphanages in the continental United States besides Berachah were later to receive "direct and indirect support" from the Christian and Missionary Alliance.<sup>31</sup> In addition, famine in India in the 1890's led Alliance missionaries there to provide care for hundreds of children.

Articles by A.B. Simpson in *The Christian Alliance and Foreign Missionary Weekly* helped secure financial support for the "helpless children" in famine-stricken India.<sup>32</sup> Henry Wilson, Simpson's associate, became especially known for his activities and accomplishments on behalf of needy children. For a number of years, the contributions he secured from U.S. children underwrote the care of one hundred of the orphans who were provided for by Christian and Missionary Alliance missionaries in India.<sup>33</sup>

### Rest Homes and Medical Missions

In 1883, "Mr. Simpson...felt impelled to open his own home for personal ministry to the afflicted," and on May 16, 1883, it was dedicated "as a Home for Faith and Physical Healing." It was said at the time that "any sufferer who is really willing to exercise and act in faith for healing will be received for a limited time for instruction and waiting upon God for temporal and spiritual blessing."<sup>34</sup> But the need for separate facilities was evident, and a year later, on May 5, 1884, Berachah Home was dedicated in another part of New York City, an institution to which Simpson devoted a good deal of his time, and which he described as a "delightful 'place' of rest or spiritual blessing."<sup>35</sup> Moreover, it was so fruitful a venture that it is reported that in its first fifteen years of ministry, 10,000 had been "transformed" through "rest, quickening, and Divine healing."<sup>36</sup>

With respect to this report, it is to be kept in mind that though Berachah Home was dedicated as a home for rest and healing, the healing in view was divine, not medical. Simpson believed that others should avail themselves of medical means, but he taught that

Christians should rely on divine power alone for relief from physical ills.<sup>37</sup> In this connection, it is instructive to note that he says concerning the physical ailments of children in the Berachah Orphanage, an institution separate from Berachah Home:

In the case of the children of our Orphanage, we would not feel justified in taking this responsibility [i.e., the responsibility of trusting solely in Christ for their healing], in view of the law of the state requiring the care of an attendant physician.

In all cases of sickness in others where there is danger involved and you have the responsibility to meet the obligations of the law, it is a great matter, if possible, to have some regular physician who believes in Divine Healing within call, so as to be responsible if necessary.<sup>38</sup>

Though Berachah Home was the most important of the homes established by or connected with the Alliance, a variety of other homes came into existence<sup>39</sup> and/or were supported in one way or another because of the influence of Simpson's ministry.<sup>40</sup>

Miss Kate White opened her home near the Gospel Tabernacle where she was a member and devoted herself to "caring for, feeding and clothing the poor and needy, worthy and unworthy."<sup>41</sup> In her obituary (1898), it was stated that her home was "a shelter for the homeless and unfortunate....She often even denied herself a bed and food to be hospitable to others."<sup>42</sup> Carrie Judd Montgomery, "a close friend of Simpson's from the early 1880's," established rest homes in Buffalo, New York, and in San Francisco, California. Though she and her husband joined the Salvation Army in 1892, they and their work continued to enjoy the appreciation and support of Simpson himself and of the Alliance, to which they also belonged.<sup>43</sup>

Typical of various other homes in North America bearing some connection with the Alliance was a home in Philadelphia directed by Mrs. Sarah Beck, which existed for the sake of people "weary or sick in body or mind."<sup>44</sup>

31. For orphan work in Fort Worth, TX, see *CMAW* (January 22, 1897): 89; *CMAW* (October 20, 1897): 405; in Chattanooga, TN, *CMAW* (June 24, 1899): 61; in Richmond, VA, *CMAW* (August 12, 1899): 173; in Newbern, VA, *CMAW* (October 12, 1907): 185.

32. See *CAFMW* (December 4, 1896): 517, *ibid.* (December 11, 1896): 529-532; *ibid.* (December 1900): 300.

33. A.B. Simpson in M. Wilson and A.B. Simpson, *Henry Wilson: One of God's Best*, p. 104-105.

34. See Thompson, *Life of A.B. Simpson*, p. 104-141. Was this the real beginning of Berachah Home?

35. *Ibid.*, p. 142-143; *CMAW*, May 4, 1898): 420. For the "objects" of Berachah Home as officially set forth in 1893, see *Year Book of the Christian Alliance and the International Missionary Alliance*, 1893, p. 48-49. In this connection, see also *CMAW* (June 6, 1908): 157. In 1897, Berachah Home was relocated in Nyack, NY, where it carried on its ministry for twenty years. See Thompson, *Life of A.B. Simpson*, p. 142-143.

36. *CMAW* (April 23, 1897): 387; cf. *WWW* (May 1885): 158-159.

37. See A.B. Simpson, *The Lord for the Body* (New York: Christian Alliance Pub. Co., 1925), p. 129.

38. *Ibid.* (original text 1900?), p. 131-132.

39. A Berachah home in Bombay, India is mentioned in *CMAW* (November 25, 1899): 406.

40. In *CMAW* (January 23, 1891): 50, Simpson speaks of a home for invalids not yet ready to trust the Lord completely for healing.

41. Magnuson, *Salvation in the Slums*, p. 200, n. 15; *CMAW* (March 1899).

42. *CMAW* (July 6, 1898): 17.

43. See Magnuson, *Salvation in the Slums*, p. 70; *CMAW* (April 22, 1892): 257.

44. See *CMAW* (1905): 700. For other Alliance homes, see *CMAW* (November 24, 1893): 334; *CMAW* (April 23, 1897): 393; *CMAW* (May 14, 1904): 362; *Alliance Weekly* (November 18, 1911): 110, (hereafter *AW*).

## Section 5. The Work of the Early Alliance

In the area of health ministries, mention must be made of the ministry of Berachah Mission in the section of New York City known as Hell's Kitchen. There "Dr. Dowkonut...held a free dispensary and gave medical attendance without charge to the poor of the neighborhood."<sup>45</sup> No doubt, Alliance inspiration led to similar ministries elsewhere.<sup>46</sup>

Besides the Alliance-inspired efforts on behalf of physical needs in North America, Alliance missionaries overseas engaged in extensive medical programs in alleviation of physical distresses. As early as 1882, Simpson praised medical missions overseas<sup>47</sup> and in that same year called for prayer and counsel concerning a proposed sanitarium on the Bosphorus.<sup>48</sup> In 1892, he not only defended medical missions but also invited volunteers for medical missionary service in Africa.<sup>49</sup> It should be noted, however, that he frequently emphasized that medical missions are justified because they open people's hearts to the reception of the Gospel.<sup>50</sup>

### Industrial Missions

*The Christian and Missionary Alliance Weekly*, July 4, 1890, reported a sewing school at Catherine Mission in New York City. In 1891, a movement to provide work for men in Rescue Missions was sanctioned.<sup>51</sup> As already noted, beginning in 1895, the Rescue Band lodged and trained girls, a ministry which enjoyed Alliance support until 1902. Beginning in the mid-1890s, William Raws of Germantown, PA, operated a plant employing 125 people on a "work-for-what-you-can-get plan." This provision, whereby the needs of otherwise unemployed people were met without undermining their self-respect, was featured in the annual Rescue Day program of the Alliance.<sup>52</sup> Door of Hope establishments, mentioned above, provided training for their residents. In the New York City Door of Hope "homemaking, dressmaking and fancy serving" were taught. On the Door of Hope property at Tappan, New York, there was "training in gardening and poultry care as well." A Women's Industrial Center was part of

the Door of Hope establishment in Fort Worth, Texas.<sup>53</sup> In Buffalo, New York, there was an "Alliance-related 'Industrial School' for girls."<sup>54</sup>

In 1893, A.B. Simpson reported on a visit he had made to India. One of the things that excited his interest was an Industrial School and Workshop operated by Alliance people in Akola, India, for the teaching of "useful trades to the native boys." He considered it desirable that the operation be "considerably enlarged" and "two or three manufacturing departments added." Though he held that "The missionary society ought not to put its funds into this work," he encouraged readers to invest their lives and their money in the project.<sup>55</sup>

In the years which followed Simpson's visit to India, famine conditions in that sub-continent led Alliance workers to a greatly expanded program of aid. A major project in this respect was the operation of a 350-acre farm in Sanand, India, where orphans were settled and taught how to earn their own livelihood.<sup>56</sup>

### Famine Relief

In 1891, relief was sent through the Alliance to flood victims in China.<sup>57</sup> During a severe famine in South China in 1903, Alliance missionaries provided food for as many as 3,000 per day.<sup>58</sup> With respect to this famine, Simpson wrote, "We cannot too strongly appeal for help in this hour of need and opportunity."<sup>59</sup>

As indicated earlier, famine relief was also provided for thousands in India at the turn of the century. A.B. Simpson wrote at length describing the desperate need and appealed to North American members of the Society to contribute generously. On one occasion he declared, "It would seem to be a duty of God's children...to plan for systematic gifts...for the next few months...." He added that "enemies of the truth are not neglected" in Alliance relief efforts, though "special provision (was made) for the native converts and their families."<sup>60</sup> Again in 1912, he appealed for famine relief in India.<sup>61</sup>

45. Pardington, *Twenty-five Wonderful Years*, p. 100.

46. From 1889 to 1891, Simpson repeatedly publicized the intention of opening a home for the insane. See *The Christian Alliance* (January 1889: 8 (hereafter *CA*); *CMAW* (November 21, 1890): 306; *CMAW* (January 1891): 6; *CMAW* (August 7, 1891): 82. We are not aware that the intention was ever fulfilled.

47. *WWW* (January 1882): 44.

48. *WWW* (June 1882): 218.

49. See *CMAW* (April 15, 1892): 242-243; *CMAW* (May 13, 1892): 306; *CMAW* (July 15, 1892): 40.

50. In *WWW* (March 1883): 61, he criticizes a medical missionary for saying medical missions is a part of the church's task, and affirms that our real task is to get people to trust in Christ as their healer.

51. *CMAW* (March 27, 1891): 194.

52. See description of this program in *CMAW* (April 16, 1897): 376.

53. Magnuson, *Salvation in the Slums*, p. 98; *CMAW* (February 13, 1891): 108; *CAFMW* (March 30, 1894): 351-352.

54. Magnuson, *Salvation in the Slums*, p. 236 n.33.

55. *CMAW* (April 28, 1893): 261. See also *CMAW* (December 22, 1893): 387; *CMAW* (February 3, 1900): 79; *CMAW* (March 3, 1900): 142; *CMAW* (May 3, 1902): 241-242.

56. See *CMAW* (November 19, 1904): 392; Magnuson, *Salvation in the Slums*, p.99. When famine conditions in India eased, the Alliance phased out its homes for orphanages and its industrial programs. See *CMAW* (February 15, 1908): 332; cf. *The Thirteenth Annual Report of the Christian and Missionary Alliance*, May 24, 1910, p. 11.

57. *CMAW* (March 6, 1891): 146.

58. *CMAW* (June 20, 1903): 37. See also *CMAW* (April 18, 1903): 221.

59. *CMAW* (June 13, 1903): 15.

60. See *CMAW* (November 25, 1899): 405-407; *CMAW* (February 3, 1900): 67, 73, 79; *CMAW* (March 10, 1900): 152; *CMAW* (March 31, 1900): 195-197; *AW* (April 6, 1912): 10. In 1918, Alliance personnel

Such relief was not only provided overseas in places like China and India. Needy people in the United States were assisted as well. There is on record the appreciation of a Kansas family which had received eight barrels of clothing as well as a gift of money in 1896, meeting not only its desperate need but that of neighbours as well.<sup>62</sup> A similar letter of gratitude for "food and clothing" assisting "the drought stricken in many districts" was received from Springfield, Montana, in 1903.<sup>63</sup> In response to the San Francisco earthquake and fire of 1906, A.B. Simpson immediately sent aid, and appealed in the Christian and Missionary Alliance for general contributions. Within a week the members of his Gospel Tabernacle alone contributed some \$700 for the purpose.<sup>64</sup> In 1913, he urged contributions for flood relief in the Central and Western districts of the C&MA.<sup>65</sup>

### Immigrants

Alliance people were assisting immigrants from Germany as early as 1887.<sup>66</sup> In 1890, the Alliance began mission work in the section of New York City known as "little Italy." By 1895, this effort included a home for girls. Students and faculty of Nyack College conducted services in Italian in surrounding communities and offered night school classes three times a week.<sup>67</sup> It may be assumed that such efforts had the support of Simpson himself.

M. Nardi, "a lifelong friend of A.B. Simpson," aided Italians in hospitals, prisons and elsewhere. In one of the poorest areas of Chicago, he established a vocational school for children, a kindergarten, a Sunday School and a sewing school. In another part of the city he instituted evening classes in English. And in other places, he initiated similar programs for needy newcomers from Italy. That Simpson compiled a biographical volume honouring Nardi, indicates at least general appreciation of his work, if not outright support.<sup>68</sup>

### Temperance

Miss J.E. Dougall, a friend of Simpson, provided leadership for the Women's Christian Temperance Union in Montreal, and played a considerable part in its

development across Canada, becoming the national vice-president in 1903. At her death in 1904, tribute was paid to her in the columns of *The Christian and Missionary Alliance Weekly*.<sup>69</sup> Mrs. Delia Collins of Fort Worth, Texas, and Mrs. John Best of Pittsburgh, PA, were prominent in WCTU work in their respective states as well as being strong supporters of the Alliance.<sup>70</sup> Josephus Pulis, whose life and leadership in Alliance work inspired Simpson to write his biography, was on the staff of the Christian Home for Intemperate Men.<sup>71</sup> In addition, Henry Wilson, Associate Pastor of the Gospel Tabernacle during Simpson's leadership there, was president of a mission which emphasized the pledging of total abstinence.<sup>72</sup>

A.B. Simpson himself delivered daily Bible lectures in the mid-1890's at the World's WCTU Evangelistic Training School.<sup>73</sup> The weekly magazine he edited included a temperance column for a number of years.<sup>74</sup> In 1907, he praised the temperance movement, and added, "All hail to every social, political and religious influence and effort that can further restrain this sinful curse."<sup>75</sup> In subsequent years, however, he points out that despite social efforts, the consumption of alcoholic beverages had increased.<sup>76</sup> He emphasized that without Christ, social and political effort is of no permanent help.<sup>77</sup>

### General Education<sup>78</sup>

In his earlier writings, Simpson strongly favoured educational work on the part of Christian organizations. In 1882, he praised educational missions overseas.<sup>79</sup> In 1885, we have reference to a "Chinese School" in connection with the Twenty-third St. Tabernacle in New York.<sup>80</sup> In 1887, a kindergarten in connection with Simpson's church in New York City is reported.<sup>81</sup>

were released for relief work in Palestine. See *AW* (March 30, 1918): 401.

61. *AW* (April 6, 1912): 10.

62. *CAFMW* (April 24, 1896): 406.

63. *CMAW* (December 26, 1903): 53.

64. See *CMAW* (April 28, 1906): 249; *CMAW* (May 5, 1906): 265.

65. *AW* (April 5, 1913).

66. See Magnuson, *Salvation in the Slums*, p. 17.

67. *Christian and Missionary Alliance Annual Report*, 1910 (for the year 1909), p. 117.

68. See A. B. Simpson, comp., *Michele Nardi, the Italian Evangelist, His Life and Work* (New York: Published by Mrs. B.P. Nardi, 1916), p. 3, 22, 24, 28-30, 33, 51, 143.

69. See *CMAW* (April 23, 1904): 313.

70. See *CMAW* (January 22, 1897): 89; and *CMAW* (April 11, 1903): 205 for tributes in Simpson's magazine when they died.

71. See A. B. Simpson, *From the Uttermost to the Uttermost: The life Story of Josephus Pulis* (New York: Christian Alliance Pub. Co., 1914) p. 11, 31, 55.

72. Magnuson, *Salvation in the Slums*, p. 136.

73. *CAFMW* (April 24, 1896): 403.

74. See *CAFMW* (February 2, 1894): 137; *CMAW* (April 9, 1897): 353; *CMAW* (November 11, 1899): 382. In *CAFMW* (January 31, 1896): 110, A.B. Simpson commended the temperance work of the renowned WCTU leader, Frances Willard.

75. *CMAW* (November 9, 1907): 96.

76. *AW* (November 16, 1912): 97.

77. *Ibid.* (January 25, 1913): 247.

78. Education for Christian ministry does not concern us in this study, except as general education may be said to be for the purpose of training for ministry.

79. *WWW* (January 1882): 23, 44.

80. *WWW* (January 1885): 32.

81. *WWW* "Report of the Christian Convention at Old Orchard, Inc., held July 31 to August 9, 1887": 84.

## Section 5. The Work of the Early Alliance

Beginning in 1891, Simpson repeatedly spoke of the desire to establish a "preparatory school for the education of the children connected with the Christian Alliance."<sup>82</sup> The *First Annual Report of the Christian and Missionary Alliance*, 1897-98, pp. 13, 85, contains a recommendation urging the provision of schools for Alliance children in the United States. Such provision was said to be "one of the greatest needs" and of "great importance." In 1894, we read of a day school in Stockton, California, under Alliance auspices, the purpose there being "to bring the children, young and old, to Christ, and to prepare them for missionary work at home and abroad."<sup>83</sup> However, it appears that Alliance-sponsored education of a general nature did not begin in the New York area until 1906. For a number of years thereafter, college courses and an academy initially for higher school grades were provided, but their existence was temporary.<sup>84</sup> According to D.W. Cartmel, "the Academy had been justified on the grounds that it supplied an alternative to the state or local schools controlled by a philosophy not consistent with Alliance views of the Bible."<sup>85</sup>

Provision of a liberal education to white boys and girls of the southern U.S. mountains who could not afford to go to the regular schools was reported in 1908.<sup>86</sup> Moreover, in the 1917-18 Report of the Alliance, schools in India and in South China were reported, including a school for blind girls in the latter area. The need for more schools in India was noted.<sup>87</sup> No doubt many more Christian schools both in North America and overseas were sponsored and/or inspired by Alliance people who had been influenced directly or indirectly by A.B. Simpson.

Simpson's support of educational enterprises seems, however, to have been a response to practical needs as he perceived them, rather than being rooted in his fundamental convictions. In 1893 he declared, "We are not called to build up great educational institutions" overseas, though he conceded that in such areas as South China "a certain amount of educational work seems to be necessary, as the native schools compel their pupils to learn and practice heathenism."<sup>88</sup> Indeed, in that

same year he declared, his view is influenced by the conviction that the gospel could be quickly taken to all the world and then Christ would come.<sup>89</sup> Perhaps one can discern how he would have harmonized his support of educational institutions with such a view in a statement he made in 1912:

Whereas educational work may be justified on the grounds of expediency, direct evangelism and Bible training work rest upon the distinct command of Christ, as well as His personal example and that of the apostles. The former may be a matter of opinion, the latter never. It is binding. Evangelism is the first and great business of the church, and must always remain so.<sup>90</sup>

### Race Relations

In a day when racial prejudice was widespread, A.B. Simpson referred to the blacks who supported him as his "beloved coloured brethren."<sup>91</sup> In 1896, Simpson's periodical published an article by an Alliance worker in the southern United States in which the living conditions of Negroes, and attitudes toward them, were strongly criticized.<sup>92</sup> The Alliance constituency supported schools for coloured people, the most important, perhaps, being the Lovejoy Missionary Institute in North Carolina, which opened its doors to needy people of all colours in 1906.<sup>93</sup> A variety of homes and institutions ministering chiefly to Negroes were either sponsored or heavily supported by Alliance people. Moreover, the columns of the *Alliance Weekly* publicized and commended such efforts, including Peter Robinson's rescue home for women established in 1904, the social work of Miss Joanne Moore of Nashville, Tennessee (Alliance responsibility of it beginning in 1906), and the Steele Home in Chattanooga, Tennessee.<sup>94</sup>

The attitude and efforts of A.B. Simpson and his co-labourers with respect to the racial situation in the United States is important evidence that they were people of noble Christian stature.

### War and Peace

Simpson's views on war and peace seem to have been complex. On the one hand, he made clear that he

82. *CMAW* (August 7, 1891): 82; *CMAW* (September 25, 1891): 194; *CAFMW* (February 9, 1894): 144.

83. *CAFMW* (December 7, 1894): 542.

84. D.W. Cartmel, "Mission Policy and Program of A.B. Simpson" (unpublished M.A. thesis, Hartford Seminary Foundation, 1962), p. 156-157. For reference to High School and College work at Nyack, see *AW* (June 15, 1912): 165; *AW* (December 21, 1912): 187; *AW* (March 17, 1914): 354; *The Thirteenth Annual Report of the Christian and Missionary Alliance*, May 24, 1910, p. 89.

85. *Thirteenth Annual Report*, p. 157.

86. *CMAW* (June 6, 1908): 157.

87. See p. 13, 19.

88. A.B. Simpson, *Larger Outlooks on Missionary Lands* (New York: Christian Alliance Pub. Co., 1893), p. 579, 356. In *CAFMW*

(March 6, 1896): 229, he opposed the establishment of Christian Schools in Manitoba, Canada, on the basis that the public schools were not sectarian

89. Simpson, *Larger Outlooks*, p. 579.

90. *AW* (December 21, 1912): 178.

91. See Magnuson, *Salvation in the Slums*, p. 122. For reports of Alliance work among blacks in the United States, see *CMAW* (May 2, 1898): 228; *CMAW* (July 6, 1898): 13; *CMAW* (September 23, 1899): 265.

92. *CAFMW* (January 24, 1896): 86.

93. See *CMAW* (January 13, 1906): 35; *CMAW* ((October 27, 1906): 257; *CMAW* (May 2, 1908): 83-84; *CMAW* (June 6, 1908): 157.

94. See *CMAW* (March 27, 1891): 195; *CMAW* (June 24, 1899): 61; *CMAW* (July 2, 1904): 66-67; *CMAW* (June 9, 1906): 354.

supported international efforts which made for peace. In 1896, he criticized the policy of Britain and the United States with respect to Venezuela.<sup>95</sup> In April, 1911, he indicated his support for President Taft's proposal of an Arbitration Treaty between Britain and the United States, and called upon the Alliance constituency to give hearty support to "Arbitration Sunday."<sup>96</sup>

It is true that early in 1914, Simpson declared that peace propaganda and effort are of little value. Only Christ brings peace. "The best peace propaganda...is the preaching of the Gospel of Grace to sinners of all nations."<sup>97</sup> It may be that the clouds of war on the horizon were making him pessimistic about human peace efforts. It may be, however, that his earlier support for international peace efforts was always with the conviction that it was only a very little that they could accomplish.

Despite his concern for peace, Simpson voiced opposition to those who held that war is always wrong, declaring,

While the spirit of Christianity is preeminently for peace, yet God has also a providential purpose of dealing with sinful nations, and sometimes war is one of His scourges.<sup>98</sup>

It seems to be Simpson himself who states in 1896,

"President Kruger showed an excellent spirit in offering troops to assist the English, if necessary in repelling the Matabele rising."<sup>99</sup> Moreover, he supported the United States in its war with Spain, declaring that it was right for the American government "to interpose for the protection of the outraged Cuban people," and urging his readers to pray that "this war shall utterly and speedily accomplish God's highest purposes for the world and the coming of His Son."<sup>100</sup> He opposed restoration of the Philippines to Spain after that war,<sup>101</sup> and rejoiced when it was announced that this would not take place, because it would now be possible to "share with them (the Philippine people) the holy

privileges of our Christian heritage as well as our liberty and civilization."<sup>102</sup>

In 1905, Simpson judged that Russia's defeat by Japan was "well deserved," and stated that "God...(was) compelling the proud oppressor (i.e. Russia) to stop a war which had been in defiance of every sentiment of justice and humanity."<sup>103</sup> A few months later, he added that Japan was "manifestly used by Him (God) as the instrument of His providence."<sup>104</sup>

In 1915, the *Alliance Weekly* described the sinking of the steamer Ancona as "another shocking outrage" and "another drop in the full cup of Teuton iniquity," this at a time when the United States was not yet at war with Germany.<sup>105</sup> After it had become involved, Simpson called for unreserved support of the war effort and described the Allied armies as "forces of liberty and righteousness."<sup>106</sup>

### The Social Order

A subject which necessarily requires attention is Simpson's attitude to the social order. He drew attention to "the oppression of the poor" and to the

sweat shops of our manufacturing cities...women and children...toiling for a pittance in suffocating workrooms with long hours of half-remunerated toil...struggling girls that have been told...that they cannot expect to earn a living by honest toil, but must also expect to sell themselves as well.<sup>107</sup>

He declared that "the whole system is harsh and selfish to the core."<sup>108</sup> However, there was no suggestion that the government should act to alleviate such circumstances. He only encouraged liberality by the wealthy.<sup>109</sup> In fact, to the oppressed he said, "Do not go and fight your battle; do not get up a strike or a political party; leave your vindication to Him."<sup>110</sup> In

95. *CAFMW* (January 3, 1896): 13.

96. *CMAW* (April 15, 1911): 40. He said, "With Great Britain and America united for peace, the world would have to behave itself!"

97. *AW* (March 7, 1914): 354.

98. *CMAW* (March 2, 1898): 204. cf. *CMAW* (April 27, 1898): 393 and *CMAW* (May 4, 1898) 411. He opposed the pacifist position of the Quakers. See *CMAW* (May 4, 1898): 420-421.

99. *CAFMW* (April 17, 1896): 373.

100. *CMAW* (May 4, 1898): 420-421. See also *CMAW* (April 27, 1898): 396. For a somewhat similar statement concerning the Japanese-Chinese War, see *CAFMW* (November 1894): 410-411.

Earlier still, he had condemned France in regard to the Franco-Prussian War. See *WWW* (May 1885): 129.

101. *CMAW* (August 3, 1899) 108.

102. *CMAW* (November 12, 1898): 444. Simpson adds, "We are not pleading for war," but "it may be the day has come for the renewed chastening of France, as well as Spain, and the using of Great Britain as the instrument of God's judgment on another Roman Catholic country...."

103. *CMAW* (march 18, 1905): 161.

104. *CMAW* (September 9, 1905): 561. For his harsh words for Italy in the Italian-Turkish conflict, see *CMAW* (November 18, 1911): 98.

105. *AW* (November 20, 1915): 113. Earlier in 1915, it was stated in the same periodical that Belgium, England, Germany and Russia were "all suffering for national sins." See *AW* (August 28, 1915): 339.

106. *AW* (April 28, 1917): 49; *AW* (January 5, 1918): 209. Cf. *AW* (January 6, 1917)L 264; *AW* (April 17, 1917): 7; *AW* (April 28, 1917): 50-52; *AW* (May 25, 1918): 116.

107. Simpson, *Practical Christianity*, p. 135-136.

108. *Ibid.*, 139.

109. *Ibid.*, p. 132-134.

110. *Ibid.*, cf. *CAFMW* (July 20, 1894): 51; *CMAW* (October 7, 1892): 248. *CMAW* (August 17, 1908): 332. In *AW* (October 7, 1911): 3, he declares that the solution to labour problems is the return of Christ. In A.B. Simpson, *Christ in the Bible*, Vol. XVII (New York: Christian Alliance Pub. Co., 1904), p. 240, he speaks of "letting them (i.e. the governments of the world) see that Christ's kingdom is not of this world, not in antagonism to any human authority."

## Section 5. The Work of the Early Alliance

1896, he described Labour Unions as "a step toward the universal democracy and lawlessness which is to be the condition of the last days, as symbolized in Rev. 17--by the kings without their crowns."<sup>111</sup>

Why was it that Simpson seems to have thought that the restructuring of society was not to be encouraged? Was it because of his expectation of the very imminent return of Christ? Was it because he believed that such effort would encourage people to fix their hopes on this world rather than on the world to come? Was it because of the laissez-faire spirit of the times? Was it because he shared the widespread optimism of the day concerning the American "way of life"? His positive view of "our liberty and civilization" quoted above may so indicate. One could legitimately conclude that all of these considerations, and perhaps others as well, may have had a part to play in shaping his view of the matter.

Simpson was not unaware that there were those who believed that social change was necessary. He was strongly opposed to socialism and repeatedly condemned it. In 1885 he declared, "Socialism has become a hideous war against civilization and humanity."<sup>112</sup> In 1911, he called it "a substitute for the kingdom and coming of the Lord Jesus Christ."<sup>113</sup> Previously he had said, "God does not come...to sweep away all differences and bring a hopeless socialism."<sup>114</sup> Nor did he associate it solely with theological liberals.<sup>115</sup> He criticized Frances Willard, renowned national president of the WCTU, for her socialist views, despite such a regard for her that he could speak of her as "our dear sister."<sup>116</sup> Moreover, he criticized Salvation Army leaders in England for their view in this respect, making mention of William Booth's book, *In Darkest England and the Way Out* (1890), and of the reception given to General Booth's views in Paris, France. He commented, "The grand basis of spiritual regeneration is ignored, but the wedge is in and a failure on any other basis will open

the eyes of leaders in the work."<sup>117</sup> Nevertheless, the work of the Salvation Army in the United States could be featured in Simpson's periodical and high praise given to it for its "love for the lost."<sup>118</sup>

Simpson's view of efforts at improving the social order is evident when he urges us to "cease from wasting our lives on good but secondary things." Our purpose, he says, is "to gather out of the world a people for His name and then to prepare the way for His kingdom and His benignant reign."<sup>119</sup>

### Conclusion

Whatever one may say about Simpson's views on world peace, and his lack of support for change in the structures of society, the social welfare impact of his movement was both enormous and magnificent. Moreover, it has been rightly described as "essentially a by-product of the deeper spiritual life Simpson and his co-workers sought to cultivate."<sup>120</sup> As F.W. Farr wrote in *The Christian and Missionary Alliance Weekly* in 1907, what was done of this nature was done "incidentally and immediately." It was the result of lives transformed by the power of the Gospel.<sup>121</sup> It seems to this writer that it is fair to say that so much was accomplished because what was of foremost importance was kept foremost without forgetting that what is secondary must be accorded its proper significance.

Only one closing comment is necessary. Whatever the reasons, there seems to have been a decline in concern about social needs beginning in the last years of the first decade of the twentieth century. The pages of the official organ of the Alliance contain much less material having to do with the meeting of man's material and social needs. (Almost all of our quotations are from the earlier years.) There are intimations that Simpson was always somewhat ambivalent about the institutional and welfare aspects of Alliance work. In 1893 he wrote, "If we had a hundred million dollars, we would not spend one cent of it in establishing another school at home, or an institute abroad, unless it were simply for the purpose of training persons directly to preach the gospel."<sup>122</sup>

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Simpson criticizes governments, and on at least one occasion, indicates that revolution is not necessarily wrong, *AW* (April 28, 1917): 50, but that is as far as he goes.

111. *CAFMW* (July 24, 1896): 94.

112. *WWW* (February 1885): 64.

113. A.B. Simpson, *The Old Faith and the New Gospels* (New York: Alliance Press Co., 1911), p. 7. Cf. *AW* (May 4, 1912): 65; *AW* (May 18, 1912): 98.

114. Simpson, *Practical Christianity*, p. 75. Cf. *AW* (November 25, 1911): 118.

115. He insisted that liberals were seldom effective with the "lowest classes" because they lacked both the message and the spiritual empowerment which were required. See *AW* (May 20, 1911): 120. For Simpson's endorsement of a negative review of C.M. Sheldon's book *In His Steps*, see *CMAW* (August 26, 1899): 201.

116. See Simpson, *The Old Faith and the New Gospels*, p. 127; *CAFMW* (May 22, 1896): 492; *CMAW* (March 2, 1898): 204.

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117. *CMAW* (May 1, 1891): 283. For criticisms of the Salvation Army by Simpson on other grounds, see *WWW* (July 1882): 283; *WWW* (January 1883): 1.

118. *CMAW* (October 20, 1900): 225; *CMAW* (April 22, 1892): 257; *AW* (September 7, 1912): 369.

119. *CMAW* (June 25, 1897): 612. Cf. *CMAW* (November 10, 1897): 472.

120. Magnuson, *Salvation in the Slums*, p. 18.

121. *CMAW* (March 9, 1907): 111-112, 118.

122. *CMAW* (October 20, 1893): 243. Apparently in the same year, he did say, "A certain amount of educational work seems to be necessary (in south China), as the native schools compel their pupils to learn and practice heathenism." However, he wished such schools to become the responsibility of national Christians as swiftly as



However, the first clear intimation of a tendency to reduce such involvement surfaces in relation to the work of the Alliance in India. There, a very large program of educational, industrial and relief activities had developed. The evidence shows that the Rev. M.B. Fuller came home on furlough in 1907-08 to the United States "to consult with the Board of the Christian and Missionary Alliance about 'practical questions of missionary policy.' Some of the items under discussion were orphanages, education and industrial work." As was to be expected, the consultation concluded with a reaffirmation of evangelism as the concern of the Alliance. It appears, however, that orphanage work, which had been very prominent in Alliance work in India, was only "conceded a temporary place" in the program.<sup>123</sup> In accord with this decision, the *Annual Report of the Christian and Missionary Alliance* in 1910, recommended the phasing out of orphanage work in India, a decision that seems to reverse the position commended in the first *Annual Report of the Christian and Missionary Alliance*, 1897-98, which recommended the establishment of schools and orphanages at home,

and the recognition of "homes, orphanages and schools under proper limitations...as part of the Alliance on the foreign field."<sup>124</sup> Following the decision reported in 1910, efforts toward the alleviation of physical and welfare needs were still being reported. Industrial work flourished "as late as 1914."<sup>125</sup> Schools in South China, including a school for blind girls at Kwai Ping, were reported in 1917-18.<sup>126</sup> Other welfare efforts continued to have Alliance sponsorship as well, but such concerns had much less prominence and are given much less attention.

Priority must always be accorded to evangelism and any program or activity which threatens that priority must be pruned. On the other hand, evangelism which does not result in the fueling of social concern is a distortion of what Christian evangelism is meant to be. It needs to be asked in all seriousness whether the turn away from social action taken by the Alliance about 1908, a turn which Simpson apparently accepted, if he did not inspire it, was a needed pruning or a retrograde step.

possible. See his *Larger Outlooks on Missionary Lands*, p. 356. Cf. p. 187, 578, 579.

123. D.W. Cartmel, "Mission Policy and Program," p. 154; *CMAW* (March 14, 1908): 400, tells of Fuller's coming to the U.S.A. to confer concerning the "orphanage, educational and industrial work." *CMAW* (February 15, 1908): 332, reports that "gradual discontinuance of regular orphanage work in India was authorized."

124. *First Annual Report of the Christian and Missionary Alliance*, 1897-98, p. 84, 85. On p. 13, it is stated, "We have not forgotten the claims of the fatherless and the orphan." See also *The Fourteenth Annual Report of the Christian and Missionary Alliance*, 1910, p. 99.

125. D.W. Cartmel, "Mission Policy and Program," p. 124.

126. See *The Twenty-first Annual Report of the Christian and Missionary Alliance*, 1917, p. 19.

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Reading 5.3

## A. B. Simpson's Understanding of the Role of Women in Ministry

Leslie A. Andrews

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Women in ministry is not a recent phenomenon. In fact, Dayton argues that modern revivalism gave birth to the women's rights movement and that, next to Quakerism, Evangelicalism "has given the greatest role to women in the life of the church."<sup>1</sup> The argument is a critical one because much of the opposition to the ministry of women in the church today seems to be a revolt against contemporary feminism in its more radical manifestations.

Albert B. Simpson, founder of The Christian and Missionary Alliance, exuded respect and admiration for godly women and their contributions to the worldwide work of evangelism and missions to which God had called him. He said, "there are certain truths which God emphasizes at certain times. He is ever speaking to the age and generation, and He never speaks at random but always to the point and to the times."<sup>2</sup> Perhaps it is timely to recall the views of our founder as we rethink the roles women occupy in The Christian and Missionary Alliance today.

Knowing Simpson's eschatological framework is central to understanding his views about women in ministry. He was possessed by a consuming passion to evangelize a lost world before the return of the King, sparked at least in part by a vision he received during his pastoral ministry in Louisville, Kentucky. That vision eventually nudged him to move to New York City, the communication hub of the world of his day, where he could launch his missionary efforts. Simpson was convinced that his were the "last days," so there was an urgency about getting the gospel out to "bring back the King."

Simpson did not seek to placate those whose ecclesiastical agendas were, in his opinion, secondary to the task of world evangelization. If women furthered the primary mission of the Church to reach lost souls for Christ, then he enthusiastically endorsed their ministries to achieve that objective. In 1893, for instance,

following a "great convention" in Atlanta, Georgia, in which women had spoken with blessing, one of the leading pastors of the city, supported by the ministerial association, tried to set "the community right on the subject of women speaking in public."

After chiding the pastor for forgetting "all the glorious results of that great convention, in the single fact that it had run across one of his ecclesiastical convictions," Simpson went on to describe the public ministry of women as

.... a little side issue of a purely speculative character, which God has already settled, not only in His word, but in His providence, by the seal which He is placing in this very day, in every part of the world, upon the public work of consecrated Christian women. Dear brother, *let the Lord manage the women. He can do it better than you, and you turn your batteries against the common enemy* [emphasis added].<sup>3</sup>

At another time, Simpson commended, at least indirectly, the public ministry of women when commenting on the value of hard places, by lifting up "Mrs. Booth" and said of her that she

was literally pushed into her public service for which she had no experience or training whatever, and from which she shrank back with extreme sensitiveness and dread. But finding herself alone and compelled to say something, she opened her lips in dependence upon God; and to her own amazement and the delight of her hearers, she found that God had given her an unction of which she had never dreamed, and which, but for that venture, would have been unused and lost.<sup>4</sup>

Women were of great value in the economy of God, not only for their gifts exercised with "unction," but also because of who they represented in the redemptive scheme of eternity. Simpson thought of woman as a "fitting type of the blessed Comforter, often represented, it would seem, under the image of a mother."<sup>5</sup>

The views of the founder of The Christian and Missionary Alliance on the formal and public ministry of women will be explored throughout this article.

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<sup>1</sup> Donald W. Dayton, "The Evangelical Roots of Feminism," in *Discovering an Evangelical Heritage* (NY: Harper and Row, 1976), 86.

<sup>2</sup> A. B. Simpson, *The Supernatural: Making Room for the Power of God* (Camp Hill, PA: Christian Publications, 1994), 1.

<sup>3</sup> *The Christian Alliance* (December 29, 1893), 402.

<sup>4</sup> A. B. Simpson, "Luke," in *The Christ in the Bible Commentary*, 4 (Camp Hill, PA: Christian Publications, 1993), 301.

<sup>5</sup> Simpson, "Luke," 314

Particular attention will be focused on Simpson's interpretation of germane sections of Scripture. It should be remembered, however, that nowhere did Simpson elaborate a detailed, systematic, cohesive theological perspective on this issue. Consequently, he appeared to be engaged in a dialectical argument with himself at times. Almost always, however, he responded to queries about the ministry of women out of his burden to evangelize a lost world and his awareness of the strategic, substantial, and successful roles which women held in meeting that agenda.

### Partnership in Ministry

Simpson recognized a male-female duality in the Godhead. He included a chapter entitled "The Motherhood of God" in *When the Comforter Came* in which he depicted Christ as the embodiment of those nurturing qualities typically associated with womanhood.

The heart of Christ is not only the heart of man, but has in it also all the tenderness and gentleness of women... He combined in Himself the nature both of man and woman even as the first man Adam had the woman within his own being before she was separately formed from his very body.<sup>6</sup>

In the Trinity, Simpson reasoned, we have a Father, a Brother, and a Husband, and "One who meets all the heart's longing for motherhood." "As our heavenly Mother, the Comforter assumes our nurture, training, teaching, and the whole direction of our life." He possesses in his teaching and guiding "considerate gentleness and patience," along with the motherly comfort, "discipline and faithful reproof which erring childhood so often needs."<sup>7</sup>

Clearly, spiritual ministry was not gender-limited in Simpson's thinking. The Godhead was both instrumental and nurturing in their relationships and work among humankind. In fact, of the 14 persons identified as early leaders of the C&MA, six of them were women.<sup>8</sup> Elsewhere of the 38 people identified as co-workers, or members of the "Founder's Team," seven were women.<sup>9</sup> Perhaps it was easier for Simpson to "make space" for women because of his expansive

images of God which were more inclusive than our gender bound images of male and female. If Simpson were speaking today, it is likely that he would affirm that spiritual ministry within the Church, as modeled by the Trinity, requires the contributions of each of the sexes.

Consider his description of Priscilla whom he cited as an example of the ministry of women. "Priscilla," Simpson insisted, "must not be forgotten." Her ministry was "all womanly," and, although "never apart from her husband" Aquila, Priscilla was no mere cipher.

Indeed, we can almost infer from the way the apostle speaks of this beautiful pair that she became at last the stronger nature of the two. In the first references to them, it is Aquila and Priscilla, but toward the last, it is Priscilla and Aquila, and the devoted and faithful woman moves to the front.<sup>10</sup>

Priscilla and Aquila were instrumental in instructing Apollo, "a distinguished and eloquent teacher and preacher from Alexandria," a sincere but "defective" minister. From among "many of Paul's companions moving with him from place to place," Priscilla and Aquila were people "from the ordinary walk of life, who counted it their commission to share in the toils and tasks of the gospel."<sup>11</sup> In speaking on the Great Commission, Paul used Aquila and Priscilla to argue that

The time has come when the heathen world needs *more than stereotyped ministers* to meet its awful needs, and Christ is calling a *whole army of plain and practical men and women* to cover its needy fields... God grant that the next few years may put such a go in the hearts of thousands of the consecrated children of God that they cannot any longer stay at home, and a great army of picked men and women, who fear no hardship and seek no rest short of the Master's coming, shall spread over all the neglected fields of the heathen world!<sup>12</sup> [emphasis added].

Although "finely educated, mighty in the scriptures and full of zeal and fervor, Apollo had yet got not further than John's baptism and was eloquently preaching of a Messiah to come." Apollo needed to mature in the faith, so Priscilla and Aquila took him into their home "and lovingly led him into the deeper knowledge of the truth. Soon afterwards he went over to Corinth and successfully continued the work which Paul had there begun, becoming in many respects as popular and successful as the great apostle himself."<sup>13</sup>

<sup>6</sup> A.B. Simpson, *When the Comforter Came* (New York: Christian Publications, 1911), n.p.

<sup>7</sup> Simpson, *When the Comforter Came*, n.p.

<sup>8</sup> John Sawin, "The Fourfold Gospel," in *The Birth of a Vision: Essays on the Ministry and Thought of Albert B. Simpson*, eds. David F. Hartzfeld and Charles Nienkirchen (Regina, SK: HIS DOMINION Supplement No. 1, 1986), 27.

<sup>9</sup> Robert L. Niklaus, John S. Sawin, and Samuel J. Stoesz, *All for Jesus: God at Work in The Christian and Missionary Alliance Over One Hundred Years* (Camp Hill, PA: Christian Publications, Inc., 1986), 257-276

<sup>10</sup> *The Alliance Weekly* (January 8, 1916), 230.

<sup>11</sup> Simpson, "Matthew," 166.

<sup>12</sup> Simpson, "Matthew," 166.

<sup>13</sup> Simpson, "Acts," 570.

## Section 5. The Work of the Early Alliance

In view of Priscilla's contribution to the nurturing of Apollos in faith and truth, Simpson then urged, "Give her and every noble woman of the fruit of her hands, and let her own works praise her in the gates." He warned, "Let no man hinder the ministry of woman within its true limitations. God has ever honored it and will yet more and more. 'Favor is deceitful and beauty is vain, but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised.'" While he argued on the one hand for a hierarchical marriage relationship (although also a "partnership") in which the wife is obedient to her husband Simpson, nevertheless, affirmed the spiritual ministry of a married woman even outside her family.

Perhaps most indicative of Simpson's strong, affirming view of active roles for women was his wife Margaret's involvement in The Christian and Missionary Alliance. While the early years of their marriage were stressful, "once she caught up with his vision and became convinced he was a man sent from God, Dr. Simpson had no finer, more loyal and hardworking associate than his wife."<sup>14</sup>

Simpson sporadically maintained a diary. The entries, covering the closing of his ministry in Louisville, Kentucky, in 1879, and the beginning of his ministry in the 13th Street Presbyterian Church, in New York City in 1880, reveal something of the tension in their relationship. Margaret was concerned about the proposed move to New York because of having to raise her four children (and one expected) in that urban center. Simpson reflected her mood at the time in his diary:

M. took out the pages I had written for the past two weeks here--God so permitted her foolish and sinful hand. Poor child. I have prayed and prayed for her until of late I cannot pray without intense distress. I leave her with Him, trusting that He will lead her to repentance and salvation. She has suffered much of late. She is possessed of an intense bitterness, and I am full of pain and fear. I was much exercised as to whether I should ask my brethren of the Session to speak to her and beseech her to be reconciled, but after conferring with one of them, I found it would be vain, and I wait in silence upon God. I trust my own heart may be kept righteous, and merciful in everything.<sup>15</sup>

Just twelve days later, however, Simpson's description of his wife was dramatically different: "Praise for much peculiar burden of prayer and spiritual blessing all day. Praise for my wife's kind and loving and altered spirit. God seems so to bless her as He leads me in the peculiar path He has of late so clearly

shown"<sup>16</sup> While Simpson's diary was fragmentary, nevertheless, it does accent his own swings in mood, which in turn were reflected in his descriptions of Maggie. Simpson experienced great spiritual heights, but also great spiritual depths. At times he could erupt into strong conflicts and feelings, even after he met the Lord in the deeper life.

In defense of Margaret, all five-foot-one-inch of her, Simpson's biographer Thompson said that it was Simpson who received the call to missions and to evangelism, and not Mrs. Simpson. But in time she became one of her husband's staunchest supporters and exercised considerable responsibility in his movement.

Mrs. Simpson was reported to have accomplished "much good for others, especially for working girls, whom God has taught her to love and teach. Through her instrumentality, hundreds of these girls have been converted and saved."<sup>17</sup> She served on the Board of Managers and as financial secretary from shortly after the Alliance organized until her death at the age of 82 in 1924.<sup>18</sup>

Perhaps most significantly, Mrs. Simpson served as superintendent of assignment of missionaries (predecessor of the C&MA's contemporary vice president for Overseas Ministries) and as a member of the foreign committee. In that role "she was considered an astute judge as to their fitness for candidacy."<sup>19</sup> She preserved eight trunks filled with letters written to her by missionaries or friends at home, all of which she personally answered. F. H. Sneft, Alliance President at the time of Margaret's death, reported that on his last visit to her "she commented that she prayed constantly that there should never be the slightest departure of the Society from its first principles of sacrifice, spirituality and simplicity."<sup>20</sup>

One other piece of evidence supports the argument that Simpson would embrace a theology of partnership. Near the end of his life when writing about "The Worship of the Church" and specifically "Women in Church Worship," he said that". . .any assumption of the place or prerogative of the man in improper, even

<sup>14</sup> Niklaus, Sawin, and Stoesz, 157.

<sup>15</sup> A. B. Simpson, Personal Diary (Louisville, KY: 10 November 1879), Monday night.

<sup>16</sup> A. B. Simpson, Personal Diary (Louisville, KY: December 1879), Tuesday night.

<sup>17</sup> H. J. Morgan, *Types of Canadian Women* (Toronto: Wm. Briggs, 1903), "Introduction."

<sup>18</sup> Margaret Simpson was the last of a number of women who served on the Board of Managers until 1984 when Mrs. Elizabeth C. Jackson was elected. Since then, four other women have been elected to serve the Alliance in this way: Dr. Barbara A. Wilkerson, Mrs. Marjorie D. Cline, Dr. Leslie A. Andrews, and Dr. Rayma C. Page.

<sup>19</sup> Niklaus, Sawin, and Stoesz, 157.

<sup>20</sup> David J. Fant, "Early Associates of A. A. Simpson: Mrs. A. B. Simpson," *Southeastern District Report* (April-May, 1977), n.p.

though the woman be exercising the gift bestowed upon her.” He reasoned on the basis of headship.

The order is, God, Christ, Man, Woman (1 Corinthians 11:2-3). The woman is the glory of the man as the man is the glory of God (11:7). The man is not of the woman but the woman of the man. Neither was the man created for the woman but the woman for the man. Yet neither is without the other, for as the woman is of the man, so is the man also by the woman (:8-12). Consequently [Paul] says, “I suffer not the woman to usurp authority.”<sup>21</sup>

From this Simpson concluded that woman’s place in the worship of the Church was one of *association with*, rather than *superiority to*, the man. She may pray and even prophesy in the Church. When she speaks, however, she must do so “in modest and seemly manner.” The point is that while women were not to snatch leadership from men, they are free to exercise the same functions, that is, praying and prophesying, in public forums.

### Spirituality Transcends the Marriage Relationship

Simpson believed firmly that, according to God’s order, marriage was a sacred institution, and that “the primeval law of marriage was the creation of one man for one woman and one woman for one man.” In commenting on Matthew 19:5-6, he said that God created “an equal number of both sexes,” and “the provision in nature itself and its instincts for the marriage relation and how it is the divine order that ‘a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh,’ and, ‘So they are no longer two, but one.’”<sup>22</sup>

The element of personal affection and mutual attraction is clearly involved here. Marriage is not a conventional arrangement of convenience, but a cleavage of hearts so strong that it supersedes the previous attachment of father and mother to the extent at least of allowing a still closer union, the union which makes them truly one. Surely, it is needless to say that marriage without such unity and love is not a sacrament, but a sacrilege.<sup>23</sup>

No matter how noble marriage is, however, “all human relationships are but stepping stones to our highest and divine relationship to Christ and heaven. The best of earthly marriages is but a little bit of broken glass full of the sunshine of heaven. God gives us these earthly ties as types of the heavenly that we may better understand the love of our divine Bridegroom, the tenderness of our heavenly Father and the meaning of

our holy sonship.”<sup>24</sup> Simpson yielded “perfect freedom,” however, to those who chose to remain single, teaching that God “leaves this a matter of conscience for each one to settle with himself or herself. If, from our high allegiance to Christ and a desire to be more free to serve Him, we choose it ‘because of the kingdom of heaven’...the Lord accepts our sacrifice and consecration.”

In 1891, on an occasion when Simpson used the marriage relationship to illustrate communion with Christ, he argued that marriage is a “partnership formed between two human beings” in which “they are expected to cooperate according to the agreement....”<sup>25</sup> In this partnership the wife fulfilled her part of the agreement by maintaining an attitude of “fellowship and dependence.” Nine years later, when asked by a reader how far a wife was to go in obeying her husband “in all things,”<sup>26</sup> Simpson replied

A wife’s obedience applies only to matters pertaining to this life. In all matter of conscience as between her and God and affecting her supreme duty and love to God, she is free, and the higher law applies, “We must obey God rather than man.” In domestic affairs and her own personal relations to her husband, she is bound by the law of obedience, and if it requires her to stoop to a lower degree of intelligence, she should be very careful before contracting marriage to be sure that she is bringing herself not to a lower, but to an equal, or higher intelligence.

In responding to a similar question, Simpson stressed that “no wife is compelled to sin to obey her husband, and if she does, the sin is hers as well as his.” He believed that it was “fallacious” to assume that the Lord may intervene, “or if He does not, it would still be all right as the sin would be on her husband,” should a husband demand an obedience that would require his wife to commit sin. Thus, for Simpson, women maintain an independent status before God, despite their functioning as dependent partners in marriage.

In all likelihood, if pressed on the issue, Simpson would have distinguished between the husband\wife relationship in particular and male-female relationships in general. Never did he seek to impose the same independent-dependent categories on women in other spheres of life. In fact, Simpson legitimated the woman’s suffrage movement in Great Britain on the basis of what “fair and reasonable men” would do, while commending American women for disavowing “any sympathy with such extreme and unlawful methods.” He conceded “the right of the franchise to every woman

<sup>21</sup> *The Alliance Weekly* (February 5, 1916), 294

<sup>22</sup> A. B. Simpson, “Matthew,” in *Christ in the Bible Series*, 4 (Camp Hill, PA: Christian Publications, 1993), 89

<sup>23</sup> Simpson, “Matthew,” 89.

<sup>24</sup> Simpson, “Matthew,” 91.

<sup>25</sup> *The Christian Alliance and Missionary Weekly* (December 4, 1891), 339.

<sup>26</sup> *The Christian and Missionary Alliance* (June 9, 1900), 385.

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for disavowing” and sympathy with such extreme and unlawful methods.” He conceded “the right of the franchise to every woman who really wants it” on the basis of expedience, since to do so “probably would bring about better political conditions.”<sup>27</sup>

Clearly Simpson did not transfer his understanding of the husband-wife relationship to relationships between men and women in society. How much woman’s suffrage influenced his thinking about the utilization of the resources of women in the church is difficult to determine. Simpson’s bifurcation of women’s roles in family and in society, however, would be consistent with linguistic analyses of Pauline passages in which the Apostle uses husband-wife categories (1 Tim. 2) versus male-female categories (1 Cor. 11), suggesting a distinction between the way in which men and women may relate within marriage in contrast to within the body of Christ.

### Freedom for Public Ministry

Simpson repeatedly emphasized women’s role in public ministry. He insisted that the prophetic ministry had “undoubtedly” been given to women and that this meant nothing less than speaking “unto men to edification and exhortation, and comfort.” For him,

Any word therefore, of edification and exhortation is proper for a woman to speak in the Christian assembly, and anything the apostle may have said subsequently to this statement can never rescind or abrogate these admissions and permissions.

Ever since Anna announced the incarnation, and Mary Magdalene heralded the resurrection, woman has been God’s special instrument for publishing the glad tidings of salvation. We may regulate, but can never suppress her ministry. The best remedy for the abuse of anything is its wise and proper use.<sup>28</sup>

Simpson appealed to 1 Corinthians 11 and the principle of headship to sort out the “wise and proper use” of women’s public ministry, which he insisted on preserving, and her “regulated” role by virtue of creation order. “The head of every woman is the man, the head of every man is Christ, the head of Christ is God. This is the scriptural order of the sexes....”

By appealing to headship, however, Simpson did not intend to prohibit woman’s public ministry: “...this does not authorize the exclusion of woman from public work for the Lord.” He believed that the limitation applied to the “formal and official ministry of the Christian church in the strictly ecclesiastical sense,” which included the offices of pastor, elder, and bishop.

Apart from “... the official ministry and government of the Christian church, there is an infinite room for proclaiming a glad message of salvation.” How Simpson could be as insistent about this limitation is somewhat puzzling since women functioned as pastors, evangelists, and members of the Board of Managers during his lifetime (including his wife Margaret as noted earlier).

Once more, though, Simpson modified his affirmation of woman’s public ministry by suggesting that “the less formal her testimony is, the better. The more it takes the form of a simple story of love, the less like a sermon and the more like a conversation, the more effective it will be.” Evidently he wanted to distinguish between the manner in which the sexes proclaim publicly and predicated this distinction on “the spirit of feminine modesty” which would add “more power” to what she said.

To make his point, Simpson differentiated between the Greek words *kerago*, “to proclaim officially with a trumpet,” and *lateo*, “to talk.” He claimed that *lateo* describes the ministry of woman, and *kerago* the ministry of man. “Man,” therefore, “is the official herald, woman is the echo of his voice, repeating it in a thou-gentler (sic) tones, until love bears it to every human heart.” Simpson may have reflected his intuitive sense that women do not have to minister like men in the sense of sounding like men in order to have a viable public ministry. He concluded by reaffirming the significance of the ministry entrusted to women:

While we place these gentle restrictions around the ministry of woman, as the bible seems to teach, we do not say that they limit her work a single iota in any really practical and womanly way. We thank God for her precious ministry, and we pray God to raise up more and more of His daughters to proclaim abroad in their sweeter and gentler way the Father’s love. The Lord Himself have the Word, great was the company of women that published it. May the Lord speedily fulfill this, the true version of the grand old Psalm.

Simpson understood prophecy to mean preaching, i.e., speaking “unto men to edification and exhortation and comfort.” (1 Cor. 14:3). Women may be endowed with the gift of prophecy (Acts 2:17), even as were the four daughters of the evangelist Philip (Acts 21:9). According to Simpson’s understanding, however, prophesying or preaching by women was not done in the pastoral role within the biblical context:

It is, however, noteworthy that there is not an incident recorded in the New Testament of a woman exercising the ministry of the pastor, deacon, or teacher. Christ did not call any woman into the Apostolate though there were “certain women who ministered unto him.”

Simpson acknowledge, however, that “Women did exercise many vocations of Christian ministry in the

<sup>27</sup> *The Alliance Weekly* (March 1, 1913), 338.

<sup>28</sup> *The Christian Alliance and Missionary Weekly* (March 27, 1891), 195.

apostolic Church without question.”<sup>29</sup> He recognized prophecy as a legitimate ministry of women, and that, therefore, “... a woman’s right to speak to men as well as to women for their instruction, quickening and comfort is clearly recognized.” Restrictions included exercising her ministry “as not to transcend the limits of modesty and womanly propriety... she is to act with such reserve that she will never *unsex* herself or try to take the place of a man: [emphasis added].

While acknowledging that women are equal to men “in ability and honor,” he went on to say that she is subordinate to his authority in the same way that two judges sitting on the same bench are equal in ability and dignity, “but one is the head of the court and the other a member of it.”<sup>30</sup>

At the same time, Simpson distinguished between married and single women. “...this was more marked in the case of the wives than of other women. *In the relationship of home* [emphasis added] the woman voluntarily placed herself under the authority of her husband.” Looking to Rotherham for help in making this distinction by saying the word for “woman” should be translated “wife.” 1 Corinthians 14:34-35 would then be translated according to Simpson, in this way: “Let the wives keep silence in the churches, and if they will learn anything let them ask their husbands at home, for it is a shame for the wives to speak in Church’.” Light on this passage was further increased by the word “disgraceful,” “which seems to refer to the social customs of the day, especially the discredit that would attach to a woman by bursting through the etiquette of their time.

The subordination of wives to their husbands was occasioned by the entrance of sin into the world through Eve’s disobedience. The effects of Eve’s transgression were ameliorated, however, by another woman, Mary the mother of Jesus who deserves our veneration and love “which God intended that all ages should accord to that one woman whose consecration and faith rolled back the curse which the sin and folly of another woman had brought upon the human race.”<sup>31</sup>

Simpson then suggests “one more consideration” with respect to the technical sense of the word Church. According to Simpson, Church “meant the ecclesiastical order, formal assembly of the congregation,” in contrast to “church building.” In this view, he went on, “the passage *might mean* that woman was not to take an official place in the ecclesiastical organization, was not

to be one of its elders, its rulers, its ecclesiastical leaders.” Otherwise, “a woman has no restriction placed upon her highest usefulness.”

Writing to the Romans, Simpson spoke of women in the Apostolic Church who “receive the highest rank and recognition”<sup>32</sup> And then he addressed the progressive unfolding of freedom for women:

Surely if, in that day, when the restrictions of social life and the public opinion of society made woman’s public services so difficult, she had attained so high a place, how much more should she accomplish in this -day of freedom and equality, when the gospel has freed her from every fetter and given her the place of honor and preeminence she now enjoys.<sup>33</sup>

The only restraint Paul places on women, Simpson contends, is that “required by her nature and her distinct place in the social economy.” The limitations imposed “had only to do with the exercise of authority in the churches.” He did concede, however, that: “There was one special ecclesiastical office given to women in the early church, and it is beginning to be revived in our own time...the office of deaconess. This was the position of Phoebe, first mentioned in this passage (Romans 16:1). The word ‘servant’ here means, literally, deaconess...It was recognized then as distinctively as the office of deacon, elder, or bishop; and while it gave woman no ecclesiastical authority, yet it recognized her proper ministry in an official way, and opened the widest doors of usefulness.”<sup>34</sup>

In his efforts to distinguish clearly between the sexes and to encourage while simultaneously “regulating” the public ministry of women, Simpson was not accurate, as he later indicated, in claiming that “there is not an incident recorded in the New Testament of a woman exercising the ministry of the pastor, deacon, or teacher.” For instance, Phoebe was called “a servant (*diakon*) of the church in Cenchrea,” the same word used of “deacons” (*diakonous*) in 1 Timothy 3:8. Priscilla had an important ministry of teaching along with her husband, Aquila. And “Junia” (Rom. 16:7) is now recognized by most scholars to have been the feminine form of a name often translated in its male

<sup>29</sup> A.B. Simpson, “1 Corinthians,” *The Christ in the Bible Commentary*, 5(Camp Hill, PA: Christian Publications, Inc., 1994), 237.

<sup>30</sup> Simpson, “1 Corinthians,” 237.

<sup>31</sup> Simpson, “Matthew,” 252.

<sup>32</sup> A. B. Simpson, “Romans,” *The Christ in the Bible Commentary*, 5(Camp Hill, PA: Christian Publications, Inc., 1994), 141.

<sup>33</sup> Simpson, “Romans,” 141.

<sup>34</sup> Simpson, “Romans,” 142. It should be noted that the word Simpson here translates “deaconess” is the same word also translated “deacon.” Why Simpson chose to distinguish between men and women in this way when the same word is used of each is unclear. It is possible, however, that he was still striving to preserve a distinction in the office on the basis of “authority” which her perceived men have and women do not have.

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form, strongly suggesting that she was indeed an apostle.<sup>35</sup>

### Ministries of Leadership

While Simpson did suggest that “few women are called to leadership, and it is doubtful if they are adapted to it,”<sup>36</sup> he also pointed to Deborah as “the first example of a woman *called to public service* by the Holy Ghost...called to exercise the public functions of a leader” [emphasis added]. For Simpson, Deborah represented “a glorious multitude of noble women” who “have followed in her train! The great ministry of the church today is being done by holy women... It is too late in the day to question the public ministry of woman. *The facts of God’s providence, and the fruits of God’s Spirit, are stronger than all our theological fancies*”<sup>37</sup> [Emphasis added].

Perhaps more with respect to his interpretation of Deborah’s place in the life of the people of God than anywhere else in his commentary on the role of women, Simpson equivocates in what he says. His reference to “the facts of God’s providence, and the fruits of God’s Spirit” may provide a key to his hermeneutical methodology, however. As with his formulation of the “Fourfold Gospel,” his understanding of what Scripture says about women seems to be influenced and shaped by his experience. Simpson was a product of the Victorian era, reflected in part by his characterization of women as “quaint charm” and “modes sphere,” and his understanding of and expectations with respect to women would have been influenced by that period of time. It is a vivid reminder that theology is not shaped in a vacuum and without reference to human experience.

Having acknowledged the extraordinary public role that Deborah exercised in the life of Israel, Simpson proceeded to moderate the effect of her example. While woman’s place is not only “to love, to suffer and to intercede, but to prophesy, to teach, and to minister in every proper way to the bodies and the souls of men,” he insisted, there yet “remains a restriction which every true woman will be willing to recognize.”

Woman is called without restriction to teach, to witness, to work in every department of the Church of Christ, but she is not called to rule in the ecclesiastical government of the Church of Christ, or to exercise the official ministry which the Holy Ghost has committed to the elders or bishops of His Church: and whenever she steps out of her modest sphere into the place of public

leadership and executive government, she weakens her true power and loses her peculiar charm.

By seeking to circumscribe women’s role in the context of his commentary on Deborah, Simpson began to “eisegete” rather than “exegete.” He sought to explain her unique role by claiming that she was to Barak as Moses was to Joshua.

Deborah herself, *the first public woman of the ages*, was wise enough to call Barak to stand in the front, while she stood behind him, modestly directing his work, and proving in the end to be the true leader. It is not disparagement of woman’s ministry to place her there. Who will say that the ministry of Moses as he stood that day on the mountain, with his hands uplifted to God, while Joshua led the hosts in the plain below, was a lower ministry than that of Joshua? He was the true leader and the real power behind the hosts of Israel, although he was unseen by the eyes of men. This was Deborah’s high honor, and not one was more ready than Barak himself to acknowledge her preeminence (italics added).

Deborah was no titular head of Israel, however, anymore than Moses was. At the time she appears on the horizons of Scripture, she was a wife, prophetess, a judge, “a mother in Israel.” Deborah did not “call Barak to stand in the front” because he was a man and she was woman. She did so because she was in fact “commander-in-chief” of the nation. As prophetess she was God’s mouthpiece. As judge she was the established leader. Everybody knew that, for “the sons of Israel came up to her for judgment” (Jud. 4:5)

Simpson had no existential framework for helping make sense out of such a prominent role for a woman in Scripture. Women were not in his time heads of state, or CEO’s of multinational corporations, or judges, or doctors, or engineers. And so he resorted to familiar categories for understanding the role of women in his time to interpret Deborah’s leadership function, and in doing so found himself standing on miry ground. While few women may be called to be “Deborah’s,” that is not more strange than that few men are called to be “Moses’s” and in no way mitigates Deborah’s ruling function.

### Teaching and Preaching Ministries

On two different occasions, separated by six years, Simpson was questioned about the preaching/teaching ministries of women on the basis of perceived limitations imposed by the apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 14:34,35, and 1 Timothy 2:9, 10: “...what authority have the women of the C.A. [the Christian Alliance] for preaching or teaching in the churches?”<sup>38</sup>

<sup>35</sup> James Sigountos, Class Lecture, Alliance Theological Seminary (Nyack, NY), n.d.

<sup>36</sup> Simpson, “Romans,” 286.

<sup>37</sup> *The Christian Alliance and Foreign Missionary Weekly* (December 7, 1894), 533.

<sup>38</sup> *The Christian Alliance and Foreign Missionary Weekly* (April 20, 1894), 43.



and "...Satan has kept me [sic] tongue tied by those two verses many times. Through Christ I have overcome; but I would really like to have you explain them."<sup>39</sup>

On the one hand Simpson asserted that "The passages referred to mean what they say .....", but then he skirted the issue and said, "...but they do not say that the women of the C.A. must not preach or teach in the churches." Other passages such as 1 Corinthians 11:5, clearly recognize the right of woman to prophesy in public, "...provided she does it modestly . . ."

The great question is, whether the sister has anything worth saying. If she has a message from God, God forbid that anybody should stop her delivering it, and there are plenty of Scriptural and womanly ways in which a true woman can represent her Master and speak for the edification of His people.

A guiding criterion for Simpson seems to have been the manifestation of the Spirit's presence in the ministry of the woman, whether it be preaching or teaching, and "womanly ways" of delivering the message. He did not answer the "prohibition" issue directly, but rather refuted it by appealing to other Scripture and human experience.

### Diaconal Ministries

While preaching on the nature of service, Simpson referred to Phoebe and Persis as examples of Cenchrea, along with "the beloved Persis." Both these women "labored much in the Lord." Their work was always, of course, carried out "in a true womanly way and sphere." They had "equal liberty in all except the pastoral office and the official ministry of the Christian church." Simpson thanked God "for the enlargement and restoration of woman's blessed ministry," and then called upon "our beloved sisters" to "awake and fulfill in these days the vision of three thousand years ago, 'The Lord Himself gave the Word, great was the company of women that published it. Kings of armies fled apace and she that tarried at home divided the spoil'"<sup>40</sup>

Much later, when writing about "New Testament Types of Missionary Characters," Simpson referred again to Persis: "The only person that gets a double mark of commendation in Paul's catalogue of his friends at Rome is 'the beloved Persis who labored much in the Lord.' The others labored, but she labored much. It is usually a woman who reaches the superlative degree." Persis, for Simpson, represented the epitome of devotion to the work of missions:

Thank God, the race is not extinguished, but the missionary work of women is wider, deeper and more glorious today than ever before. No one can do more in promoting the idea of missions at home, no one can be such a recruiting agent for volunteers, especially in her own family, and not one can give and sacrifice as women do. God help you, "beloved Persis," still to "labor much in the Lord."<sup>41</sup>

Simpson maintained a balanced perspective, however, in his understanding of the relationship between work and worship and expressed this in this commentary on Mary's anointing of Jesus in the house of Simon, the leper. Her sacrificial act "was more than a sentimental expression of Mary's love to her Teacher and Lord." She had a spiritual perception expressed through her act of faith, "a faith which had already detected the great purpose of His life and understood as none other had that He had come to die."<sup>42</sup> By her consecrated act, Mary demonstrated "that there are ministries our Lord asks for Himself alone which are higher far than all our works of charity and gifts for the poor and the church. Our highest service should be for him." Mary's act of worship also demonstrated that "there are gifts which may be kept too late."

### Ministry by Exception

The Christian and Missionary Alliance, from its inception, has stressed healing as part of the Fourfold Gospel. Prayer for the sick accompanied by anointing with oil by elders of the church has been customary. On one occasion, a reader wrote to ask whether women have the right to anoint the sick for healing. Apparently, an evangelist had claimed that "no women have a right to anoint the sick for healing, but elders only." Simpson replied:

We believe the teaching of the Scripture recognizes the elder as the proper one to anoint, but we do not consider that this should be carried to such an extreme that in the absence of a proper elder, a suffering child of God should be compelled to refuse the ministry of a believing woman simply on a technical ground. God's methods in matters of outward form are flexible enough to allow for exceptions and adjustments, and while every true woman will ever seek to take the more quiet place, yet we believe that where the regular officer is not available or even prepared for this ministry, that God will accept hers.<sup>43</sup>

The above commentary on James 5:13-16 is punctuated with frequent exceptions: "carried to such an extreme"; "in the absence of a proper elder"; "simply on a technical ground"; "God's method in matters of

<sup>39</sup> *The Christian and Missionary Alliance* (March 24, 1900), 187.

<sup>40</sup> *The Christian Alliance and Missionary Weekly* (February 3, 1893), 69.

<sup>41</sup> *The Christian and Missionary Alliance* (September 8, 1906), 154.

<sup>42</sup> Simpson, "Matthew," 138.

<sup>43</sup> *The Christian and Missionary Alliance* (June 9, 1900), 385.

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outward form”; “flexible enough to allow of exceptions and adjustments”; “where the regular officer is not available or even prepared for this ministry.” Simpson was concerned with expediency, in this instance that of divine healing for the sick, and he regarded the form of anointing with oil by the elders as servant to the function which the form served.

### Conclusion

Several things may be noted in conclusion about the public role that women held in The Christian and Missionary Alliance during its founder’s lifetime.

First, Simpson was thoroughly committed to the task of world evangelization and welcomed enthusiastically as coworkers those women who shared his vision and supported this task. Women served as missionaries, evangelists, educators, teachers, preachers, supervisors of healing homes, and officers in the movement.

By 1912, when the C&MA underwent reorganization and adopted a new constitution, the Alliance at home reported 239 branches and affiliated churches located in thirty-five states and Canadian provinces. The 1912 annual report listed 182 names of workers who directed this work, 107 of whom were ordained men and 39 women.<sup>44</sup> More than one-fifth of the official workers in the alliance were women! Today women comprise 56 percent of the C&MA missionary force.<sup>45</sup>

While preaching at Old Orchard, Maine, Simpson stressed the importance of women’s involvement in the missionary enterprise:

It has caught the heart of woman, and our Women’s Societies are leading in this noble crusade all around the world. Someone well expressed the attitude of women to missions in a religious assembly when referring to the fact that men helped the missionary cause by their wills after they were dead, and women helped the missionary cause with a will while they were living, and added, “We are greatly indebted to dead men and live women.”<sup>46</sup>

Second, Simpson profoundly respected the spirituality, intelligence, and giftedness of women. He did not hesitate to praise them publicly, wholeheartedly, and widely for their ministries. Women played strategic roles on the “Founder’s Team.”

Third, Simpson struggled to maintain a delicate balance between the sexes in public ministry. He wrestled authentically to come to terms with the ways in

which human sexuality impacted Christian ministry. He sometimes resolved these differences in an apparently arbitrary manner, owing largely no doubt to his very pragmatic approach to ministry and his commitment to do whatever promoted world evangelization.

Fourth, Simpson taught that women were restricted from the offices of pastor, elder, and bishop (although women evangelists were authorized to establish and organize “branches”). Would he do so today? The answer is not as obvious as it might seem at first blush. His writing is punctuated with equivocation, such as “Let the Lord manage the women.”

He believed that wives are partners with their husbands, and women work in *association* with men in the church. “Fair and reasonable men” approved of the suffrage movement. The principle of headship “does not authorize the exclusion of woman from public work for the Lord,” although it was important to preserve “the spirit of feminine modesty.” Women were not to unsex themselves. He spoke of “gentle restrictions” as “the Bible *seems* to teach” [emphasis added]. While he claimed Christ called no woman into the Apostolate, recent biblical scholarship supports the fact that Junia (feminine) rather than *Junias* (masculine) was indeed an apostle.

Simpson distinguished between married and single women, suggesting that submission to male authority occurred primarily “in the relationship of home.” When discussing the nature of the church, Simpson said it *might* mean women were not to occupy official offices. He recognized the “restrictions of social life and the public opinion of society” in biblical times as contributing to limitations imposed on women. God’s providence and the fruits of His Spirit “are stronger than all our theological fancies.” In preaching and teaching, the important thing was whether she “has anything worth saying.” “God’s methods in matters of outward form are flexible enough to allow for exceptions and adjustments.”

Fifth, like so much of Simpson’s doctrinal formulation in the “Fourfold Gospel,” his way of relating to women and the shaping of his understanding of their roles as coworkers in ministry was born out of the crucible of experience. Theology was not an abstraction for Simpson. It was a living, dynamic process of engagement between the Scripture and the practice of ministry. Christ was the centripetal force drawing men and women from many different walks of life together in a common commitment, for “our

<sup>44</sup> Niklaus, Sawin, and Stoesz, 125.

<sup>45</sup> Samuel J. Stoesz, “Women in Ministry,” Unpublished paper (1995), 14.

<sup>46</sup> A. B. Simpson, *The Alliance Weekly*, 37:3 (1911), 36.

missionary work...puts in our hands the key to the bridal chamber and the lever that will hasten His return.”<sup>47</sup>

Sixth, in a draft of the first constitution for “The Evangelical Missionary Alliance,” Simpson cited five special features proposed in the movement.<sup>48</sup> One of the features was “the ministry of woman.” The movement’s founder believed that Christ, “the great Head of the Church,” desired “to emphasize and utilize it [ministry of woman] still more.” The foreign mission, he stressed, needed 100,000 women right then and had “a place for everyone.”

Seventh, Simpson’s strategy to evangelize a lost and dying world revolved around “the irregulars of the Lord’s army, the people that went beyond their formal line of ministry, and like Joseph, allowed their fruit to ‘climb over a wall’ .....There was a glorious irregularity as well as a divine order, for order was never intended to cramp, but only to direct the forces of the spiritual world.”<sup>49</sup> Was Simpson merely pragmatic? Or was he expressing an important principle about the way in which God in His sovereignty often works in our world, overruling our most cherished presuppositions and biases, in order to accomplish His eternal purposes?

A critical question facing The Christian and Missionary Alliance revolves around the drawing of boundaries which define who we are. The process of institutionalization tends to narrow one’s self-definition.

General Council 1981 rejected one of the nine principles proposed by the committee studying the role of women in ministry:

We recognize also that God, in His sovereignty has at times placed women in positions of authority... We need to be open when God chooses to work in this way.<sup>50</sup>

By rejecting this principle, the boundary circumscribing one class of people and delimiting how they might be involved in Alliance ministry was drawn even more definitively. While the denomination has every right to do so, it should recognize that by taking this action it has with respect to women made a significant departure from the original spirit and genius of its founder. Simpson argued that the “best remedy for the abuse of anything is its wise and proper use.” Has The Christian and Missionary Alliance met this criterion? The question still remains “Does the C&MA have a place for everyone?” as its founder originally stressed.

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<sup>47</sup> A. B. Simpson, “The Lord’s Coming and Missions,” *The Challenge of Missions* (New York: Christian Alliance Publishing Co., 1926), 55.

<sup>48</sup> *The Word, The Work, and The World* (June 1887), 367.

<sup>49</sup> A. B. Simpson, “Acts,” in *The Christ in the Bible Commentary*, 4 (Camp Hill, PA: Christian Publications, 1993), 545.

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<sup>50</sup> *Minutes of General Council 1981*, The Christian and Missionary Alliance (Anaheim, CA: 1981), 325.

Reading 6.1

## **General Constitution and Principles**

Adopted by the General Council, May 26-30, 1912  
Amended by the General Council, March 25-28, 1913

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The Christian and Missionary Alliance, owing to providential developments, finds itself called to readjust itself to a larger fellowship on the basis of the recognition of Jesus Christ as Saviour, Sanctifier, Healer and Coming Lord, and comprising the following constituent elements:

1. Individual Christians of whatsoever evangelical name.
2. Groups of Christians of various evangelical churches in any locality.
3. Undenominational churches conducted on independent lines.
4. City and highway missions.
5. All foreign missions and missionaries under the Alliance.

### **Objects**

The objects sought by this Society include the following:

1. To promote unity of faith in the Lord Jesus in His fullness, earnest effort for the conversion of souls, and the deepening of the spiritual life of Christians everywhere, by means of teaching and testimony in the power of the Holy Spirit, without reference to ecclesiastical uniformity, but in cordial sympathy with all evangelical Christians or organizations.
2. That Christians in a given locality, in sympathy with the truths for which the Alliance stands, but of different church affiliations, may be afforded fellowship with one another and with the larger association of kindred believers, without affecting their denominational relations, may be stimulated as loyal witnesses to Jesus Christ in His fullness, and may have a common channel for voluntary cooperation in world-wide full gospel efforts.
3. That denominational churches and city and highway missions of kindred spirit and type may have the opportunity of voluntary association with this larger fellowship, and of co-operation in spreading the full gospel at home and abroad.
4. That the foreign missionaries and missions of the Alliance may enjoy the widest possible fellowship and support.

As a condition of sharing this fellowship, it is understood that all individual members, local groups, undenominational churches, city, highway and foreign missions uniting in this association shall accept the supervision provided for in the accompanying Constitution, and that the independent churches formed out of Branches of the Christian and Missionary Alliance, and the city and highway missions, shall agree to such legal relations in respect of property as shall secure the perpetual use of permanent investments for the full gospel work under the charge of the Alliance.

This condition does not interfere with the interdenominational character of the Alliance. Its attitude toward such independent churches and companies is simply the same as toward individuals, namely, one of cordial recognition and helpfulness. It is to be clearly understood that such full relations between the Alliance and these churches or companies are always effected on the initiative of the churches or companies themselves, and not through the solicitations of the Alliance. The latter merely accepts the trusteeship for the properties of such churches or companies, and the responsibility of supplying or approving their ministers or leaders, with a view to assuring their permanent adherence to the full gospel truths for which the Alliance stands.

In addition to these various constituent elements, the Alliance also welcomes the co-operation of such evangelical denominations and groups of churches or Christians, not identified with it in corporate relations, as may be disposed to send their missionaries under its Board and contribute their missionary offerings through its Treasurer.

### **Membership**

The condition of membership shall be belief in God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit; in the verbal inspiration of the Holy Scripture as originally given; in the vicarious atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ; in the eternal salvation of all who believe in Him and the eternal punishment of all who reject Him; recognition of the truths of the Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour, Sanctifier, Healer and Coming King, as taught by the Christian and Missionary Alliance; full sympathy with the Society's

principles and objects, and co-operation by contributing to its work.

### **Organization and Government**

The organization of the Alliance shall be on the principle of local, district and international Branches, each circle being organized in detail consistently with the general type of organization defined in the following Constitution. All legislative and executive features shall be upon the basis of well-balanced liberty and responsibility, heading up in a periodic representative Council of supreme legislative authority, and in an executive Board of Managers.

#### **I. Legislative Body**

The ultimate power of the Society shall be vested in its entire membership, and delegated by them to a General Council, thoroughly representative of the whole constituency, on some agreed basis of selection. This council shall consist of all the officers and members of the Board of Managers, and such representatives of particular Departments as that Board may appoint, together with representatives of Branches and affiliated churches, and all foreign missionaries of the Christian and Missionary on furlough. This Council shall for the present meet annually, and shall at each Annual Meeting itself determine the time and place of its next meeting. It shall be the supreme legislative body of the Alliance. It shall not attempt executive work, but shall after well-matured nomination elect a Board of Managers for this purpose. It shall require full reports from this Board, and its legislation shall limit and direct the line of administration carried out by the Board.

#### **II. The Executive Body**

The authoritative control and direction of the entire work between the Annual Meetings of the General Council shall be committed to a Board of Managers, whose members must be located within reasonably convenient distance of the Alliance headquarters, so that a quorum can always be secured. Eight members shall constitute a quorum. The membership shall be large enough to be representative, but small enough to be effective. It shall not be lower than fifteen. The term of office shall be three years, one-third of the members retiring at each Annual Council, but being eligible for re-election. They shall be elected by ballot at the Annual Council, careful preliminary preparations being made for such ballot. The Board shall have the power to fill vacancies between meetings of the Council, and also to make its own By-Laws.

#### **III. Officers**

The Officers of the Society shall consist of a President, a Vice-President, a General Secretary, a Recording Secretary a Treasurer and Honorary Vice-

Presidents. Of these, the President shall be elected triennially, and the Vice-President, General Secretary and Treasurer annually, by ballot or open vote of the General Council. The Recording Secretary shall be elected annually by the Board of Managers.

##### *1. President*

He shall be the recognized head of the entire organization, the presiding officer over the General Council, and the Board of Managers, of which body he shall be recognized as an *ex-officio* member. He shall also be an *ex-officio* member of all the special committees and Departments under the Board. His duties shall embrace the general oversight of the entire work at home and abroad, the visitation of the National Conventions and the various Districts, the preparation of an annual survey of the work for the Council, the presentation to the Council, and the Board, and the special Departments from time to time, of such matters as he may judge expedient, and in addition such deputation work at home and abroad as he may find practicable and for the best interests of the work.

##### *2. Vice-President*

He shall perform the duties of the President in the absence or disability of the President, and in the case of the death of the President, the Vice-President shall succeed to the office of President until the next meeting of the General Council, when a President shall be elected to fill out the unexpired term of the deceased President.

##### *3. General Secretary*

He shall be the medium of correspondence for general matters in connection with the Society not pertaining to special Departments of the work.

##### *4. Recording Secretary*

He shall keep the records of the meetings of the Board and General Council, with such assistance as may be needed at the General Council.

##### *5. Treasurer*

His duties shall embrace the receiving of all funds contributed for the work, the sending out of prompt acknowledgments and of numbered receipts to all contributors, the preparation of a monthly report for the Board of Managers, and an annual report, properly audited, for the General Council. He shall also be the head of the Finance Department, and shall disburse all the funds of the Society on the order of this Department and the Board.

A Business Manager under the direct authority and supervision of the Treasurer and Finance Department shall have charge of the office, with such clerical help as may be required, for prompt and thorough dispatch of all official business.

## Section 6. The Alliance After Simpson

### IV Special Departments of Administration

There shall be a systematic division of administrative work among the following Executive Departments, which, with their heads or Secretaries, shall be appointed by the Board.

#### 1. Finance Department

Having charge of all the receipts, disbursements and financial business of the Society. No disbursement is to be made except on the order of this Department, and audited statements to be presented, as required, to the Board, the council and the Annual Meeting. The Treasurer shall be the head of this Department.

This Department shall also act as a bureau of information on all points of law, forms of business, and such matters as bequests, conveyance of title deeds, etc.

#### 2. Education Department

Having charge under one head of all the educational work of the Alliance, in accordance with the revised basis adopted by the Annual Council of 1912. The Educational Secretary shall be the head of this Department.

#### 3. Home Department

Having general oversight of the interests of the home field, in consultation with the District and Local Executives, and being the medium of communication with the Board in all matters requiring readjustment or attention of any sort, and in general constituting a bureau of communication and arrangement between all available workers and needy fields, both old and new, and the recruiting agent of ministerial supply. It shall also have charge of the Young People's and Children's Work. The head of this Department shall give as much time as his other duties admit of to field visitation. The Home Secretary shall be the Head of this Department.

#### 4. Foreign Department

Having the direction of the entire work of the foreign missionary fields, and covering missionary candidates, appointments, furloughs and retirements, assignment of missionaries and native workers to particular supporters, with some method of closer correspondence between the parties. The Foreign Secretary shall be the head of this Department.

#### 5. Deputation Department

Having charge of special campaigns along missionary lines, as well as the missionary part of District Conventions, in co-operation with the District authorities, the oversight of the production and circulation of missionary literature in pamphlet form and through the missionary department of the *Alliance Weekly*. In general it shall constitute an agency for the promotion of public interest in missions, the recruiting of missionary reinforcements and the increasing of the

financial resources of our foreign missionary work. The Deputational Secretary shall be the head of this Department.

#### 6. Publication and Literature Department

Having charge of the publication and dissemination of periodicals, books, and tracts which conform to the distinctive testimony of the Alliance. The Publication Secretary shall be the head of this department.

#### 7. Fraternal Relations Department

Having as its object the fostering of and making practically effective our policy of comity, fraternity and mutual co-operation in the Lord's work with the various evangelical churches, and especially endeavoring to secure and utilize, in harmony with all the other agencies of the Alliance, new channels of practical access to and influence upon Christians throughout the existing churches. The Secretary of Fraternal Relations shall be the head of this Department.

As far as possible each of these Departments shall be under the direction of a member of the Board. Where this is not practicable, some strong and experienced worker shall be selected for the position. Each Department shall be further supplemented by a small but efficient Committee under the Secretary or head of the Department, and some of these Committees may be made up in part of members outside the Board. These Departments, while possessing no executive power apart from the action of the Board, shall have their regular meetings, and deal first with the matters pertaining to their Departments, getting them into shape for presentation to the Board, with recommendations of definite action.

### V. Districts and Local Branches

The Home Field shall be divided by the General Council into certain geographical Districts, and these shall be subject to change from year to year by the action of General Council. Each of these Districts shall have a constitutional provision for local self-government, not inconsistent with this Constitution, on all matters exclusively affecting such District. This government shall be on the same lines as that of the national administration, including a District Conference for District administrative control, and an Executive Committee for detailed administration. Such District Conference shall be thoroughly representative of the whole District, and shall meet annually at a time most convenient for the District workers and least likely to interfere with the meeting of the General Council. It shall elect the District Executive Committee, of which the District Superintendent shall be the Chairman, and shall require reports from this Committee. It shall also appoint representatives to the General Council, on the

## Section 6. The Alliance After Simpson

basis of representation prescribed by that body, and make provision for the expenses of representatives attending such Council.

The District Executive Committee shall have control of all arrangements in connection with regular Conventions within the District, their speakers, etc., excepting only such general deputations as the Board may arrange from time to time in conference with the District.

District Conferences may sub-divide their Districts into smaller sections, according to State lines or otherwise, under special superintendents appointed by them. The combination of Branches and fields of operation ought to be adjusted with reference to convenience and spiritual efficiency rather than arbitrarily on mere State lines. District Conferences may also, if deemed necessary, nominate Assistant District Superintendents subject to the approval and appointment of the Board. In Districts not fully organized the Board shall take the initiative in perfecting the District organization.

Field Evangelists shall be appointed by the Board for the visitation of the whole field in connection with periodic Conventions and special evangelistic work. They shall be assigned by the Board, through the Home Secretary, to the Districts as may be found desirable and practicable, and their appointments within the Districts shall be arranged by the District Superintendents.

The members of the Alliance in a particular locality shall be organized as a Local Branch. The work shall be under the charge of a Local Superintendent in conjunction with the local Committee elected by members.

### *VI Foreign Mission Fields*

These shall be under the general oversight and authority of the Board of Managers, but in all matters of local detail there shall be a similar administration to that of the home Districts. Each field shall be organized with an Annual Conference and an Executive Committee for the control of matters of local interest and detail not requiring the direct interposition of the Board. The Annual Conference shall elect the Executive Committee

with the exception of its Chairman who shall be nominated by the Conference and appointed by the Board.

### *VII Titles to Property*

1. All property for the use of the Society generally shall vest in the Christian and Missionary Alliance as incorporated under the laws of the State of New York.

2. All property of Districts, Local Branches, local schools and undenominational churches in affiliation with the Christian and Missionary Alliance may be held by said Districts, Local Branches, local schools and undenominational churches in affiliation as aforesaid, after they have been duly chartered by law, and every such local charter must contain a clause connecting it with the Christian and Missionary Alliance of New York as the parent religious Society, and expressing in said clause that should such District, or Branch, or school, or church, cease to exist as a corporate body or cease to be subject to the purposes, usages, doctrines and teaching of the Christian and Missionary Alliance, then all its property, appurtenances and effects then owned or held by it shall revert to and become the property of the Christian and Missionary Alliance as incorporated under the laws of the State of New York, and all such charters shall be approved by the Board of Managers before becoming effective.

In order to hold a check upon hasty legislation, when any matter has been adopted by a vote of the majority in a General Council, any three members of that Council may together immediately demand a vote of two-thirds majority, and the matter must then be laid over a day and be again voted on, and a two-thirds majority of the members present shall be necessary to adopt it.

No change shall be made in the above Constitution and Principles unless such change shall have been first approved by a two-thirds vote of the General Council and ratified by a General Meeting of the members of the Society, held after at least three months' notice of the time and place by publication in the official organ of the Society.

Reading 6.2

## Annual Report of the President\*

Paul Rader

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*Them also I must bring (John 10:16)*

The world groans with such appalling need; the old nations cry with such pain; the young ones with such birth pangs; the classes are so nervous, so irritable, the devil is so rampant--while, on the other hand, the saints are so earnest in prayer; the body of Christ is so expectant of a revival; the reports of meetings tell of such blessing, such manifestation of the power and Spirit of God, that we calm and settle ourselves with God, awaiting in faith the clearer outlines of the next great epoch or event in the history of the Church. The form the coming great spiritual awakening will take is a bit vague now to the eye, but its oncoming rumble has reached a multitude of expectant and eager ears.

It is seven years since that pistol shot, in the hill town of Bosnia, let loose upon the world the white horse, the red horse, the black horse and the pale horse of the Revelation. The coming forth of these terrifying chargers is only a trial trip around the whole earth, but the havoc wrought in these seven years has left our poor world bleeding, sick, hungry, heart-broken and trembling.

May God save the Christian and Missionary Alliance in this its twenty-fourth Annual Council, since the year of its incorporation, from in the least measure being blind leaders of the blind host who know not our glorious Lord. May He make us especially wise in these awful closing days of Satanic warfare. Warfare, I repeat it. Brethren, we are in the war. "The Lord of Hosts is with us. The God of Jacob is our refuge." Leaders may drop before our eyes, and the ranks be thinned according to the prophesied falling away. But remember through it all, this is war. War requires wisdom. The tactics of war are more powerful at times than its long range guns, and the tactics are the products of wisdom.

We are in Council assembled to discuss the tactics of warfare in connection with the workings of the Christian and Missionary Alliance into whose fellowship and operation God has called us. We are helpless without His wisdom. The Lord might excuse some societies for weakness, but we can never be so excused, for our boast is large, and our banners exalt a full Christ;

a Saviour, all righteous, a Sanctifier, all victorious; a Healer, all sufficient, and a coming King, all glorious. Our danger in this warfare as a society is that with such long ranged and powerful guns of doctrine, we will rely only upon these, forgetting that proper tactics, well understood, must put these guns in position to do victorious business. We are not assembled here in Council to make a message for this society. Praise God! that message has already been made and given by the Holy Ghost. Our message is all wrapped up in Himself. It is "everything in Jesus, and Jesus everything."

But we are here to get wisdom, and the wisdom we need is from above. The wisdom we need is also revealed in the Scripture and comes to spiritual hearts who search the "Word of God."

### Spurious Spirituality

Spurious spirituality is now and will be increasingly manifested by the devil in the coming days. Only the spiritually wise will be able to distinguish the fake from the true. Movements to counterfeit the movements of the Holy Ghost will be lauded by the devil. Wholesale criticisms and denunciations without distinguishing between the false and the real will be indulged in by many leaders. It will take wisdom to stand. It will take much more wisdom to advance. Our Society is called upon by its very genius and message to advance in just such a crisis and in the face of just such fire.

If we can have His wisdom, it assures us of His tactics. If we get His tactics, it will lead into His plan and His program, and will put this full message upon the battle hills of earth, that it may reach the blinded, dying multitudes and do business for eternity. It is to get His wisdom and His plan, that we have commenced our Annual council this year with a day of prayer. Our united hearts' cry is "O Lord of Hosts, in this hour of opportunity, give us Thine own plan and Thine own power."

We are warriors then in council. Many ranks are represented here. The Lord Jesus Himself is our Leader and Head. We are all commissioned officers,

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\* *The Christian and Missionary Alliance: The Twenty-Fourth Annual Report, 1920-1921*, (New York: The Christian Alliance Pub Co., 1920), pp. 7-14, 19, 2526-28.



commissioned to carry this Gospel to the ends of the earth. We love the fight. We love our great Commander. We want to hear His orders from heaven. We want to move forward into the whitened harvest fields. To do this, we must ask ourselves some questions. They are the common sense questions that all warriors of all history have asked.

There are four questions which we will now consider: First, then, what is the power of the enemy? This is the question from which the natural heart and mind would shrink. It is so much more comforting to talk of victory, courage, plans. It is our human nature's most typical trick to stick out our chest in the hour of battle, talk loud and say like Peter, "Though all men forsake thee, yet will I never forsake thee." The thirty-first verse of the fourteenth chapter of Mark records this, "Likewise also said they all." They all forsook Him and fled because they had not believed in the hour of darkness which the Lord warned them would come. They did not even hear when for their sakes He said plainly to the crowd who came to arrest Him in the garden, "This is your hour and the power of darkness."

We must know and let the people know that the day in which we are living is the beginning and oncoming of those dark days so plainly recorded in the Word of God. We must know this that we may fight on in the hour of darkness instead of stopping to complain of the darkness. One form of this darkness will be the ease with which the multitudes will be deluded and deceived by a growing, popular fake Christianity. Christian societies, so called, education enterprises, uplift movements will greatly enlarge and become the mouth piece instead of the pulpit. Because of the size of this mustard plant, and the gay color of the feathers of the birds that lodge in the branches, the people will be deceived, believing it to be real Christianity. "The body of Christ" shown forth in the Scriptures will not be understood. The enemy will show the great growth as a delusion. The true Christian commission of getting out of the body of Christ from among all nations will be fought at every forward move. At every open door in the mission field soon will be found great so-called Christian powers and programs of education and reformation to substitute for evangelization and salvation.

### The Enemy Will Advance

The enemy will advance and is advancing their civilization propaganda to laugh out of the trenches the truth of salvation. Hospitals, splendid as they are and benevolent as are their open doors of human kindly service, will be used by the enemy as a substitute for holiness. This camouflage hospital ship, loaded with needed salve, will be anchored in great mission center

harbors as a forerunner of salvation along with school buildings. Then like a tape worm these two enterprises will take all the time, strength and money of the missionaries and mission boards. The enemy slips salvation on a side seat, softly saying, "Sit still, sweet Gospel Story, we're opening the way so you can sing your song very soon." The "preparation" for the Gospel propaganda is being very successfully used by the enemy everywhere even now. It is high time we recognized this deviating of our men and money by the enemy and believe afresh that the Gospel preached in any tongue, under any circumstance, to any people has within itself its own dynamite to open its own way. The Gospel of Jesus Christ does not have to play second fiddle to any hospital, school or civilizing scheme. The Gospel is God's great pioneer. It opens the path, it plows the furrows, it plants the seed. Then the hospitals, schools and civilizing, uplifting schemes come on behind. Look what the enemy has done. He has taken this perfectly good, four-wheeled wagon of *hospitals, schools, civilization, science*, and fastened them successfully before the great gospel horse. He stands and laughs while the Christian Church beats the horse and yells, "Git up." He is gaining his fight for the Christian Church seeing that things were not moving, have turned out the gospel horse and gotten into the shaves themselves, crying "Hurrah for us." The emphasis is and will from now on increasingly be on "us" until the great Ego, the great boasting Anti-Christ "I" shall put his boasting false prophet into the leadership of this great self-movement of our day. Yes, it is the cart before the horse and then get rid of the horse.

Beloved, let us remember in this Council that in Christian warfare we go after the general and his staff *direct* though Christ's merit. "We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the world rulers of this darkness in the heavenlies." Let us not attack the people who are doing these things. Satan has been able to draw much fire to no purpose in this way from the ranks of Christians. In natural warfare, we fight the soldiers of the general, but in Christian warfare, we attack the devil himself and his staff by the prayer of faith. He is speeding up his attacks. Let us speed up in prayer. Look back for seven years and see the accelerated speed of his onslaught in darkness, lawlessness, lust. It is especially the hour of lawlessness preparing for the coming of the lawless one who will come as the world's dictator. Because of this lawless spirit, many Christians will be affected. Many will refuse to walk under any leadership and old ties of fellowship will be broken. Deception, diversion, derision, delusion, division ten is the what power of the enemy.

## Section 6. The Alliance After Simpson

What is our power? We might rather ask "Who is our power?" We know the answer is Christ, but to reach Him who has all power both in heaven and on earth, we must go by the way of prayer. Therefore, the power of our Alliance forces must be prayer. I cannot say one new thing about prayer. There is no need that I should repeat what wonderful things have already been said by others. I must, however, in the strongest terms possible, call our attention to warfare by prayer. The Alliance is what it is and has accomplished what it has because of its belief in the power of prayer. Our leaders, our branches, our missionaries have succeeded only in proportion to the place they have given prayer.

The message of our society points to Christ Himself as all sufficiency. Since the power is wholly His, He is looking for men who are wholly His through whom He can manifest this power. If He can get a society of men who are wholly His, He can give them His power wholly. God grant that we may qualify as a society in this particular. What society, what individual dares march out against the enemy behind this warfare today unless it can be said--I am wholly Thine and therefore Thou art wholly mine? . . .

### What are our policies?

Take these two figures, and look steadily at them. You will see what the first policy of this society must be. The figures show nearly twice as many women as men. WE MUST HAVE MEN. There must be a movement at once to get men for the foreign field. If you could hear the agonizing cry of our lady missionaries in their pleading for men to come to the field, you would, I am sure, give yourselves in intercession for men. "Pray ye the Lord of the Harvest."

I ask that this Council look these figures squarely in the face before God, and at once enact legislation that will send our society courageously forth in faith for men. I would most earnestly ask that men be the uppermost note at all our coming conventions, and that our faith for men be expressed by legislation that will ask all our training schools to make way for men by asking all lady candidates this year to remain at home or attend some other school, while men take the precedence.

We must pray men, think men, talk men, dream men. We must have men for all these yawning trenches around the globe.

This emphasis on men must not in any way take the form of discouraging women. We need women, and must continue to have as many women as men, but the women are now so much in the majority that we must call a halt until God's Scriptural place for men is reached. . . .

### Self-support and Co-operation

We must not only have workers sent from this country, but we must believe God, and plan for a great increase in native workers. To this end we must magnify the Bible School for the training of native workers on every field.

The supporters of our work must be encouraged to give to the Bible training work. Information concerning the Bible training schools will be sent to all desiring it.

I wish to strongly urge that the Foreign Department gather all the valuable information concerning native self-support on the foreign field, and that a campaign of education concerning self-support be started at once among all our missionaries. All our missionaries, who now have self-supporting churches, should write out fully, and send to headquarters for the information of others the story of their efforts in bringing their church to self-support. Their plans and methods should be set forth in rigid detail. All information about students' support by natives should also be included. Our society must take new ground and bring about a reviving movement in all our fields concerning self-support. . . .

Great advance in the home fields can only be made through securing new chairmen for districts, both great and small, in the United States and Canada, which are not now supervised. Some of our own Alliance workers must look to God, asking Him if He would not have them leave their already established work, and go into some of these unoccupied fields at home. It is not only the "regions beyond" we must take in the foreign field, but also at home.

The Home Department should give itself most energetically and fully to the work of securing new district superintendents.

There should also be some definite legislation, leading to a larger distribution of Alliance literature. Pushing Alliance literature through bookstand and private mailing list should be considered a very important part of the ministry of an Alliance superintendent. The *Alliance Weekly*, as the mouthpiece of the Alliance, sending forth its message, spreading before the supporters the needs of the fields, and telling of triumphs of faith at home and abroad, deserves a far greater list of subscribers. It must be a settled policy with us to constantly push this splendid organ, so necessary in all our Alliance activities. . . .

Let us go out anew to our fields of labor from this Council to move with Him and forward in faith for a lost world.

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Reading 6.3

## The Message of the Christian and Missionary Alliance\*

W.M. Turnbull and C.H. Chrisman

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### Introduction

Were it possible to compress the Alliance Message into a single word, that word would be "Himself." This sentiment has been crystallized and immortalized in one of Dr. Simpson's hymns which has sung itself into the hearts of thousands of God's children.

Once it was the blessing,  
Now it is the Lord;  
Once it was the feeling,  
Now it is His Word.  
Once His gifts I wanted,  
Now the Giver own;  
Once I sought for healing,  
Now Himself alone.

The Christian and Missionary Alliance has always sought, as a sane and spiritual movement, to closely follow Scriptural standards, having as its ideal a life of prayer, faith, simplicity and sacrifice. The whole Society has partaken of the spirit of its founder -- Rev. A.B. Simpson.

The Alliance accepts without question the great Fundamentals, specifically as follows:

The Verbal Inspiration of the Scriptures.  
The Trinity of the Godhead.  
The Deity of our Lord Jesus Christ.  
The Personality of the Holy Ghost.  
The Sanctifying Baptism of the Holy Ghost.  
The Universal Depravity of the Human Race.  
The Atonement by the Blood of Christ.  
The Salvation of the Lost by Grace.  
The Healing of the Body.  
The Resurrection of the Dead.  
The Eternity of Punishments and Rewards.  
The Reality and Personality of Satan.  
The Pre-millennial Coming of the Lord.

But the Alliance has a Distinctive Testimony which from the beginning of its organization has been called the Fourfold Gospel--Jesus our Saviour, Sanctifier, Healer and Coming Lord. Nearly forty years ago the venerable George Mueller of Bristol Orphanage fame told Dr. Simpson that his arrangement of truth was most evidently "of the Lord" and suggested that he never change its mold. Since this time other organizations

have either adopted or adapted the phraseology, and so we thank God and take courage.

### Jesus our Saviour

In this connection it is a pleasure to quote from the trenchant pen of Woodrow Wilson as follows: "Christianity is not character, Christianity is Christ."

We believe that man, originally created in the image and after the likeness of God, fell from his high and holy estate by eating the forbidden fruit, and as the consequence of his disobedience the threatened penalty of death was then and there inflicted, so that his moral nature was not only grievously injured by the fall, but he totally lost all spiritual life, becoming dead in trespasses and sins, and subject to the power of the devil. Gen. 1:26; 2:17; John 5:40; 6:53; Eph. 2:1-3; 1 Tim. 5:6; 1 John 3:8.

We believe that this spiritual death, or total corruption of human nature, has been transmitted to the entire race of man, the man Christ Jesus alone excepted; and hence that every child of Adam is born into the world with a nature which not only possesses no spark of divine life, but is essentially and unchangeably bent towards evil, being enmity against God, and incapable by any educational process whatever of subjection to His law. Gen. 6:5 Psa. 14:1-3; 51:5; Jer. 17:9; John 3:6; Rom. 5:12-19; 8:6, 7.

We believe that, owing to this universal depravity and death in sin, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless born again; and that no degree of reformation however great, no attainment in morality however high, no culture however attractive, no humanitarian and philanthropic schemes and societies however useful, no baptism or other ordinance however administered, can help the sinner to take even one step toward heaven; but a new nature imparted from above, a new life implanted by the Holy Ghost through the Word, is absolutely essential to salvation. Isa. 64:6; John 3:5, 18; Gal. 6:15; Phil. 3:4-9; Tit. 3:5; Jas. 1:18; 1 Pet. 1:23.

We believe that our redemption has been accomplished solely by the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, who was made to be sin, and made a curse, for us, dying in our room and stead; and that no repentance,

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\* (New York: The Christian Alliance Publishing Co., 1927), 31 pp.

## Section 6. The Alliance After Simpson

no feeling, no faith, no good resolutions, no sincere efforts, no submission to the rules and regulations of any church, or of all the churches that have existed since the days of the Apostles, can add in the very least to the value of that precious blood, or to the merit of that finished work, wrought for us by Him who united in His person true and proper divinity with perfect and sinless humanity. Lev. 17:11; Matt. 26:28; Rom. 5:6-9; 2 Cor. 5:21; Gal. 3:13; Eph. 1:7; 1 Pet. 1:18, 19.

We believe that Eternal Life, being a gift, must be accepted as such, and can never be purchased or earned by deeds of human merit; that Christ and Christ alone can save; and that no works however good, no Church or Church membership, no lodge, no righteousness of our own, no moral attainment, no religion, Christian or otherwise, no Pope, priest or minister, no penance, confessional or christening, no repentance, praying or Bible reading, can in any way save us from hell, impart Eternal Life, or get us into heaven. "By grace are ye saved through faith and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God." Rom. 6:23; 1 John 5: 11; Eph. 2:8; Acts 4:12; Rom. 4:5; Titus 3:5.

We believe that Christ, in the fullness of the blessings He has secured by His obedience unto death, is received by faith alone, and that the moment we trust in Him as our Saviour we pass out of death into everlasting life, being justified from all things, accepted before the Father according to the measure of His acceptance, loved as He is loved, and having His place and portion, as linked to Him and one with Him forever. John 5:24; 17:23; Acts 13:39; Rom. 5:1; Eph. 2:4-6, 13; 1 John 4: 17; 5:11,12.

### Christ Our Sanctifier

Sanctification, or holiness, is the gift of the Holy Ghost, the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the prepared inheritance of all who will enter in, the great attainment of faith, not the attainment of works. It is divine holiness, not human self-improvement, nor perfection. It is the inflow into man's being of the life and purity of the infinite, eternal and holy One, bringing His own perfection and working out in us His own will.

Sanctification or holiness results from *contact with God*. This contact has both a divine and a human side. On the divine side contact is formed by the cross of Christ and the work of the Spirit, and on the human side by entire surrender and appropriating faith. The first point of divine contact is the cross. The Christian who is struggling with sin and helpless in defeat must come to see that in the thought of God he is identified with Christ in His crucifixion and in His resurrection. The cross has a separating power. Through the blood of the cross our hearts are cleansed. The cross separates us from the world, from our sins, and from self. By our

death with Christ we are released from "the carnal mind"; we are separated from "the flesh"; we are detached from the self-life. By our resurrection with Christ we are "renewed in the spirit of our minds," we "put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness"; and, highest of all, we "put on the Lord Jesus Christ," who is thus "made unto us . . . sanctification." Eph. 4:23, 24; Rom. 13:14; 1 Cor. 1:30.

"The second point of divine contact whereby sanctification is received is the work of the Spirit. The identification of the believer with Christ in death and resurrection is the historical side of holiness; the transformation of the believer in character and conduct through the baptism of the Holy Spirit is the experimental side of holiness. The one is apprehension, the other is appropriation. After the vision of victory comes the realization of victory. Now it is through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit that the vision of victory is transformed into its realization. It is through the incoming of the Holy Spirit that the revelation of the indwelling Christ breaks with comforting cheer upon our despairing hearts, and it is through the Holy Spirit that we are enabled to die unto sin and live unto God.

"On the human side there are two points of contact with God whereby we become partakers of the holiness of Christ; namely, a step of entire surrender and an act of appropriating faith. This means a covenant made with God, a definite transaction at a definite time when by full consecration and living faith we boldly enter in and possess our inheritance. The step of surrender must be voluntary, complete and final; the act of faith must be definite, living and aggressive. Such a step of surrender and such an act of faith means a new Christian experience--a crisis as radical and revolutionary as the crisis of conversion. In nature it is not a gradual development, but a sudden change. In regeneration we pass out of death into life; in sanctification we pass out of self into the Christ-life. In regeneration we receive "a new spirit"; in sanctification Christ comes and takes up His abode within the "new spirit." When such a revolution occurs in our lives, we shall certainly know it; and we may expect the Holy Ghost to witness as definitely and distinctly to His work of sanctification as He did to His work of regeneration."

Paul specifies the threefold division of our human nature--the spirit, the soul and the body--as respectively the subjects of this work of sanctifying grace. The spirit is that which is cognizant of God. It is the moral element in man, which trusts, loves and glorifies God. The spirit must first be quickened by regeneration, since naturally it is dead. A sanctified spirit is one separated from all known evil and dedicated unto God, so that all its powers are at His disposal. A sanctified spirit is also

a spirit filled with the presence and the Spirit of the Lord.

The soul is endowed with understanding, tastes, affections, passions and appetites. All these can be separated, dedicated and filled with the Spirit and life of God. There is a distinct baptism of the Holy Ghost for mind as well as for spirit.

The human body was designed in the beginning as the pattern and type of the sublimest form of being which ever should exist. The body, therefore, should be separated in all its functions, dedicated to God, to become "the habitation of God through the Spirit." "Know ye not that your bodies are the temples of the Holy Ghost?"

The baptism of the Holy Spirit is simultaneous with our union with the Lord Jesus. The Spirit does not act apart from Christ. The Holy Spirit is pure Spirit, and has not been incarnated in human flesh as the Son of God was in His birth and early life. Instead of this, He has been so united to Jesus Christ that he partakes of the incarnation of the Son of God, and comes to us clothed in the humanity of Jesus.

In receiving Him we receive the Lord Jesus Himself. He comes to us to impart the very life of Jesus Christ. He takes the qualities that were in Him, and makes them ours. He transfers to us the love, the purity, the gentleness, the faith of Jesus Christ, and so imparts to us His very nature as to reproduce in us His life, and we live, in a very literal and real way, the Christ-life as our own experience.

This is a very attractive conception of the Christian life. It is not our holiness, but the life of our Lord. It is not our struggle with the old nature, but it is the imparting of a new nature, and the indwelling of a new life. Hence it follows that when the Holy Spirit comes into our life and consciousness it is Jesus that is made real to us, rather than the Spirit, who never speaks of Himself.

Every disciple of Christ ought to have some special manifestation of the Holy Ghost and some gift for Christian service. The manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.

These gifts are conferred by the Holy Ghost Himself in His sovereign will according to individual fitness and for the completeness and profit of the whole body of Christ. He knows the gift that will best enable us to glorify Him and help others. No disciple can expect to receive all these gifts. It is unscriptural and unreasonable to say that any one gift is the criterion of having received the Holy Ghost. God adjusts our equipment to the special work which He has called us to do. As in the body the different members have different offices, so it is in the body of Christ.

Above all gifts, above all ministries, is the grace of love, that love that uses every gift and ministry, not to exploit its own greatness, but to glorify God and bless men. Not only is love here described as an end, but as a means. He says, "I show unto you a more excellent way," which is the way to reach the highest gifts of the Spirit. God will entrust to us His most sacred ministry and most glorious manifestations in proportion as He sees that we will use them in the spirit of love and for the help of the souls that are so dear to the Shepherd's heart.

Let us covet earnestly the best gifts, but chiefly the gifts of useful and effectual spiritual ministry.

Let us pray for love, let us cultivate love, let us take the Lord Jesus Himself to be our love, and let our deepest cry be

"Give me a heart like Thine."

The crisis of sanctification, while it brings entire holiness in every part of our being, is only the infancy of holiness. All the parts and organs and functions are there, but there must be growth into maturity and manhood to "the fullness of the stature or a perfect man in Christ Jesus." Growth is not a matter of parts, but of degree in the various parts, and maturity in their combination and complete development. It is this process of Christian nurture that occupies so large a place in the New Testament epistles. It was for this that the Comforter was promised to guide us into all truth.

It cannot be too strongly emphasized that *holiness is retained only while vital contact with Christ is maintained*. To abide in Christ means two things; namely, obedience and fellowship. In 1 John 3:24 we read "And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth [abideth] in me and I in him." Again, our Lord Himself said, "He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood dwelleth [abideth] in me and I in him" (John 6: 56). If we would be like Christ, we must keep His commandments and abide in His love, even as He kept His Father's commandment and abode in His love.

### **Christ Our Healer**

That healing is in the Atonement for us has always been the contention of the Alliance. It is difficult to understand how anyone could object to healing being placed on this reverent plane, which exalts our Lord more than it exalts any human agency.

Dr. Scofield, in his explanatory notes printed in the Bible that bears his name, has called attention to the seven compound names of Jehovah, declaring that they set forth God's redemptive relation to man. He says that these names reveal God "as meeting every need of man from his lost state to the end." One of these redemptive names is Jehovah Rapha or Rophi (Ex. 15:26), meaning "I am the Lord that healeth thee." Concerning this Dr.

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Scofield writes as follows: "That this refers to physical healing the context shows, but the deeper healing of soul malady is implied." If these names of Jehovah reveal His *redemptive* relationship to man do they not clearly point to Calvary?

Dr. Kenneth Mackenzie says that Dr. Simpson was probably the first man to define healing as provided in the atonement. Since this time a mighty host have followed him in this postulate. Since the conflict of opinion in reference to the subject of healing at the present time seems to center around this mooted problem it would be helpful to examine two cardinal Bible passages, Isaiah 53:4, 5 and Matthew 8:17.

"Surely he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows . . . He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon him and with his stripes we are healed."

The first reason for applying this passage to healing is the use of the word "griefs," "He hath borne our griefs." The original word is found about a hundred times in the Old Testament, and every time but this it is translated "sickness." This is the only instance where it is translated "griefs" and this must be because the translator could not quite understand the sense of using "sickness" here. The Hebrew word really means "disease." This verse covers the atonement for our bodies, the provision of His redemption for these mortal attacks.

The next reason for applying these verses to healing is the word "borne." "He hath borne our sicknesses." This word has a theological meaning which is most clearly defined in many of the passages in which we find it. It is applied to the scape-goat that bore away the sins of the people. It is used in this chapter where we are told that He bore the sins of many. It is found in John where we are told that the Lamb of God "beareth away the sins of the world." So it does not mean mere sympathy or relief, but substitution, one bearing another's death penalty. Christ literally substituted His body for our body. That is the meaning of the words, "Surely he hath borne our sicknesses." He took them upon Himself and relieved us of the load by His atonement.

And it seems that Matthew himself applies this passage to healing in the eighth chapter of his Gospel, verses sixteen and seventeen. "When the evening was come He healed all that were sick . . . that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, 'Himself took our infirmities and bare our sickness.'" The words "infirmity" and sickness denote physical difficulty and disability. The one may be a lack of strength and the other may be a condition of physical disease. And it is certain that Matthew was referring to the body alone, for he quotes the passage in direct

connection with Christ's miracles of healing. The reason he healed the people was because Isaiah said He would. Now if Isaiah did not mean healing this verse would be irrelevant. Isaiah must have meant healing or Matthew would not have quoted it.

But verse five of this fifty-third chapter of Isaiah lends the strongest support to our argument that healing is in the atonement. There are four things mentioned. "He was wounded for our transgressions." These are actual sins. "He was bruised for our iniquities." This is different from transgressions. This has reference to something within us, showing that Christ died for what we are as well as for what we do. "The chastisement of our peace was upon him." That means our spiritual blessing, our peace and rest, our union with Christ in the Holy Ghost. "With his stripes we are healed." That makes the inventory complete. Without that it is only a partial list. With that it is fourfold and entire. But to say that "by his stripes we are healed" simply means spiritual healing is a tautology. He has covered spiritual in the former statements. This must mean something else--physical redemption through His agony as our substitute. Taking these four points together no unprejudiced mind can doubt for a moment that this passage covers the healing of our bodies through the Atonement of Christ.

But again we want to notice the force of the word "surely" in the text. "Surely he had borne our sicknesses and carried our sorrows [pains]." Why did He say "surely"? Why did He say it here? Well, to say the least, it is an underlining of the passage intended to make it as very important. It makes it not only important but absolutely true. In the beginning of the chapter Isaiah stepped out with diffidence and hesitation, and said, "Lord who hath believed our report? Lord they won't believe what I am going to say, and especially when I say anything about the power of the Lord, they will be sure to doubt it. If I talk about historical facts they may believe it, but if I go and tell them of a divine arm that can take hold of man's weaknesses, if I reveal a power that can do great things, they will doubt my testimony." "Lord, who hath believed our report and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?" Therefore, the Lord just says, "Isaiah, tell them that it is true and put my oath behind it, and say, 'Surely, this particular part of the Gospel is true, because it does reveal the arm of the Lord, it does show the power of God.'" In this passage, "Surely he hath borne our sicknesses and carried our sorrows," the same Hebrew verbs for borne and carried are used in verses eleven and twelve for the substitutionary bearing of sin. Do they not all and in each have the same substitutionary and expiatory character?

Arguments against Divine Healing are frequently drawn from its failures. If this method were employed against justification, regeneration and sanctification, would not the attack be almost overwhelming?

### **Christ Our Coming King**

Is there positive proof that we may look for the Pre-millennial Coming of the Lord?

The Lord has been here already, the Lord Jesus lived on this globe of ours literally, actually treading its material surface with His holy feet, and saturating its soil with His precious blood. He has been a citizen of this earth; why should it be thought a thing incredible that He should come back again to His old home? If He actually lived here once, why should He not actually come here again?

How simple that is! Here once He initiated His work. Why should He not come back and finish it? Here once He fought the battle. Why should He not come back and wear the crown of victory and see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied? Here once He paid the fearful price. Why should He not come back to win the great reward? That is what He Himself says. He is "like a nobleman going to a far country to receive for Himself a kingdom, and return." There is nothing transcendent or novel about the Glorious Son of God becoming a citizen of earth. He is a citizen of earth forevermore and has already lived among us here like other men.

He did not merely in a transitory way touch the human family, but He became forever identified with the race of Adam, and He never can get away from His humanity. All that concerns our race concerns Him. He is a man today and He will be a man forever and wherever man is to be, the Son of man will be also. So that Christ's relation to this old earth is a permanent relation and His kingdom is to be consummated here where it was first begun.

Let us note that the promises and prophecies of the Old Testament have not been satisfied and fulfilled. There is a double thread running through the texture of ancient prophecy. There is the crimson line of the cross, and there is also the Golden thread of the coming Glory. The Jews saw only the prophecies of the glory, and therefore when He appeared among them they were not prepared to recognize the lowly Nazarene, that rejected Man, as the fulfillment of the splendid ideal. They had good cause for it, to a certain extent, at least. The only trouble with them was that they were out of date. They had mixed the chronology. He was the King, but He was not yet enthroned. It was first the cross and then the crown; the Lamb of Calvary first and then the Lion of the tribe of Judah. Unless He comes again part of the prophetic scriptures will be unrealized. It was necessary

that He should fulfill the vision of the cross and it is just as necessary that He shall fulfill the vision of the King.

The Lord Jesus Himself when He was on earth always left the impression that He was coming back again, actually, visibly, personally to His people. He repeatedly told them also that when the Son of man should come He should sit on the throne of His glory and they should sit on thrones and receive rewards for their earthly sacrifice and sufferings. One particular event in the very middle of His career, the Transfiguration on the Mount, was an object lesson, a demonstration of this very thing, foreshadowing the fact that He who seemed so obscure was really to be unveiled some day in the great Apocalypse of the Advent and appear in glory. The risen dead were represented by Moses and the transfigured living by Elias. In Matthew 24 we have a detailed prophecy of the Lord's return. We have also the parables of the Talents, the Pounds, the Marriage of the King's Son, the Ten Virgins, the Sheep and the Goats. These have no meaning unless the Lord is coming back again. All His teachings crystallized around two focal points, His cross and His advent.

In the next place, His very last message was on this specific subject. As He hovered in midair between earth and heaven, His parting word was sent back by two messengers, perhaps two glorified men, who stood by them and said, "Why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus shall so come again in like manner as ye have seen him go up into heaven." Put these three S's together--same, so, seen--and you have a trinity of infallible proof. "This same Jesus shall so come as ye have seen him go." He is the same and He will be the same then, and you will see Him and you will know He is the same. That is Christ's farewell message, and we know He means what He says.

The apostolic testimony was always the same. Peter said at the very beginning of the Acts, "Whom the heavens must receive till the times of the restitution of all things." Therefore, when that is accomplished the heavens will not hold Him any more.

Paul proclaimed Him as the One who would be "the Judge of the living and the dead." In Romans He gives three chapters to the dispensational questions leading up to the day when a Deliverer shall come to Zion and turn away ungodliness from Jacob. The First Epistle to the Corinthians reaches its climax in the magnificent fifteenth chapter, and the realities of that glorious appearing. Second Corinthians tells us how "we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ." Colossians tells us that "when he shall appear we shall appear with him in glory." Thessalonians crystallizes around the doctrine of the Lord's Coming. Every chapter and every important paragraph finds its keynote

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in this Blessed Hope. In Timothy Paul declares that this is his own personal hope, that he shall receive "the crown of righteousness" which the Lord is keeping not only for him but "for all that love his appearing." James bids us "Be patient . . . unto the coming of the Lord." Peter tells us it was the very meaning of the Transfiguration when they "were with Him in the holy mount." John in his epistles and the Apocalypse repeats the message of His glorious Advent and the importance of our constant preparation for it.

But the supreme and crowning evidence of the Lord's pre-millennial coming is the glorious book of Revelation. Two generations after Christ had ascended, after thousands of saints had been gathered home, after hundreds of churches had been established on earth, after the spiritual facts and experiences of Christianity had been illustrated to the fullest extent, the Lord Himself came down as the last Messenger of inspired truth, and to John on Patmos He gave the glorious message of which the keynote and finale is this-- "I am coming again." The first announcement in that Apocalypse is "Behold, he cometh with clouds," and the last farewell is, "Behold, I come quickly."

Shall we answer, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus," come quickly?

### **The Alliance Missionary Enterprise**

God has given to the Christian and missionary Alliance a missionary movement unique in its polity, worldwide in its scope, lofty in its aims, and inspiring in its motives; and it seems fitting that at this time we should be fully baptized into the very heart of this movement until we ourselves shall go forth as living epistles and apostles for the evangelization of the world.

First and best, it is an evangelical movement, and in these days of doubt and sometimes denial of the Bible and the Blood it has ever stood for the faith once for all delivered unto the saints, and steadfastly believed that if we cannot give the world a divine message, we had better give it no message at all.

Second, it is an evangelistic movement, not aiming to build up elaborate institutions, but to preach the Gospel immediately to every creature and give one chance for eternal life to every member of our fallen race.

Third, it is a spiritual movement, seeking and sending only missionaries that have been baptized with the Holy Ghost and are fitted to develop the highest type of Christian life among the people to whom they minister.

Fourth, it is an interdenominational movement, not building up sectarianism, but bearing only on its banner the name of Jesus, and welcoming the cooperation of Christians and missionaries of every

evangelical denomination without requiring the sacrifice of their convictions and denominational relationships.

Fifth, it is an international movement, attracting by the greatness of its scope, and interesting by the magnificence of its field, men and women who are concerned for the welfare of every race and tongue.

Sixth, it is a pioneer movement, not duplicating existing agencies, but reaching out to the regions beyond, and seeking to send the Gospel to the most destitute corners of this benighted world. In China it was among the first to enter the province of Hunan, and the pioneer of Kuang Si; in Palestine it built the first American chapel in Jerusalem; in Annam it has planted the first native church; in Venezuela and Ecuador it has dedicated the first Protestant chapels; beyond the great wall of China it has thirty-three martyr graves, and the tomb of one of its pioneers is a mile-stone marking the lonely way to the borders of Arabia.

Seventh, it is an economical movement, avoiding expensive establishments, aiming to make every dollar go as far as possible, and sending only such missionaries as are glad to give their lives and services for their bare expenses.

Eighth, it is a pre-millennial movement, not attempting to convert the world, but rather to gather out of the nations a people for His name; thus looking for and hastening the day of the coming of the Lord.

Ninth, it is a lay movement, utilizing agencies for which otherwise the doors had perhaps been closed, and encouraging the consecrated layman, the earnest business man, the humble farmer boy, the Spirit-filled maiden whom the Master has called and fitted to follow in the footsteps of the lowly fishermen of Galilee and create a new battalion in the army of the Lord, the volunteers and irregulars of whom we have no cause to be ashamed, and who but for this movement might never accomplish their glorious work.

Tenth, its divinest seal is the spirit of sacrifice. While we do not claim a monopoly of self-denial, yet we thank God with deepest gratitude and humility for the men and women in the homeland whose noble gifts for missions are not unworthy of having a place with Mary's anointing and the widow's mite. Still more we thank Him for the glorious army of missionaries abroad, of whom over one hundred and fifty, counting not their lives dear unto themselves, have rendered the supreme offering of devotion. Over four hundred more are still engaged in the work and, surrendering all prospects of human ambition and interests and asking nothing but the bare necessities of life, represent us today under the burning sun of India, in the malarial swamps of Africa, in the unsavory cities of China, in the sweltering humidity of the Philippines, or amid the snow-covered heights of Quito or far Thibet, only asking of us that we



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will make it possible for them to spend and be spent till Jesus comes for the salvation of men, the glory of God, and the hastening of the coming of our Lord and King.

With such principles, such precedents, such opportunities, such a work, such a Leader, such a hope, and such a cloud of witnesses, O beloved, is it not worthwhile?

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Reading 7.1

## Aggressive Christianity\*

Missionary Sermon Preached by Rev. A.B. Simpson  
on the closing Sabbath of the Nyack Convention,  
September 10, 1899.

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*Having hope, when your faith is increased, that we shall be enlarged by you according to our rule abundantly, to preach the Gospel in the regions beyond you, and not to boast in another man's line of things made ready to our hand (II Cor. x. 15,16).*

Were I asked to state the distinctive principles of the work of the Christian and Missionary Alliance, of which the Convention is a crystallized expression, there are two things that I would say: First, it stands for an absolute faith in supernatural things and a supernatural God. It represents a Christianity which is out-and-out for God, and it gathers to it those and only those who believe something, and believe it with all their heart and soul and strength. In a word, it represents intense spiritual earnestness.

And secondly, along with this as the outgo and overflow of this deeper life of faith and consecration, it represents intense aggressiveness in its work for God, an overflow and an outgo that is ever reaching on to the regions beyond and seeking to pass on to others the blessing we have ourselves received.

The Alliance movement therefore represents spiritual earnestness on the one hand and aggressive activity on the other. These are the two thoughts expressed in our text, somewhat obscurely, perhaps, at first sight, but plainly enough when we look more carefully at the structure and language of the passage.

The apostle first speaks of their faith and his own enlargement through fellowship with them, and then of the outcome of all this, leading him forward to new aggressive work in regions where others have never gone, and neglected fields which other have not reached. Let us glance briefly at these two distinctive features of Christian work, and, we trust we may say, without egotism, of this work.

I. A deeper and a larger faith. "Having hope that when your faith is increased we shall be enlarged by you." The apostle was longing for a deeper and larger faith both on their part and his own. This must ever be the spring of earnest and aggressive work. We cannot give others more than we ourselves have received. The

water can rise no higher than the spring. All missionary enterprise must have its source in a deeper spiritual life. Therefore, God has been deepening the life of His people during these waiting days. Therefore, God has been developing a more earnest consecration and a more intense devotedness to Christ in the hearts of His people during these years. It is this that stimulates your generous gifts and your noble sacrifices. It is because you believe in God and in His Word without reserve and have not been afraid to put all the weight of your need and your eternal future upon it and have found in it a satisfying joy; it is because of this that everything else is cheap in comparison and everything else has ceased to hurt. God has given us a Christ that is real, a Comforter that fills the heart, a love that lifts us above ourselves, "a joy that abounds even through deep poverty unto the riches of your liberality," a whole Gospel for the whole man, spirit, soul and body, and it is only the logical sequence that it should also be for the whole world.

II. The result of this is unselfish and aggressive work. No soul can receive this deep, divine and overflowing life and henceforth live unto himself. No church can be baptized into this supernatural life and this Christ spirit and ever again be selfish, contracted or earthbound. It makes the world our parish and irresistibly flows out like water to the deepest place of need.

This we trust, we may say without immodesty or extravagance at least, is the aim of the Alliance movement. The greatest blessing of our work next to the precious Gospel the Holy Spirit has revealed and the living Christ who is its centre and substance, is the privilege of giving it to the world. It has lifted our work to a higher plane than even the deepest spiritual teaching could ever have given it. It has given opportunity for the development of the highest qualities both of faith, love, sacrifice and service, and it is not too much to say that it has brought us far greater blessings than we have been able to confer upon others. Building far better than we knew God led us from the beginning to lay a foundation broad enough to reach the whole

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\* A.B. Simpson, "Aggressive Christianity," *Christian and Missionary Alliance Weekly* 23 (Sept. 23, 1899): 260-262.

circumstance of the world in the scope of our purpose and our blessing. The missionary idea had given not only expansion but height and depth to the whole spirit of the movement. It is a law of the commercial world that the balance of trade must be maintained and that the exports and imports of a country must have a due proportion. If we did nothing but receive goods of other lands we would soon become a bankrupt people. It is the export of our produce and manufactures that brings to us the treasures of the world and enriches our merchants and our people. It is the same in the natural world. The body of water that only receives the inflow of its tributaries and has no outlet from which to discharge its overflow necessarily becomes a stagnant swamp or Dead Sea.

And so the life that terminates upon itself is an anomaly foreign to the very nature of things and contrary to the law of its own existence. The Christian that is bound by his own horizon, the church that lives simply for itself, is bound to die a spiritual death and sink into stagnancy and corruption. We never can thank God enough for giving us not only a whole Gospel to believe, but a whole world to give it to.

Let us look a little farther at this great ideal of aggressive Christianity and see how it is essential to the whole system of divine religion:

1. First it is the spirit of the Master. It brought Him to Bethlehem and Calvary, and it governed all his earthly ministry. How touching the picture of one of the first days in His earthly work! The previous Sabbath had been spent in the wonders of His grace and power, and when the next day dawned the multitudes thronged around Him, and Peter came eagerly saying, "All men seek for Thee." Peter was delighted with the success of his Master's ministry. He was proud to be around Him and know that He was the centre of every thought and heart. But he could not find his Lord at first, and when he did discover Him He was away in a place of retirement whither He had gone a great while before it was day to wait upon His Father in earnest prayer, and when he found Him the Master was not at all delighted or elated by the crowds, but turning His back upon His sudden popularity He set His face to new fields and answered, "I must go into the next towns that I may preach there also, for therefore came I forth. And He preached in their synagogues throughout all Galilee." Again and again with weary feet and unwearied love the blessed Master traveled over the nine hundred cities of Galilee until all its teeming millions had heard the Gospel from His lips.

How beautiful that little verse in the fourth chapter of John, "He must needs go through Samaria." It was not because the road to Galilee led through Samaria, but it was because a poor, weary soul was there

at Jacob's Well, and all her countrymen in the city of Sychar, outcasts from "the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise," for whose souls there was no one else to care. How graphic the irony with which His very enemies described His love of souls when they cried in reproach "This man lieth in wait for sinners and eateth with them." And when He had traversed all His own land of Israel He reached beyond to Syrophenicia to the poor, sinful race of Jezebel, to the country of Peraea, and the very malefactor that hung beside Him in His dying agony. His love was always reaching out to regions beyond, and if the spirit of the Master is in us we shall be reaching too.

2. This was the spirit of the Great Commission. For when He went away He left His will in the form of His last commands. And what were these? They may be summed up in three special commissions. First, a commission to the nations as nations in the closing verses of the Gospel of Matthew: "Go ye therefore and disciple all nations." He sent them out as ambassadors from the King of kings to the kings of this world. He thus repudiated at once the idea of the Gospel being intended for any single nation or race. Certainly not the race of Israel, and just as certainly not the Anglo-Saxon race. The commission was world-wide, and it shall never be fulfilled until every race, tribe and tongue of the human family shall have received the Gospel in such form that its people can understand the message of salvation. It would not suffice if all the sinners in the United States were saved if there was yet a single tribe that had not heard of Christ--the commission would not be fulfilled. We cannot emphasize too much this national phase of the great commission, and until it is obeyed we do not see how we can consistently expect the Master's coming.

Next, there is the individual commission, "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature." This sends us man by man to the individuals of the race, and bids us give every human being a chance for his life.

Then, finally, there is the last utterance of the commission in its most aggressive form given by the Lord from the slope of Olivet just before His ascension: "Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you, and ye shall be witness unto Me"--and now notice the expansive character of the command--"in Jerusalem--and in all Judea--and in Samaria--and unto the uttermost parts of the earth!" So the ever-widening circle extends until it takes in the whole circumference of the world. Short of this, Christian enterprise dare not pause or it will miss the promise of the Holy Ghost and the approval of the Master.

3. This was the spirit of the early Church. They were slow to catch the Master's thought, but gradually

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they understood it and fulfilled it. And so it was not long until the Gospel had spread to Samaria, and then Philip was pressed out by the Holy Ghost to meet on yonder desert the heathen prince of darkest Africa and send him back to his own continent a pioneer of the glorious Gospel, and perhaps one of the founders of those mighty churches we afterward find in northern Africa. Then Peter is taken up on the housetop and prepared by a heavenly vision for the wider ministry that awaits him next day in the house of Cornelius the Roman centurion.

Next, the church at Antioch is formed with its larger brotherhood and its freer atmosphere of spiritual fellowship and world-wide evangelism. And then Saul is raised up and prepared for his peculiar ministry as the apostle of the Gentiles, and in due time sent forth on his world-wide evangel until he too is able to say, "So that from Jerusalem and round about unto Illyricum I have fully preached the Gospel of Christ. Yea, so have I striven to preach the Gospel not where Christ was named lest I should build on another man's foundation, but, as it is written, to whom He was not spoken of, they shall see, and they that have not heard shall understand." The one ambition of his life was to "preach the Gospel in the regions beyond."

And in the passage already quoted in the fifteenth chapter of Romans there is a fine sarcasm in one of his sentences where he tells them that much as he desired to visit them at Rome and enjoy their spiritual fellowship, yet he had not even thought of coming to them until he could say, "I have no more place in these parts." There was really nothing left to do among the heathen and so he was free to go to Rome, but even in going there it was but incidental to a more distant journey into Spain, and it was partly for the purpose of their helping him in this missionary journey. And so he says, "But now having no more place in these parts, and having a great desire these many years to come unto you, whosoever I take my journey into Spain, I will come to you, for I trust to see you in my journey or to be brought on my way hitherward by you if first I be somewhat filled with your company."

4. This is the true spirit of Christian love. It is the native instinct of the heavenborn soul. The supreme law of the universe is love and the essence of love is to think of others and especially of the most needy and helpless ones. "There's another man," was the stammering cry of the shipwrecked sailor as they roused him into consciousness and bore him from the raft on which he was floating. His first thought was of the comrade that he had left dying behind him, and so while "there's another man" in any corner of this dark world who is sinking in the night under his awful load of guilt and with a desperate sense of helplessness, let no man

dare to call himself the disciple of Jesus who does not care or presume to answer back to the challenge, "Am I my brother's keeper?"

5. Aggressive Christianity is the world's greatest need. Shall I try to make you understand the awful condition of the majority of our fellow beings in heathen lands? Can you take in the idea of a thousand millions without the Gospel? Suppose we were to bring them into this Tabernacle a thousand at a time, three times a day, every day in the week, and every week in the year, and thus have three thousand souls every day hear the story of salvation, how long do you suppose it would take the whole congregation of the Christless world to pass before us and have one sermon preached to them about the love of Jesus? It would take just one thousand years, and in the thousand years there would be thirty generations more just like them left to perish. How many of them have died since this Convention began? A population as vast as Brooklyn, as Philadelphia--a million souls perished without Christ! How many of them will pass away before we meet again at Nyack a year from now? Let me give you the picture of graves. Let us bury them side by side all across the continent and allow one yard for each grave. The row of graves would reach from New York to San Francisco and back again twice over. And all of these have perished without Jesus! Oh, as they pass into His presence in their darkness and sorrow and learn for the first time that He died to save them, what must they think of us, and what must He think of us, if we never feel their need and never make a sacrifice to save them? We gave a hundred thousand soldiers to emancipate this little island of Cuba from oppression. If we should give a hundred thousand missionaries it would mean one missionary for every ten thousand of the human race, and with that army of workers the entire world could be evangelized in ten years.

What about the means that such a movement would require? It would take just fifty millions of dollars, one-quarter of the amount the United States spent in a single year on the Cuban war, and a mere trifle for the Christian world to give for the evangelization of the heathen.

We are told by intelligent authorities that the actual increase in wealth of the Christian people of the United States as represented by the amount that they add to their Savings Bank deposits is five hundred millions of dollars. Now they could give all this without lessening their wealth by merely contributing the annual surplus. But if they gave but a tenth of this it would be fifty millions of dollars annually from the United States alone, and it would be sufficient to support an army of one hundred thousand missionaries, or one to every ten thousand of the human race. When we look at such

figures how can our hearts help being filled with deepest shame and wonder at the selfishness of Christians and the long-suffering of God!

Time will not permit me to tell you of the neglected fields of this lost world. I might speak of the three thousand languages and dialects of earth, of which more than two thousand still remain without a translation of the Scriptures or a Gospel messenger to tell them of Christ. I might speak of the interior provinces of China, with perhaps one missionary to half a million souls; of Mongolia and Tibet, which have just been touched with the first rays of light; of Turkestan and Anam without a single missionary; of the Philippine Islands just opening their gates to the Gospel; of hundreds of tribes in Central Africa that never heard of Jesus; of five million Indians in South America that are still in the night of paganism, and of many of the republics of South America that have but two or three lone messengers just beginning to cut their way through the dense darkness. But space and time forbid. God is calling, the Spirit is pointing, the Macedonian cry is pleading for the regions beyond. Oh, who will go, and who will help to send?

The Missionary Institute, for which today we are to contribute our loving gifts, is a training school for missionaries for the regions beyond. The men and women whom we train and send are themselves outside of the ordinary range of the Gospel ministry, and belong, in a sense, to a region beyond. Like the brave Rough Riders and Volunteers who helped to win the cause of Cuban freedom, they are the brave Volunteers

and Irregulars in the army of Christ and of missions, and they go forth to regions where others have not ventured and fields where others have not scattered the precious seed. If there is a hard place, if there is a lonely spot, if there is a neglected soul, that is the place that is the work for which these brave hearts are first to volunteer. But what right have they to sacrifice and serve at such cost while we stand back in selfish indolence and apathy? No, let both ranks of the army of the Lord advance alike and keep step together, the workers at home and the workers abroad in the same glorious enterprise of sacrifice and service for a crucified Lord and a lost world.

In conclusion, the spirit of aggressiveness is the spirit of our age. The great message of God's providence to our people today is national expansion. The hand of God and the victories of our brave soldiers have spread our flag over new realms and new races. Let us not forget that these millions are not only our fellow citizens but our fellow sinners too. Shall we be true to the trust that God has so gloriously enlarged? Shall we give them merely the earthly symbol of freedom, or shall we give them the glorious liberty of the children of God and the Magna Charta of the Gospel of Jesus Christ?

If the glory of Christ's cross has transfigured  
you and me,  
As he died to make them, holy, let us live and  
make them free  
While God is marching on.

## Reading 7.2

### **A Presentation of the Indigenous Church Policy of the Christian and Missionary Alliance\***

Dr. Louis L. King

All missionary work conducted by the Christian and Missionary Alliance has a twofold objective. The first and immediate objective is the widespread preaching of the Gospel. The ultimate objective is the building up of the indigenous church. The clear statement in the

*Foreign Service Manual* is: "The winning of adults to Christ and establishing of churches in all places where converts are won is regarded as the primary objective of all missions." In this paper we shall be dealing chiefly with the ultimate goal; namely, the development of the Church.

\* (1960), CBC/CTS archives.

The writer gratefully acknowledges help from "A Study of Indigenous Policies and Procedures" prepared by the C.B.F.M.S. in 1952. I have also made adaptations from paragraphs 3,4,6,7,8, and 10 on pages 20-23 of a privately circulated document entitled "A New Financial Policy for the New Century" as prepared by the American Methodist Mission, North India. This was later edited and included as a chapter in Blaise Levai's *Revolution in Missions*. Many other books on the subject have been read and ideas gleaned from them incorporated herein.

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St. Paul, writing under divine inspiration, states that the goal of all Christian work is, "That we may present every man perfect/mature/in Christ Jesus." This is, therefore, the criterion by which all missionary endeavour must be judged. No matter how spectacular or dramatic or specialized the work, it all must be tested as to whether or not it is contributing to the planting and then to the maturing of the Church of Jesus Christ. Whatever is found to stultify growth or supplant national initiative or imperil self-reliance or weaken witnessing is to be shunned. Whatever method or procedure secures a mature church of believers ought to be followed.

We are particularly favoured in our search for the method we should follow. More than a hundred years have passed since Dr. Henry Venn, Secretary of the Church Missionary Society, stated that the purpose of missions is the development of churches which are "self-supporting, self-governing, and self-propagating."

Dr. Venn and all exponents of this policy since his day interpret these three terms thus:

1. Self-support means support by oneself or itself. Technically speaking, therefore, it rules out support of churches by foreign funds in any degree or for any part of its work. It means that support of the pastor will be from church offerings or from personal income or both.

It allows also that contributions may be received from interested persons or sources within the same city or country.

2. Self-government means that all matters pertaining to the church, its committees, its property holdings, its treasury, its discipling, and preaching are administered by nationals.

3. Self-propagation refers to the growth of the church through the witnessing of the members to other people in accordance with the Great Commission and Acts 1:8.

Since Dr. Venn's day, valuable books as well as many articles have been written on the subject. The national churches of Korea, Congo, Indonesia, Viet Nam, the Philippines and others are living monuments of the principle of indigeneity. Their achievements are known to us. Moreover, the history of our own Society's experience in church planting and maturing - as recorded in the "finding Committee Report of the Board of Managers, 1952," together with the published Bangkok Report - is an open book to us all. In addition, by consultations, reasonings and debates; by events which have compelled us to face the problem of the church; by the action of opposing principles firmly resisted in debate - by all of this, the vagueness and incorrectness of many things have come to light.

What, then, are the weaknesses and impediments which, if permitted to survive, will enter into damaging

and destructive combinations that will stultify the work of achieving the indigenous church goal?

### A. Lack of Adherence to a Policy

Whenever the indigenous policy has been adopted by a mission, missionaries inevitably object: "The Christians are not ready," "They are economically unable," "You do not understand our situation," "Give us time and we will work out our own solution." When the pleas are honoured and ideas and methods contrary to the well enunciated policy have been permitted, the results have not been good for the mission and less so for the church. Not only does such action retard the attainment of the objectives but it has proven to be a source of disunity and trouble in the mission and also in the mission-church relationship. It is a chief reason for lack of success in achieving the type of church that is the Biblical goal.

### B. The Missionaries Themselves

That missionaries are listed as hindering the indigenization program may come as a shock. It should, however, be remembered that this is not an indictment. The missionaries really cannot be blamed. They are what they are by virtue of innate talents, ambitions, and attainments, and the fact that they were reared in a fabulously rich economy where the accepted axiom is "nothing succeeds like success" and where the test of achievement is to get things done quickly.

1. Each missionary without doubt is deeply concerned that evil not creep into the life of the church. His is a laudable ambition that the Christian standard of morals and habits of life be maintained. Immorality, drinking, smoking, chewing betel nut, and worldliness are especially to be shunned. Just here, however, may come the breakdown in the indigenous method in that the missionary, sensing - whether correctly or not - that these evil practices would be allowed if the administration were left to the nationals, carries on as director of church affairs. He imposes a code of morals and ethics which inevitably leads the national to conceive of the Gospel as a system of law. He also initiates disciplinary actions. It is this wholesome desire for a pure-living people of God and a seeming inability of the nationals in just this area that sometimes keeps the missionary from an enthusiastic espousal and implementation of the indigenous method.

2. Those who work with backward peoples can honestly speak of what is to Westerners their slowness, laziness, and lack of dependability. Whether in personal matters or church affairs, these triple dispositions reign supreme. An American missionary with his native propensity for speed and success can hardly contain himself. He reasons that the Gospel must be preached to the lost and that the Church must be properly cared for,

and that now. In such situations the normal procedure has been to fall back upon:

- a. Foreign money and professional evangelism.
- b. The notion that missionary work is an end in itself.
- c. The tendency to consider the mission society more important than the new church that it set out to establish.
- d. Making efficiency a matter of prime consideration.

3. It is generally believed that spirituality and a reasonably good education are prerequisites to church leadership. To this there can be no objection. There is danger, however, when we as missionaries go a step further and actually select men to be pastors on the basis of their education and good appearance. At the Bangkok Conference it was said:

"We all have the same Holy Spirit. He is the gift of Jesus Christ and His work is to give gifts to believers. These good gifts should be evident in believers. But when the mission rules, it may mar the operations of the Holy Spirit. For instance, we pay men to preach who are not gifted to preach. We see a man who is good looking and intelligent and we say, 'He ought to be a worker.' We then proceed to dress him in American clothes, educate him, raise his standard of living and on graduation day look at him and say, 'He is all ready to preach.' No, not necessarily so! He may never have been gifted by the Holy Spirit. All we saw was his intelligence, but we did not see and we haven't seen to this day that the Holy Spirit has gifted him for the place where we have placed him. A tragedy, therefore, occurs in the Church. Our men try to do God's work in the flesh, whereas these spiritual ministries can be performed only with the gifts of the Holy Spirit."

4. The indigenous method is set aside whenever and wherever the missionary draws up a constitution for acceptance by the national church. We have found that sometimes an awesome document with minute details, which for the most part parallels our American church constitutions, is imposed upon the young church. The constitution should originate with the church and thus be on a level of their comprehension and implementation.

5. To see scantily or immodestly clothed people is especially repugnant to some missionaries. To be adequately clothed according to Western standards they consider to be synonymous with true Christianity, and this because they have made no serious effort to separate the essentials of the message of the Gospel and life in Christ from the intertwinings and accretions of Western culture in Christianity. The people must be dressed; therefore, the "missionary barrel" full of castoff clothing has become part and parcel of missionary endeavour. This is done in spite of the fact that the clothing may not

be suited to the people and may be a deterrent to self-support.

In one area the people were, for all practical purposes, nude. In their culture they had never made clothes. They did not know what cloth was. They had no soap and no currency to buy these things. Every one of them was in the same condition. Moreover, when the Westerner came among them wearing clothes, the smell of perspiration was most repulsive. Despite this, the mission decided to provide blankets, clothing, and soap for the preachers and their wives. These were items which were scorned by the parishioners and which in their economy they were not able to provide for themselves. What the missionary did, both to the pastors and their wives, really (1) placed them outside their own social group, (2) provided them with things they were economically unable to obtain for themselves, (3) caused them to be an offense to their fellows with the odour of perspiration, and (4) changed the true position of the minister of the Gospel from that of being a servant of the Lord among the people to being a lord over God's heritage.

6. When the Christians of our younger churches compare missionaries with Christ, they complain that they are not sufficiently Christlike. One national leader said, "I have met very few missionaries who do not feel they are superior to us."

In one culture to lose one's temper is considered offensive. Were a missionary to show an un-Christlike attitude in handling church matters, that could have a devastating effect among such a people. A wholesome relationship, therefore, with national Christians is of immense importance. Failure in Christlikeness is a major cause of our weakness in successfully bringing about the indigenous church.

7. An inadequate understanding of the true nature of the Body of Christ as a living organism infused with life and directed by Christ its Head impedes our attaining the goal. The Church is seemingly conceived of as a tinker toy to be put together and held together by the missionaries: they are able to do everything so much better and faster that the national experiences a feeling of hopeless inferiority so that in the presence of the missionary he will seldom do as well as he is capable of doing. His initiative, the very characteristic that needs development and expression, is retarded. The possibility of the Holy Spirit's directing him and the life of the church is ignored.

8. The indigenous church policy may not commend itself to a missionary because of the frustration he may experience in trying to apply it. Even in the homelands, establishing a new church with only a small company of believers with little money and in an inconspicuous place can be a discouraging and frustrating experience. On the mission field it is much

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more so. The missionary, therefore, appeals for money and buildings and medicine and schools to defeat his frustration. When these have been obtained, it is possible to have little or no passionate concern for a program built on the indigenous policy. Where these things are not given, the frustrated missionary is tempted to blame his lack of success on the fact that subsidy and these other items have not been available. Just a little help here and a little help there, he believes, would certainly achieve results. In either case, frustration in a missionary opposes the indigenous policy.

9. Being wedded to modern conveniences or our own standard of living helps to militate against the type of church we seek. In the eyes of the nationals the missionary is a millionaire. He reasons that begging from such is only legitimate.

10. The promotional type missionary may unwittingly undermine the indigenous method. He sees the financial advantage to the mission to be gained by pleading for support of national workers and orphans and for the construction of church and school buildings. He probably is a most gifted letter writer and platform speaker when at home. It is inherently difficult, therefore, for him to sponsor enthusiastically that which curtails this ability.

11. A few missionaries oppose the plan for a more basic reason. They sincerely ask, "Are we not to obey James 2:5-17 and help the poor and needy with education, medicine, buildings, and clothes?" In reply it might be said that:

- a. Free medical, educational and economic aid causes the Christians to consider themselves the beneficiaries of the mission. The ineradicable impression is that the mission is the "Mother-Father," the great provider, and that the mission's very duty is to look after the welfare of its converts. Experience furthermore reveals that whenever the mission fails to help thus, they feel they are being ill-treated.
- b. Sometimes there is a desire to lift the economic and social standard because the people and their way of life are considered inferior. Our goal is to establish the Church of God, not to transplant Western culture.
- c. It is a true scriptural position that the social and economic advantages should come through the young church rather than through the missionary.
- d. The church should be so built that when the scaffolding is removed, the building will not collapse. We should, therefore, sacrifice everything that does not definitely contribute to the permanent establishment of the church.
- e. By distributing medicine, clothing, and education, the missionary may draw upon himself the accusation which is widespread in India and which

was most prominent in the Niyogi Report<sup>59</sup> that these are used purely and simply as inducements to conversion. Although they are actually given in the name of the church, the people in general do not grasp the true motive of compassion.

- f. "The church should fall back on its own resources and develop its own ways of working. It should be capable of expressing concern for the needy by reason of the Spirit in its midst. Its fruits should spring from its own roots, and all efforts to impose from the outside what does not spring from its own life are foredoomed to relative failure. We should not try to hang our fruit on their trees; therefore, any message or service or aid which the missionaries have to render needs really to be done by the churches and that at the earliest possible moment. The effort should be made to establish the church as the one and only basis from which the work of God can go forward to its destined end." (selected: source unknown)

### C. Terms of Service

The short term of service on some fields militates against attaining or maintaining St. Paul's goal for the church. If today's missionary program exactly duplicated St. Paul's and was to a civilized, educated, gentle people well acquainted with Judaistic thought, ethics and Old Testament preaching, then the short stay in a place would suffice. The work, however, in many places is carried on among peoples untutored in civilization and who are just learning of the truth of God. Because the situation in this age is different from Paul's, it is necessary to stay a longer period.

Here is our problem: A missionary and wife with financial backing are assigned by the field conference to a certain district. They become known for good works. They distribute free medicine each day. They rescue and harbour girls who don't want to marry the husbands selected for them. This eventually calls for a primary school, supported in part or wholly by foreign funds.

Men in debt are also helped. Those in trouble with the authorities secure special consideration by the missionary's intervention. The missionary, being handy with saw and trowel and artful in appeal to the home constituency, gets around all policy statements and gets a church building started. At his furlough time another couple is assigned to the district. By contrast the nationals consider them not at all satisfactory. They have no knack for medical work and the dispensary is closed. Feeling that they should not arbitrate in marriage matters, the new couple discontinues the work of

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59. Report of the Christian Missionary Activities Enquiry Committee, Madhya Pradesh, 1956, Government Printing, Madhya Pradesh, Nagpur.



rescuing runaway girls. The man has no experience in construction; furthermore, he has a firm mind to follow the mission's policy regarding the use of foreign funds for the erection or repairing of church buildings. He believes that every church must be self-supporting from the beginning. He, therefore, does not continue in the program of his predecessor. At first this is a genuine shock to the local Christian community. The man, however, is mighty in prayer, able in declaring the whole counsel of God in a most understandable and winsome way. He itinerates slowly and takes ample time in each church centre, giving spiritual bread instead of stones to the people. His authority does not come because of his white skin or because of his superior education or because of some constitutional provision. He sways and controls and leads by spiritual qualifications, by the Word of God taught in the energy of the Holy Spirit. Soon the life of the Christian community begins to take on a new hue. Quarrels are stopped, sin is dealt with, repentance and restitution are practiced. Christians pray and witness. Believers are added to the Church. Then furlough brings the missionary's ministry to an abrupt end.

The previous missionary couple then returns to this district and reinstates the former program, or else another couple is sent with differing personalities and abilities. This pair is quite unable to do what the first and second couple had accomplished. The district suffers and the purpose of establishing a church is hindered by this method of short terms.

The Lutheran Church in Australia New Guinea has had phenomenal success with many thousands of converts. In an article appearing in the July, 1956, *International Review of Missions*, one reason assigned for this success is as follows:

The early history of the Lutheran mission in New Guinea is in no way different from that of other missions. In this tropical country, among men of a Stone Age civilization and cannibals, much courage, endurance, self-sacrifice and joy in suffering and dying was necessary. The beginning was difficult. It lasted from 1886 till 1899, when the first two converts were ready for baptism and then until 1906, which brought the first great movement towards Christianity. Although conditions changed later, we should consider some of the social characteristics of the early missionaries: they were sent out for life and could only go home for retirement if they were unfit for work. Not life, but service, was what mattered. In this way they could devote themselves completely to the work, and this gave great continuity.<sup>60</sup>

60. Additional reasons for success were described as follows in "The Growth of the Lutheran Church in New Guinea," by George F. Vicedom, D.D., *International Review of Missions*, July, 1956. "The mission was very poor and the missionaries had much difficulty in gaining a livelihood. In them, too, the natives could see men with

## D. Schools

In most mission fields the work is carried on in close proximity to the Roman Catholics. They somehow manage to secure government assistance and forthwith establish a school program superior to anything Protestants can produce. The government in some instances seems to help the Catholics by establishing no government school system or else having an inadequate one. In such a situation, those desiring a good education are forced to attend Catholic schools. This is an intolerable situation. We sincerely believe we would lose our children and young people if we did not educate them ourselves. In addition, we argue ourselves into believing that the day of village evangelism is over and that today we need to give ourselves to school evangelism.

After Dr. Clyde Taylor's visit to Africa, he had the following to report on education in that continent:

Giving young people the education they want won't of itself hold them for the Gospel. In every land where this has been tried, experience tells us that it isn't education but deep spiritual life that holds young people for the Gospel. Moreover, once missionaries get involved in education, they seem to become immune to an honest perspective. Education holds the missionary home, enables him to have a regular life with a schedule. This is far easier than itinerant evangelism and teaching in the bush and villages. Unless he is that exceptional educator who has a burden for the spiritual life of the students to the extent that he works at discipling every one of them with personal contact, the spiritual problems dwindle to problems of discipline. Missions don't seem to be able to control education

many needs. For their very survival they had to seek the confidence and help of the natives. Thus the Gospel came to have a real meaning for the pagans, because it was practised by the missionaries under the same difficulties as the pagans had to contend with.

"Dr. Hogbin vouches for the fact that the missionaries had no racial prejudices. They did not restrict themselves to showing their affection by inviting the natives to their homes, but lived with them, visited them in their villages, sat at their fires, went hunting with them, ate with them from the same dish. Like the Lord Jesus Himself, they entered into the world of these people and regarded it as their own. In this way they learned to speak difficult languages, studied religion and customs, got to know the people and could thus proclaim the Gospel by their very presence.

"Language difficulties, and in particular the great number of languages, prevented the missionaries from following the evangelistic method which so many adopt in the belief that they must proclaim the Word of God as quickly as possible to all men, in order that the Word may work of itself. The missionaries were compelled to settle down and to concentrate on one language-group. In this way congregations grew up as life-centres, from which the surrounding country could be won. In these places, the Gospel message was shown by example and was not an echo in an empty room.

"The missionaries, although strict Lutherans, discarded their own form of Christianity and church with these primitive people. They may have doubted whether such people were capable of becoming Christians as we understand the word. By so doing they achieved a New Testament freedom of operation. The way was clear to accept such people as full Christians in their own way."

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when they get started, especially if it is subsidized. It brings in funds so they can support more missionaries so more missionaries can be absorbed into the system. In one major area we found that out of 300 missionaries, two were giving full time to evangelism. The rest were engaged in institutions of one kind or another, mostly primary education or teacher training.

If missions must operate a school system they must train teachers, but we consistently ran across this subtle danger. When young people in our schools reach secondary standing, they are sorted out, the best for full teacher training, second best for beginning primary schools. Of what's left, choose the best for native workers and send them to the Bible Institute. We saw that system in operation. In Congo there are 802 national pastors, 6,000 evangelists, but 14,000 school teachers, and 1,600 foreign missionaries. Surely such a consuming educational effort is harmful to the Church.

In addition to what Dr. Taylor has said, Dr. Daniel J. Fleming, Professor Emeritus of Missions, Union Theological Seminary, New York, has the following to say about the limitations of an intellectual approach in missions:

Westerners are apt to put too much trust in reason as a means of producing cultural change in another land. But it is possible ludicrously to overestimate what reason can accomplish. One is tempted to combat some situation, such as racial prejudice, with direct and logical argument based on facts. However, psychologists tell us that such intellectual arguments have minor effects.

The limitations of the approach through reason lie in assuming that facts and logic are the determining elements in the situation. The dynamic factors may be the traditional and emotional patterns which are more deeply imbedded in an individual than logic. In fact, in any folk society recurrent problems are met in conventionalized, spontaneous, and uncritical ways. Behaviour tends to be constant from generation to generation. The most serious opposition, therefore, to Christianity may not be from protest to its formulated thought but from its challenge to its customary ways of thinking and acting.

Tradition is not the only nonrational force at work. Modal ways of thinking and acting may, also, be emotionally instilled and, hence, not readily subject to logical argument. We are told that primitive religion is danced out rather than thought out. In particular, it is stated that the religion of the Bantu in Africa is still a matter of emotion, not of the intellect. 'He is more concerned with doing what makes him feel confident and assured than with thinking about the reasons for what he does, and intellectual absurdities do not trouble him a bit. He is very sensitive to the behaviour patterns which make him feel all wrong though he could not explain why they do so; but he is not sensitive at all to the incongruity of irreconcilable ideas.'

But it is not only in Africa that emotion plays a large part in moulding ways of thinking and acting. A committee of the American Council of Education states

that for us, also, emotions are the most potent and frequent factors in change of attitudes. The report continues: 'The usual lag of social reforms, after obvious evidence of the need of reform is available, shows that for the mass of people attitudes are not widely readjusted on a rational basis.'

Our own experiences confirm the truth of these statements. Since the intellectual approach is so limited, it is a mistake to place undue emphasis upon it. Schools have their place but a clear understanding of that place is essential. Here is The Christian and Missionary Alliance policy for control of secular schools. It makes the best of actual situations with which missions are confronted and still maintains the indigenous policy:

### Policy Statement on Secular Schools

1. As a general rule, it is not the responsibility of the mission but of the government or the people themselves to conduct and support schools.

2. There is justification for the mission's engaging in secular education only when the government does not operate secular schools but commits this responsibility solely to the Protestant and Roman Catholic missions whom they will subsidise.

3. Secular school work should be done only because of necessity and not by choice.

4. Mission-conducted schools are to be conducted according to the following policy:

- a. To provide for primary education.
- b. To erect buildings according to government standards.
- c. To be self-supporting from the beginning, at no cost to the mission for all needs not met by the government.
- d. To be taught by nationals.
- e. To be administered by nationals when feasible.
- f. To be operated on a temporary basis for eventual turnover to the national church.

5. When the time comes that the government carries on its own educational program or when the people are able, the mission should disengage itself from this type of work. Then the assets and obligations should be turned over to the national church, if they are willing. In any event, the mission must eventually terminate its participation in the school work. For when the necessity no longer exists, we must withdraw to concentrate our limited resources and personnel on ministering the Word in the most concentrated and direct means at our disposal.

6. In view of the policy regarding secular schools, it is important that the fields exert restraint and moderation so that the school program does not go beyond the requirements and overcommit the field and the Foreign Department.

7. It is the mission's primary calling to win people to Christ and that by a direct approach through the

Spirit-filled ministry of the Word of God. We must never permit ourselves to be drawn away from this vital, primary objective and lessen our missionary effectiveness by overemphasis upon less direct approaches to the perishing people whom it is our responsibility to evangelize.

### E. Missionary Competition

Another serious obstacle to the indigenous church policy is the presence on a given field of Protestant missions who are opposed to the indigenous principle and the comity agreement, and invade areas where indigenous work is being attempted. They offer to build churches, to pay the pastors' salaries, to educate on the high school and college levels all who will come. In almost every instance when missionaries feel the pinch of this competition they want to modify the indigenous position.

### F. Medical Missions

I list medical missions as an impediment to the indigenous church program although it has not become so with us. Before, however, it does become a problem, we should anticipate it and with our limited experience and information gathered elsewhere make some observations.

Medical missions are an impediment to the indigenous church program unless a distinction is made between a medical missionary practice and a general practice of medicine overseas. If a missionary doctor or a nurse is endeavouring to raise the health standards of an area, trying to meet its medical and surgical needs, seeking in general to help the people, spending his or her total time in practicing medicine, but leaving the spiritual ministry to others to perform, then that doctor or nurse cannot properly be called a medical missionary. What he is doing is nothing more than every reputable doctor or nurse does, whether Christian or not. He is in effect practicing medicine and incidentally having some association with Christians.

If on the other hand the doctor or nurse employs medicine as a tool - a vehicle to carry salvation to a community and is himself actively endeavouring to win people to Christ and to establish a church - then he may be truly called a medical missionary.

An eminent authority on medical missions and the indigenous method, Dr. Robert G. Cochran, M.D., writing to missionary doctors about the "Changing Functions of Medical Missions," states:

Our ultimate objectives, then, are, first, to disciple the nations so that they may evangelize the peoples, and second, not to meet need, but to demonstrate how need can be met. Our objective is not necessarily to train personnel for the mission hospitals, or to be a convenient agency to give medical relief to the Christian

community, or to be just another hospital in a land that is so starved of hospital facilities that new hospitals could be put within a hundred miles of each other and still more would be required. Our primary task is to win men and women for Christ, to point the road to full development in the Christian life, so that twice-born Christians, filled with the Holy Spirit, experiencing the liberty whereby Christ has made us free, can go forth and disciple the nations.

Dr. Cochran, discussing medicine, education, and missions in the Cameroons, said:

The people are too ready, governments only too anxious to encourage us to take our education, our example of service, without our Christ. We are like the disciples, watching in the Hall of Judgment, and we see Pilate, having been challenged by our King, turn and say, 'I will release unto you your King.' Let us be careful that by our actions and our planning, by our misunderstanding of our King's purpose, we do not encourage the devils in the crowd to shout, 'We have no king but the Caesar of higher education and the best medical standards.'"

Mission societies that do much medical work find the following dangers in it:

1. Medical staffs bypass their main objectives, becoming so engrossed in medicine that the spiritual part is neglected.
2. Hospitals have insatiable appetites for more and better equipment and larger staffs.
3. Medical work tends to overshadow the church in the size and importance attached to it, as well as the finances needed in mission considerations.
4. It becomes much more conspicuous than the church in the eyes of the national.

One large mission with nine medical doctors and thirty-four nurses in four fields, after an evaluation of its long-standing medical work, came to these conclusions:

1. Since the missionary doctor is both missionary and doctor, formal Bible training must be a part of his training.
2. Large centralized hospitals are not conducive or helpful or needed in order to develop a strong national church. A hospital with more than twenty-five beds is not in accord with sound policy.
3. Although doctors and nurses are sent primarily as missionaries and secondly as doctors and nurses, they actually often spend their full time doing that which was intended merely to be a "means to an end."

4. Medical personnel do not always catch the vision of a church and evangelistically related work. They see the need of enlarging institutional work.

In order to forestall these difficulties the Board of Managers has adopted the following as the official C&MA policy on medical work:

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### Policy Statement on Medical Work

The historical position of our Society regarding medical work is established as follows:

We commend the many missionary agencies which are doing effective medical and hospital work - a ministry which has been honoured of God. However, The Christian and Missionary Alliance, having been definitely called and committed to a program of evangelization and the building of the Church, does not engage generally in specialized medical and hospital work. We propose to continue the observance of this policy and to prosecute diligently our program of evangelization and the building of the Church.

However, in the carrying out of our work of evangelism, it has been found necessary to supplement the ministry of the Word by rendering physical aid to suffering people who had no one to cleanse their sores and treat their sicknesses. For this reason nurses have been sent to several fields, and clinics established. In fact, in some cases missionaries without medical training have found it necessary to give medical aid, including simple surgery.

In some fields or sections of fields the lack of medical facilities for the Christian community or for special groups such as those with leprosy, makes it imperative that direct evangelism be supplemented by attention to bodily welfare. Therefore, while giving pre-eminence to our policy of evangelism and the building up of the church, we also reserve the right to employ nurses and clinics in well-rounded missionary ministry, and in a few certain cases to appoint medical doctors on a true missionary basis as members of our missionary staff. (BM 9/6-7/51, p. 217)

That we shall keep faith with the calling given our Society to minister the word in as direct and personal a way as possible in the power of the Holy Spirit, we define our objectives in medical work as follows:

- 1.a. That hospital and clinic work be an auxiliary and supplementary ministry to that of personal witnessing and Bible teaching on the part of those engaged therein.
- b. That where special clinic facilities are required, these be moderate in construction and furnishings.
- c. That clinics be limited to caring for outpatients and not be permitted to develop into small hospitals for inpatients.
2. That nationals be encouraged to receive government care wherever available because our purpose is to meet needs of a type for which there is no other provision.
3. That any expansion of medical work beyond the above receive prior clearance from the Foreign Department.

### G. Joint committees

The joint committee can become a front through which the mission rules. In some instances, joint

committees have been made a final court of appeal, with more importance and authority than the national church general council. To correct this the chairmanship should alternate between the national church chairman and the field chairman, or, as is done in one country, the national church chairman is always the chairman of the joint committee. The best procedure for maintaining the indigenous aspect of the church is to make the joint committee a forum for sharing views. In any matter that involves the mission alone or the church alone the recording of minutes may well be dispensed with. Since the mission conference is the sovereign body of the mission and the church general conference or general council is the supreme body of the church, a joint committee cannot legitimately originate action for the mission nor yet for the national church; and especially it should never sit as a tribunal deciding the legality of the national church's acts. It is in this area that joint committees seriously err and retard indigenous effort.

### H. Why Self-Support is Essential

1. Self-support is of the very nature of the church. To be a Christian means that a man must give. "Freely ye have received; freely give," is the command. He has freely obtained salvation. Now out of an inner compulsion and motivation and allegiance, he gives himself, his time, his talents, and his possessions to God. Further, Jesus says, "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me." And the Church for its very on-going depends upon this concept of denying self and giving sacrificially.

2. Self-support is required by the Scriptures. Not to give is a denial of the Lordship of Christ in a man's life. It is outright disobedience to such scriptural injunctions as Matthew 23:23 and I Corinthians 16:1,2. It robs a man of a scripturally ordained proof of the sincerity of his love to Jesus (2 Cor. 8:8). It keeps him from receiving any honourable mention or reward by Christ who in commenting upon the widow's two mites established that praise and reward from Him is based, not upon the amount that we give but upon what we keep for ourselves (Luke 21:1-4).

3. Experience shows that unless a person gives when he is poor, he will not give more generously when he is better off. Proper giving to the church does not automatically come with a better standard of living or educational advantage. The Methodist Mission in India, which celebrated its hundredth anniversary in 1957, has a membership of half a million people. They report, however, that in one rural conference in 1954, the average giving to the church per family was 1/300th of their total annual income and that their city Christians, although economically much better off, gave

proportionately but little more to the church than did those in the village.

4. The witness of the church requires self-support. The effectiveness of the national witness is tremendously decreased when it is supported from abroad. Questions like these are asked the foreign-supported worker: "How much does the mission pay you for preaching?" "Why is Christianity the only religion that has to be supported from abroad?" "Isn't there something wrong with a religion whose adherents don't care enough about it to support it?" "If Christianity is as wonderful as its people claim, cannot it provide for the support of its own ministers?"

5. The searching questions being raised by newly independent governments require of the churches that they be self-supporting. Prime Minister Nehru in a letter to the Lutheran Primate of Sweden, explaining the Indian Government's restrictions on foreign missionaries entering India, stated: "As far as possible the Indian Church should be independent. We have in India the Syrian Church which has been here for 1800 years and more. We have had various churches of the Protestant persuasion for the last 100 to 150 years. These periods are long enough to build up an indigenous church which need not rely too much upon external assistance for its existence."

6. Furthermore, the non-Christian national is saying in newspaper propaganda against the missionaries something like this: "We gladly welcome generous donations to support mission schools and hospitals, etc.; but we strongly resent foreign money to support your religion; that is, the Church. Let your Christianity prove itself. If it is truly national and the Christians are what they claim to be, they will stand on their own feet. If not, they will fall. Let us really see what will happen if the foreign props are taken out from under your religion. Let us see if it will prove itself worthy to be considered a real part of our country."

7. The psychological difficulties require that the church be self-supporting. Experience shows that when people know an evangelist is mission-paid, they tend to discount both him and his message. This can hardly help but have its effect upon the worker himself, making him aware of the barrier between him and the people he is seeking to reach.

8. The proper relationship between the ministry and the people of the church requires self-support. The subsidy system tends to create the wrong kind of relationship. At the very centre of the scriptural idea of the church is a unique relationship between the pastor and those to whom he ministers. It is called the shepherd-to-sheep relationship. Intrinsic in this relationship are two principles: (1) The shepherd cares for his sheep, even to the extent of laying down his life for them, and (2) the sheep will provide for the

shepherd. If the shepherd fails to live up to his obligations, he proves himself to be a hireling, and not a true shepherd. If the sheep fail to live up to their obligations, then they prove themselves to be not true sheep of his fold.

Now let us ask ourselves what kind of a relationship is actually produced when the shepherd is not dependent upon his sheep for support, and the sheep do not provide for their shepherd. Is it not true that all too often, instead of an attitude of love, care, and self-sacrifice on the part of the ministry, there will develop the feeling, "I get my salary paid whether I serve you or not and whether you like me or not." And on the side of the congregation, "What's the use of our worrying about it? The pastor gets paid whether we provide for him or not and whether we like him or not." This is certainly not a healthy state of affairs.

Then, too, from a human point of view, it offers some serious temptations. It affords to pastors a degree of power and security independent of the demands and requirements of the laity, and it relieves the laymen of the need and responsibility of paying for the pastoral support. Is not this one of the principal reasons for our slow progress in developing local support? Much has been said about the economic weakness of the Christian community, but is it not true that the greatest obstacle to local support is not economic inability but a lack of conviction regarding its necessity on the part of the ministers themselves? To upset the comfortable status quo is never easy, especially when one is a beneficiary of the system. Spiritual apathy and wrong relationships are inevitably bred by the present system of subsidy.

9. Self-support will have a tendency to keep the missionary from transplanting to foreign soil a church order and an American-style church building, which the people neither need nor can support.

10. To accomplish the great purpose for which Christ founded the Church, self-support is required. The aim of our Society in sending out missionaries and funds has ever been to create a church that will support and govern itself and play its rightful part in the evangelization of its own country and eventually become a partner in the world-wide missionary enterprise of the Church. This without question is the aim of our Society. Unfortunately, foreign financial aid, instead of accomplishing this end, does exactly the opposite. With a guaranteed mission income for the pastors, there is little incentive for them to work for self-support and no incentive for the people to give. Such a Church, furthermore, has little concern for people outside of its immediate environment. They insist on receiving but do not give. Thus the Church becomes a cripple and then is given a permanent crutch. It doesn't have to stand on its own feet and walk with its own strength. The further tragedy is that often both

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missionary and national are honestly convinced that the Church cannot walk without the crutch and the grand purpose for which the Church was established is thwarted.

### I. End of Subsidy and Beginning of Self-Support

In the areas where subsidy is given, how and when should it cease and self-support begin? There are no exact answers here. Each field will need to decide to do it in its own way and in its own time, but the experiences of others can be studied and relied upon to advantage.

#### I. The Foreign Department's observations are:

1. The 10 percent cut in subsidy per year has not succeeded in any of the C&MA mission fields.
2. Dr. Jaffray's "ladder system," whereby for every ten members subsidy is cut 10 percent, has attained success only in Viet Nam.
3. The five-year plan has succeeded in Thailand. A good account of this is given beginning on page 81 of the Report of the Asia Conference, Bangkok. The Berar field of India has succeeded with a different type of five-year plan whereby 20 percent of the subsidy was cut each year.
4. Abrupt termination of financial help has been attempted in Cambodia. It has succeeded but for a period greatly upset the work.
5. The Philippines program is a middle-of-the-road program depending almost entirely upon the churches themselves.
6. The Central Treasury system, whereby all churches pool their offerings, has been relatively successful but is not recommended because of the abuses inherent in this system.

The things that primarily militate against success in any self-support program are:

1. Lack of clear thinking.
2. Indecision and disunity among the missionaries on the subject.
3. A harsh, legalistic attitude by the missionaries.
4. The inability of missionaries to achieve spiritual leadership.
5. Lack of confidence in the missionaries.
6. The complex Western-style constitutions imposed upon the people.
7. Dependence upon natural "weapons" instead of the Word of God and power of the Holy Spirit.
8. Permitting exceptions to the policy.

### J. Why Self-Government is Essential

The self-government of the church is based upon the scriptural doctrine that the Church is the body of Christ, and Christ is the Head. The National Church,

therefore, is not a colonial possession of the mission, and the mission should never endeavour to interfere in and manipulate its affairs. It is, however, right and proper to expect that the nationals will want a family relationship with us; not a mother-in-law relationship but that of partners in the work of the Lord. Ideally the day must come when the mission ceases its work. Christ must have His rightful place. The Christians must be caused to look to Him, the Bible, His example, and the Holy Spirit for direction, and not to the mission or to the missionaries. The doctrine of the Headship of Christ is basic to self-government.

1. "The Church is pervaded by His presence, animated by His Spirit, filled with His life, energies, and grace, governed by His authority, and used as His instrument for bringing men into His all-embracing act of salvation. He is the sole Head of the Church which receives from Him what He Himself possesses and is endowed by Him with all that she requires for the realization of her vocation."

2. The voice of the Lord is supreme in the decisions of the church. For the believer, not the church's or the mission's decisions, but the Lord's Word is final. He is the sole King and only Lawgiver in Zion. Even democracy's right to legislate is ruled out in all questions of faith, practice, and worship if the Lord through His Word has spoken on these matters. The Bible, therefore, becomes the ultimate constitution and only law book for the Church.

3. "The Church recognizes the Headship of Christ in seeking to do only those things which He has commissioned her to do. As she receives Christ's righteousness by His saving presence, so also the Holy Spirit makes her His instrument to preach His Word, mortify the flesh, and manifest His love to men. The church is not in the world to find problems to solve or issues on which to pass resolutions. She has her Gospel given her by God: The proclamation of Christ as Prophet, as Priest, and as King. The testimony to the grace of His coming and humiliation and the glory of His coming in power. She is commissioned to offer the Gospel of free salvation through His atonement, to expound the Word to His Body, to be the pillar and ground of the truth, to carry the evangel to all nations. It is not her business to carry out every good thing that needs doing in the governmental, international, economic, social, or political structure of the world." (Adapted from *The Headship of Christ*, by William C. Robinson.)

The following considerations require that a church be self-governing:

1. The present rapid trends toward nationalism. Bernard Shaw once said that nationalism is like cancer which, when a man has it, he can think of nothing else. Nationalism demands two things; namely, independence

and equality. These are perfectly right and proper demands on the part of nationals and should not be denied them. Furthermore, if the post office can get along without foreign supervision, why cannot the church; and if the customs department can be handled by nationals, why cannot the church?

2. The growing educational standards, which create a healthy degree of self-confidence.

3. The change of missionary personnel. In most fields the present missionary staff didn't bring the national Christians to a state of life in Christ. There is no reason of custom for them to venerate and follow the newer worker arriving from abroad, many of them younger in years and in faith than the nationals themselves.

4. The only way to develop self-reliance is to let the church govern itself. For true self-government the church should be allowed to frame its own policies. This is where we most frequently fail. We hold to the

indigenous policy in principle but are apt to do back-seat driving. We relinquish the wheel but insist upon directing the way. We give our well-thought-out and cut-and-dried formulas and expect the church to adopt them without any modification. The better method would be to let them develop from the known to the unknown by the trial-and-error method than to force them into our actions. Let them develop along lines of their own instead of insisting that they develop along Western lines in architecture, order of service, method of work, and from of government.

In these matters, special care should be taken not to denationalize the believers. Our work is to make a Christian out of a non-Christian; it is not to make him like an American. Christianity has come from God. It is, therefore, universal in its appeal and scope. It is native to every land and, therefore, should of itself make a man a better citizen.

### Reading 7.3

## How the C&MA Relates to Overseas Church\*

David H. Moore

Church-mission relationships is one of the most crucial missiological concerns.<sup>1</sup> The maturing of national churches into full selfhood as Church is accelerated or retarded by their relationship to missions that, under God, have been used to plant them.

These are some of the issues confronted in church-mission relationships: How does the mission differ from the national church? Should the mission be fused or absorbed into the national church? To whom is the missionary primarily accountable? Who determines the ministry assignment of a missionary? Should a missionary pastor a local church or hold office in the national church? Should the mission support national pastors, evangelists, church leaders? Should the mission finance primary and secondary educational programs for the national church? Should the mission fund theological scholarships for nationals? Who formulates the church's doctrinal statement? Who identifies biblical

principles and applies them to the culture? Who determines church organization, worship style, music?

When struggling with these questions, and many others, there are no passages of Scripture to which one can turn that explicitly address the issues. To be sure, there is mission in the New Testament - God reaching out to people through the Church. But mission structure is rudimentary. Church-mission relationships are not treated. Nor is there much help from contemporary missiologists.

How are we to evaluate what we are doing today in missions and have done in the past? How do we determine what to do in the future?

We have to begin with a theology of the church, a functional theology. Ecclesiology is a primary informant of missiology. What kind of a church do we hope, under God, to plant? What will it look like? How will it act? What will be its nature and function? What is the biblical model? Functional theology is dynamic. It ought to be changing as our understanding of Scripture grows. There are biblical principles to be identified in the cultural, historical, and linguistic context in which the biblical writer speaks under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Those universal

\*David H. Moore, *His Dominion*, 15(2): 7-18 (1989)

1. George W. Peters saw it as the foremost issue on the administrative operational level years ago. See his "Issues Confronting Evangelical Missions" in Wade T. Coggins and E.L. Frizen, Jr., eds., *Evangelical Missions Tomorrow* (South Pasadena: William Carey Library, 1977), p. 158.

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principles are to be applied in cultural and historical context under the illumination of the Holy Spirit. Even more difficult is to apply them in another culture.

The Christian and Missionary Alliance has an admirable record in church-mission relationships, largely because of the philosophy and policies crafted by Louis L. King during his long tenure as Foreign Secretary and later as Vice-President of the Division of Overseas Ministries.<sup>2</sup> Partnership is the model that best describes the way in which The Christian and Missionary Alliance seeks to relate to overseas churches.<sup>3</sup> In this model, church and mission relate as separate organizational entities, working together as partners. Overseas national churches are independent and autonomous. They are not related organizationally to the C&MA in North America except as equal members in The Alliance World Fellowship. The mission is primarily under the authority of and accountable to the sending church. The C&MA has opted for a partner relationship to overseas churches because it considers the model most conducive to the development of the overseas churches' selfhood.

### Primary Missiological Objective

"The Christian and Missionary Alliance has as its principal objective the winning of adults to Christ and the establishing of churches where converts are won."<sup>4</sup> Christ's commission to disciple all the nations (Matt.28:19); to proclaim the Good News to all the nations (Lk. 24:46,47); to be His witnesses to the

remotest part of the earth (Acts 1:8) underscores the imperative of reaching unreached peoples. Emphasis on winning adults is not to devalue children or to imply that the C&MA should not be involved in children's ministries; it is to recognize the biblical emphasis, the cultural patterns of family structure, the societal role of children, and the culturally acknowledged agents of change. All other ministry activities must be supportive of and supplemental to the primary objective. Investment of personnel and finances are to be so evaluated.

Evangelization is best achieved through the planting of churches (note the emphasis on local churches in the Acts). Church planting takes priority in the allotment of personnel and finances. In exceptional cases where church planting is not possible, priority may be reassigned (such as literature, radio, and relief ministries in China and the Indochina countries; use of tentmakers in countries of limited access).

Christ's commission to disciple involves baptism as a faith expression and the communication of Christ's teachings (Matt. 28:16-20).<sup>5</sup> In the Gospel of Matthew a disciple is a follower (8:22,23), a denier of self (16:24), a doer of the Father's will (13:49,50). A disciple, then, is one who has made a basic commitment to the person of Jesus Christ and whose pattern of life reflects that commitment. Winning people to Christ involves discipling them - training, teaching them to be followers of Christ. While the mission must not become mired in church maintenance ministries, neither may it neglect discipleship responsibilities nor close its eyes to problems of nominality in the church. Crucial is the development of discipleship models, culturally relevant to new believers. The most desirable models are those not only effective in training but that can be owned, used and financed by the church. Evangelizing and discipling are carried on simultaneously. Evangelism is integral to discipleship.<sup>6</sup> There is no stopping to consolidate.

### Ecclesiological Perceptions

Of the many images and analogies used of the Church in the New Testament, discussion is here limited to two and that in brief summarization.

**The Church is basically people.**<sup>7</sup> Not all humankind is part of the Church. The Church is made up of a special kind of people: redeemed people (Eph

2. Louis L. King served as Foreign Secretary and, after reorganization, Vice President of Overseas Ministries in The Christian and Missionary Alliance from 1954 to 1978 when he was elected President. See Robert L. Niklaus, "From Homestead to Executive Office," *Alliance Life* 122:10 (May 13, 1987), pp. 11-13.

3. Partnership is a term preferred by the writer rather than modified dichotomy which was used by Louis L. King. See his "Mission/Church Relations Overseas," parts I and II, in Vergil Gerber, ed. *Missions in Creative Tension* (South Pasadena: William Carey Library, 1971), pp. 154-188. In the same volume George W. Peters uses the term "partnership of equality and mutuality," in his *A Biblical Theology of Missions* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1972), pp. 199-241. Despite the different titles used by King and Peters, their models are similar. Arguing for an integration model is Petrus Octavianus in Patrick Sookhdeo, ed., *New Frontiers in Mission* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1987), pp. 25-35. Orlando E. Costas has an interesting chapter on mission and church-mission relations in *The church and Its Mission: A Shattering Critique from the Third World* (Wheaton: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 1974), pp. 153-174. Finally, in a seminar presentation C. Peter Wagner touches briefly on the problems arising out of a mission fusing or totally integrating with the national church, "Church-Mission Relations: Some Implications for Churches, Mission Agencies, and Missionaries" with responses in *The Future of the Missionary Enterprise* (New York: IDOC International, 1974).

4. *Missionary Handbook for Overseas Ministries*, 1987 edition (Nyack: The Christian and Missionary Alliance, 1987), p. 7. As noted on p.5, the policies contained in the Handbook have been approved by the Board of Managers of the C&MA in the United States and the Board of Directors of the C&MA in Canada.

5. The verb used in Matthew 28:19 is *matheteuo*. It occurs elsewhere in Matthew 13:52 and 27:57. The only other New Testament occurrence is in Acts 14:21. The noun form, *mathetes*, is found over 250 times in the Gospels and the Acts. Neither verb nor noun are used in the Epistles.

6. See Roland Allen, *The Spontaneous Expansion of the Church* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1962), pp. 20-25. Note also Alan Tippett, *Introduction to Missiology* (Pasadena: William Carey Library, 1987), p. 373.

7. Compare the use of *laos* in the New Testament.



1:7); people in whom God has taken up residence (Eph. 3:14-19; Col. 1:27; Jn. 14:17); people to whom the Holy Spirit has come and to whom God has given His dunamis (Acts. 1:8; Eph 1:19; 3:20). The Church is made up of those called of God according to purpose (Rom. 8:28); called of Jesus Christ (Rom.1:6,7); called, both Jew and non-Jew (1 Cor. 1:24); called and kept for Christ (Jude 1). The Church is not only called, it is sent (Jn. 20:21). Throughout his Gospel, John's emphasis is on sentness. The church is made up of those whom God purposes to transform from what they were and are into what He intends them to be (Rom. 8:29; 2 Cor. 3:18).

**The Church is the body of Christ** (Rom. 12:5; 1 Cor. 12:27; Eph. 1:22,23; 5:23; Col. 1:18). Christ is the Head (Eph. 5:23). Every believer is under the Lordship of Christ, subordinate to the body head. Every believer is a member of the body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:27; Eph. 5:30). Each believer is "baptized," placed into the body by the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 12:13).<sup>8</sup> There is only one body (Eph 4:4). Every believer is gifted by the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 12:7, 11) with a particular body function to perform. Age, sex, education, race, ethnic group, or spiritual maturity are not in themselves determining factors. Spiritual gifts are graciously given, they cannot be earned. Body health depends upon the proper functioning of all body members. Believers are interrelated and interdependent. Each is spiritually related to all other believers. Spiritual unity of the body is a fact. Each believer needs the ministry of the other body members in order to grow as God intends. Through His body members, Christ ministers to the Church.

There is a wealth of material in the New Testament concerning the Church in its nature and function. From statements about nature, function can be inferred. Where the Church is functioning, inferences can be drawn as to nature. However, care must be taken not to read into nature and function what is not biblically valid. Four of the many aspects of the Church's nature are selected to illustrate.

By nature the Church is a witnessing body. In the Upper Room Jesus informs His disciples of the parakletos whom He will send from the Father (Jn. 15:26, 27). The parakletos is the Spirit of Truth and He will bear witness of Jesus. The disciples will bear witness also because they have been with Jesus from the beginning. Jesus issues a promise to His disciples just before His ascension (Acts 1:8). They are to be witnesses of Christ in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and to the remotest part of the earth. Witnessing of Christ is by the enablement of God's power received when the Spirit

comes. Where the body members live under the Spirit's control, the Church will be witnessing of Christ.<sup>9</sup>

By nature the Church is a ministering body. By gifts of the Spirit body members are equipped for function and ministry (Rom. 12; 1 Cor. 12-14; Eph. 4; 1 Pet. 4).

By nature the Church is a worshipping body. That the Church is a worshipping body is evident throughout Scripture. A representative passage is taken from the Acts (2:42-47):

Believers were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching, to fellowship, to the breaking of bread, to prayer. Day by day they were continuing with one mind in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they took meals together with gladness and sincerity of heart, praising God and having favour with all the people.

By nature the Church is a giving body. In the New Testament the classic passage on giving is II Corinthians 8 and 9. The Macedonians were remarkable in their giving. They gave while experiencing affliction (8:2), and deep poverty (8:2). They gave joyfully and liberally (8:2), beyond human ability (8:3), and pled for the privilege of participation in giving (8:4). Following verses deepen our understanding of this giving church.

I Corinthians 9:1-18 is a highly significant passage for it instructs us on the relation of monetary support to the ministry.

Other passages treat the Church's privilege in giving (Acts. 11:28-30; 4:32-35; I Tim. 5:16; Phil. 4:15).

### Missiological Implications

Theology, especially ecclesiology, informs missiology. Ecclesiological perceptions have implication for the church planted overseas and influence how the mission sent by the sending church relates to the planted church.

As God's people, the Church is universal - wherever the people of God are, the Church is. The church is visible, as visible as the people who compose it. The church is people living in history - frail, weak, sinful, subject to failure but in the process of radical transformation.

Every local group of believers is a local expression of the one body of Christ. In the New Testament they are called local churches. Buildings may be of importance culturally but they are not essential to the expression of Church nature.

There is basic unity of the body celebrated in the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper. Yet there is diversity in member functions because of differing

8. Interpretation depends on how Paul is using the preposition en in First Corinthians 12:13.

9. For further explication see "The Impulse" in Roland Allen, *Missionary Principles* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964), and Harry R. Boer, *Pentecost and Missions* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1961).

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gifts of the Spirit. There is family likeness that is to characterize all believers - the Fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5).

National churches (including the C&MA in the USA, C&MA in Canada, and overseas C&MA - related churches) are expressions of the same Church, assuming the members have experienced spiritual birth. No one national church is all the Church. Nor are all of them together all the Church. There are other believers in other national churches. Each national church, each local church is an expression of the same Church. Overseas national churches are as much Church as the C&MA in North America. National churches have Church nature. The parakletos has come to them. God's dunamis enables.<sup>10</sup> This means that national churches overseas are as free to make erroneous decisions as missions or churches in North America.

The body of Christ is expressible in various cultural forms. The Church - wherever it is, in whatever culture and context - may express itself in culturally and linguistically authentic forms. This includes worship forms, witness and ministry forms, musical and art forms, organizational and theological forms. The Church - wherever it is, in whatever culture and context - is under the authority of Christ and His Word. National churches in their early years may reflect organizational, theological and cultural patterns of the planting mission. However, national churches must be given freedom to initiate changes that are biblically and culturally consistent. It is the national believer that is ultimately responsible to God and His Word for appropriate contextualization. Overseas churches are in no greater danger of accommodating to culture and societal norms than are national churches in the United States and Canada. Identifiable in western evangelicalism are the influences of contemporary society and culture, some of which are "rationalized" as biblically rooted.<sup>11</sup>

The mission must not usurp the church nature of the national church. With the national church the mission can witness, minister, worship, give. But not in place of it!

Because it is Church, the national church overseas is as much subject to the impulse of the Holy Spirit in witness and to the mandate of Christ in the Great Commission as is a national church in North

America. Sensitivity to that impulse is currently expressed in cross-cultural mission by overseas churches within their own national borders.<sup>12</sup> Missionary outreach beyond national borders is also carried on by some overseas churches.<sup>13</sup> For most overseas churches the western mission model is not practical because of limited finances and other reasons. Those churches must be encouraged to create or adapt models to fit their own resources. History demonstrates that the church was involved in missions many centuries before the current western mission structures developed!

Biblically, it may be assumed that all the gifts of the Spirit are being distributed to believers in the overseas national churches. Gifts of leadership have been given. They may be exercised in cultural forms quite different from the church in the west. Gifts of evangelism and of teaching may be used in culturally relevant patterns. The overseas churches are being equipped by the Spirit for ministry. Gifts may require development for maximum effectiveness, but they are there.

Overseas national churches will express their worship nature in forms that differ from North American churches. Emotional expression may be more overt. Vocal and instrumental music may sound strange to western ears. Services may seem interminable to westerners accustomed to a 60- or 90-minute service. Prayer may be in concert aloud. Early morning prayer services in homes or in churches may be practised more than private devotions. What matters is the expression of true worship in cultural forms meaningful to the worshippers.

Overseas national churches, as part of the Church, have a giving nature. A national church may be relied upon to support its leaders and pastors in a manner that is culturally suitable. That church may well struggle to practise responsible stewardship as do churches in North America. Often most difficult for the overseas church to support are western institutional structures (such as theological schools or hospitals) inherited from the mission. The financial area is usually where the mission (and the individual missionary) finds

10. See the remarks of Roland Allen in *Missionary Methods: St. Paul's or Ours* (London: World Dominion Press, 1956), pp. 183-190.

11. A few examples are the following: wealth is an evidence of blessing. God will always bless His children if they trust Him and work hard. Decisions for Christ are made only on a private, individual basis. One relates to God in a strictly individual manner. For a classic analysis of American culture see Edward C. Stewart, *American Cultural Patterns: A Cross-Cultural Perspective* (LaGrange Park: Intercultural Network, Inc., 1972).

12. There is a definitional problem that generates considerable confusion in North America. It is the use of the term "native missionaries" by some organizations to describe what have traditionally been called "national evangelists" or pastors. For a helpful discussion see "Beyond 'Native Missionaries'" by Ralph Winter in *Mission Frontiers* 8 (September-October, 1986), pp. 3, 8, 9.

13. See the *Prayer Directory*, 1989 edition (Nyack: The Christian and Missionary Alliance), p. 145 where 49 missionaries from 5 national churches are listed. In addition, there are Dutch, West German, British and Australian missionaries listed along with missionaries from Canada and the United States, according to field classifications. They are supported by churches in their respective countries and serve under the administration of the Division of Overseas Ministries.

it most difficult to disengage.<sup>14</sup> The mission may cooperate with the national church in special projects of evangelism, discipleship, leadership training, church planting and construction.<sup>15</sup> To help and not hinder the national church is the mission's objective. Aid, in whatever form, hinders when it hinders the expression of the church's Church nature. The mission must make that kind of judgment in considering assistance, even when the church misunderstands. As Dean Gilliland has observed, "The perception on the part of the church to know when not to receive is as important as it is for the mission to know when to give and when to withhold."<sup>16</sup>

### Relational Stages

Consciously or unconsciously, the overseas church and the mission relate to one another differently depending on the stage of their relationship. W. Harold Fuller of SIM International has suggested four stages.<sup>17</sup> He calls them pioneer, parent, partner and participant. Using those titles but not necessarily Fuller's definitions, the development of church-mission relationships may be described as follows:

**Pioneer.** In the pioneer stage there is no national church. There are no national Christians, at least among those people targeted by the mission. The missionary comes and seeks to communicate the Good News of Christ so that it will be linguistically and culturally perceptible to the people. The Holy Spirit opens the minds of some to understand and respond. Spiritual births result. A church is born! The pioneer has become a parent.

**Parent.** The missionary/mission acts as spiritual parent. The missionary teaches, organizes, supports. The newborn church totters, leaning heavily upon the missionary/mission as it learns to walk. But the church does grow and mature. Eventually church and mission arrive at the third stage. Blessed is the church and mission who recognize what has happened and act accordingly!

**Partner.** In the partner stage, the mission drops the role of parent and assumes that of elder brother or sibling. The church has come of age. It appoints its own leaders; chooses or adapts its organizational structure; makes its own decisions; develops its own patterns of evangelism, discipleship and worship; finances its own programs. Tension, even conflict,

develop if the mission or certain missionaries continue to treat the church as a dependent child, or if the church alternates between the roles of child and partner to serve its own purposes. In the partner stage there are usually national church leaders who are older than the missionaries in experience and age. Wise is the missionary/mission who retreats further and further in order to encourage the church to exercise the full responsibility of adulthood. In effect, this ushers in the next phase of church-mission relationship.

**Participant.** In the participant stage the missionary and national work side by side. Only when the church asks for it does the mission offer advice (and that sagely). Mission staff is far outnumbered by national church. Church institutions are directed by the church. Church priorities may differ considerably from mission priorities because a church's concerns are broader than those of a mission. Missionaries may be seconded to church agencies to work under church authority. Missionaries may be minority members on joint church-mission committees. The mission participates in the ministry of the church by invitation. Much of what describes the participant stage began in the partner stage but now is normative. It is at this point that the mission should seriously consider full redeployment of staff into unreached areas outside of those occupied by the church or consider withdrawal from the country altogether.

**Observations.** This is a helpful analysis in understanding the evolution of the church-mission relationships. However, the following merits emphasis. There is no precise hour or day to which church and mission can point and say with certainty, "At such and such a time we passed from pioneer to parent stage, or from parent to partner." In retrospect it is easier to identify a time in general terms. Stages dissolve from one into another. Transitions are not clear and sharp. Rather than four stages in development, there may be twenty-four! To relate optimally well, both church and mission need to understand where they are on the continuum. At times there may be a foot in each of two stages. In most countries The Christian and Missionary Alliance is probably between the partner and participant stages in church-mission relationships. What irritates a healthy relationship is a significant number of persons in church or mission who seek to retain a role from a former relationship stage.

### Relational Levels

There are four levels on which The Christian and Missionary Alliance relates to overseas national churches.

**Personal.** By far the most crucial of the relational levels is the personal relationship developed between individual missionaries and national church

14. See the chapter entitled "Finance" in Roland Allen's *Missionary Methods*. Also Alan Tippet's discussion of self-support in Introduction, p. 380; "Beyond Independence to Responsible Maturity" by James Plueddemann in the *Evangelical Missions Quarterly* 19 (January, 1983), pp.48-55.

15. For C&MA policy see *Missionary Handbook*, pp. 25-43.

16. Dean S. Gilliland, *Pauline Theology and Mission Practice* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1983), p. 256.

17. W. Harold Fuller, *Mission-Church Dynamics* (Pasadena: William Carey Library, 1980), Appendix G.

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leaders. Whether field director with church president or missionary with local pastor or layperson, strong relationships are imperative on the personal level. To build strong relationships requires time and serious identification with nationals on the part of the missionary. But without healthy personal relationships, formal church-mission relationships are meaningless.

**Joint executive committee meetings.** At least annually, the executive committees of national church and mission meet for several days. In joint session they do not have legislative power over the respective bodies. They do, however, discuss matters of mutual interest - problems or potential ones, assignment of missionaries, joint projects and other concerns. They can also strategize together and set mutual priorities.

**Working agreements.** Church and mission relate formally through working agreements negotiated over a period of from two to six days.<sup>18</sup> Normally, agreements are in effect for five years at which time a new one is negotiated for another five years. Originally, agreements were born out of crisis in church-mission relations. In an effort to find a mutually agreeable solution, church and mission with DOM representatives met for an extended time. Procedures for the consultations were developed out of experience and have been revised as needed. The two major participants in the working agreement consultation are church and mission. However, two representatives from the Division of Overseas Ministries (vice-president and regional director) are also parties. Representing the mission is the field executive committee which includes the field director. The church is represented by its executive committee. There may be additional delegates from the church due to ethnic diversity, geographic expansiveness, or the unusual size of the church.

Church, mission, and DOM representatives submit items for the agenda. The church selects three of its representatives and the mission two of theirs to serve on an Agenda Committee. That committee forms a unified agenda with items prioritized. Church and mission each appoint official secretaries who work together to ensure an accurate record of the proceedings. Once the agenda is approved in plenary session, discussion of the items begins. Debate is candid and open. A running account is kept of the discussion but names of debaters are not entered. At this time no decisions are reached by vote. Usually a consensus emerges or it becomes apparent that, for whatever reason, a particular request cannot be fulfilled.

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18. Working agreements have been concluded over the years with 17 overseas national churches. Currently there are agreements in effect with 14 churches. No attempt has been made to negotiate agreements with over 20 of the churches. Small size, geographic concentration, and church age are factors.

Discussion of agenda items may extend from one to two days. After the agenda is completed, church and mission meet separately to draft an agreement document as to how they shall work together. Next, the draft documents are submitted to the five-person Agenda Committee which is now increased to seven, one additional member from church and mission. The committee then seeks to write a document from the two drafts. That church and mission highly respect and have confidence in their Agenda Committee members is important because some negotiation occurs within the committee. When the committee has completed the document, copies are made and it is read in plenary session. Here decisions are reached. Revisions, additions, or deletions may be made. Any changes are incorporated into the document and new copies prepared. In plenary session the revised document is read. Church, mission, and DOM delegations then meet separately to determine if they can sign the document. In plenary session, each group gives its decision (rarely is there dissent at this stage). Representatives then proceed to sign the document.<sup>19</sup> Following a brief recess a communion service is held by which church, mission, and DOM celebrate their unity in Christ and their desire to work in partnership for Christ.

I have participated in over twenty working agreement consultations in almost seven years. As a member of the field executive committee, I was involved in the first agreement negotiated with the church in Indonesia in 1973. Experience in agreement consultations in Africa, Asia, and Latin America has been convincing that though the method may be western, it has been effective in strengthening church-mission relationships. Debate has been open, sometimes heated and often controversial. The missionaries, at times, have been shocked to hear the church's views and perceptions. Content of agreements changes over the years as third and fourth agreements are negotiated. Financial matters have decreased in importance and in some agreements are hardly mentioned. Agreements may deal with joint projects, personnel priorities, property transfer, joint executive committee meetings, evangelism goals, unreached peoples targets, and any specific problem areas.

The use of working agreements is a transitional phase in the stages of church-mission relationships. Consultations in the future may increasingly centre on joint goals and strategies. In time, the agreement

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19. Each delegate receives a copy. Copies are sent to all national church workers and mission staff. An English translation is made and signed for the files of church, mission, and DOM. However, the official copy of the agreement is the one in the national language of the church.

methodology will become obsolete. It is, after all, only a means to strengthen church-mission relationships.

**Alliance World Fellowship.** Almost all of the overseas churches are members of The Alliance World Fellowship which was organized in 1975 and meets quadrennially. The AWF is a fellowship. It has no legislative authority over member churches. The C&MA in the United States and Canada are member churches on the same basis as other national churches.<sup>20</sup> At the AWF meetings papers are presented, responses given, and discussion facilitated in small groups. Groups' reactions are summarized by designated reporters in public meetings. Worship sessions characterize the week. Perhaps the greatest benefit for many delegates is to fellowship with the larger Alliance family and hear what God is doing elsewhere.

### Conclusion

Evangelism with a view to gathering those who believe into local churches is the major objective of The Christian and Missionary Alliance in its overseas ministries. Missionaries engage in theological education, Bible translation, the production and distribution of Christian literature, radio broadcasting, medical

ministries, refugee and famine relief, and tentmaking service. But all is intended to contribute toward evangelism and church planting. Church planting means local churches. The local churches grow into a national church. Relating to those national churches are the churches that send the missionaries. Basic to sound missiology is a strong ecclesiology. Scripture does not speak directly to church-mission relationships. However, Scripture contains principles applicable to those relationships. To correctly interpret Scripture, identify universal principles, discern the missiological implications of them and apply them, is a continuing process. That does not lend itself to cement-like dogmatism. Church-mission relationships are not static. There are stages in growth. Recognition of those stages enables church and mission to better understand each other. All levels of relationship are important. The sending churches of the United States and Canada are grateful to the overseas churches for their patience, understanding, and partnership. As more and more of the overseas churches become themselves ending churches, they will appreciate our struggle. May they also learn from our mistakes and surpass us in the quality of their relationships with churches they are planting.

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20. Forty-one national churches are members of The Alliance World Fellowship.



## Part 2

# Alliance Thought



Rev. A.B. Simpson  
1843-1919





Reading 8.1

## The Centrality of Jesus Christ in the Fourfold Gospel\*

David Schroeder

*The following is a sermon preached in Colorado Springs at the Division of Church Ministries Leadership Conference on March 22, 1994.*

Worshipping five days a week some 50 yards away from A.B. Simpson's grave can have a profound effect on a person. At least it does so for me. Probably more than anything else, Simpson's "presence" there on the hillside challenges me about the sacred trust I have been given as Nyack College's president. Without trying to deify our founder, I want to confess how utterly astonished I continue to be as I learn more about his accomplishments.

While many people have never regarded Simpson as a theological giant, I have to confess that I have found new appreciation for him in that regard also. This new respect began a little more than a year ago in a most unexpected way. Dr. Rambo had asked me to give some structure to the strategic planning process for the Christian and Missionary Alliance. In early January 1993, the President's Cabinet went on a retreat to consider the eight plans that had already been developed and to synthesize them into one workable document.

### Why We Exist

Near the beginning of our discussion, Richard Bailey asked for the privilege to present some ideas he had recently been pondering under the theme of recovering our spiritual vitality." [In about 20 minutes using the marker board, he sketched out an important idea calling us back to the centrality of Jesus in the fourfold Gospel.] He reminded us that Simpson's emphasis was not on the doctrines of salvation, sanctification, healing and the second coming, but on Jesus as the Saviour, Jesus as the Sanctifier, Jesus as the Healer, and Jesus as the Coming King. That very important idea, my friends, is why we exist as a denomination. Many churches have a doctrine of salvation, sanctification, healing and the second coming, but it is the Alliance's distinctive emphasis that beyond the doctrines we bring the living person of Jesus Christ into our daily experiences of empowerment for forgiveness, holiness, bodily health and eternal hope which stimulates missions. Let me develop this idea.

Perhaps we have become sidetracked from the centrality of Jesus as we have argued (discussed) the various doctrines. Maybe we are asking the wrong questions.

The question about salvation is not *why*, but *who*?

The question about sanctification is not *how*, but *who*?

The question about healing is not *what*, but *who*?

The question about the second coming is not *when*, but *who*?

### The Central Question about Salvation Is Not Why

Why are some saved and not others? Why do some hear the gospel but not all? Why is it fair for God to condemn those who have never heard? Why do some seem to be saved and then drift away?

We can argue forever about Calvinism versus Arminianism (and it is OK to discuss the issues: my fear today is that for most young people the counterpart to Calvin is not Arminius but Hobbes!) Fortunately, in the Alliance we have not allowed this issue to separate us, and we refuse to allow election or free will and eternal security or potential apostasy to become cardinal tenets of orthodoxy.

We have stayed together as a church even in the past few years amid some debate, and to our credit. I believe, we have examined carefully again the driving force of our mission which is not the lostness of man, but the command of Christ. The love of Christ compels us – His love for sinners – so we focus on Him.

If the question about salvation is why, it should be, "Why are any saved!" The informed do not deserve to be saved anymore than the uninformed. Salvation is not about fairness, but about mercy! And about mercy the hymn writer said it best:

'Tis mystery all, let earth adore.  
Let angel minds inquire no more.

But the question is not why, but who. By whose name must we all be saved? Jesus Christ. Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).

\* David Schroeder, Heritage Series, Christian Publications, Camp Hill, Pennsylvania, 1994

## Section 8. The Fourfold Gospel

### **The Central Question about Sanctification Is Not How**

How are we sanctified, in a crisis or progressively? How can we be sure if someone is sanctified--that is, what is the evidence! Some sign or special gift! Or, how is sanctification the same as or different from the baptism of the Holy Spirit or the filling of the Holy Spirit? Or, how thoroughly can one be sanctified? To the point of sinless perfection?

We can argue forever about these issues and in so doing, probably prove we are not very sanctified. Maybe the distinctions between these terms are important to some degree, but not important enough to sidetrack us from who is the Sanctifier. Simpson, for all his emphasis on the Holy Spirit, insisted that Jesus is the Sanctifier. Perhaps because Simpson brought back to the church an emphasis on the Holy Spirit in the late 19th century, we tend to associate him particularly with the third person of the Trinity. Indeed, he did write two great volumes on the Holy Spirit, but let us not forget that there were some 28 titles in the Christ in the Bible series (now published in a six-volume set).

Well, we are not trying to trichotomize the Godhead. It is clear that Scripture reports that the Father has assigned different roles to the Son and to the Spirit. Jesus is the primary agent for sanctification. "But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, now crowned with glory and honor because He suffered death, so that by the grace of God He might taste death for everyone. In bringing many sons to glory, it was fitting that God, for whom and through whom everything exists, should make the Pioneer of their salvation perfect through suffering. Both the one who sanctifies and those who are sanctified are of the same family so Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers" (Hebrews 2:9-11). Later in Hebrews, the writer affirms this truth again. "And so Jesus also suffered outside the city gate to sanctify his people through his own blood" (Hebrews 13:12).

It is true that the Holy Spirit fills us and empowers us for holiness in service, but all of this is based on the atoning work of Christ. God has only one agent or source of grace for the believer. All the grace that will ever be imparted to the human family comes through Jesus. God the Father has not subjugated the role of Jesus to be the Saviour of the carnal, only for the Holy Spirit to be the Sanctifier of the saints. Jesus is the Sanctifier. All grace flows from Calvary. This is why we are not sacramentalists. There are no new provisions of grace, but many new distributions. Grace, including sanctification, comes through Jesus Christ. So the question about sanctification is not how, but who. If the question is how, it should be, "How far along am I with my sanctification? How can I be more like Jesus?" But

the question is who. Stanza three of Simpson's hymn *Jesus Only* affirms Jesus is our Sanctifier:

Jesus is our Sanctifier,  
Cleansing us from self and sin,  
And with all his Spirit's fullness,  
Filling all our hearts within.

### **The Central Question about Healing Is Not What**

What are the conditions for healing? What is the role of faith? What activates healing power? What hinders some from being healed even when we abide by James 5?

We can argue about the role of faith, the 'name-it-claim-it' theology, or the healing- in-the-atonement issues. We can debate about the legitimacy of healing services versus private elders-only settings. We can exegete and reexegete James 5. But the question is not what, but who.

In Acts 4 just before the verse in which Peter boldly declares that salvation is found in no other name than that of Jesus, we find the Apostles explaining to the Jewish leaders how they were able to heal the crippled man who was found begging at the temple. "We are being called to account today for an act of kindness shown to a cripple and are asked how he was healed, then know this, you and everyone else in Israel: It is by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified but whom God raised from the dead, that this man stands before you completely healed" (Acts 4:9-10).

Jesus only is our Healer. Is healing in the atonement? Of course it is- 'by his stripes we are healed.' Is healing unconditionally promised to everyone who asks? Apparently not. Does that render the atonement ineffective? No, it renders God sovereign. whose plan for our bodies is different than His plan for our souls. Divine healing, and indeed divine health, is not the end product of rigid obedience to some formula. Rather, it is the unmerited, sovereignly given act of grace provided to some people for the glory of God.

If the question about healing is what, it should be. 'What do I yearn for more: the gift or the giver!' "Once I sought for healing, now Himself alone." But the question is who. Who is our healer! Jesus Christ is our Healer.

### **The Central Question about the Second Coming Is Not When**

When in the order of eschatology will it occur? When does the rapture happen in relation to the tribulation? When is the kingdom established on earth? When will there be a new heaven and new earth? When do the dead in Christ rise? When does the antichrist

reign? We can argue forever about millennialism, the tribulation, the rapture, dispensationalism, apocalypticism and turn the blessed hope into a belligerent hype.

And while the Christian and Missionary Alliance holds to a premillennial view, for Simpson, premillennialism was not about eschatology, but about missions. It was the blessed hope of the imminent return of Jesus that fuelled his missionary passion. While Simpson did engage in a bit of eschatological speculation, for him the return of Jesus was not the subject of curious speculation, but the motive for dynamic missionary ministry.

No, the question about the second coming is not when, but who. Who is coming?

I saw heaven standing open and there before me was a white horse, whose rider is called Faithful and True. With justice he judges and makes war. His eyes are like blazing fire, and on his head are many crowns. He has a name written on him that no one knows but he himself. He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood, and his name is the Word of God. The armies of heaven were following him, riding on white horses and dressed in fine linen, white and clean. Out of his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations. 'He will rule them with an iron sceptre.' He treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God Almighty. On his robe and on his thigh he has this name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS. (Revelation 19:11-16)

The only important question is, "When will the next unreached people get to hear the Gospel to hasten Christ's return?" "Ye men of Galilee why do you stand looking into the sky? . . . You shall be my witnesses to Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and all the unreached peoples of the earth."

### What Practical Difference?

But so what? What practical difference does it make to focus on the centrality of Jesus Christ in the fourfold gospel? Simply this: the fourfold gospel is not salvation, sanctification, healing and the second coming. It is Saviour, Sanctifier, Healer and coming King. It's about a person, a living, divine person. Not about ideas, doctrine or knowledge.

The doctrine of salvation cannot save anyone.

The doctrine of sanctification cannot make anyone holy.

The doctrine of healing cannot give health.

The doctrine of the second coming will not return Christ to earth.

Whereas A.B. Simpson focused on the living, dynamic presence of Jesus in his daily life and on his blessed activities as Saviour, Sanctifier and Healer and King, all too often we have minused Jesus out of the equation and turned those blessed activities into sterile

and stagnant doctrines. The Christian and Missionary Alliance has called upon us to give fresh impetus and terminology to the fourfold gospel. For me, the answer is simply to return to the centrality of Jesus Christ.

### The Pastoral Implications

What are the pastoral implications of this? What real difference can this centrality of Jesus make in the lives of our people, our churches, our districts and our denomination? Let me share three ideas.

First, we must teach our people to relate daily with the living presence of Jesus. Why? Because you obey a person, whereas you only understand a doctrine. Obedience, not knowledge, must be the hallmark of the disciples of Jesus Christ. The Scriptures testify to this in an interesting way. The word for disciple (*mathetes*) is found 250 times in the Gospels and Acts. After that, it drops out of the New Testament vocabulary altogether. That is to say, the word disciple is not found in the Epistles or Revelation. Rather, the writers from that point on refer to believers as brethren, beloved, and saints. We must ask why such an important word in the Gospels and Acts was abandoned by the writers of the epistles. The answer is found in the last part of Acts 11:16 where it says, "The disciples were called Christians first at Antioch." The context of this verse indicates that the gospel was now going cosmopolitan. No longer was it being restricted to Jerusalem and Judea.

The word for disciple has a rich history in classical Greek. Socrates, Plato, Aristotle and other philosophers all had disciples. That same Greek word was used and referred to a person who was an intellectual apprentice. The primary verb associated with this type of disciple is the Greek word *manthano*, which means to learn. Interestingly, although the word disciple occurs 250 times in the gospels and Acts, the verb *manthano* occurs only five times. When we look for a primary verb that describes the action of Christian disciples, we find the Greek word *akoloutheo*, which means to obey. (Literally, hear, follow and obey.) Thus, Jesus called his disciples by saying, "Follow me," using the word *akoloutheo*. He was not asking them simply to tread in his footsteps, but to become his obeyers.

Now because the primary action of a disciple of Jesus is not merely learning but obeying, the early Christians understood that to use the word for disciple as was understood in Greek culture would be to convey an misunderstanding of what it meant to be a disciple of Jesus. The disciples of Jesus are not merely those who learn truth, but those who obey a person.

(In fact, the frequent use of the word "saints" in the epistles may suggest to us that the disciples of the

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gospels have been turned into the saints of the epistles. If so, we find an interesting relationship between discipleship and sanctification, because the word for saint, *hagoi*, is the root word for sanctification, *hagiosmos*. In other words, the disciples of the gospels are now the holy ones, or saints, of the epistles. Therefore, our doctrine of sanctification is really the expansion of the concept of discipleship.)

So a first pastoral implication of the centrality of Jesus Christ to the fourfold gospel is that we must teach our people to relate daily with the living presence of Jesus. This will enable them to obey Him, which, as you know, is part of the Great Commission – “teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.”

Secondly, we must help our people to enter the experiences of forgiveness, holiness, health and hope through connectedness to the life of Jesus.

Forgiveness must not be seen to be merely the end result of a formula or creedal confession. Forgiveness requires absolution, and only Jesus can give that absolution. The one we have disobeyed must be the one to whom we say, “Please forgive me.” The one from whom we are seeking forgiveness must be heard to say, “I forgive you.” Apart from this there is no real cleansing of the guilt that we carry with us. Perhaps this is why many Christians seem not to be able to be rid of their guilt. Rather than connecting to the living Jesus and hearing him say, “I forgive you, my son or daughter,” we connect our people to some doctrine which they may not even understand, and which in its lifelessness is not able to extend pardon or the cleansing of guilt. Our people must enter the experience of forgiveness through connectedness to the life of Jesus.

We must teach our people that they cannot progress in the area of holiness by the works of the law or special self-discipline or self-improvement. The book of Galatians is written entirely for the purpose of demonstrating that those who begin with the life of the Spirit cannot then expect to progress through self effort or observance of external principles. The flesh is far too powerful to be conquered by the spirit of man apart from the Spirit of God energizing us. Holiness will never be achieved simply by self-determination. Perhaps the reason many of our people struggle with the strength of the flesh is they have not learned to abide by the power of the Spirit of Jesus within. We must help our people to enter the experience of holiness through daily connectedness to the life of Jesus. His holiness must be taken for our holiness. In a moment of great temptation it does little good to be reminded about a doctrine. It does immeasurable good to understand that we are in the presence of a divine person.

We must help our people to enter the experience of bodily health through connectedness to the life of

Jesus. In our age, health is often idolized. Several new billion-dollar industries have developed in the past few decades because the human family, particularly in the West, has made such a fetish out of bodily health.

Certainly, we need to take care of our bodies. They are the temple of the Lord, but they are not idols. The body is the Lord's; it belongs to the Lord. Jesus told His disciples not to take thought or be anxious about what they would eat and what they would wear. Furthermore, He reminded them, “Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life?” (Matthew 6:27).

We have heard recently some very encouraging reports of the grace of Jesus being extended to individuals among us who have touched God for divine healing. In these reports I have been impressed by the fact that the ones being healed are aware that it is the grace of Jesus and His divine strength which are the basis for their healing. These people have learned the truth that we must help all of our Alliance people to understand and act upon: namely, that in order to experience bodily health we must do so through daily connectedness to the life of Jesus.

We must also help our people to enter the experience of hope through connectedness to the life of Jesus. Hope is a rare commodity these days, and often, even when we do find hope, we find that it is very self-centred. Even among those who know the Lord and long for His return we find a progression of growth in the motivations for having the hope or His return. In early days, a Christian may want to see Jesus return for the purpose of getting revenge on the sceptics and enemies of Christ. We long to see Him come back so that He will show the rest of the world that after all, we are the right ones and they are wrong. As we progress in our Christian growth, perhaps our motivation becomes one of escape. Weary with well-doing in serving the Lord, we long for His return just so that we can “fly away” out of all of our troubles. This still is a self-centred motivation for hope. As we grow in maturity, however, we begin to understand that the primary reason for hope is just to be with the Lord we adore. We begin to yearn for Him to come for no other reason than for Him to come into the full inheritance of His kingdom and enjoy the family for which He laid down His life. And, yes, even here perhaps there is a bit of a selfish motive – namely, we want to be with the One we love.

Nevertheless, and for whatever reason, Christians are uniquely the people of hope. But many of the members of our churches do not live daily with the wonderful sense that Jesus may return at any time. We must help our people enter the experience of hope through daily connectedness to the life of Jesus.

Thirdly, we must motivate our people for missions out of a passion for the return of Jesus. For

years we have focused on the Great Commission because it emphasizes the important acts of going and making disciples. Although Simpson used the Great Commission as a primary text in his life, a more important text was Matthew 24:14. Perhaps we ought to celebrate this verse in The Christian and Missionary Alliance as the “Great Motivation” – “and this gospel (fourfold?) of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.”

Focusing only on the Great Commission has subtly shifted our missiology to being one of duty. We respond to the imperatives of going and making disciples of all the nations, and as we have seen earlier, it is the responsibility of disciples to be obedient. But wooden obedience is not the best motive for serving. Love is a far greater motivation, and the verse we quoted above shows that a far better stimulus for missions is the blessed hope for bringing back the King. The deep missionary passion of A.B. Simpson was not

simply his joy of obeying a command of Jesus; rather, over and over again he focused on the blessed hope of Jesus coming back to the earth.

We must motivate our people for missions out of a passion for the return of Jesus.

I am calling on all of us fellow disciples of Jesus in The Christian and Missionary Alliance to come back to the centrality of the person of Jesus Christ in the fourfold gospel. To come back to the person, the living, divine, present person. To stop quibbling about the whys, hows, whats and whens of salvation, sanctification, healing and the second coming, and to focus on the divine Who. When we do this we will be teaching our people to relate daily with the living presence of Jesus. We will be helping our people to enter the experiences of forgiveness, holiness, health and hope through connectedness to the life of Jesus. And we will be motivating our people for missions out of a passion for the return of Jesus. Even so come, Lord Jesus.

Reading 9.1

## The Baptism of the Holy Spirit: A Crisis or an Evolution\*

A.B. Simpson

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Is the baptism of the Holy Spirit a distinct blessing or is it simply a deeper development of the experience of conversion? Is the indwelling of Christ in the believer's heart a definite promise to the consecrated believer, or is it received at regeneration and simply revealed and manifested as a later stage of progressive Christian experience? This is a question of much practical importance and divides the teachers of deeper spiritual truth into two important classes.

### I. The Arguments for the Progressive Theory.

Those who believe in what we shall call in this paper the progressive theory, hold that the Holy Spirit is given at conversion to every believer, and there is no subsequent receiving of the Spirit, although there are many successive stages in the revelation of Christ to the soul, and the realization of the Spirit's fullness.

1. A favorite passage and the strongest argument which they present is Romans viii. 9-10: "But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness." At the first glance, this seems to be a very convincing argument, but it will bear much investigation.

In the first place, it is possible for a truly converted soul to be in the flesh and not in the Spirit. Writing to the Corinthians, the Apostle Paul distinctly says, "I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. For ye are yet carnal, for whereas there is among you envying and strife and divisions, are ye not carnal and walk as men?" No one will deny that these were Christians. They were brethren. They were "babes in Christ," and yet they were carnal. They were in the flesh. They were not pleasing God. They were not subject to the law of God, but they were the children of God. Therefore the apostle in Romans viii. 9 is speaking not of all Christians, but of those Christians who are no longer in the flesh, but have received the Spirit of God and have become spiritual simply through the Holy Spirit.

In the next place the words, "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His," does not mean necessarily that such a one is not a Christian, but rather that he has not yet surrendered to Christ in such a sense that he belongs to Him. Christ may be ours and yet we not fully His. This is the great difference between the two classes of Christians that we find everywhere to-day. The one class has surrendered to Christ and belongs to Him. The other has not yet recognized the divine Ownership and given up the self-life. "Christ is mine," is one thing. "I am Christ's" is another. In the Song of Solomon the bride begins by saying, "My Beloved is mine," but ends by the deeper confession, "I am my Beloved's." It is when we reach this deeper experience and can truly say, "I am the Lord's," that the glorious words, I Corinthians iii. 22,23: "All things are yours and ye are Christ's and Christ is God's." All things are not ours till we are all the Lord's. Therefore in Romans xii.1 the apostle appeals to those who have already experienced the mercies of God and are brethren, "I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." The passage therefore in Romans viii.9,10, does not necessarily prove that if we have not yet received the Holy Ghost, we are not Christians or saved persons, but rather that we are yet carnal and belong partly to ourselves. The same is true of the 10th and 11th verses: "If Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you." This really describes a very balanced Christian experience, an experience in which the Holy Spirit so dwells in us and Christ is so embodied in us that we are able to receive His quickening life in our bodies. Our physical life is practically the temple and the home of the Holy Ghost, and as such He cares for it, keeps it and heals it. To say this is the experience of every Christian would be taking a good deal for granted.

2. Another argument for the indwelling of Christ in all believers is II Corinthians xiii 5: "Know ye not your own selves how that Jesus Christ is in you, except

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\* *Living Truths* 5 (Dec. 1905), pp. 705-715.

ye be reprobates?" The hasty inference of a superficial reader would be that if we do not have the indwelling of Christ in our hearts we are doomed and damned. Now this is all due to an erroneous reading of the passage. On reference to Rotherham's version or the admirable notes of Connybeare and Howson on this passage, an intelligent reader will observe that the word "reprobate" is translated disapproved. The apostle has just been speaking of a test that he proposes to have whether the Corinthians are walking in the complete will of God or not, and this is to be made evident either by his being disapproved or they being disapproved when the test comes. Indeed, he says he will be glad to be disapproved that they may be approved in that test because this will be to him the best evidence that they are right with God. "We are glad," he adds, "when we are weak and ye are strong; we wish also your perfection." The same word is used in the apostle's fine figure in I. Corinthians ix. 27, to the rewards of the Father. The word is translated "castaway," in our old English version, but every Bible student knows that this is entirely wrong. Literally it is "disapproved." The reference is to the race and the apostle's fear lest having preached the Gospel to others, when the prizes are distributed at the end of the race, he should miss his crown and be disapproved by the judge. He has no idea of being lost at all, but simply losing the great reward of the victor. Therefore here in the passage first quoted he simply means that if Christ is not in them, they are disapproved; they are not living up to the high standard of Christian life which they should. They are coming short of their privilege and duty. Surely, no one will deny this. But this is a very different matter from being an unsaved man or woman. On the contrary, there is the strongest implication that they are saved, but coming short of Christian privileges and duties.

3. The next argument of our friends, the evolutionists, is founded upon the promise of the Apostle Peter on the day of Pentecost, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you and to your children and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." Now, we do not for a moment question that the promise of the Holy Spirit is for every sinner, for all the promises are offered freely through His grace to any that will accept the Saviour, but that does not mean that they are all received at the same moment. When you enter a house, you enter the several rooms in order, and you must pass from chamber to chamber. It is so in the experiences of the deeper Christian life. You come into the vestibule and then you pass on to all the apartments until at last you reach the observatory at the top, but you don't get there the first

step. Peter was simply announcing the fullness of our great salvation and telling them all that God had for them and yet there was much still reserved for them even after their conversion. We are willing, however, to concede that the baptism of the Holy Ghost may be received at the very same time a soul is converted. We have known a sinner to be converted, sanctified and saved all within a single hour, and yet each experience was different in its nature and was received in proper order and by a definite faith for that particular blessing. What we contend for is that the baptism of the Holy Spirit is a distinct experience, and must be received by a definite faith, and this involves the crisis: a full surrender and an explicit preparation of the promise of God by faith.

4. Another proof text quoted by our friends is Acts v.32: "The Holy Spirit whom God hath given to all them that obey Him." Therefore if we are obedient Christians we must have the Holy Spirit. But this is just what we are contending for: that multitudes of Christians are not obedient Christians. They have not surrendered to the will of God. They have [not] given up the world and sin. They have not presented their bodies a living sacrifice and therefore they do not enjoy the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, because they do not obey Him.

5. A very strong text used by our friends is I. Corinthians iii. 16: "Know ye not that we are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy, for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are." This passage, it is said, was addressed to carnal Christians, even to "babes in Christ," and therefore all such Christians must be the temples of God and have the Holy Spirit. In answer to this it is enough to say that there were evidently two classes of Christians in the church at Corinth, and that the apostle alternately addressed these two classes. Speaking to the one class he says, "In everything ye are enriched so that ye come not behind in any gift, waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."

And yet, in the next breath he says, "There is evil among you. Ye do wrong and defraud, and that your brethren. Ye are carnal and walk as men." Paul expected them to apply the shoe where it would fit. Substantially he says this in I. Corinthians x.15: "I speak as to wise men. Judge ye what I say." Some of them were the temples of God. Others were too unholy to be the temples of God. The true exposition of this passage will be found in the parallel passage, II. Corinthians vi. 16-18, where he says, "What agreement hath the temple of God with idols? For ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them and walk in them, and I will be their God and

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They shall be My people. Wherefore come out from among them and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you. And I will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be My sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." Here most plainly the condition of separation is insisted upon before God will come in and dwell in them and walk in them and receive them. Putting these two Scriptures together the argument of our brethren falls to pieces, and the necessity of a very thorough spiritual preparation for the indwelling of Christ is made plain.

6. In the twelfth chapter of I Corinthians verse 7, it is said, "The manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal," and verse 13, "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles." In these two passages the apostle is speaking of two distinct things. In verse 13 it is our union with Christ as His body that is referred to. Now, there is no doubt that every believer the moment he accepts Christ is united to the body of Christ. The word "by" should be "in" here. Are we all baptized into one body? That is a very different thing from the individual reception of the Holy Ghost. The apostle refers to this in the next clause, "We have all been made to drink into one Spirit." Some one has finely illustrated this by the figure of the bottle in the sea, and the sea in the bottle. It is possible for the bottle to be in the sea and the sea not be in the bottle. It is possible for us to be in the Spirit and in Christ by faith that saves and yet not have the Spirit of Christ in us by the faith that sanctifies. The seventh verse, however, has special reference to the supernatural gifts of the Spirit in healing, teaching, speaking with tongues, etc. "These," he says, "are given to every man to profit withal." He means that every Christian may have the endowment of power without respect of persons in the measure in which he will profit thereby and use this great gift to the best account. But this very word "profit" implies certain conditions. The gift is for those that will make good use of it. It is, therefore, implied that before receiving it there shall be evidences of very deep sincerity and consecration, and every readiness to use it according to the work and for the glory of God. Even the apostles were required to tarry until they be endued with power from on high. This is not a gift that could be lightly assumed, but a profound experience calling for the most earnest and protracted preparation.

### II. Arguments for a Crisis Experience

But time and space will not permit us to prosecute farther this side of the argument. Let us turn now to some proofs of the other view: namely, that the indwelling of Christ and the Baptism of the Holy Spirit

constitute a definite experience and a second blessing and involve a very real crisis in our spiritual life.

1. The strongest proof we know is derived from the experience of the Master Himself, our glorious Forerunner. He was born of the Spirit, as we read in Luke i.35: "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." But He was not baptized with the Spirit until His thirtieth year. Then when He made a complete surrender of His life to the Father and assumed the cross and the work of redemption in His baptism at the hands of John, the heavens were opened and the Holy Ghost ascended upon Him and abode. From that time there was a new personality added to the Son of man, and all His words and works were spoken and performed in dependence upon the power of the Holy Ghost.

Now, the Lord was our forerunner. "As He is so are we also in this world." Like Him we are born of the Spirit and like Him we too must be baptized with the Spirit. There comes a time when a new personality is added to ours and we go forth to life's conflicts and duties no longer alone, but in union with Him who has come to be our very life and all-sufficiency. It is the same as the bride who has hitherto walked alone through life, but there comes a day when another life is united to hers, and two go forth to life's toils and trials, and yet not two, but one, and henceforth he is her strength, He is her support, He is her guide, and she goes forth leaning upon her beloved. That is exactly what comes to pass we when receive the Holy Ghost and the Lord to dwell within.

2. The experience of the disciples before and after Pentecost is equally clear and convincing on this point. Up to that time, they were undoubtedly saved men and women, but after Pentecost there came to them an entirely new experience involving not only power for service but power for holiness and righteousness in their own lives. The men were as changed as their ministry. "With great power gave the apostles witness to the resurrection of Jesus Christ and great grace was upon them all."

3. The promise of Christ to His disciples that the Comforter should come was accompanied with very clear conditions and definitions. Speaking of Him, He says, "He dwelleth with you and shall be in you" (John xiv. 17). He identified the coming of the Comforter with His own indwelling. "At that day, ye shall know that I am in the Father and ye in Me and I in you." And yet His coming to abide is connected with a spirit of devotion and obedience. "If a man love Me," He says; "he will keep My words and My Father will love him and We will come unto him and make our abode with



him" (John xiv. 23). He had already said, John xiv. 21: "He that hath My commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me: and He that loveth Me shall be loved of My Father, and I will love him and will manifest Myself to Him." Christ's indwelling is here connected with a spirit of love and obedience. Who will say that the men and women that are loving and living for the world and trying to have barely enough religion to save them from the flames of hell, are fit subjects for such an experience? Is it not a degradation of such a glorious promise to make such an application of it?

4. The promise of Ezekiel respecting the coming of the Holy Ghost clearly distinguishes it from conversion. First we have the promise of conversion. (Ezek. xxxvi. 25, 26) "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness and from all your idols will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take the stony heart out of your flesh and I will give you an heart of flesh." All this very clearly refers to the forgiveness of sins, justification by faith and regeneration by the power of the Holy Spirit. This is the new heart received in conversion. But now there comes another promise transcendently greater and not to be confused with all this: "And I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments and do them." This is the baptism of the Holy Ghost. This is not our Spirit, but His Spirit. We have received our new spirit, but now in this His Spirit comes to dwell, the divine and infinite Spirit of God. The effect of this is to cause us to walk in His statutes and to keep His judgments and do them. It does not say to encourage us, to instruct us, but to "cause" us. Therefore if this is not its effect, the Holy Ghost somehow has failed. How is it therefore if all Christians have received the Holy Ghost to dwell in them that the Holy Ghost has not caused them to be obedient? He does not say He will try to cause them, but He will cause them, and this is the great first cause, and above all, our second cause. Would we not naturally conclude that the people that are not walking in His statutes and keeping His judgments and doing them, have not received this causing power?

5. The types which we find in ancient Israel foreshadow this deeper life and second blessing. When Israel went out of Egypt, they typified our conversion, but when they entered the land of promise and crossed the Jordan, they set forth our coming in the "rest which remaineth for the people of God." There was surely a very great difference between these two experiences, and it was marked in the most significant manner and a great heap of stones set up so that there never could be any mistake about it in the minds of their children. Even in the earlier chapters of their wilderness life, we have a

fine illustration of this deeper life. The Holy Spirit was set forth by the pillar of cloud and fire that went before them. This was their experience during the first year after leaving Egypt, but on the first day of the second year, something very different came to pass. The tabernacle was finished and dedicated and solemnly handed over to God, and then that mystic cloud came down and no longer led them from the sky or the mount, but took up its abode in the very bosom of the tabernacle as the Shekinah Presence of God, the Holy of Holies, and henceforth we read that God spoke to them, not from the mount, but from between the cherubim. This is exactly what comes to pass when we receive the Holy Ghost. God moves down into our heart and henceforth the throne of grace is not yonder in the skies, but within us, and

"Christ is never so distant from us  
As even to be near;  
He dwells within our inmost being,  
And makes our heaven here."

6. The appeal of the Apostle Paul to the Galatians, Galatians iv. 19: "My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you," makes it very plain that these were his little children who had been born through an earlier experience of soul travail on his part, and now he is travailling in birth for another blessing: that Christ may be formed in them. The logical force of the truth itself needs no emphasizing.

7. Space will only permit us to add one more argument, namely: that the experiences of the saints of God both in the Scriptures and in modern Christian life, involves this deeper blessing. Jacob came to his Peniel and through a divine transformation came forth no longer Jacob but Israel, a prince with God. Job dies to his self life, and came out with a new experience and blessing. Isaiah saw himself unclean and received the touch of fire that sanctified and sent him forth to his glorious service. Joshua, notwithstanding all the victories of the wilderness, had to meet the angel of the Lord and die to his own leadership before he could bring Israel into the land. Paul went through the struggle of the seventh of Romans, and by a definite revelation of Christ came out into the eighth chapter of the Christ life filled with the Holy Ghost. It was after meeting with some Moravian saints who had found this "secret of the Lord," that John Wesley became changed and filled with the Holy Ghost, and set the world on fire. The same experience has been multiplied in scores and hundreds of saintly lives in these last days, and while no experience in itself is a sufficient foundation for a Christian doctrine, yet backed by such an array of Scripture as we have endeavored to present, we see much more in it in these lives which are eloquent

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appeals to us today, saying, "I beseech you therefore by the mercies of God that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." "Tarry ye till ye be endued with power from on high." "Abide in Me and I in you."

In conclusion, the truth that we have been endeavoring to demonstrate is intensely practical. So long as people think they have it all, there is little incentive to rouse themselves and claim their full inheritance, but when God's people see that like Israel of old, they are still toiling in the wilderness under His displeasure, that they are neglecting a great salvation, that they are out of fellowship with Christ and grieving

the Holy Ghost, motive is supplied of overwhelming power and they are led to heart searching, humiliation and unceasing prayer, and a new impulse comes into their lives like a great tidal wave over the ocean of love, and an experience comes to the soul as much higher than conversion as conversion was better than the old life of flesh and sin.

This is the deepest need of the Church today. One such consecrated, Spirit-filled life means a score of souls for God. "Let us therefore fear lest the promise being left us of entering into His rest any of you should seem to come short of it."

### Reading 9.2

## The Crisis of the Deeper Life\*

George P. Pardington

In regeneration God gives us a "new spirit." In sanctification He puts within us the Holy Spirit. ("My Spirit;" Ezekiel xxxvi. 26, 27.) Regeneration is the result of the *gracious inworking* of the Holy Spirit. Sanctification is the result of the *personal indwelling* of the Holy Spirit. Consequently, after regeneration the Holy Spirit is *with* us; but after sanctification He is *within* us. Now, the experience of sanctification through the indwelling Christ is realized in connection with the definite reception of the gift of the Holy Spirit by full consecration and living faith. Indeed, it is through the Holy Spirit that we come to see the hopelessness of struggling against sin; it is through the Holy Spirit that we catch a glimpse of the cross with its promise and potency of deliverance; it is through the Holy Spirit that the revelation of the indwelling Christ breaks with comforting cheer upon our despairing hearts; and it is through the Holy Spirit that we are enabled to die unto sin and live unto God.

*First*, the Reception of the Gift of the Holy Ghost.

### I. The Experience of the Apostolic Church

In the experience of the Apostolic Church, as recorded in the book of Acts, there were three things that were closely connected, namely: Conversion, Baptism and Reception of the Holy Ghost. Thus on the Day of Pentecost Peter declared:

Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of your sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call. (Acts ii. 39, 40)

Now, in this passage of Scripture three facts would seem to be clear: First, conversion (here described as the remission of sins), baptism, and the reception of the gift of the Holy Ghost, are three separate and distinct things; second, these three things, while separate and distinct, are yet closely related both as doctrines and as experiences; and third, these three things are here stated in their normal order and Scriptural relationship. When a sinner is converted he should seek baptism as the open confession of his faith in Christ as Saviour and Lord, and as the sign and seal of his identification by faith with Christ in His death and resurrection. Then he should definitely receive the Holy Ghost, Who by His indwelling and infilling will become the enabling for a life well pleasing to God and the equipping for a life of fruitful service to man.

The relation of the reception of the Holy Ghost to the experience of conversion in the Acts of the Apostles is an interesting study. A careful examination of the book leads to two conclusions, namely: First in some instances the Holy Ghost was received *at the time of*

\* *Living Truths* 6(Sept. 1906): 533-41, 543-46.

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conversion; and second, in other instances the Holy Ghost was received *subsequent to* conversion.

1. In some instances the Holy Ghost was received at the time of conversion. This was the case on the Day of Pentecost and in the house of Cornelius.

From the language of Peter, already quoted (Acts ii. 39, 40), we learn that on the day of Pentecost conversion, baptism and the reception of the Holy Ghost went together; that is, while these three things were separate and distinct experiences, yet no interval of time elapsed between conversion and baptism on the one hand, or between conversion and the reception of the Holy Ghost on the other.

Then they that gladly received the word were baptized; and the same day the Lord added unto them about three thousand souls. (Acts ii. 41.)

The case of Cornelius and his household is recorded in Acts x. 44-48:

While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them that heard the word.

And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost.

For they heard them speak with tongues and magnify God. Then answered Peter, Can any man forbid water that these should be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?

And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then prayed they him to tarry certain days.

Here also, as on the day of Pentecost, conversion is connected with the reception of the Holy Ghost, although the two experiences were separate and distinct. On this occasion, it will be observed, the reception of the Holy Ghost *preceded* baptism.

2. In other instances the Holy Ghost was received subsequent to conversion. This was true of the Samaritan disciples and the Ephesian disciples.

The case of the Samaritan disciples is recorded in Acts viii. 12-17:

But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.

Then Simon himself believed also; and when he was baptised he continued with Philip and wondered, beholding the miracles and signs which were done.

Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John; who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost:

(For as yet He was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.)

Then they laid their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost.

Now, observe that under the preaching of Philip the Samaritans "received the word of God." That is, they were converted, or saved. Moreover, they received Christian baptism—"they were baptised in the name of the Lord Jesus." But at a later date, or *subsequent to* their conversion, they received the Holy Ghost, under the joint ministry of Peter and John. It is interesting to note that the Holy Ghost was given to the Samaritan disciples through prayer and the laying on of hands by the apostles.

The case of the Ephesian disciples is recorded in Acts xix. 1-6:

And it came to pass, that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to Ephesus; and finding certain disciples,

He said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost, since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard, whether there be any Holy Ghost.

And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptised? and they said, Unto John's baptism.

Then said Paul, John verily baptised with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on Him which should come after him, that is, Jesus Christ.

When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues and prophesied.

Paul's question in verse two, in the Revised Version, reads: "Did ye receive the Holy Ghost, when ye believed?" Rotherham translates: "And he said unto them: Holy Ghost received ye, when ye believed?" Now, whichever of these three renderings be preferred, four facts stand out clearly: *First*, the Ephesian disciples were Christians; yet at the time Paul met them, they had not received the Holy Ghost. *Second*, conversion, therefore, and the reception of the Holy Ghost are separate and distinct experiences. *Third*, the Holy Ghost may be received at the time of conversion. And *fourth*, the Holy Ghost may be received subsequent to conversion. On this occasion, it will be observed, Christian baptism was administered some little time after conversion; and further, that the Holy Ghost was received in connection with Christian baptism and the laying on of hands by Paul.

The case of the Apostle Paul does not seem to be altogether clear. The record in Acts ix. 17-18, reads:

And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house: and putting his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way, as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest be filled with the Holy Ghost.

And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales: and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized.

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Now, it does not appear to be altogether clear just at what time Paul was converted--whether on the road to Damascus, or during the three days of darkness. Consequently there is an uncertainty as to whether the apostle received the Holy Ghost at the time of conversion, or subsequent thereto. In the latter event, the interval was very brief--amounting to only a few days. On this occasion, it will be observed, the Holy Ghost was received before Christian baptism.

Surely, from this brief study of the experience of the Apostolic church, as recorded in the book of Acts, we may learn that God is sovereign in His operations, and that doctrinal distinctions made by man cannot shut Him up to set ways of working. At the same time four things seem to be clear: First, conversion and the definite reception of the gift of the Holy Ghost are separate and distinct experiences. Second, conversion may occur without the experience of receiving the Holy Ghost. Third, the Holy Ghost is often received at the time of conversion. And fourth, the Holy Ghost is often received subsequent to conversion.

Now, in the light of these facts we believe that conversion and the reception of the Holy Ghost should go hand in hand, so to speak; that is, while they are distinct experimentally, they should not be separated chronologically. But in the lives of few Christians today, comparatively speaking, is this true. John Wesley tells of a man who was converted one hour, sanctified the second hour, and glorified the third hour. The man died three hours after he was saved. Indeed, where there is right Scriptural teaching no interval of time need occur after conversion before the Holy Ghost is received. Unfortunately, however, this is seldom the case. Generally an interval of time--and often it is a long period--does occur. Indeed, some true hearted children of God never seem to know from experience the personal indwelling of the Holy Ghost. But this interval, where it occurs, is filled in with the weary marches and dreary experiences of the wilderness of Sinai, and with the ceaseless struggles and discouraging defeats of the seventh chapter of Romans. We cannot refrain from saying that we believe God never intended that there should be a barren waste of Christian experience between regeneration and sanctification, but that conversion should be immediately followed by a life of victory over sin and self in union with the indwelling Christ and through receiving the gift of the Holy Ghost.

### II. The Teaching of the Apostolic Writings.

We have studied the experience of the Apostolic Church, with reference to the definite reception of the Holy Ghost, as recorded in the book of Acts. Now, let us turn to the teaching of the Epistles.

Let us cite a few passages which refer to the possession of the Holy Spirit or to the indwelling of the risen Christ. These two classes of passages may be grouped together, for it is the baptism of the Holy Ghost which brings to our hearts the revelation of the indwelling Christ.

1. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, *if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you*. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His. And if Christ dwell in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. (Romans viii. 9-10.)

2. Know ye not that ye are the temple of God and that *the Spirit of God dwelleth in you*? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy, for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are. (I. Corinthians iii. 16-17.)

3. *For by one Spirit we are all baptized into one body*, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether ye be bond or free, *and have been all made to drink into one Spirit*. (I. Corinthians xii. 13.)

4. Know ye not your own selves how *that Jesus Christ is in you except ye be reprobrates*? (II. Corinthians xiii.5.)

5. This only would I learn of you, *Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith*? (Galatians iii.2.)

6. My little children, of whom I travail in birth again *until Christ be formed in you*. (Galatians iv. 19.)

7. For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ of Whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named,

That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man;

*That Christ may dwell in your heart by faith*; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love,

May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height;

And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God. (Ephesians iii. 14-19.)

8. To whom (the saints) God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; *which is Christ in you, the hope of glory*. (Colossians i. 27.)

A careful examination of the above and similar passages discloses two striking facts, namely: First, in some instances the baptism or possession of the Holy Spirit is closely identified with regeneration or conversion; and second, in other instances these experiences are separated in point of time. But this is just the conclusion which we reached from our study of the book of Acts. Thus the experience of the Apostolic Church and the teaching of the Apostolic writings agree:

and, indeed, this must be so; for the Holy Spirit was the Inworker of the one as He was the Inspirer of the other. In fact, the words of Peter, on the day of Pentecost--Acts ii. 39-40--give us the key, which explains the teaching of the New Testament on this vitally important theme. There we learn, as we have seen, that the remission of sins or conversion and the reception of the gift of the Holy Ghost, while closely related, are yet separate and distinct both doctrinally and experimentally. When this principle of interpretation is clearly understood and firmly grasped, two resulting facts will be readily admitted, namely: First, the Holy Ghost may be received at the time of conversion; and second, the Holy Ghost may be received *subsequent to conversion*.

### III. The Spiritual Crisis in the Life of our Lord.

The baptism of our blessed Lord with the Holy Ghost was a spiritual crisis in His life; it marked alike the beginning of His encounters with Satan and the opening of His public ministry of teaching and healing. As a Babe Jesus was born of the Spirit in Bethlehem of Judea:

The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. (Luke i. 35)

Moreover, as a Child and Youth the Spirit of God was with Jesus of Nazareth. Luke gives us two exquisite pictures, one of the boyhood and the other of the early manhood, of the Saviour:

And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom; and the grace of God was upon Him.

And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man. (Luke ii. 40, 52.)

Thus, the life of Jesus, during the silent years of the home training in Nazareth, was the object of the Holy Spirit's special and peculiar care. The growth and symmetrical development of His spirit, mind and body were under the influence of the Holy Spirit. It was, furthermore, through the Holy Spirit that "the grace of God was upon Him," and that He "increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man." But at thirty years of age a marked crisis came in the life of our Lord. It was then, at the river Jordan, that Christ was not only baptized in water by John the Baptist, but also baptized with the Holy Ghost by His Heavenly Father. Thus we read:

Now when all the people were baptized, it came to pass that Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened,

And the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon Him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, This is My beloved Son; in Thee I am well pleased. (Luke iii. 21,22.)

What, then, was the significance of this marked crisis in the life of Christ? From His birth till His baptism the Holy Spirit was *with* Christ; but from His baptism till His passion the Holy Spirit was *within* Him. After the crisis at the River Jordan two Divine Personalities were inseparably united--Jesus of Nazareth and the Spirit of God. From that hour the life of Christ was wrought out in absolute dependence upon the Holy Spirit. Thus it was through the Holy Spirit that Christ met and overcame the Devil in the wilderness; it was through the Holy Spirit that Christ uttered His matchless words and performed His wondrous deeds; it was through the Holy Spirit that Christ offered Himself as sacrifice on the cross; and it was through the Holy Spirit that Christ was raised from the dead and declared to be the Son of God with power. The great difference, therefore, between the private life and public ministry of Jesus Christ is explained by His baptism at the Jordan and the incoming and indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

Now, the Apostle John tells us that "as He is, so are we in this world." (I John iv. 17). In this experience, therefore, as in all other things, Christ is our Divine Pattern. So, after we have been born of the Spirit--and it should not be long afterwards--we must be baptized with the Spirit. It is then in connection with taking Christ as our sanctification that we receive the Person of the Holy Ghost as our indwelling and abiding Comforter. When once He comes into our hearts, He never leaves us. We may indeed grieve Him, but we can never grieve Him away. (Ephesians iv. 30.)

### IV. The Promise of Christ.

On one occasion Christ closed His instruction concerning prayer with these words:

If ye, then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Heavenly Father *give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?* (Luke xi. 13.)

Here our Lord was addressing His followers, among them manifestly being some who were saved; yet He gives them the promise of the Holy Spirit, to be received in answer to prayer.

Again in the upper room, just before His betrayal, the Master gave His disciples very explicit and definite teaching concerning the Holy Spirit. One of His parting messages was:

If ye love Me, keep My commandments.

And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you forever;

Even the Spirit of Truth; Whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him; but ye shall know Him; for *He dwelleth with you and shall be in you.* (John xiv. 15-17.)

In verse seventeen an important distinction is made in the use of the prepositions "with" and "in."

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*With* is the Greek *para*, and means "by the side of." *In* is the Greek *en* and means "within." As we have seen there is a vast difference between having the Holy Spirit *with* us, and having Him *within* us. In the one case He is a presence *outside*; in the other case He is a Person *inside*. Plainly, the meaning is that before Pentecost the disciples had the Holy Ghost with them; but after Pentecost they were to have Him within them. This view of the Saviour's words is supported by the discriminating way in which the tenses of the verbs are used. "Dwelleth" is the present tense and refers to the time of Christ's speaking. "Shall be" is the future tense and refers to a coming time. Evidently, the Day of Pentecost was in the mind of the Master.

Once again, after His resurrection, Christ referred very definitely to the approaching advent of the Holy Ghost:

And, behold, I send the promise of My Father upon you; but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high. (Luke xxiv. 49.)

But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you; and ye shall be witnesses unto Me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth. (Acts i. 8.)

Here the passage in the Acts of the Apostles explains the passage in the Gospel of Luke. There is no *endowment of power* apart from the *incoming of the person*; and we know that on the Day of Pentecost the Person of the Holy Ghost, the Gift alike of the Father and of the Son, was received by the company of one hundred and twenty disciples waiting in the upper room. The experience of these waiting disciples, therefore, teaches us the necessity of distinguishing between salvation by the blood of the crucified Christ and sanctification by the indwelling of the risen Christ. They were saved men and women; yet until they had received the Holy Ghost, they were not enabled for a life of holy obedience, nor equipped for a ministry of abiding fruitfulness. So today after the cleaning blood of the cross comes the enduing power of the upper room. Calvary is not sufficient; we must have our Pentecost.

Beloved, we have crossed the River Jordan. We have passed out of the "waste, howling wilderness" and are "over in the Land of Canaan." The seventh chapter of Romans with its ceaseless struggles and discouraging defeats is in the past and we are living in the eighth chapter with its grateful rest and welcome deliverance. The vision of victory has been transformed into a glorious reality.

Now, when a radical and revolutionary transformation like this takes place in our hearts and

lives we shall certainly know it. Moreover, we may expect the Holy Spirit to witness as definitely and as distinctly to His work of sanctification as He does to His work of regeneration. But while this is true, the witness in every case will not be the same either in kind or in degree. There are of course temperamental differences in people; and there are varying types of Christian experience, corresponding to these differences, which a knowledge of psychology helps us to understand and explain. For example, there are demonstrative persons; and when such persons experience sanctification, the witness of the Spirit is quite likely to take the form of exalted feeling or even exalted emotion. On the other hand, there are dispassionate persons; and in their case there is apt to be little, if any, feeling; but they will have a deep, quiet sense of spiritual satisfaction. But however this may be, the point to be emphasized is that in every instance of sanctification the witness of the Spirit, both in kind and degree, should be *satisfactory to the believer himself who is sanctified*. Moreover, a truly sanctified life will "bring forth fruit unto God;" and this fruit--"the fruit of the Spirit"--will be manifest to all.

It is not necessary for a Christian worker to notify a sinner when he is saved. The new light on the countenance, the new song on the lips, the new spirit of prayer, the new love for God--these and many other similar evidences of conversion will be seen and known of all men. Furthermore, God has promised to give to each regenerated heart the witness of its acceptance. In like manner, it will not be necessary for a Christian worker or a fellow believer to notify a child of God when he has received the Holy Ghost and taken Christ as his sanctification; indeed, spiritual injury has been done to many a soul by this practice. Beloved, if the Holy Ghost has really come to your heart to abide forever, He will surely let you know it. Nor will He keep you long waiting. Do not be satisfied with anyone's assurances upon this point. Resolve to hear direct from heaven for yourself. Of course you must take the Holy Spirit by faith; but it is your privilege soon to have your claim of faith sealed by the certainty of personal knowledge. A failure at this point now will only mean perplexity of mind and disappointment of heart later on. Therefore, take your Bible, and go alone with God, and continue to wait upon Him until you get an answer and are sure that you can say "Yes" to the vital important question which Paul asked the disciples of Ephesus:

Have Ye Received The Holy Ghost Since Ye Believed?

## How To Abide\*

A.B. Simpson

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*"And now, little children, abide in him; that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming." (1 John 2:28)*

It would seem as though John meant that only little children could abide in Him; that only when we get to be little can we know the Lord in His fullness; only when we cease from our manly and womanly strength and become dependent can we know His strength and independence as our support and stay. John counted himself among the little children, because he says, "we" when he addresses us. He was indeed a little child in spirit from the time Boanerges died, and John laid his head on Jesus' breast to be strong no more in himself, and to be seen no more apart from the enfolding arms of Jesus.

We have seen Christ in His personal glory; we have seen what it is to be in Him and to have Him in us, and now we want to have these impressions stereotyped. John says, "Little children, abide in him, that when he shall appear we may have confidence."

Let us speak very particularly and plainly about how we may maintain this abiding. You have surrendered; you have given up your strength as well as your will; you have consented that henceforth He shall support your life. Like a true bride, you have given up your very person, your name, your independence, so that now He is to be your Lord. Your very life is merged in Him, and He becomes your Head and your All in All. Now, beloved, how is this to be maintained? He says we are to abide, and He will abide in some sense according to our abiding. "Abide in me, and I in you."

### Live By The Moment

First, it must be a momentary life, not a current that flows on through its own momentum; but a succession of little acts and habits. You have Him for the moment, and you have Him perfectly; you are perfectly saved this moment; you are victorious this moment, and that which fills this moment is large enough to fill the next, so that if you shall renew this fellowship every moment, you shall always abide in Him. Have you learned this? The failures in your life mostly come through lost moments, broken stitches,

little interstices, cleavages in the rock where the drops of water trickle down and become a torrent. But if you lost no steps and no victories, you shall abide in constant triumph.

First, then, learn this secret, that you are not sanctified for all time so that there will be no more need for grace and victory; but you have grace for this moment, and the next moment, and by the time life is spent, you shall have had a whole ocean of His grace. It may be a very little trickling stream at first; but let it flow through every moment, and it shall become a boundless ocean before its course is done.

### Definite Acts of Will

Next, this abiding must be established by a succession of definite acts of will, and of real, fixed, steadfast trust in Christ. It does not come as a spontaneous and irresistible impulse that carries you whether you will or not, but you have to begin by an act of trust, and you must repeat it until it becomes a habit. It is very important to realize this.

A great many think, when they get a blessing, that it ought to sweep them on without further effort. It is not so. An act of will, an act of choice is the real helm of spiritual life. You were saved from sin by actually choosing Jesus as your Saviour; you were consecrated by definitely giving yourself and taking Him for everything.

So beloved, you must keep the helm fixed, and press on, moment by moment, still choosing to trust Christ and live by Him until at last it comes to be as natural as your breathing. It is like a man rescued from drowning; when they take him from the water, respiration seems to be stopped. And when it returns, it is not spontaneous, but a succession of labored pumpings; they breathe the air in and they breathe the air out, perhaps for half an hour; then an involuntary action is noticed, and nature comes and makes the act spontaneous; and soon the man is breathing without effort.

But it came by a definite effort at first, and by and by it became spontaneous. So with Christ: if you would have this abiding in Him become spontaneous, you must

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\* From *The Christ Life*, (New York: Christian Alliance Publishing Co., n.d.), pp.67-79.

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make it a spiritual habit. The prophet speaks of the mind "stayed on God," and David says, "My heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord." We begin by determining, and we obey Him no matter what it costs; and by and by the habit is established.

### The Law of Habit

Then comes the third principle: habit. Every habit grows out of a succession of little acts. No habit comes full-grown into your life; it grows like the roots of a tree, like the fibres of the flesh, as the morsels of food you swallow are absorbed into your life. You see a man going steadily along in a course of life, but that course of life was established by the habit of years. The stenographer at my side sits and takes down my words as fast as I can speak them. At first it was clumsy and slow work; but at length it became a habit, and now he does not have to stop and think how to make the characters; they come to him as naturally as the words come to my lips. So it is with writing: we remember how painfully at first we had to hold the pen, but we now dash off our signature, and it is always the same; our friends know it, our banker knows it; and it can be identified as ours. How did it come about? Because for years we have made the same marks. This is the reason, beloved, that it pays to plod; the habit becomes at length a necessity, and is easier as it grows.

It is so with evil; it is easier for a man to go down the longer he goes down, and it is easier for him to go up the longer he goes up. And so it is with looking to Jesus; it is like the movement of the eye--the lid moves instinctively and the Bible uses it as a figure of God's care. "Keep me as the apple of thine eye." Before the dust can hurt the eye, the little curtain falls over the tender ball. So we find ourselves in life instinctively holding our tongues when we would have felt like talking. So we can discern the very scent of evil before it comes and inarticulately breathe a prayer to heaven before the danger reaches us. Thus also will the habit of obedience be formed; it comes by doing steadily, persistently, and faithfully what the Lord would have you to do. He is putting you to school in these little trials, until He gets the habit confirmed, and obedience becomes easy and natural.

### Self-Repression

Again, if we would abide in Christ we must continually study to have no confidence in self. Self-repression must be ever the prime necessity of divine fullness and efficiency. Now you know how quickly you spring to the front when any emergency arises. You know how easy it was for Peter to step forth with his sword drawn before he knew whether he was able to meet the foe or not. When something in which you are

interested comes up, you say that you think under some sudden impulse, and then, perhaps, you have weeks of taking back your thought, and taking the Lord's instead. It is only as we get out of the way of the Lord that He can use us.

And so, beloved, let us practice the repression of self and the suspending of our will about everything until we have looked to Him and said, "Lord, what is Thy will? What is Thy thought about it?" When you have that, you and He are not at cross-purposes; and there is blessed harmony. Those who thus abide in Christ have the habit of reserve and quiet; they are not reckless talkers; they will not always have an opinion about everything, and they will not always know what they are going to do. They will be found holding back rash judgments, and walking softly with God. It is our headlong, impulsive spirit that keeps us so constantly from hearing and following the Lord.

### Dependence

If we would abide in Christ we must remember that Christ has undertaken not only the emergencies of life, but everything; and so we must cultivate the habit of constant dependence on Him; falling back on Him and finding Him everywhere; recognizing that He has undertaken the business of your life, and there is not a difficulty that comes up, but He will carry you through if you let Him have His way and hold the reins, and you just trust and follow.

### Recognizing His Presence

Again, if you would abide in Christ you must cultivate the habit of always recognizing Him as near, in your heart of hearts, so that you need not try to find Him, reaching out to the distant heavens and wondering where He has gone. He is right here; His throne is in your heart; His resources are at hand. There may be no sense of God's presence, but just accept the fact that the Spirit is in your heart, and act accordingly. Bring everything to Him, and soon the consciousness will become real and delightful. We do not begin with feeling--we begin with acting as though He were here. So, if you would abide in Christ, treat Him as if He were in you, and you in Him; and He will respond to your trust, and honor your confidence.

### God In Everything

Further, if you would abide in Christ, you must recognize that Christ is in everything that comes in your life; and that everything that occurs in the course of Providence is in some sense connected with the will of God. That trying circumstance was not chance, something with which Christ had nothing to do, and which you can only protest against and wonder how God



can sit on the throne and let such things be. You must believe that God led in it, and though the floods have lifted up their heads on high, yet God sits on the throne, and is mightier than the great sea billows and the noise of many waters. You must believe that He will "cause the wrath of man to praise him, and the remainder thereof will he restrain." You must say: "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof."

We need not regard everything as the very best thing that we would choose, or the very best thing that God ultimately has for you; but it is allowed, either that God may show you His power to overcome it, or else that it may teach you some lesson of holiness, trust, tranquillity, or courage. It is something that, under the circumstances, fits into God's purposes; and, therefore, you are not to look for different circumstances, but to conquer in these already around you. You are not to run away and say, "I will abide in Christ when I get to where I want to be," but you must abide in Christ in the ship and the storm, as well as in the harbor of blessing. Recognize that everything is permitted by God, and that He is able to make all things work together; and not only so, but to make you know they are all for your good, and they are working out His purposes.

### **Watch the Outward Senses**

Again, if we would abide in Christ, we must be very watchful of our senses. There is nothing that so easily sets us wandering, and leads us out into dangerous fields and by-path meadows as the senses of the body. How often our eyes will take us away! Walking down the street you will find a thousand things to call you from a state of recollection. Some people's eyes are like a spider's--they see behind and before and on every side. You know Solomon says, "Let thine eyes look right on, and let thine eyelids look straight before thee." It is this letting the world in, no matter by what door it comes, that separates us from the presence of our Lord.

So with our ears. If you listen to one-hundredth part of the conversation even of Christians you will be thoroughly defiled; and so you have to hold your ears, and your eyes, and live in a little circle. You have not to manage half so many things as you undertake to sometimes, and about which you have so much anxiety.

There is a little creature called the water spider, and it lives in the water, away down in the mud lake of the marsh. It just goes down a few inches and lives there all the time. You ask how it can breathe and live in the water? Oh, it has a strange apparatus by which it is able to gather around itself a bubble of air a few times

larger than its body. It goes to the surface and fills it with air and goes down, and this little air bubble forms an atmosphere for it, and there it builds its nest and rears its young; and you know where air is the water cannot get in. So it is as safe in its little home with the dark water all around it, as if it lived above in the clear air of heaven. So we can get into our element and stay there with Him, and although there is sin around us, and hell beneath us, and men are struggling and tempted and sinning, we shall be as safe as the saints above, in the heavenlies, in Christ Jesus.

### **Internal Prayer**

Once more, if we would abide in Him, we must cultivate the habit of internal prayer, communing with God in the heart. We must know the meaning of such words as "God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." "In everything give thanks, for this is the will of God concerning you." This habit of silent prayer, not in word, but in thought, is one of the secrets of abiding. There is an old word the mystics used--"recollection." We would call it a recollected spirit.

### **Vigilance**

There is another word in connection with abiding: it is vigilance--being wide awake. It is the opposite of drifting. It is the spirit of holding, and being ever on guard, and yet sweetly held by the Lord. Now this does not mean that you have to do all the holding and watching; you are to have your hand on the helm, and Christ will do the steering. It is like the brakes on the train--the brakeman only touches the lever and sets the current in motion; the engineer does not have to make the train go, he has only to turn the throttle. You and I do not need to fight our battles. We have only to give the watchword, and the powers of heaven follow it up if it is in the name of Jesus. So we may ever abide in fellowship and victory moment by moment, until at last He becomes the element of our very life.

### **Let God Lead**

If we would abide in Christ, we must stop trying to have God help us, and fall into God's way and let Him lead. We must get the idea out of our spirit that we have chosen to serve Christ and we have got to have Christ help us. We must see, rather, that we have come into His way and He is carrying us because He cannot go any other way. If you get on the bosom of the river, you have to go down the river; if you are in the bosom of God, you have to go with Him. Only surrender yourself to God, and your life will be as strong as omnipotence and as sweet as heaven.

## Section 9. The Early Alliance View of Sanctification

### Surprises

We should, perhaps, speak of the surprises that come. Sometimes the Lord let sudden temptations sweep over you to put you on your guard; and if such things come into your life, take them as from Him, sent to put you on the watch and give you some hint, like the falling of the eyelash to let you know that the eye is threatened. But if you keep very close to Christ, I do not believe that these things will come as quickly as you think. They spring often from some heedlessness of your own. You are getting out of the way, and were not where the Lord expected you to be, and, perhaps, the surprise came to let you know that you had been in the enemy's country. If we abide in Him, all evil will have to strike us through Him. Perhaps you were a little out of your center and Christ let the enemy come to frighten you back to Him, just as the shepherd's dogs are sent to drive the lambs into the fold. Better that you should get a little fall than ultimately to meet with disaster.

### Failures

But if, notwithstanding all your care, you make a mistake, if you have a disaster or a discouragement, don't say, "I have lost my blessing." "I have found this life impracticable"; but remember that "if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

### How to Make God Real

A friend asked the question the other day, "How can I make God real?" God is not real to many people. He does not seem so real to that man as his difficult task; He does not seem so real to that woman as her work and her trials; He does not seem so real to that sufferer as his sickness. How shall we make Him real?

The best way I know is to take Him into the things that are real. That headache is real. Take Him into it, and He will be as real as the headache, and a good deal more, for He will be there when the headache is gone. That trial is real; it has burned itself into your life; God will be more so. That washing and ironing are real; take God into your home, and He will be as real. That is what makes Him real--to link Him with your life.

So the banyan tree grows. First its trunk and branches shoot up to heaven, and then the branches grow down into the ground and become rooted in the earth, and by and by there are a hundred branches interwoven and interlaced from the ground so that the storm and the winds cannot disturb it, and even the simoon of the Indian Ocean cannot tear it up. It is rooted and bound together by hundreds of interlacing roots and branches. And so when God saves a soul He plants one branch; but when He comes to fill and sanctify and help in your difficulties, each is another branch; and thus your life becomes rooted and bound to God by a hundred fibres, and all the power of hell cannot break that fellowship or separate you from His love.

"Lord Jesus, make Thyself to me  
A living, bright reality,  
More present to faith's vision keen  
Than any outward object seen,  
More dear, more intimately nigh,  
Than e'en the sweetest earthly tie.

"Nearer and nearer still to me  
Thou living, loving Saviour be.  
Brighter the vision of Thy face,  
More glorious still Thy words of grace;  
Till life shall be transformed to love,  
A heaven below, a heaven above."

## Reading 10.1

# "Deep Calleth Unto Deep": Stillness in Early Alliance Spirituality\*

Charles Nienkirchen

The first generation of leaders of the Christian and Missionary Alliance neither articulated nor practised their view of the Christian life in an historical vacuum. Consequently a precise understanding of early Alliance spirituality necessitates a thorough examination of the ostensible links between the development of the Alliance during its childhood and trends in the broader complex world of late nineteenth-century American evangelicalism. Those persons interested in researching Alliance origins must increasingly devote themselves to this task. Paradoxical as it may seem, such a preoccupation with searching the past for roots is not inconsistent with a futuristic mindset directed toward developing adequate theological/pastoral/missionary responses to the challenges which await the Alliance in its second century.

Theologically speaking, the motto "fourfold gospel" was first coined by Albert Simpson to crystallize and communicate the distinctive doctrinal essence of the Alliance--Christ as Saviour, Sanctifier, Healer and Coming King.<sup>1</sup> It currently serves much the same purpose in the Alliance constituency. Interpreted within an historical framework, however, the expression takes on added value. It provides the key to understanding the integral relationship between those pivotal religious experiences which shaped the spiritual journeys of the founder and his associates and the statements of faith which they formulated. Furthermore, it sheds considerable light on the degree to which the Alliance was influenced by various interdenominational, transcontinental movements which conditioned the spiritual expectations of large numbers of Protestants in the United States, British Isles and western Europe during the closing decades of the nineteenth century.

In his commemorative volume *Twenty-five Wonderful Years* (1914) which he dedicated to Rev. and Mrs. A.B. Simpson, George Pardington, an early

Alliance theologian/historian of Methodist extraction, contextualized the genesis of the Alliance. He pinpointed its inspirational and theological dependence upon "five providential movements."<sup>2</sup> Pardington concisely identified those nineteenth century movements "whose spirit and purpose fused and focused in the Christian and Missionary Alliance" as: 1) gospel evangelism conducted by Finney, Moody and Sankey, Whittle and Bliss; 2) the Holiness movement in Europe and American as promoted by George Muller, Horatius Bonar, Frances Havergal, Charles Finney and Dr. Walter and Mrs. Phoebe Palmer; 3) the divine healing movement associated with Dorothea Trudel (Switzerland), Pastor Johann Blumhardt (Germany), Pastor Otto Stockmayer (Switzerland), W. E. Boardman and Mrs. Elizabeth Baxter (England), Dr. Charles Cullis, Carrie F. Judd and "Father" Allen (United States); 4) the modern missionary movement let by William Carey and 5) the rebirth of premillennialism advocated by James Brooks (St. Louis) and A.J. Gordon (Boston).<sup>3</sup>

## The Influence of Quietism

Complementing Pardington's interpretation of Alliance origins, A.T. Pierson, a Presbyterian promoter of the Keswick movement, had earlier made a general observation regarding the nineteenth-century evangelical revival which further elucidates another salient characteristic of the early Alliance. Pierson commented that the intense desire for increased personal holiness which permeated many streams of evangelicalism in the late nineteenth century was in many instances fuelled by the writings of the mystics; namely, Jacob Bohme, St. Theresa, Catherine of Siena, Madame Guyon, Fenelon, Tauler and William Law.<sup>4</sup> More specifically, a study of the contemplative aspects of early Alliance spirituality concentrating on the theme of stillness, which this article

\* *His Dominion*, 14(4): 2-22 (1989).

1. On the origins of the phrase "fourfold gospel" see "The Opening of the Convention," *The Christian Alliance and Missionary Weekly* 4 (March 7-14, 1890), p. 157; W. T. MacArthur, *Twenty Sermonettes* (n.p.: published privately, n.d.), p. 48; Kenneth Mackenzie, "My Memories of Dr. Simpson," *The Alliance Weekly* 72 (July 31, 1937), pp. 485-87, 490, esp. p. 485.

2. George Pardington, *Twenty-five Wonderful Years 1889-1914* (New York, NY: The Christian Alliance Publishing Co., 1914), p. 13.

3. *Ibid.*, pp. 14-17.

4. Arthur T. Pierson, *Forward Movements of the Last Half Century* (New York, NY: Garland Publishing Inc., 1984; original edition, 1905), pp. 11-12; cf. *The Story of Keswick and its Beginnings* (London: Marshall Brothers, n.d.)

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purports to do, corroborates Pierson's conclusion. In fact the weight of the evidence warrants the conclusion that any interpretation of early Alliance "deeper life" teaching which does not give due attention to its contemplative dimensions has conspicuous shortcomings.<sup>5</sup> It does not offer a satisfactory explanation of the individual and corporate spiritual dynamic which nurtured the experience of the sanctified life on an ongoing basis among early Alliance adherents. The widespread resurgence of interest in Quietism among other evangelicals during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries can also be documented among Alliance pioneers.

Quietism had arisen as a movement in the seventeenth-century Catholic church in France and Italy. Its doctrines and practices were primarily disseminated through the labours and writings of Madame Guyon (1648-1717), Francois Fenelon (1651-1715), and Miguel de Molinos (1640-1697). At the core of Quietist teachings was the dogmatic insistence that the voice of God could only be heard in stillness.<sup>6</sup> The movement was eventually proscribed because of a perceived exaggerated emphasis on the prayer of quietude to the neglect of Christian duty. While not in agreement with all that was part and parcel of Quietism, nineteenth-century Holiness leaders were nevertheless attracted to the writings of the aforementioned Quietist figures.<sup>7</sup> They publicly recommended Quietist literature as embodying spiritual principles and disciplines necessary for cultivating an interior life devoted to an ever deepening, intimate knowledge of God.<sup>8</sup>

Simpson traced both his insight into the "power of stillness" and appreciation for the discipline of listening prayer to a book entitled *True Peace*, which had been given to him by an unidentified friend sometime during the mid-1870s.<sup>9</sup> It was comprised chiefly of a distillation of various Quietist treatises by Guyon, Fenelon and Molinos. Compiled anonymously by two Quakers, William Backhouse and James Janson, and intentionally designed for popular consumption, this book appears in a pocket size edition which underwent twelve reprintings between 1813 and 1877.<sup>10</sup>

The longer title of the work, *A Guide to True Peace or The Excellency of Inward and Spiritual Prayer*, disclosed its overall contemplative orientation. While an in depth analysis of the book's contents exceeds the limits of this article, the substance of some of its chapter titles – "The Spirit of God Dwells in the Heart of Man," "On Mortification," "On Resignation," "On Self-Annihilation" and "On Perfection, or the Union of the Soul with God" – clearly locates the book squarely within the mainstream of centuries-old Christian mystical theological tradition.

Significantly, Simpson esteemed his entrance into contemplative spirituality via the medium of Quietist literature as "one of the turning points of [his] life."<sup>11</sup> For him, this discovery made possible the experience of "the Sabbath rest of the soul" which he valued as the "sweetest blessing" known to the believer in this life.<sup>12</sup> Only by embarking on an inward journey into "the deepest center of the soul" could one be brought to

5. In his impressive lengthy study, Gerald McGraw gives brief attention to the theme of "rest" in Simpson's doctrine of sanctification, but surprisingly, he misses Simpson's emphasis on stillness, acquired through his exposure to Quietism. Simpson's testimony, "The Power of Stillness," does not appear in the 66-page bibliography. See "The Doctrine of Sanctification in the Published Writings of Albert Benjamin Simpson" (Ph.D. thesis, New York University, 1986), pp. 205-10, 296-300.

6. For a succinct scholarly analysis of the rise and demise of Quietism see Elfrieda Dubois, "Fenelon and Quietism" in Cheslyn Jones, Geoffrey Wainwright, Edward Yarnold, eds., *The Study of Spirituality* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1986), pp. 408-15.

7. In his study of the nineteenth-century Methodist Thomas Upham, Darius Salter concluded that Upham (like Simpson) married Quietist mysticism to his Holiness theology without surrendering the essentials of his own Protestant theological tradition. See "Thomas Upham and Nineteenth Century Holiness Theology" (Ph.D. thesis, Drew University, Madison, NJ, 1983), esp. pp. 196-247; cf. Upham's *Life, Religious Opinions and Experience of Madame Guyon*, new edition (London: H.R. Allenson Ltd., 1905). As evidence of the popularity of Quietism in Holiness circles see the anthology of the writings of Fenelon, Guyon and Lacombe edited by James Metcalf, *Spiritual Progress or, Instructions in the Divine Life of the Soul* (Philadelphia, PA: National Holiness Publishing House, 1883).

8. See Simpson's editorial reference to "the invaluable writings of Madame Guyon" in *Living Truths* 6 (July 1906), p. 385, and his publication of an article, "The Interior Life" by Madam Guyon in

ibid., pp. 421-25. In a book review, *Meditations from Fenelon* was commended for its "deeply spiritual character." *The Christian and Missionary Alliance* 32 (July 24, 1909), p. 288; cf. Pardington's evaluation of Guyon and Fenelon as "notable examples of deep piety" who "taught the most utter self-abnegation and entire submission to the will of God." *Studies in Church History* (Brooklyn, NY: The Christian Alliance Publishing Co., n.d.) p. 161.

9. A.B. Simpson, "The Power of Stillness," *The Christian and Missionary Alliance* 33 (October 16, 1909), p. 37. Simpson first preached the sermon "The Still Small Voice" in January 1895. See *The Christian Alliance and Foreign Missionary Weekly* 14 (January 22, 1895), pp. 57-59, esp. p. 59. Thus "a score of years ago" when he was given a copy of *True Peace* by a "friend" would extend back to the mid 1870s during his Louisville pastorate. a plausible candidate for Simpson's unidentified friend is the elusive "Miss S." whom he describes in his diary as "full of God--full of faith and power--lifted above all circumstances and dwelling in heavenly places" and "far ahead of us all." See entries in Simpson's Louisville/ New York diary for Nov. 22 and 24, 1879; March 3, 1880, for references to "Miss S." in *Simpson Scrapbook*, compiled by C. Donald McKaig, unpublished manuscript, pp. 150-51, 152, 178.

10. William Backhouse and James Janson, comps., *A Guide to True Peace or The Excellency of Inward and Spiritual Prayer* (New York, NY: Harper and Brothers, 1946), p. vii.

11. Simpson, "The Power of Stillness," p. 37; cf. a longer version in *The Holy Spirit or Power from on High* (Harrisburg, PA: Christian Publications, Inc., n.d.; original ed., 1895), 1:160-64.

12. Simpson, "The Power of Stillness," p. 37.

"dwell alone with God in eternal stillness."<sup>13</sup> A continuing appreciation in Alliance circles for Quietist literature survived well into the post-Simpsonian era, which is understandable given the seminal contribution of Quietist spirituality to the original Alliance conception of the sanctified life.<sup>14</sup>

### The Testimonies of George Pardington and Sarah Lindenberger

A recognition of the indispensability of stillness to the maturation of the believer's life and ministry radiated beyond Simpson's own experience to his far-reaching network of friends and associates, many of whom regarded him as their spiritual mentor. The testimonies of George Pardington and Sarah Lindenberger are most interesting in this regard. Pardington, who taught at the Missionary Training Institute for more than two decades (1892-1915), recounted in an unpublished document written on Sunday, June 29, 1890, that his "nervous and excitable" nature was seriously impairing his capacity to receive any sense of divine guidance beyond "surface, mere emotional suggestions." He candidly confessed, "I do not know God's voice when He speaks and seldom even hear it."<sup>15</sup> Acknowledging his deep-seated need for "God's quietness," Pardington made the following covenant with God:

...I determine and promise to obey God's voice upon every occasion and to any extent. I determine and promise to listen and hear His voice. I determine and promise to be quiet and still upon every occasion till I hear His voice. I will on no occasion do anything until I definitely and satisfactorily get God's voice in regard to it.<sup>16</sup>

Pardington evidently made this "transaction with God" while a student at New York University and sustained it in good conscience as both an historian and theologian. Historically he was discerning of the "bright

and dark side" of monasticism which, though inspired by a commendable longing for "the quiet and seclusion of...desert habitations," soon succumbed to doctrinal and moral aberrations. Pardington was similarly ambivalent about the mysticism of the later Middle Ages. While undeniably capturing a central aspect of historic Christianity that the soul could enjoy direct knowledge of God through meditation and communion, it was at the same time demonstrably prone to "an absorption in spiritual things to the neglect of one's duty."<sup>17</sup> The past excesses of monks and mystics, however, did not deter Pardington from positing the ideal of the "mystic-missionary" who was motivated by a theological paradigm of the Christian life in which genuinely fruitful ministry was inextricably linked to a relationship of union and communion with the Lord.<sup>18</sup> Such a desired depth of spiritual intimacy could not be nurtured apart from a posture of quietness, patient waiting and listening to the voice of God on the part of the believer. Pardington's collection of "Quiet Hour Talks," published in 1902 as *The Still Small Voice*, offers ample indication of his commitment to a vision of the deeper life defined in contemplative/active terms.<sup>19</sup>

Sarah Lindenberger, who first associated with A.B. Simpson in 1882 and served as deaconess in the Berachah Home for healing from 1884 to 1917, had an equally profound sense of the vital role of stillness in expanding the believer's experience of the sanctified life. Shortly after commencing her healing ministry, the heavy toll extracted on her naturally frail anatomy by the intensive demands of the work brought her to a state of "nervous prostration." She regarded her life at this point as "hanging by a thread." As a result of this personal crisis, Miss Lindenberger recounted in her autobiography that she was brought to the realization that she "could not depend upon others to pray for [her]" and that she was being summoned by the Holy Spirit "to *be alone with God*, to depend upon Him and *receive from Him*" (italics are hers).<sup>20</sup>

The experience of stillness for Lindenberger had numerous benefits. Not only was "a recollective spirit" accompanied by "a deep, abiding rest and peace" but it was also "far more pleasing to [God] than the rush of self-effort and planning" which typified much of the

13. Ibid.

14. See H.M. Shuman's reference to Fenelon and Guyon in his introduction to A.W. Roffe's *The Divine Touch* (Gravenhurst, ON: n.p., 1926), p. 1; cf. A.W. Tozer's inclusion of Madam Guyon's poems in his anthology of poetry by orthodox mystics. *The Christian Book of Mystical Verse* (Harrisburg, PA: Christian Publications Inc., 1963), pp. 65-66, and his working definition of mysticism, pp. v-viii; cf. Tozer's endorsement of Molinos's *The Spiritual Guide* in his list of recommended books. David Fant Jr., A.W. Tozer, *A Twentieth Century Prophet* (Harrisburg, PA: Christian Publications, Inc., 1964), p. 181; cf. *Keys to the Deeper Life* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1957), p. 16, where Molinos is listed with other "saintly souls."

15. Quoted in Richard W. Bailey, "The Alliance's Theologian," *Alliance Witness* 121 (October 8, 1986), p. 22. I am indebted to John Sawin for a copy of the original text of this document. See also Pardington's article, "Resting in God," *Christian Alliance Weekly* 11 (July 11, 1890), p. 8, written when he was 24 years old.

16. Ibid., p. 24.

17. George Pardington, *Studies*, pp. 52, 53, 54, 124-25, 163-64.

18. Ibid., pp. 163-64. Pardington interpreted monasticism and mysticism as understandable reactions against the worldliness and formalism of the church. However, both movements discredited themselves by virtue of their extremism. Biblical orthodoxy called for "holding the middle ground" which would "preserve the balance and harmony of both truth and life."

19. George Pardington, *The Still Small Voice: Quiet Hour Talks* (New York, NY: The Christian Alliance Publishing Co., 1902).

20. Sarah A. Lindenberger, *Streams from the Valley of Berachah* (New York, NY: The Christian Alliance Publishing Co., n.d.), pp. 21-22.

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Christian activism of the day. Furthermore, a quietness of the soul which allowed the believer to be sensitized to "the inwrought prayer of the Holy Ghost" also precipitated entry into both "a life of power and a Sabbath rest of soul."

In the final analysis, a ministry rooted in the personal knowledge of God acquired through stillness, would ultimately prove more fruitful than that done solely in the power of "intellect, or study, or even Bible knowledge, or a worked-up prayer."<sup>21</sup> Reflecting on the formula for longevity in truly Spirit-anointed Christian service, Lindenberger recalled:

I have known many Christians who had strong faith, the gift of prophecy, and knowledge, so that they could inspire an audience, were able to prevail at times, in prayer for the sick; and yet, there was something lacking in their deeper life, and their work did not continue strong in God. There was a lack of stillness of soul, and of having Christ manifested in them.<sup>22</sup>

The demise of "several strong workers, women whom [she] knew personally" further solidified Lindenberger's own convictions. Though these persons were once "used mightily in Christian work" they had "after a time...lost their power" thereby serving as vivid reminders that the Christ-life, with its call to internalize the death and resurrection of Christ, could only come to full bloom in the soil of stillness.<sup>23</sup>

### The Image of "The Dew"

Early Alliance writers frequently gleaned from nature illustrations of the fundamental principles of the spiritual life. A favourite image used to depict the nature, effects and method of nurturing inner stillness was that of "the dew." Expounding on Hosea 14:5-8, Simpson interpreted the prophet's allusion to dew as "an exquisite description of [God's] cheering and comforting grace" which could be effortlessly received in quietness:

Do you ever get fretted, or heated, or tired, or passionate, and do you wonder why God does not refresh you? Get quiet and cool, and lo! from the surrounding air, which is full of God, you will gather drops of refreshing which will rest, and quiet, and calm you. ...God is always full of quiet and restful love and we must get quiet to take it in, and our hearts will be full of praise. Look up and feel that you touch Him, and then rest in Him. He is not far from every one of us.<sup>24</sup>

The consequences of receiving the dew were all encompassing, "life for the soul, the body, the heart, the

intellect, the whole being."<sup>25</sup> It would even "spread refreshing over all" and "sweeten" the believer "for home life...social life...business life." and every sphere for activity where he was divinely led.<sup>26</sup>

In an address delivered at the Linwood (Ohio) Convention in 1889, Simpson's former Mennonite pastoral colleague, A.E. Funk, underscored that the dew "does not form on a stormy or windy night" but only in an atmosphere of quietness. He likened the natural conditions which inhibit the formation of dew to the "many cares, disturbances of the mind and heart [and] not being right with other people, etc." which prevented numerous Christians from hearing the still small voice of the Lord.<sup>27</sup>

Pardington bemoaned the wearied condition of many church workers, who though faithfully engaged in Christian service, were nonetheless oblivious to their own spiritual dryness:

Their teaching is Scriptural, their labours are faithful and abundant; but somehow their messages sound old and stale. The secret of the trouble is to be found not in their service, but in themselves. Their own hearts are half famished, yet they recognize it not. Their spirits are drooping for lack of dew.<sup>28</sup>

As a remedy for this spiritual impoverishment which would restore freshness and fragrance to life and ministry, Pardington prescribed a "daily quiet hour," preferably observed in the evening. This consisted mostly of practising the discipline of meditation designed to foster a "spirit of recollection" throughout the tasks of the following day. The hour of meditation, if regularly observed, proved a catalyst for communion and prayer. These three devotional exercises, working in tandem, created the soul climate necessary to bringing the dew.<sup>29</sup>

The dew as a tangible image of the invisible, silent processes operative in those who had experienced the Spirit's infilling, was rarely described more picturesquely than in F.E. Marsh's *Emblems of the Holy Spirit*:

The visitations of the Spirit are silent and searching, and yet none the less real and stimulating. Life with its energy, spring with its beauty, gravitation with its attraction...and the earth moving on its axis, are all silent and potent. The Spirit comes not with blare of trumpet, and boom of cannon, but like the gentle dew

21. Ibid., p. 124.

22. Ibid., p. 108.

23. Ibid., p. 109.

24. A.B. Simpson, *Natural Emblems of Spiritual Life* (New York: Word, Work and World Pub. Co., n.d.), pp. 51-53, esp. p. 52. On quietness as "the greatest work of the Holy Ghost" see A.B. Simpson, *Divine Emblems in the Book of Exodus* (New York, NY: Word, Work and World Pub. Co., 1888), pp. 79-81, esp. p. 80.

25. Ibid., p. 53; cf A.B. Simpson, "God's Challenge," *Triumphs of Faith* 40 (July 1920), pp. 155-56.

26. Simpson, *Emblems*, p. 53.

27. A.E. Funk, "I will be as the Dew Unto Israel," *Triumphs of Faith* 9 (Sept. 1889), p. 194.

28. Pardington, *The Still Small Voice*, p. 26; cf. D.Y. Schultz, *The Paraclete*, revised and enlarged edition (New York, NY: The Christian Alliance Publishing Co., 1917; original edition, 1903), p. 24.

29. Ibid., p. 28, 30-31, 97-107.

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He comes quietly and surely; and a proof of His infilling is a quiet and gentle life and an unobtrusive manner.<sup>30</sup>

In another book written specifically to address the needs of a fulltime Christian worker, Marsh, a member of the Missionary Training Institute faculty and associate pastor at Simpson's Gospel Tabernacle, devoted an entire chapter to "The Worker's Isolation." Waiting on God in solitude not only brought the dew but also prompted a self-knowledge which made it possible for impediments to spiritual fruitfulness to be exposed and removed.<sup>31</sup> Healthy Christian ministry needed a regular diet of stillness.

### Power and Stillness

Alliance authors frequently juxtaposed the motifs of power and stillness in their discussions of the Spirit-filled life. For Dr. Henry Wilson, Simpson's close friend and Gospel Tabernacle associate, the inner symbiosis of divine power and stillness was intuitively grasped during a visit to Niagara Falls. The thunderous volume of water pouring over the falls became to him "a mirror in which [he] saw the power of God" manifested in the believer through the Holy Spirit. Beyond the whirlpool at the base of the falls, Wilson visualized the river winding its way "to be lost in the calm, deep waters of Lake Ontario" which spoke to him of "the deeper Sea of God's eternal peace."<sup>32</sup>

In an anthology of Simpson's poetry, two compositions, "The Peace of God" and "Power from on High," fittingly appeared in sequence.<sup>33</sup> The "mightiest servants" as they matured, came invariably to appreciate the importance of resting in stillness as the context for releasing spiritual power in ministry. On the appropriateness of silence as an actual form of ministry Simpson wrote:

We learn to believe for the power and the result and count ourselves but instruments in His hand willing sometimes to be used even in our very silence as much as in our service.<sup>34</sup>

Kenneth Mackenzie, the Alliance's adopted Episcopalian theologian, turned to the figure of Elijah as one in whom the rhythm of solitude and powerful

ministry was exemplified. He enjoined all Christians to follow suit:

Be sure, dear Christian, that you are not qualified to enter the home of the widow until you have acquired the curriculum of the brook. Let us plead strongly for the "quiet hour" with God each day, that the service of the day [might] be marked by divine benedictions.<sup>35</sup>

For Mackenzie, it was only "flesh-depending critics" who erroneously perceived solitude as "lost time" and "doing nothing." When seen from a heavenly perspective, the human priorities of "economics and expediency" paled in comparison with God doing His work in His way. In the divine economy, "the worker is more than the work," hence Mackenzie's emphasis on the quality of one's personal preparation before entering Christian service.<sup>36</sup>

### The Role of Stillness in Prayer, the Spirit-Filled Life, Healing, Education and Conventions

A recent interpreter of the early Alliance insightfully concluded that "the fourfold gospel...began with the Protestant heritage of salvation" and "did not try to negate or diminish this teaching." However, the Alliance did supplement the Protestant doctrines of justification and conversion with "other compelling elements, attractive in its age, and based squarely in scripture."<sup>37</sup> Since the fourfold gospel was more an invitation to nominal Christians to experience divine life than a credal statement by which to safeguard doctrinal orthodoxy, Simpson and the Alliance logically expended their energy on methods of spiritual formation which promoted the Christ-life rather than on abstract theologizing divorced from the realm of practical piety.

The practice of stillness was deemed essential to various aspects of early Alliance spirituality, notably, prayer, the Spirit-filled life, healing, education and conventions. Like many Orthodox/Catholic/Protestant writers before him who identified themselves with the mystical tradition, Simpson came to recognize that a full-fledged prayer life could not exclude the aspect of listening stillness developed through practising the presence of God in one's inner consciousness. He knew well from his own experience that the mind was relentlessly besieged by a "pandemonium of voices" as well as "a thousand clamoring notes from within and without."<sup>38</sup> Thus, the ancient discipline known to

30. F.E. Marsh, *Emblems of the Holy Spirit* (London: Pickering and Inglis, 1923), pp. 192-207, esp. pp. 199-200. I have been unable to locate a smaller first edition by the same title published in 1884 in which Marsh briefly discussed the symbolism of the dew.

31. F.E. Marsh, *The Christian Worker's Equipment* (New York, NY: The Christian Alliance Publishing Co., 1900), pp. 236-37.

32. See Lesson 29 in Henry Wilson, *Bible Lamps for Little Feet* (Nyack, NY: The Christian Alliance Publishing Co., 1894), pp. 98-101.

33. A.B. Simpson, *Millennial Chimes, A Collection of Poems* (New York, NY: The Christian Alliance Publishing Co., 1894), pp. 14-19.

34. See Simpson's discussion of "deeper peace" and "deeper power" in *Higher and Deeper* (South Nyack, NY: The Christian Alliance Publishing Co., n.d.) pp. 36-38, esp. p. 38.

35. Kenneth Mackenzie, *Elijah, A Character Study* (Brooklyn, NY: The Christian Alliance Publishing Co., n.d.), pp. 12-13; cf. A.B. Simpson, "The Elijahs and the God of Elijah," *Living Truths* 1 (September 1902), pp. 119-20.

36. *Ibid.*, pp. 9, 10.

37. Bill Pitts, "Holiness as Spirituality: The Religious Quest of A.B. Simpson" (Paper delivered at the Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion, December 1987, Boston, MA), p. 14.

38. Simpson, "Power of Stillness," p. 37.

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medieval mystics as the prayer of "recollection" proved a workable strategy for combatting mental distractions and was thus recommended as a means of abiding in Christ.<sup>39</sup> Developing the habit of constant prayer did not necessitate the artificially separated environment of the monastery which Simpson deplored as never having generated "a wholesome type of Christian experience." The prayer of "recollection" could be effectively cultivated in the mundane world of multiple demands, trials and temptations. Far from being an obstacle to prayer, Simpson saw daily difficulties as an "incentive to communion with God."<sup>40</sup>

For Simpson, the "highest ministry of prayer" (intercession) took on new power and focus when directed by the "deepest kind of prayer" (silence).<sup>41</sup> Pardington similarly described the complete prayer cycle in terms of "inwrought and outwrought prayer."<sup>42</sup> He further contended that the disappearance of the prophetic gift from contemporary preaching was directly attributable to the failure of overworked pastors to receive spiritual vision because of their neglect of "retirement" and "recollection." As a result, their parishioners received "manufactured" sermons rather than messages "prepared in the guidance of the Holy Spirit."<sup>43</sup>

Verbal discourse admittedly had definite limitations when entering new depth of union with the Lord. The "prayer of silence," however, enabled the believer to savour those moments of "deep communion too sacred for speech where the heart of love sinks into the heart of God in unutterable oneness, worship, and stillness."<sup>44</sup> The soul's "deep longing" for intimacy with Jesus could only be found in "God's quiet, the inner chambers, the shadow of the Almighty and the secret of

His presence." When entering "into the shadow," Simpson described the believer as being "lost to the sight of himself...to the sight of others and overshadowed by what he might call gloom." The only prerequisite for attaining this state of restful communion was "to cease...thinking, questioning, planning, fearing...trying...listening...answering the tempter and to hide one's head on the bosom of Jesus...."<sup>45</sup> Conversely, at less favourable times when this communion was unexplainably interrupted by an overwhelming sense of separation from the Lord, a "quiet restful assurance" was regarded as the heart posture most conducive to restoring inner peace.<sup>46</sup>

The commitment of Simpson, Pardington and other Alliance leaders to making silence a part of their spiritual exercises evidently filtered down to their disciples. Josephus Pulis, a converted alcoholic who served both as an elder of the Gospel Tabernacle and as a member of the Board of Managers for many years, was a case in point. He noted "how few people [knew] God in a quiet, restful way" because they chose instead to be preoccupied with "so-called works which will be burned up." His counsel to spiritual seekers was to begin each day with waiting before God "quietly, trustfully [and] restfully."<sup>47</sup> Pulis maintained that silence increased one's receptivity to "the gentle ways in which God comes" through "instinct, intimation and intuition."<sup>48</sup> Having imbibed some of the teaching of the Carmelite monk, Brother Lawrence, and the Quietist, Madame Guyon, it was Pulis's custom to engage in silent meditation for a half-hour prior to the daily morning and afternoon services conducted in the chapel of New York Christian Home for Intemperate Men where he served as Assistant to the Manager.<sup>49</sup>

At the heart of its proclamation of the Spirit-filled life, the early Alliance preached a doctrine of Spirit-baptism subsequent to regeneration. This blessing was not considered automatic. Rather, it was to be preceded by a time of waiting in stillness which could not be profitably short-circuited. To the Alliance founder, reenacting the Apostles' days of waiting in the Upper Room was "a discipline of self-crucifixion" without which there would be no "deep and full" reception of the

39. A.B. Simpson, *The Christ Life* (Harrisburg, PA: Christian Publications Inc., 1925), pp. 69, 72-73, 74, 76; *Echoes of the New Creation* (Nyack, NY: The Christian Alliance Publishing Co., 1903), pp. 66-68; cf. Pardington, *The Still Small Voice*, pp. 103-104; Lindenberger, *Streams from Berachah*, p. 124. Simpson's use of the "prayer of recollection" is analyzed more extensively in a larger ecumenical context by Dwayne Ratzlaff, "An Old Medieval Message: A Turning Point in the Life of A.B. Simpson," in David Hartzfeld and Charles Nienkirchen, ed., *The Birth of a Vision* (Beaverlodge, AB: Horizon House Publishers, 1986), pp. 177-186.

40. A.B. Simpson, *Correspondence Bible School Deeper Truth and Life: The Life of Prayer, Tenth Study* (n.p., n.d.), pp. 7-8.

41. A.B. Simpson, "The Secret of Prayer," *Living Truths* 4 (March 1904), pp. 126, 125-26.

42. Pardington, *The Still Small Voice*, pp. 171-81.

43. George Pardington, "The Prophetic Element in Preaching," *Living Truths* 7 (January 1907), pp. 17-21. F.E. Marsh compared those Christian workers who were "acquainted with the exterior of the things of God, but [who] know nothing of their inward power and reality" to the Old Testament Gehazi. They lapsed into dead formalism because of succumbing to the temptation "to substitute action for meditation and communion" while doing "the so-called work of the Lord." *The Christian Worker's Equipment*, pp. 241, 251.

44. Simpson, *Higher and Deeper*, p. 40.

45. A.B. Simpson, *The Love-Life of the Lord or The Deeper Lessons in the Book of Canticles*, second edition revised, (New York, NY: The Christian Alliance Publishing Co., 1895), pp. 43-52, esp. pp. 51, 52.

46. George Pardington, "The Sense of Christ's Presence," *Triumphs of Faith* 9 (March 1889), pp. 51-52.

47. A.B. Simpson, *From the Uttermost to the Uttermost: The Life Story of Josephus Pulis* (New York, NY: The Christian Alliance Publishing Co., 1914), p. 43.

48. *Ibid.*, p. 47.

49. *Ibid.*, pp. 55, 56, 69.



Spirit.<sup>50</sup> Simpson underscored the importance of this preparatory period in *The Holy Spirit*:

And so it [is] necessary that these days should be spent in waiting and learning to be silent, and forming the habit of the suspension of our own activity, and the dependence of our will entirely upon the direction of the Holy Ghost.<sup>51</sup>

Waiting in solitude and quietness allowed the Spirit to search the innermost recesses of the heart and reveal one's "folly...failures [and] need."<sup>52</sup> Simpson knew the shallow sense of the divine presence which would result where the season of sustained stillness in anticipation of the Spirit's coming was aborted:

These days of waiting are important that we may listen to God's voice. We are so busy that we cannot hear. We talk so much that we give Him no chance to talk to us. He wants us to hearken to what He has to say to us. He wants us on our faces before Him, that He may give us His thought, His prayer, His longing and then lead us into His better will....Beloved we do not wait enough upon the Lord. We do not spend sufficient time at the Mercy seat. We allow the rush and hurry of life to drive us off, and we lose time instead of gaining it, by our reckless haste.<sup>53</sup>

The benefits of quiet waiting had been borne out for him during his Louisville pastorate when he had set apart a month for seeking the Lord for a baptism of the Holy Spirit. At the same time, he cautioned against a "musty, monkish way of seeking a blessing" which isolated one from the necessary duties of practical life.<sup>54</sup> In a later season of life, Simpson's quest for a "deeper and fuller baptism [of the Holy Spirit]" was intensified by times of prolonged waiting.<sup>55</sup>

The high priority he gave to stillness, however, was not always endorsed. On one occasion a one time Alliance missionary who had switched his allegiance to the Pentecostal movement chastised Simpson for his overdependence on the "still small Voice" which he

denounced as a regression to a "past dispensation." Contrary to Simpson's instruction, believers were to be encouraged to expect "the mighty sound of Pentecost" which "suited this age better" and was more in accord with the pattern of the book of Acts.<sup>56</sup> This did not comply, however, with Simpson's own experience. After five years of seeking for a "new...Mighty Baptism of the Holy Ghost in His complete Pentecostal fullness embracing all the gifts and graces" Simpson recorded that "tongues or similar gifts" had not come,<sup>57</sup> only that the Lord had "met [him] still with the old touch and spiritual sense" with which he had long been familiar.<sup>58</sup>

In the Alliance theology of the Spirit-filled life, stillness was important in psychologically preparing oneself for the post-regeneration crisis of Spirit-baptism. Moreover it was also recognized as necessary in the continuing process of growing into the fullness of the Spirit which was defined more as "a habit" than "an act."<sup>59</sup> In his classic, *The Crisis of the Deeper Life* (1906), Pardington instructed the Spirit-baptized believer to "spiritually open up his whole being to God" by "waiting upon the Lord" and "drinking in the peace and rest...of the Holy Ghost."<sup>60</sup> A life of constant victory over the pressures of temptation was not likely apart from an ongoing sensitive obedience to "the still small voice" within.<sup>61</sup>

The stillness motif which pervaded the first-generation Alliance understanding of sanctification was equally discernible in its concept of divine healing. The holistic anthropology of early Alliance teachers which stressed the interdependent relationship between body, soul and spirit meant that outer physical ailments were often diagnosed as deriving from inner spiritual maladies, especially that of lack of stillness of soul.<sup>62</sup> Divine

50. A.B. Simpson, *The Christ of the Forty Days* (New York, NY: The Christian Alliance Publishing Co., n.d.), p. 233.

51. A.B. Simpson, *The Holy Spirit or Power from on High* (Harrisburg, PA: Christian Publication, Inc., n.d.; original ed., 1895), 2:70. Cf. A.B. Simpson, *A Larger Christian Life* (New York, NY: The Christian Alliance Publishing Co., 1890), pp. 90-91.

52. Ibid., p. 72.

53. Ibid., pp. 73, 75; cf. Simpson, *A Larger Christian Life* (New York, NY: The Christian Alliance Publishing Co., 1890), pp. 90-91.

54. [A.B. Simpson] Editorial, *The Christian Alliance and Foreign Missionary Weekly* 12 (February 16, 1894), p. 1; *Practical Christianity* (Brooklyn, NY: The Christian Alliance Publishing Co., 1901), pp. 61-62.

55. A.B. Simpson, *Nyack Diary* (1907-1916), entries in 1907 for August 9, 22, 28; September 5, 6, 12, 13. A copy of this diary is in the Canadian Bible College and Canadian Theological Seminary Archives, Regina, SK. Simpson had written in *The Christ of the Forty Days*, p. 233: "...it is also true that at each successive stage of our life and work, and at each new departure, there must be a tarrying for power."

56. See W. W. Simpson's letter to A.B. Simpson, October 17, 1916. A copy of this letter is in the Canadian Bible College/Canadian Theological Seminary Archives, Regina, SK.

57. Simpson, *Nyack Diary*, entries for August 9, 1907 and October 6, 1912.

58. Ibid., entry for October 6, 1912.

59. George Pardington, *The Crisis of the Deeper Life* (New York, NY: The Christian Alliance Publishing Co., 1925; original edition, 1906), p. 212.

60. Ibid., p. 213; cf. Simpson's and Wilson's similar advice on how to maintain the sanctified life. Simpson, *Correspondence Bible School Deeper Truth and Life, Study No. 3, The Indwelling Christ* (n.p., n.d.) pp. 14-16, esp. p. 16; *Wholly Sanctified* (New York, NY: The Christian Alliance Publishing Co., 1890), pp. 111-112; Henry Wilson, *The Internal Christ* (New York, NY: The Alliance Press Co., 1908), pp. 27-28, on "Restfulness-Activity in Him."

61. Pardington, *Crisis*, p. 217; cf. Wilson's discussion of "deeper voices" and "larger visions" in *Internal Christ*, pp. 48-50, as the fruit of one's progress in sanctification.

62. Some of the best examples of this holism are the two chapters on "The Body and Religion" in *Spirit, Soul and Body* (New York, NY: The Alliance Press Company, 1910), pp. 80-108, authored by J. Hudson Ballard, Principal of the Wilson Memorial Academy; cf. Kenneth Mackenzie Jr., "Divine Healing," *Triumphs of Faith* 19

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healing was thought to be most effectively appropriated through stillness. In his treatise, *Divine Life for the Body*, Kenneth Mackenzie (perhaps the Alliance's preeminent healing theologian) placed learning to wait upon God in stillness at the centre of the divine strategy for making divine health available to the believer:

Undoubtedly, if we learn to wait upon Him in stillness, we shall not only receive His life, but we shall have such experience of His indwelling and vitality as will press us into a service that may truly be to His praise. The indwelling Spirit will not permit those who are responsive to His quickening in any wise to make void the divine method.<sup>63</sup>

Failing to follow this "divine method" halted the communication of Christ's resurrection life to the believer and potentially induced a serious state of "nervous prostration" and "permanent invalidism" capable of bringing some persons to the brink of suicide. By unlocking the "secret of stillness," the afflicted persons could recover from the acute anxiety brought on by living a strongwilled, overly ambitious life and receive a "vision of God's leisure."<sup>64</sup> Josephus Pulis forthrightly claimed that "the mighty prayer of silence" was more potent in delivering him from a near fatal illness than even physical rest and a vacation might have been.<sup>65</sup> Henry Wilson depicted divine health as "a veritable 'Gulf Stream' in the ocean of...daily life" which "permeates and penetrates silently...below the surface, the very texture and hidden parts of the human organism" creating "a new atmosphere in one's whole consciousness."<sup>66</sup>

The healing home, an innovative structure which flourished during the formative years of the Alliance, offered a supportive environment where Wilson's "Gulf Stream" of divine health could flow to seeking persons.

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(April 1899), pp. 93-94. On the psychosomatic nature of many illnesses see A.B. Simpson, "The Connection Between Spiritual and Physical Life," *Triumphs of Faith* 18 (September 1898), p. 215; *Friday Meeting Talks or Divine Prescriptions for the Sick and Suffering* (New York, NY: The Christian Alliance Publishing Co., 1894), p. 32.

63. Kenneth Mackenzie Jr., *Divine Life for the Body* (New York, NY: The Christian Alliance Publishing Co., 1926), pp. 145-47, esp. pp. 146-7. Simpson referred to quietness as one of his "sedatives" which curbed the nervous, impulsive streak in his temperament and cured "one form of [his] heart trouble [which] came from excitement and wasted strength." See his tract *My Medicine Chest or Helps to Divine Healing* (New York, NY: Christian Alliance Pub. Co., 1913), p. 3.

64. Kenneth Mackenzie Jr., "The Relation of Divine Healing to Nervous Prostration," *Triumphs of Faith* 23 (November 1903), pp. 251-53; cf. Mackenzie's chapter, "The Conditions of the Maintenance of the Life of Redemption" in *Redemption: A Study* (Brooklyn, NY: The Christian Alliance Publishing Co., 1903), pp. 70-83, esp. p. 73.

65. Josephus Pulis, "A Wonder of Divine Power," *Triumphs of Faith* 21 (September 1901), p. 197.

66. Henry Wilson, *The A.B.C. of Divine Health* (New York, NY: The Alliance Press Co., 1908), pp. 40-41.

First established by Simpson in New York City in 1883, Berachah Healing Home was later moved in 1897 to South Nyack, near the Missionary Training Institute. It was described as:

a commodious building with accommodations for nearly one hundred persons...in a most charming situation...specially fitted up as a temporary resting place for those who desire to wait upon God for quiet teaching, rest and healing.<sup>67</sup>

As a primary disseminator of the Alliance doctrine of divine healing, the healing home in effect reflected the institutionalization of stillness. In her defence of the legitimate place of the healing home within the overall life of the church, Sarah Lindenberger focused on the need for "a quiet resting place where people could come for careful and thorough Biblical teaching in the things of the Spirit."<sup>68</sup> The daily liturgy of the home demonstrated a high commitment to reading Scripture and silence:

We always urge our guests to quietly wait upon the Lord until they clearly see every stepping in the Word of God – if this is not done there is always failure.<sup>69</sup>

Like her mentors Simpson and Pardington, Lindenberger embraced a balanced contemplative/active model of the Christian life. Thus to her, the healing home did not perpetuate the monastic error of turning solitude and silence into the "business of life." Rather, it was intended for "a season of retirement from the ordinary routine and pressure of life."<sup>70</sup> The opportunity for such a temporary "Sabbath" afforded by the healing home, could "perhaps be obtained in no other way."<sup>71</sup> This controlled, tranquil atmosphere, free from outside distractions, became a haven for vibrant spiritual renewal. Thousands of persons, many of whom were accustomed to a regular dose of "dry theology" preached in "cold and worldly" churches, here came to experience Christ as Saviour, Sanctifier and Healer.<sup>72</sup> Lindenberger was persuaded that

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67. *First Annual Report of The Christian and Missionary Alliance 1897-8 Christian and Missionary Alliance New York* (n.p., n.d.) pp. 10-11.

68. Sarah Lindenberger, "The Work of Berachah Home," *The Christian Alliance and Missionary Weekly* 4 (March 21-28, 1890), p. 207.

69. *Ibid.*

70. *Ibid.*, p. 208; cf. Kenneth Mackenzie's criticism of the error of monasticism in turning solitude into a "perpetual isolation" to the denial of man's societal nature. Though solitude definitely enhanced one's communion with the Lord, it was only intended for a season. *Elijah*, p. 12.

71. *Ibid.*

72. *Ibid.*, pp. 208, 207. One of the stated objectives of the Berachah Home was "to be a place of spiritual rest and instruction for the deepening of the life in Christ, and where His children can wait upon Him to hear His voice and receive the fullness of His Spirit." See *Year Book of the Christian Alliance and the International Missionary*

"a peaceful spirit" and "cultivating the habit of listening to God's voice in [one's] soul" were necessary to receiving and maintaining divine health. She annually reported the numerous healings which occurred at Berachah Home in meetings characterized by "great simplicity and quietness."<sup>73</sup>

The value of stillness, eloquently promoted in the writings of early Alliance leaders, was further inculcated in the Alliance rank and file via the media of schools and conventions. Concern for the spiritual life of students was uppermost in the minds of the founder and faculties of the Nyack schools. Though Simpson's New York Missionary Training College was initially situated in a congested, noisy part of New York City, its curriculum nonetheless provided students with a daily opportunity for "meditation and private devotion." This enabled "each one [to] have the privilege for a certain length of time of being alone with God."<sup>74</sup>

The relocation of the Missionary Training Institute in 1897 to a serene, hillside in Nyack, New York, was an obvious boon to Alliance educators. The new campus with its abundance of "woods...hills...pure air...mountain streams and the far-reaching panorama up and down the [Hudson] river" aptly suited their integrationist educational philosophy in which the academic enterprise was interwoven with physical recreation and religious exercises.<sup>75</sup> The 1916-1917 Catalogue for the Missionary Training Institute and the Wilson Memorial Academy acknowledged that "spiritual welfare and mental vigor [were] greatly dependent upon physical well-being." It advertised the lovely natural setting of the schools as a definite incentive for "healthful and pleasurable exercises of much variety."<sup>76</sup> More importantly, Nyack Heights was praised as "an ideal spot for communion with nature and with God."<sup>77</sup>

*Alliance 1893* (New York NY: The Christian Alliance Publishing Co., n.d.), p. 48.

73. Sarah Lindenberger, "Some Truths of Divine Healing," *Triumphs of Faith* 33 (January 1913), p. 42; "Berachah, House of Rest and Healing," *The Ninth Annual Report of The Christian and Missionary Alliance (Reorganized)* (n.p., n.d.), p. 81; cf. "Divine Healing and Berachah Work," *The Thirteenth Annual Report of The Christian and Missionary Alliance (Reorganized)* (n.p., n.d.), p. 111, in which she described the ministry of Berachah Home as a "quiet work."

74. See the catalogue of the *New York Missionary Training College Ninth Session, Oct. 13, 1891--May 1, 1892* (n.p., n.d.) p. 8, available in the Nyack College Archives, Nyack, NY.

75. *The Nyack Schools of The Christian and Missionary Alliance (1914-1915) Catalogue Nyack-On Hudson* (n.p., n.d.), p. 7. In its promotional literature the Missionary Training Institute took full advantage of its idyllic setting in terms of catering to the physical and spiritual needs of the students. See *The Romance of The Missionary Institute at Nyack-On Hudson, New York* (n.p., 1933), pp. 11, 25.

76. *Catalogue (1916-1917) Nyack Schools of The Christian and Missionary Alliance Nyack-on Hudson* (n.p., n.d.), p. 8.

77. *Manual of The New York Missionary Training Institute, Nyack Heights, Nyack, New York (1911)* (n.p., n.d.), p. 8. In locating an

For the Nyack student community, stillness was not only to be found in the natural environs but was also encouraged by regularly scheduled times of silence. The nightly observance of a "Quiet Hour" intended for "quiet meditation and prayer" was a prescribed part of the students' daily routine supplementing the mandatory half-hour of private devotions before breakfast.<sup>78</sup> These private times were further reinforced by a weekly public "Quiet Hour Service" which was the special creation of Dr. George Pardington.<sup>79</sup> The Missionary Training Institute Manual (1911) described this "unique public service" as a "hallowed season, combining mental relaxation with spiritual refreshment."<sup>80</sup> Commencing with the singing of praises and prayer followed by five to ten minutes of silent prayer, the service concluded with an informal devotional homily by Dr. Pardington. A student high school yearbook commented that "both Dr. Pardington and the students love the Quiet Hour."<sup>81</sup> After Pardington's death in 1915 the "Quiet Hour Service" as such apparently disappeared from the Nyack educational agenda.<sup>82</sup>

It is noteworthy in this regard that a strict observance of the Lord's Day on campus, wholly congruent with the founder's own Sabbatarianism, further enhanced the overall devotional atmosphere of school life.<sup>83</sup> William Oliver, who supervised the boys at Wilson Memorial Academy, reported that "quiet

Alliance settlement at Nyack Heights, Simpson hoped to rival the major east coast summer convention sites at Old Orchard, Maine and Ocean Grove, New Jersey. See "Nyack College Centennial," *South of the Mountains* 26 (October/December 1982), p. 6.

78. *Manual (1911)*, p. 26. Students at the Missionary Training Institute were required on a daily basis to participate in 3-4 hours of prayer and worship exercises of an individual and corporate nature.

79. Pardington's *The Still Small Voice* (1902) was a compilation of his Quiet Hour addresses.

80. *Manual (1911)*, p. 26.

81. *The Criterion (Published by the Class of 1913 of Wilson Memorial Academy Nyack-on-the-Hudson)* (New York, NY: The Christian Alliance Publishing Co., n.d.), 1:43.

82. The Missionary Training Institute catalogues for 1920, 1923-24, 1924-25 and 1925-26 mention only the "Quiet Hour" privately observed by students in their rooms on a nightly basis. See *The Missionary Institute Calendar (1920)*, *Nyack-On-Hudson, N.Y.* (n.p., n.d.), p. 7; *Catalogue of the Missionary Training Institute of the Christian and Missionary Alliance (1923-24)*, *Nyack-On-Hudson, New York* (n.p., n.d.), p. 12; *Catalogue of the Missionary Training Institute of the Christian and Missionary Alliance (1924-25)*, *Nyack-On-Hudson, New York* (n.p., n.d.), p. 12; *Catalogue of the Missionary Training Institute of the Christian and Missionary Alliance (1925-26)*, *Nyack-On-Hudson, New York* (n.p., n.d.), p. 11.

83. For Simpson's theological convictions regarding the Lord's Day see *First Corinthians: The Principles and Life of the Apostolic Church*, Christ in the Bible Series, vol. 18 (Harrisburg, PA: Christian Publications Inc., n.d.), pp. 139-152; cf. his endorsement of Sabbath-keeping because of "inherent reasons connected with the mental and physical welfare of man..." as well as his criticism of anti-Sabbatarianism as a source of stumbling and perplexity to Christians. *Correspondence Bible School Christian Doctrine Study No. 6: The Sabbath* (n.p., n.d.), pp. 9, 3.

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hours" were maintained on Sunday from 2 to 3 p.m. Additionally, all "popular song...ragtime music...secular songs or music" were prohibited "on the Lord's Day."<sup>84</sup>

The "Quiet Hour" also appeared as a distinctive feature of Alliance conventions. In view of A.E. Thompson's assessment that the hundreds of conventions conducted across North America by Simpson and his associates "did more than any other single agency, except Dr. Simpson's pen, to disseminate the truth" of the fourfold gospel, the structure of the convention deserved attention.<sup>85</sup> Nowhere else were large numbers of Alliance adherents more intensively exposed to the movement's unique brand of spiritual formation, especially given that the larger annual conventions lasted for a week to ten days and were often held in facilities ideally suited for spiritual reflection because of their scenic, restful location.

The convention format, a creatively devised synthesis of the Holiness camp meeting, Keswick Conference, revivalist evangelistic campaign, missionary convocation and prophetic gathering, demonstrated the same respect for the power of stillness as has already been documented in other areas of Alliance spirituality. A typical daily convention schedule included a Quiet Hour Service from 9 to 10 a.m. which set the stage for the two hours of messages on deeper truth and life which ensued.<sup>86</sup> The organizers knew from experience the increased response to the preached Word which came when the heart of the listener had first been drawn into an inner posture of silent waiting and expectation. Indeed, in just such a fertile convention setting, the Alliance had been born at Old Orchard Beach, Maine, in 1887.

### Conclusion

The dawn of the twentieth century brought with it a proliferation of mechanical inventions in the fields of industry, transportation and communication. The combined effect of these technological improvements was not only to accelerate the pace of life in Europe and North America but also to impose upon the entire world a scale of commercialization hitherto unknown. Against this backdrop of rapid social change, the accent on stillness in early Alliance spirituality can be seen as an attempt to counteract the erosion of the spiritual life of

churches and individual Christians alike. A similar concern was shared by many evangelicals from the late nineteenth century onwards. This was evidenced in the steadily increasing volume of books consisting of daily devotional readings which was published in the years immediately prior to and following World War I. Alliance authors made their own substantial contribution to this genre of literature intended to help new believers have daily quiet times while life around them was becoming ever more hectic.<sup>87</sup>

Alliance writers were also cognizant of the spreading influence in their time of the New Thought movement, a forerunner of the modern New Age movement. The exotic mixture of oriental religions and cultic beliefs which circulated in the United States at the turn of the century under the label "New Thought" laid claim to a quality of religious experience no longer attainable in many western churches which had succumbed to the materialistic, scientific rationalism of the age. Alliance leaders clearly distanced their experience of stillness from the "Nirvana of the Buddhist" which they dismissed as "a sort of self-annihilation."<sup>88</sup> To their credit, however, they did not adopt a defensive, reactionary stance which would have curtailed instruction in the contemplative dimensions of the deeper life because of the risk of its being confused with eastern mysticism. In his critique of the New Thought movement entitled *An Angel of Light* (1917), Kenneth Mackenzie accepted the infiltration of spiritual "light from Asia" into America as a challenge to western evangelical Christians to rediscover the genuine biblical doctrine and experience of stillness:

Tis well that the New Thought people are challenging us to match their "Silent Hour." God can use that for our good. It may be He is calling us away from the diversified and often fruitless activities of the later day church life. The average sermon of our day...lacks the power of persuasiveness. Are we not to think seriously

84. *The Twentieth Annual Report of the Christian and Missionary Alliance (Reorganized)* (New York, NY: The Christian Alliance Publishing Co., 1917), p. 79.

85. A.E. Thompson, *A.B. Simpson: His Life and Work*, rev. ed., (Camp Hill PA: Christian Publications, Inc., 1960), p. 105; cf. Pardington's discussion of the Alliance's "unique convention system" in *Twenty-five Wonderful Years*, pp. 78-79, esp. p. 79: "The fact is we have contracted the convention habit. For of the Alliance it may be said, 'Conventions ye have always with you.'"

86. *Ibid.*, p. 80.

87. See Simpson, *Days of Heaven upon Earth: A Year Book of Scripture Texts and Living Truths* (Brooklyn, NY: The Christian Alliance Publishing Co., 1897); *Elim, Its Wells and Palms* (New York, NY: The Christian Alliance Publishing Co., 1910); *When the Comforter Came* (New York, NY: The Alliance Press Co., 1911); *Life More Abundantly* (New York, NY: The Christian Alliance Publishing Co., 1912); *Count Your Blessings or Records of Promise and Answered Prayer* (Nyack and New York, NY: The Christian Alliance Publishing Co., n.d.); *Heart Messages for Sabbaths at Home* (Nyack and New York, NY: The Christian Alliance Publishing Co., n.d.); cf. Louise Shepard, *The Christian Alliance Birthday Book* (New York, NY: The Christian Alliance Publishing Co., 1894); *Heavenly Manna Bible Messages for a Month* (Nyack and New York, NY: The Christian Alliance Publishing Co., 1898).

88. A.B. Simpson, *The Life of Prayer* (New York, NY: The Christian Alliance Publishing Co., 1915; original edition, 1890), p. 112; cf. Simpson's understanding of the difference between the stillness required by Buddha and the rest and intimacy offered by Christ. *The Four-Fold Gospel* (Brooklyn, NY: The Christian Alliance Publishing Co., 1890), pp. 65-66.

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of the life of worship, of contemplation, of vital communion with God? If we have been saying prayers it becomes us to learn to pray with the understanding and power. We recall how tempestuous Elijah, driven by Jezebel into the wilderness, found himself in Horeb, where thru the wind, the earthquake and the fire, he saw his mission exemplified. But it was only when he heard the "voice of gentle stillness" that God could again commission him. The Psalmist has laid upon us the injunction in his own experience, "My soul is silent unto God"....This in answer to God's own charge, "Be still and know that I am God"....<sup>89</sup>

In this context, Simpson's official biographer, A.E. Thompson, correctly designated him a "Pauline mystic" and properly referred to the spirituality of the early Alliance as an "evangelical mysticism," understood as an intimate supra-natural communion with God flowing from an inner identification with the death and resurrection of Christ.<sup>90</sup> The "soul breathings" of a Brainerd, McCheyne or Edwards which some critics might have been tempted to dismiss as "mysticism," Simpson upheld as "the supreme passion of the sanctified soul" and the highest form of Christian "enthusiasm."<sup>91</sup> Standing firmly in a Protestant theological tradition, Simpson and his followers unmistakably differentiated between "peace with God," the "foundation of all deeper experiences and blessings" which was solely the result of the atoning and justifying work of Christ, and the "peace of God," a "deep, divine supernatural rest" which could only be known by actually entering into the deeper life and experience of stillness.<sup>92</sup>

Some Alliance leaders who witnessed Simpson's spiritual journey evolve in a contemplative direction originally feared that his withdrawal from public ministry might cause the Alliance missionary vision to falter. The organization had come to rely heavily on the founder's boundless flow of energy as well as his diverse talents and spiritual gifts by which the cause of the Alliance was advanced at home and abroad. It was readily conceded, however, that as Simpson's high-profile involvement gave way to a "life of quiet," not

only did the fruitfulness of conventions increase but the number of students applying to the Missionary Training Institute "became larger than ever in its history."<sup>93</sup> In the eyes of his closest companions at least, Simpson was vindicated.

In his 1919-1920 report Simpson's presidential successor, Paul Rader, commented with a sense of regret on the closure of many healing homes within the Alliance.<sup>94</sup> Perhaps the trend which Rader observed was symptomatic of a larger tendency in Alliance circles. As the founder and his circle of associates departed from the scene and the Alliance emerged from adolescence into adulthood, there were indications that some of the bedrock features of early Alliance spirituality were already on the wane.

One of the more subtle alterations in the preaching of the fourfold gospel showed up in a diminishing appreciation for the importance of stillness. As early as 1906, Milton Bales, an Alliance field superintendent, assessed the "short Conventions of from one to three days" as "a mistake." He called for them to be replaced with "fewer (if necessary), but longer Conventions" which provided sufficient time "to get souls through to God" and created the sustained contemplative atmosphere in which spiritual conviction could "deepen."<sup>95</sup> By 1921, the evidence of serious spiritual decline within the Alliance constituency was more pronounced. E.J. Richards, secretary of the Home Department, noted the prevalent trend among "so-called full gospel workers to present the truth in such a way that it [did] not lead to definite conscious experience."<sup>96</sup> Consequently many persons who subscribed to the fourfold gospel nonetheless failed to experience the power of the Holy Spirit in their lives with "satisfying fullness." The "clear and definite" inner witness of the Holy Spirit to one's regeneration and sanctification deemed essential to prevent the inevitable drift into "worldliness and formalism" was noticeably absent among a growing number of Alliance followers.<sup>97</sup>

The transition from the first to second generation brought no substantive changes to early Alliance theology. The doctrinal consensus – Christ as Saviour,

89. Kenneth Mackenzie, *An Angel of Light* (New York, NY: The Christian Alliance Publishing Co., 1917), p. 188: cf. Mackenzie's insistence that the inner spiritual cravings capitalized on by eastern religions, spiritism, theosophy and Christian Science are adequately fulfilled in the Spirit-filled life. *Anti-Christian Supernaturalism* (Nyack and New York, NY: The Christian Alliance Publishing Co., n.d.), pp. 123-59, esp. p. 155.

90. Thompson, *Simpson*, pp. 171-83.

91. A.B. Simpson, *Earnests of the Coming Age* (New York, NY: Christian Alliance Publishing Co., 1921), p. 135.

92. A.B. Simpson, *Correspondence Bible School Deeper Truth and Life: The Secret of Peace, Second Year, Ninth Study* (n.p., n.d.), pp. 2-4; cf. *Philippians, Colossians, Thessalonians*, Christ in the Bible Series, vol. 20 (New York, NY: The Alliance Press Co., 1899), pp. 101-106, esp. p. 101.

93. Kenneth Mackenzie, "Jesus and Our Mortal Flesh," *The Alliance Weekly* 56 (March 18, 1922), p. 5.

94. Paul Rader, "Report of the President of the Christian and Missionary Alliance (1919-1920)," *The Christian and Missionary Alliance: The Twenty-third Annual Report (1919-1920)* (New York, NY: The Christian Alliance Publishing Co., 1920), pp. 9-10.

95. "Report of Rev. Milton M. Bales, D.D., Field Superintendent," *The Ninth Annual Report of the Christian and Missionary Alliance (Reorganized) 1906* (n.p., n.d.) p. 37.

96. "Report of the Secretary of Home Department," *The Twenty-fourth Annual Report of the Christian and Missionary Alliance (Reorganized)* (New York, NY: The Christian Alliance Publishing Co., 1921), p. 74.

97. *Ibid.*, p. 75.

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Sanctifier, Healer and Coming King – apparently remained intact. Alliance orthodoxy was preserved at the institutional level well enough. However, in the

innermost spirits of many Alliance people, where the historic truths of the fourfold gospel needed continually to be revealed and embraced by faith, "deep no longer called unto deep."

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### Reading 10.3

## Conversion and Sanctification in the Christian & Missionary Alliance\*

Gordon T. Smith

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The conservative, evangelical tradition within Christianity has yet to develop a comprehensive spiritual theology that effectively delineates the nature of Christian experience. Richard Lovelace broke new ground with his *Dynamics of Spiritual Life* (IVP, 1979). But this did not elicit the anticipated development of an Evangelical theology of the spiritual life.

This problem is particularly evident within the Christian & Missionary Alliance. The question of sanctification, and thus of spiritual experience in general, is a vital one within this denomination. But this theme, critical to the identity and character of the denomination, has not been adequately addressed by biblical exegetes, theologians and historians within the tradition. If anything, we tend to shy away from the subject. The standing impression one gets is that we want to avoid controversy or schism, or that we want to avoid alienating the denominational hierarchy. Sam Stoesz has made a notable contribution in his recent book, *Sanctification: An Alliance Distinctive* (CPI, 1992). There have been other contributions as well, including Gerald E. McGraw's "The Doctrine of Sanctification in the Published Writings of Albert Benjamin Simpson" (unpublished doctoral thesis, New York University, 1986).

Yet, these are but a good beginning. What is still needed is a theology of the Christian experience from an Alliance perspective that can serve as a reference point for discussion, preaching, and spiritual formation. I also wonder if the development of a viable formulation of the spiritual life within the C&MA could provide a basis for a significant contribution by Alliance theologians to the spiritual theology of Evangelicalism. It seems to me that the time is ripe for some measure of a resolution between three distinct streams within the history of Christian spirituality: the Wesleyan-Holiness-

Pentecostal, the Mystical-Catholic stream, and the Reformed.

But, more to the point, it is vital that within the C&MA a concerted effort be made to develop a theology of the Christian life because this is so central to our heritage and identity. Confusion about this component in our heritage seriously undermines our strength as a viable tradition within Christendom. If we are ambivalent about our understanding of sanctification, we will consistently find that we are unsure of our theological identity. Uncertainty on this question is as threatening to our identity as ambiguity on the sovereignty of God would be to the Dutch Reformed, questions on the authority of the church to the Roman Catholic, and uncertainty on adult, believer's baptism to a Baptist. To put it more directly, we cannot claim to be Alliance if we cannot develop a theology of the spiritual life that reflects two realities: a) continuity with our theological heritage; and, b) exegetical and theological integrity.

And that is our tension. We tend to have two kinds of people within the C&MA--the hagiographers and the iconoclasts. The iconoclasts see little if any good in the heritage of the C&MA when it comes to theology. Simpson and his contemporaries are viewed as incompetent in both biblical exegesis and in theological method, and thus as having little to contribute to a modern discussion. They are even, perhaps, a bit embarrassed by our founders. The unstated assumption is that the sooner we can move on and distance ourselves from Simpson, the better.

The hagiographers, on the other hand, feel the need to refer to the founder of the denomination as Dr. Simpson, which is the Alliance equivalent of saying Saint Simpson. In this perspective, Simpson did no wrong, especially when it comes to exegesis and theology. These folk would seem to have us defend

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every aspect and perspective that Simpson brought to the question of sanctification.

We need an approach to this discussion that affirms tradition along with the authority of Scripture. We need to affirm the strength and vitality of our theological and spiritual heritage, and the power and significance of Simpson's insights, while also acknowledging that Simpson was neither a good exegete nor a good theologian. He was a preacher, prophet, and leader. We can affirm his strengths, and recognize that he was a product of his age. He was a giant in the religious movements of the late 19th century. But he also had some glaring weaknesses, notably those that we find so difficult to accept: weak biblical exegesis and poor theological method.

Yet, it is possible to develop a theology of sanctification and of Christian experience in general, that reflects careful attention to Scripture while also affirming the insights of the heritage. This contemporary perspective on sanctification, then, will reflect the strengths, wisdom and insights of the denominational founders. We stand on the shoulders of giants. But it would also seek to formulate our theology with attention to biblical exegesis and theological method. Our contemporary statement will be with different language and probably a new paradigm by which we capture the biblical message and the insights of our heritage.

### **I. Conversion Reconsidered**

There are different ways in which one could approach the doctrine of sanctification within a particular theological tradition. One could review the history of its development within the denomination, and suggest a contemporary expression of the doctrine. Or, one could compare the writings of the denominational founders to the insights gleaned from the exegesis of pertinent biblical texts. Or one could make a comparative study of the doctrine of sanctification with the C&MA and other traditions.

The approach taken here will include, in some respect, each of the above perspectives. However, the principal means by which the subject will be broached will be through a discussion of the meaning and experience of conversion. My interpretation of Simpson and the contemporary formulation of sanctification is based on a specific understanding of conversion.

There is not space or time here to develop fully the perspective on conversion that I hold as I approach this subject. To summarize this perspective briefly, the basic premise is that conversion must be viewed as a series of events in the life of a new believer. Conversion, so usually thought of as a single, dramatic event, is more accurately perceived of as a number of

distinct occasions, distinct, but ultimately inseparable when it comes to appropriating all that it means to be a new Christian.

This understanding of conversion recognizes that the initiation into Christian faith is portrayed differently in the Synoptic Gospels, the Acts of the Apostles, Paul's epistles and the Gospel of John. When these four diverse perspectives are correlated, a case can be made that conversion represents seven distinct events:

- 1) belief, the intellectual component;
- 2) repentance, the penitential component;
- 3) trust, the component of emotional dependency;
- 4) water baptism, the sacramental component;
- 5) surrender to the will of God and consecration in response to God's call, the volitional component;
- 6) the reception of the gift of the Spirit, the charismatic component; and,
- 7) incorporation into congregational life, the corporate component.

Others will certainly summarize the biblical notion of conversion differently. Some may well prefer to merge belief and trust, and identify this component as faith. But the basic premise remains the same: the New Testament notion of conversion is best portrayed as a series of distinct events in the life of the believer. And, what is noteworthy for our purposes here, these events are not necessarily experienced in a single, dramatic event in the life of a new believer.

In the context of a discussion of the Alliance doctrine of sanctification, what must be wrestled with more thoroughly, though, is the sixth component, the reception of the gift of the Spirit. I cannot but conclude that when the New Testament is considered, as a document read and heard, in isolation from the experience of the church, we can only come to the following conclusion: the gift of the Holy Spirit is received at conversion.

Those who come to Christ receive his Spirit. The promise of the Spirit is essential to the meaning of conversion. It is not an extra, over and beyond conversion. Rather, the gift of the Spirit was at the heart of the promise of the prophets regarding the redeeming ministry of the Messiah. He would baptize his people with his Spirit. How then can we speak of the salvation procured by the Messiah if it does not include this dimension? It is inherent to what it means to be a follower of Jesus, one who has been graced by his salvation. The promise of the Spirit was an essential component of the new covenant. The promise given to Abraham for the Gentiles included the promise of the Spirit (Galatians 3:14). John the Baptist spoke of Jesus as the one who would baptize in the Holy Spirit. Thus, the experience of the Spirit is a vital part of entering the

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kingdom of God. It is not in addition to conversion or incidental to the initiation into Christian faith.

Virtually all New Testament authors refer to the gift of the Spirit in some form or another. There are different expressions used to refer to the same reality. John speaks of rebirth by the Spirit. Luke in his Gospel and in the Acts refers to Spirit-baptism. In the Pauline letters the most common expression is the "filling of the Spirit." It is most likely that these expressions are diverse ways of describing the same reality, namely, the reception of the gift of the Spirit, however conceived. In John 20:22 Jesus exhorts his disciples to "receive the Spirit." Paul has one, and only one, occasion when he speaks of the baptism of the Spirit (1 Cor. 12:13); his general use is "filling by" or "walking in the Spirit." The Spirit, for Paul is someone to whom we are subject, rather than to the flesh, and someone who infills us, as the Spirit of Christ. Thus for Paul, submission and infilling go together. Indeed, submission to the will of God is the prerequisite for the infilling of the Spirit.

Luke does not use "baptism in the Spirit" language exclusively. In comparing Acts 1:5 and 2:4 we see that "baptism" and "filling" are both used and used synonymously, so that the expression "filling of the Spirit" can refer to an initial crisis of receiving the gift of the Spirit, as well as to a process, as we find it in Ephesians 5:18.

James Dunn (*Baptism in the Holy Spirit*, Westminster, 1970), has effectively shown that the book of Acts, the only section of the New Testament that could conceivably support a distinction between conversion and Spirit-baptism, actually affirms that the gift of the Spirit is an essential dimension of conversion. He argues that Acts 2:37ff serves as a kind of paradigm of the nature and meaning of conversion. He writes: "Luke probably intends Acts 2:38 to establish a pattern and norm for Christian conversion-initiation in his presentation of Christianity's beginnings" (p. 90). The verse reads:

Peter said to them, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."

To the degree that text does provide us with a norm or pattern, we can conclude the following regarding the nature of the conversion experience. Conversion includes belief in response to truth (they heard a sermon from Peter), repentance, water baptism, the gift of the Holy Spirit, and, if we are prepared to recognize the significance of their next actions, as described in Acts 2:42, incorporation into a Christian community that is characterized by teaching, worship and fellowship.

The rest of the book of Acts is a history of the proclamation of the Gospel and the reception, by various communities, of the Gospel. It includes the preaching of the apostles as well as descriptions of the experience of the early Christians, as they discovered and appropriated their new faith. What we find, is that though the ideal may be Acts 2:38, the actual experience was not necessarily so neat. Cornelius was baptized after he received the gift of the Spirit. In his case the experience of the Spirit did not come automatically with belief, repentance, and water baptism, as is implied in 2:38. But this does not mean that the Spirit is not a gift that is an essential component of Christian conversion. At most, it implies that the reception of the Spirit may be potentially distinct from the acts of belief and repentance (distinct, though inseparable).

All of this means that we cannot support, from Scripture, the basic Wesleyan-Holiness paradigm of conversion and sanctification. To respond to the exegetical evidence by saying that the Spirit is with us, but not in us, at conversion, is merely to play language games. The New Testament itself makes no such distinction.

Romans 6, 7 and 8 are often used in support of the notion that the Spirit is received and known in an experience subsequent to conversion. The argument is that Romans 6 describes conversion, Romans 7 the struggle of the unsanctified believer, and Romans 8 the experience of the individual who is filled with the Spirit. But again, this apparent attempt at exegesis begs the question. The most obvious interpretation of these chapters is that the experience of Paul in Romans 7 is the experience of fallen humanity that longs for the consummation of the kingdom. Our actual experience is a continual tension between Romans 7 and 8.

## II. The Experience and Doctrine of A.B. Simpson

### A. The Question of Theological Method

As noted earlier, then, exegesis alone cannot be the basis for distinguishing the gift and experience of the Spirit from Christian conversion. But exegesis is not the end of the matter. Invariably, our theological formulation, and our experience, are informed by a spiritual tradition and a theological heritage.

The experience of the church shapes and informs the theology of the church. Whereas Scripture always must remain as the primary source of our theological formulation, experience (along with tradition and reason) will also have a formative influence in the beliefs, doctrines and teachings of the church. Biography informs our theology. Paul's conversion experience has shaped, in a canonical sense, the life and doctrine of the church. Invariably, the experience of the



founders of theological movements has shaped the character and convictions of those who are part of those movements. Rather than bemoaning this fact, we can actually celebrate it and learn from it.

The purpose of theology is to edify the church. But more, theology also has the task of interpreting the experience of the church in the light of divine revelation. What we then discover, is that the theological task includes helping the Christian community make sense of experience while also recognizing that our experience of the Spirit will invariably influence the perspective we bring to divine revelation in Holy Scripture, while Scripture remains primary in the development of our theology.

This leads me to a subsidiary premise: the experience of Simpson was a primary factor in the formulation of Simpson's doctrine. We can say this without apology. Indeed, I will conclude that in the end critical aspects of Simpson's theology were determined not by exegesis but through his own experience. Only in recognizing this can we eventually come to a resolution of the tension many of us feel between the weaknesses in theological and exegetical method in Simpson, and his own experience, and the influence of both in the doctrine of the C&MA.

### **B. Simpson's Experience**

A.B. Simpson was raised a Presbyterian, and though his mature theology cannot be termed "Reformed," we can conclude that in his theology he maintained a Reformed doctrine of sin, justification by faith, holding to the priority and sovereignty of grace in the lives of Christian believers. He acknowledged his faith in Christ as a young man (15 years of age) and eventually entered in public ministry as a Presbyterian pastor.

But, Simpson had a growing discontent with the level or depth of his spiritual experience that was made more acute when reading William E. Boardman's, *The Higher Christian Life* (1858 edition). Simpson, through this book, was impressed by two things: 1) that there is the potential, as a Christian believer, for a level and depth of spiritual vitality and inner strength far beyond what he was currently experiencing; and 2) that this more profound experience was found in no one other than Jesus Christ himself. And Simpson decided that he would be content with nothing but an experience of Christ comparable to what he had read of in Boardman.

At the same time, there was throughout North America, and to some degree in Britain as well, a variety of movements, under different designations, that were emphasizing in some form or another a similar message. Broadly speaking, these could be termed "holiness movements" in that despite some critical differences, all affirmed the possibility of an experience of grace and

divine holiness in the life of the believer that was described as deeper or higher than normal Christian experience.

The conviction of this movement was that this more profound level of experience could be justified from Holy Scripture. Many, for example, believed Pentecost indicated that there are two phases of salvation--Calvary being the first. Some spoke of the experience of the Spirit as a baptism for each individual who would move into a greater depth of spiritual vitality. Others, especially those from a Wesleyan tradition, spoke of perfection as this deeper experience of grace and emphasized the possibility of being freed from sin for a perfect love.

Boardman's book was the primary influence in Simpson's life at this point. The holiness movement (particularly D.L. Moody) challenged and encouraged Simpson. Sometime between 1872 and 1875 Simpson had a dramatic and life-changing experience of divine grace that was for him a turning point in his experience with Christ. He was empowered for ministry and strengthened, in a marked way, in his desire to turn from sin and live in righteousness. This came about 15 years after his first experience of Christ as a young man.

Then there is also a third critical experience in the life of Simpson. In 1881, he experienced a complete emotional and physical breakdown. He heard teaching that led him to believe that he could be healed and he had a unique, miraculous healing which he recognized as the gift of the Holy Spirit. But, this third experience was also for him the occasion when he saw more than at any other time that the grace of God called him to a complete emotional dependency upon Christ as a moment by moment reality in his daily experience. This event was for Simpson the culmination of his spiritual journey because there was a critical and deliberate transfer of trust in himself to trust in Christ that came with a recognition of the all-sufficiency of Christ. He describes this experience and realization in his famous sermon "Himself." This experience seems to have been the most significant as far as the formulation of his own theological convictions. But, it very much was the culmination of the motivations and insights he had received through the reading of Boardman's book.

### **C. Simpson's Doctrine**

Simpson adopted a basic Wesleyan-holiness paradigm to explain the nature and goal of Christian experience. Though his own pilgrimage was marked, if anything, by three distinctive moments, he was deeply immersed in the broader holiness movement of the late nineteenth century, and adopted in his teaching the notion of conversion followed by a crisis of the Spirit.

He differed in some notable ways from the teachings of his contemporaries: he rejected the

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perfectionism of the Wesleyan-methodists; he did not accept the suppressionism of the Keswick movement. And it is probably an overstatement to call him a pre-Pentecostal. He was none of these, but he was definitely part of the broader movement that accepted, adopted and encouraged a two-step approach to Christian sanctification, referred to as either the "second blessing" or the "baptism of the Spirit", but, by whatever term, as enabling the Christian believer to experience the "deeper life".

Simpson's doctrine would include the following notable features. First, sanctification is not optional, but essential; election is for sanctification. Simpson would even say that the experience of sanctification is inherent in salvation. He spoke of salvation as conversion plus the baptism of the Spirit, and on more than one occasion raised doubts about the genuineness of the spirituality experience of the unsanctified.

Secondly, Simpson stressed the centrality of Christ--that sanctification is nothing more than the indwelling Christ, made possible by the Spirit, whereby we are enabled to live in holiness and serve Christ effectively. Sanctification is not, then, merely the imitation of Christ; it is a state of dynamic union with Christ wherein the life of Christ empowers the believer.

There is a tension within the theology of the Christian life between an affirmation of the life in Christ that denies self-centredness, and the life in Christ that is a negation of self-identity, which is a denial of the true self. Simpson would, it seems, stress the former, but he often does not nuance his comments as carefully as one would like.

Thirdly, sanctification is both a crisis and a process. It is a crisis in that we appropriate sanctification by faith as a distinct and separate act from our justification. Both justification and sanctification are experienced in Christ, are each appropriated by faith and though distinct, are inseparable. This crisis of sanctification was normally referred to as the baptism of the Spirit. In this, he seems to have adopted the language of D.L.Moody.

Fourthly, the root of sin is self-centredness; the primary need of our lives is surrender to Christ and consecration for his service. Thus, sanctification is for Simpson a crisis of the will, not of the emotions. It is, fundamentally, not a matter of passively waiting for the Spirit. Rather, it is a gift that is known and experienced by an act of the will through faith. Obedience does not earn or even serve as a means of our sanctification. But, it is a necessary precondition and act by which we co-operate with the grace of God.

Fifthly, the fruit of the sanctifying grace of God is two fold: the believer is enabled to be holy, and empowered for Christian service. There is a direct

relationship between sanctification and Christian mission in the writings of Simpson.

Simpson had a more Augustinian/Reformed doctrine of sin that distinguished him from the Wesleyans. But, he was more Wesleyan in his notion of grace, and this distinguished him from the Keswick movement. He was more life affirming and more Christ-centred than Keswick preachers.

### III. A Contemporary Formulation of the Sanctification in the C&MA

A. B. Simpson was not a biblical exegete; neither was he a theologian. He was a preacher and prophet who adopted the accepted means of interpreting Scripture and formulating faith of his generation. A century later we rightly protest that in terms of biblical exegesis and theological method, Simpson's work is not acceptable. We fail The Christian & Missionary Alliance when we do not acknowledge the limitations of the founder.

But can we not affirm that Simpson had a vision of the Christian life that was biblical, that was pertinent to his era and which enabled him to effectively serve his generation? And can we not ask how this same vision can be affirmed in our generation while at the same time seeking to exegete Scripture and develop, with integrity, a theological understanding of the Christian life?

We can, but we must recognize the power and significance of our spiritual heritage and theological tradition. What follows is based on the premise that God does speak through tradition and inform our theological formulations by the experience of others. Further, it will mean that we will not quickly reject Simpson's doctrine simply because his exegesis was faulty. This, by definition, means that we will not need to adopt the language and even the basic paradigms of Simpson's doctrine. His language was based, in part, on his exegesis. Further, his language and the structure of conversion-sanctification arose in a unique period in the history of the church. It could well be that the language of sanctification and the basic paradigm he adopted are not appropriate today.

Recognizing, this, I would suggest that we would do well to incorporate four fundamental features into a contemporary doctrine of sanctification within the C&MA.

#### 1. The Gift of the Spirit, Received by Faith

Central to the Alliance doctrine of sanctification is the affirmation that Christ is known and experienced in full through a definitive act wherein the believer, by faith, receives the gift of the Spirit.

I have argued that the gift of the Spirit is an essential dimension of Christian conversion. There is no exegetical basis for a two-step paradigm to Christian

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sanctification. We cannot justify, on purely exegetical grounds, separating conversion from the filling or baptism of the Spirit.

A. B. Simpson is typical of other writers of the late nineteenth century in building his case for this second crisis of sanctification on texts such as Acts 19, where we have an example of Christians who were baptized with water, but had not experienced the baptism of the Spirit. He uses this example to show that the one does not automatically lead to the other, that it is possible to have one without the other. Simpson concludes that they are distinct and must each be appropriated as separate acts of faith.

In one respect, I agree with Simpson. They are different and each needs to be appropriated by faith. But, the question that must be raised is whether the act of receiving the gift of the Spirit is a subsequent crisis following conversion or an inherent dimension of conversion.

We can affirm the reception of the gift of the Spirit as a distinct moment, wherein the believer acknowledges and receives the gift. But this event is inherent in what it means to become a Christian believer; it is not something that represents a second stage or blessing or step in our experience. It may come as a second step, but it is not, inherently, a second step.

I am convinced that Simpson himself, if he were still teaching and preaching, would be formulating his theology differently now than he did a century ago. My suspicion is that he would have moved on from the Wesleyan-holiness paradigm, which was appropriate in the late 19th century with the urgent need to bring renewal and revitalization to a dead church. There are two seeds in the thought of Simpson that lead me to this conclusion.

- 1) He had definitive reservations about the status of those who had been regenerated but not sanctified. He called them half-saved. He recognized that justification and sanctification, though distinct, are inseparable.
- 2) Simpson agreed that if new believers were properly taught, they would have no significant amount of time between their conversion and the reception of the gift of the Spirit.

Ideally, he believed, these would be part of the same, single event in the life of the believer. His only insistence was that the gift of the Spirit was received as a separate and distinct act of faith. Of interest is his comment that it was quite acceptable if the two were received in the same prayer(!), just so that there were two distinct acts of faith receiving both regeneration and sanctification. In commenting on the place of water baptism in the initiation into Christian faith, Simpson wrote:

In the divine plan, sanctification is closely connected with justification, and assumed as immediately following it. The fact is, that in the Christian life of many persons, it comes at a later period. But this is not God's intention, and this assumes that sanctification is to accompany, or immediately follow, the first action of faith . . . . In [Romans 6, sanctification] is spoken of as something immediately connected with their baptism, and to which that act committed them.

(Simpson, *The Epistle to the Romans*, p. 137-8)

And, elsewhere:

We are willing, however, to concede that the baptism of the Holy Ghost may be received at the very same time a soul is converted. We have known a sinner to be converted, sanctified and saved all within a single hour, and yet each experience was different in its nature and was received in proper order by a definite faith for that particular blessing.

(Simpson, *Living Truths*, Dec. 1905; quoted by Stoesz, p. 63)

This then, led George Pardington to conclude the following:

Indeed, where there is right Scriptural teaching no interval of time need occur after conversion before the Holy Ghost is received. Unfortunately, however, this is seldom the case. Generally an interval of time--and often it is a long period--does occur . . . We cannot refrain from saying that we believe God never intended that there should be a barren waste of Christian experience between regeneration and sanctification, but that conversion should be immediately followed by a life of victory over sin and self in union with the indwelling Christ and through receiving the gift of the Holy Ghost.

(Pardington, *Outline Studies*, p. 163; quoted by Stoesz, p. 63).

In other words, Simpson himself did not insist on the two-step paradigm, a crisis "subsequent to conversion." Rather, we have hints that he would have been quite prepared to see the reception of the Spirit inherent in the act of coming to Christ, receiving Christ and consecration for the service of Christ. The Wesleyan-Holiness paradigm, then, is not in itself an essential component of the Alliance doctrine of sanctification. What is essential to the Alliance heritage is the fact that the gift of the Spirit is received as a distinct act of faith, distinct from belief and repentance.

If this formulation is valid, the implication would be two-fold:

- 1) we would teach and preach that in coming to Christ we can and must receive the gift of the Spirit, a gift which is known by faith as we submit our lives to the lordship of Christ; and,
- 2) we would, as part of our ministry to those who are coming to Christ, lead them through a simple

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act of consciously receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit.

My suggestion is that all new believers, perhaps on the occasion of their baptism, should have hands laid on them, and a prayer offered on their behalf that they would know and receive the Spirit. This event would not of necessity be marked by an outward sign or evidence, emotional or otherwise. It would simply serve as an ongoing benchmark for the believer. They would be charged to walk in the Spirit, for by faith we believe as they do, that they have been granted the gift of the Spirit.

It would also mean that we would not require that a person have a distinctive "second crisis" or definitive moment before we are assured that they are filled with the Spirit. We do not require that a person have a definable moment when they were justified or knew that their sins were forgiven before we acknowledge that someone is our brother or sister in the faith. Our heritage only affirms that there is value in affirming the role and ministry of the Spirit and receiving the Spirit through a specific and intentional act of faith. What counts is not past events or crises, but the current experience of the Christian. If a Christian doubts that they have been forgiven, then we lead them to an assurance that their sins have been forgiven. I am only suggesting that if a believer doubts that they are filled with the Spirit, then we lead them to a conscious appropriation of the gift of the Spirit.

### **2. Affirming the Call to Walk in the Spirit (not the Flesh).**

Within the C&MA, we can confidently affirm an interpretation of Romans 6, 7 and 8 that recognizes that the basic reference point for sanctification is, for the Apostle, the act of baptism, as per chapter 6. Those who are baptized are those who have made the definitive choice to live as slaves of righteousness.

Chapter 7 affirms that in our spiritual walk we will not be sinless. We will, for the whole of our lives, live in the flesh and live as men and women who continually face the darkness in our own souls. Our experience, as maturing believers, will be characterized by Romans 7 as much as Romans 8. But, we mature in our faith as we consciously choose to walk in the Spirit, thus enabling the Spirit to bear his fruit in our lives. There is no inner tension between an old man and a new man. The challenge of Christian experience is one of either submitting to the flesh or submitting to the Spirit.

True spirituality, then, has both a passive and active dimension. It is not "letting go and letting God." The spirituality of the C&MA cannot be termed "quietist". We are not true to our heritage when we downplay the significance of our actions in the world, or speak of the grace of God as merely needing us to

"allow God to work through us." We are not "channels only." Yes, it is passive, in that we acknowledge and gratefully receive a gift from God. Further, it is passive in that we affirm that the transformation of our lives happens by grace in the timing of God. But, there is also an active dimension that includes the following aspects:

- 1) Our work in the world is significant and meaningful; in the service of Christ, we are not negated through the inward ministry of Christ in our lives. Rather, in the fullness of the Spirit, we are, to use words borrowed from Simpson, granted wisdom, motivation, encouragement and inner strength to effectively serve. But, it is we who serve. Our agency is profoundly significant.
- 2) Sanctification is a consecration of our lives and service for God and His kingdom. In this sense, sanctification is profoundly linked with service and activity in the world. We are, in some sense at least, sanctified for service. The Spirit enables us to grow in sanctifying grace; the Spirit empowers us for ministry. These divine acts are distinct but inseparable.
- 3) Sanctification is a process of continual surrender to the Word and will of God. Our lives are transformed insofar as we are filled with the Spirit and the Spirit bears fruit in our lives. But, this happens as we submit to the Word and surrender our lives to the will of God. Consecration and transformation are invariably linked. Thus the call to walk in the Spirit. In no respect is the reception of the gift of the Spirit a substitute for walking in the Spirit.

In these respects, the C&MA is distinct from the Keswick movement. The Alliance heritage is more life and work affirming. Our actions in the world do make a difference and are meaningful. Further, Alliance theology emphasizes more fully the positive presence of Christ in our lives rather than viewing the ministry of the Spirit in negative terms as subduing the flesh. Further, spirituality is an active choice of surrender to the word and will of God; this dimension is at the heart of Simpson's notion of sanctification.

### **3. A Christocentric Spirituality**

Simpson and his successors could almost be accused of being Christomonic. The zeal with which Simpson's biblical expositions could find Christ in every book and virtually every chapter of the Bible, and his hymnology which without hesitancy affirms that "Jesus Only is our Message" reflects this commitment. Alliance spirituality unequivocally affirms that Christ is sufficient for Christian faith and life. There is no sense in our notion of sanctification that having received

Christ, we now need more, perhaps an experience of the Spirit. All we need is found in Christ.

Further, Christ is only known and experienced by the Spirit. We reject any kind of a polarization between Calvary and Pentecost. Christ can only be known by the Spirit; the Spirit glorifies Christ in our lives.

The Christian & Missionary Alliance is often viewed as having two distinctives: the deeper life and missions. But it is more accurate to affirm that the C&MA is radically Christ-centred, and the denomination is a tradition that understands Christ as one who by His Spirit enables us to know His life and empowers us to be His servants.

#### 4. The Priority of Sanctification

Simpson accurately affirms the biblical notion that though justification and sanctification are distinct, they are inseparable. We cannot be sanctified without justification; but, justification of necessity must be followed by sanctification. We are justified that we might be sanctified. Sanctification is not a unique privilege for a few; it is the very purpose of our salvation.

As such, Simpson, while maintaining an Augustinian notion of sin, essentially affirmed a Wesleyan optimism when it came to the possibilities of grace. With the entire holiness movement (broadly conceived), he affirmed that in this life we have the potential to become mature in our faith--not only seeking joy, but experiencing joy as the fundamental emotional centre of our lives; not only seeking righteousness, but knowing freedom from sin and the enabling of God to love neighbour as self; not only longing for courage and inner strength, but actually knowing a freedom from fear and spiritual ineptitude; not only working for God, but actually bearing fruit for the kingdom.

But, this affirmation of the possibility of spiritual maturity while dependent on the gift of the Spirit was, for Simpson, complemented by a process of spiritual growth. We could not grow in grace without the gift of the Spirit. But the gift itself does not make us mature. It rather frees us and enables us to grow in faith. The process needed the crisis, but the crisis of necessity must be followed by the process. As such, it is eminently appropriate for us within The Christian and Missionary Alliance to affirm the need for spiritual discipline, programs of spiritual formation, and the crucial place of the means of grace for spiritual vitality.

In this respect, also, there is a distinction from the Keswick movement and contemporary revivalism. Keswick writers would seem to imply that if there is spiritual immaturity, the solution is one of surrender and consecration. The Keswick movement comes dangerously close to affirming that we are sanctified by

a decision of our will. If we are spiritually weak, then the solution is simple: surrender and consecration. This is a similar emphasis to that found in North American revivalism where we find the continued use of "altar calls" as the means by which people might know God's grace--as though the altar call itself, as a forum for the act of the will in surrender, will somehow sanctify and liberate.

While surrender is imperative, it is only part of the picture. Surrender must be complemented by discipline; consecration is good only insofar as it is followed by an active response to the means of grace.

Simpson's emphasis on the process, as equally critical as the crisis, is a strong indication within our own heritage that while the crisis may be important, the focus of our energies is not the altar calls and the acts of surrender, but rather the slow, incremental, disciplined growth wherein the individual is enabled to know the grace of God, respond to the prompting of the Spirit and be transformed by the Word of Christ.

But Simpson, for all his optimism, never accepted the perfectionism of the Wesleyans. His Wesleyan optimism regarding the possibilities of grace was always complemented by his recognition of the power of sin and the flesh. We are sinners and our lives are not transformed in a moment. Rather, it is through the gift of the Spirit that we are enabled to know the grace of God that transforms. This is followed by a process of growth and maturity. But, in this life we will never know a total freedom from sin; that freedom awaits consummation of the kingdom.

#### Conclusion

Any study of A. B. Simpson's doctrine of sanctification is selective. He was not a systematic theologian; he was not consistent in his use of terminology and there were developments in his thought that led him in later years to abandon positions he held earlier. This has been but one attempt to affirm the heritage we have within the C&MA but also I do so as one who recognizes the primacy of Scripture in theological formulation. But it is selective, and no doubt another's interpretation of Simpson will come to different conclusions. But, this study has sought to address several critical tensions in the development of a contemporary theology of sanctification within the C&MA:

- 1) the tension between Scripture and tradition;
- 2) the tension between crisis and process in sanctification;
- 3) a tension between an Augustinian notion of sin and the more optimistic, Wesleyan view of grace that is at least implied in Simpson's writings.

Reading 10.4

## “How High of a Christian Life?” A. B. Simpson and the Classic Doctrine of Theosis

Bernie A. Van De Walle

In Scripture, the idiomatic phrase “as far as the East is from the West” (Ps. 103) is used to communicate the idea of insurmountable distances. The East is understood as one extreme and the West is understood as the other—extremes that, by their very definition may never be brought together. In Christian history, the terms East and West are also invoked and, loaded within these terms, is the idea that there are two Christian traditions which have very different histories, practices, and doctrines—perhaps differences even beyond reconciliation. While each is still broadly labeled “Christian,” it is understood that foundational and significant differences exist between the two—including the respective understandings of the cardinal Christian doctrines of soteriology and teleology.<sup>1</sup>

Perhaps the greatest of these doctrinal differences between East and West may be found in the Eastern doctrine of humanity’s ultimate and ideal destiny. For the Orthodox East, the goal of human existence and, therefore, of salvation is nothing less than the divinization of humanity or *theosis*. The theological and practical connotations of such a doctrine ring strangely in Western ears. Yet, *theosis* is not an obscure or marginalized doctrine within Eastern Orthodoxy. Rather, the deification of humanity is the major theme and “golden thread” running through all of Eastern Christianity. Deification may rightly be identified as nothing less than the “religious ideal,”<sup>2</sup> the very “aim of the Christian life,”<sup>3</sup> and “the very essence of [Orthodox] Christianity.”<sup>4</sup> Deification is the *telos*, the very goal

and purpose of human life<sup>5</sup> and “the final goal at which every Christian must aim: To become god, to attain *theosis*, deification, or divinization.’ For Orthodoxy . . . final salvation and sanctification mean . . . deification.”<sup>6</sup>

For Protestant Evangelicals, such a theological assertion rings not only oddly, but smacks heretical. That which is “so characteristic of Orthodoxy,”<sup>7</sup> sounds alien, at best, to Evangelicals. Daniel Clendenin has identified the cause of this dissonance as rooted in the disparity of ruling theological metaphors. For the West, especially for the influential Protestant Reformers, forensic metaphors of sin and salvation rule theological understanding. Such is not the case, however, for the East where the ruling soteriological metaphor is that of separation and “mystical union.”<sup>8</sup> Historically, the West has focused its soteriology on issues of guilt and punishment. The East, however, has focused more on the themes of alienation and death. For the Orthodox, what humanity has gained from Adam is more than simply guilt and a sinful nature. More importantly, it has also inherited a condition of corruption and death. The goal of salvation, then, is not just justification but vitality—the communication of life. Rather than the pronouncement of divine pardon, the imparting of life—the divine life—is the ultimate and final triumph over death.<sup>9</sup>

Even so, ultimately, the Eastern and Western dichotomies on the issue of soteriology are not as precise and final as they may appear at first glance.<sup>10</sup> Each tradition must deal with the variety of soteriological metaphors used in Scripture—both

\* Wesleyan Theological Journal, Vol. 43, Fall 2008, pp 136-153.  
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<sup>1</sup> Daniel Clendenin, *Eastern Orthodox Christianity*, Second Edition, (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 2003), 124.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 120.

<sup>3</sup> Timothy Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, New Edition, (London: Penguin Books, 1997), 231.

<sup>4</sup> Vladimir Lossky, *In the Image and Likeness of God*, (Crestwood, NY: St. Valdimir’s Seminary Press, 1974), 97. Vladimir Lossky, *The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church*, Reprint, (Greenwood, SC: The Attic Press, Inc., 1973), 9. Lossky will go further to argue that from an Eastern perspective it was the protection of the doctrine of theosis that lay at the heart of the Arian controversy for if Christ is not of the same substance as the Father, then “our deification is

impossible.” The same, he says, is true for the historic battles against Nestorianism, Apollonarianism, Monophysitism, and the Monothelites. Lossky, *Mystical Theology*, 10.

<sup>5</sup> Stavropoulos Christoforos, “Partakers of the Divine Nature,” in *Eastern Orthodox Theology: A Contemporary Reader*, Second Edition, Daniel B. Clendenin, ed., (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 2003), 184.

<sup>6</sup> Ware, *Orthodox Church*, 231.

<sup>7</sup> Christoforos, “Partakers,” 183.

<sup>8</sup> Clendenin, *Eastern Orthodox Christianity*, 122–123.

<sup>9</sup> Clendenin, *Eastern Orthodox Christianity*, 132–133.

<sup>10</sup> Clendenin, *Eastern Orthodox Christianity*, 124–125.

juridical and biological. Consequently, Eastern theologians and writers are not immune from using Western juridical language. And despite its tendency to sound heretical in Western ears, Catholic, Protestant, and Evangelical theologians are not, and have not been, totally immune from speaking of salvation in terms of *theosis* and deification.<sup>11</sup> In fact, some from the Western theological tradition have a soteriology that bears many astonishing similarities to an Eastern doctrine of *theosis*. This is not limited, however, to those Westerners who come from the more liturgical or, apparently, mystical of the Western traditions. Those who may seem to be theologically the furthest are not immune from the draw of *theosis*. This paper will show that the Rev. Albert Benjamin Simpson, a typically mainstream, late-nineteenth century, and influential Evangelical, while trained wholly and thoroughly in the Western Protestant Calvinist theological tradition, developed a soteriology that bears more similarities than dissimilarities to a carefully defined Eastern Orthodox doctrine of *theosis*.

### Carefully defining an Eastern Orthodox doctrine of Theosis

Too often, western critiques of *theosis* are ill-founded, based upon assumption and conjecture rather than upon a thoughtful response to a well-researched understanding. Evangelicals have joined in on this straw-man attack by assuming that an Eastern doctrine of *theosis* asserts either far more or something far different than it actually does. If, then, we are going to try to compare Simpson's soteriology to an Orthodox doctrine of *theosis*, it is necessary to begin by outlining an accurate and fair definition of *theosis*, carefully avoiding caricature and "straw men." In this effort to define *theosis* from an Eastern perspective and to resist caricature, I have turned only to Eastern and pro-Eastern sources in initially outlining the doctrine.

Daniel Clendenin, a noted evangelical scholar of Orthodoxy has noted that when one enquires into the doctrine of *theosis*, Eastern or otherwise, two cautions must be presented. The first is a caution related to human ability. That is, in any investigation into the doctrine of *theosis*, humanity must be sure not to delve beyond what it is able to perceive or comprehend. This also means that humanity must be careful not to seek an understanding of that which is beyond what has been revealed.<sup>12</sup> Humanity must humbly realize its own cognitive limitations as well as realize and respect the transcendence and ineffability of God. When one

investigates the doctrine of *theosis*, one must always remember that the topic "is ultimately a mystery,"<sup>13</sup> beyond both human comprehension and expression.<sup>14</sup>

The second caution that Clendenin asserts is any accurate understanding of the Eastern Orthodox doctrine of *theosis* must maintain the eternal, ontological distinction between the Creator and the creation. No accurate rendering of an Orthodox theology of deification will assert that such a distinction is lost. Rightly defined and rightly understood, an Eastern doctrine of *theosis* never dissolves into something that should be confused with pantheism. Orthodox theologians assert the maintenance of this distinction by arguing that in *theosis*, while there is a real union of the divine with the human, the union is not of the divine essence or nature. Rather, the union is with the divine energies. This is not to say that the nature of God is divine while the energies of God are not. While the divine energies are not the divine essence, neither are they less than divine. The divine energies are "God Himself."<sup>15</sup> Bishop Kallistos (Timothy) Ware writes, "When a man knows or participates in the divine energies, he truly knows or participates in God himself, so far as this is possible for a created being."<sup>16</sup> Ware goes on to note that this moment of both intimacy and distinction is not wholly different from the perichoretic nature of the triune God. While one, real distinctions remain. Even so, while one so deified remains distinct from God, the union is nonetheless very real.<sup>17</sup> This distinction between the divine energies and the divine nature keeps from blurring the ontological distinction. The exact nature of the distinction between the divine essence and the divine energies, though, the Orthodox do not clearly define, relegating it to the category of "philosophical antinomy."<sup>18</sup>

In addition to maintaining the divine/human distinction, the Orthodox assert, "Whatever it means to 'become god,' the essence of human nature is not lost."<sup>19</sup> Divinized humans remain essentially human. "[Humanity] becomes god by grace, but not God in

<sup>11</sup> Clendenin, *Eastern Orthodox Christianity*, 124.

<sup>12</sup> Clendenin, *Eastern Orthodox Christianity*, 129.

<sup>13</sup> Clendenin, *Eastern Orthodox Christianity*, 130.

<sup>14</sup> This will explain why much of Orthodox teaching in the area of the divinization of humanity, and many other mystical topics, is often approached apophatically. What may not be expressible and comprehensible in the positive may be affirmed in the negative. Yet, even so, the very nature of *theosis* as mystery means that final definition is beyond human capacity.

<sup>15</sup> Ware, *The Orthodox Way*, 232.

<sup>16</sup> Ware, *The Orthodox Way*, 22. cf. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, 232.

<sup>17</sup> Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, 232.

<sup>18</sup> Meyendorf, *The Orthodox Church*, 186.

<sup>19</sup> Clendenin, *Eastern Orthodox Christianity*, 130.

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essence.”<sup>20</sup> Humanity, in union with God, remains fully human and “is not swallowed up or annihilated.”<sup>21</sup> Human it is and human it will remain. Furthermore, it does not become a *tertium quid*—something, in essence, different from what it was before. Bishop Ware is certain to observe that in a genuine Orthodox understanding of *theosis* “[there] is union, [but] not fusion or confusion.”<sup>22</sup> The divine and human are brought together but the union does not result in a synthesis. Human nature is changed, surely, but not to what it was not essentially. What occurs, then, is not a change in essence but a change in quality—a relative change.<sup>23</sup> Humanity, while not *other* than what it was before this union, certainly is *more* than it was before. Given the union with the divine energies, it now resides on a higher plane of existence, not contradictory to human nature, yet, not something within its own ability to grasp, either. *Theosis* results in “the elevation of the human being to the divine sphere, to the atmosphere of God.”<sup>24</sup>

Once one has grasped these key cautions, (the realization that *theosis* is mystery and that the ontological distinction is not compromised, humanity remains essentially human), there are a number of other key themes that constitute the Orthodox understanding of divinization.

First, the doctrine of *theosis* is essentially Christocentric. While *theosis* occurs through the agency of the Spirit, 1) it is complementary to the work of the Incarnation, and 2) results from union with Christ. For the Orthodox, divinization is understood to be intimately related to the doctrine of the Incarnation, as its reciprocal or complement. That is, what occurs in the elevating action of *theosis* inversely reflects the descent of the divine in the Incarnation. In the Incarnation, we see the humbling of God as the Eternal Son takes on, in a very real way, human nature. Christ humbled himself in the Incarnation. Conversely, in divinization humanity is exalted. Thus, *theosis* is analogous to the Incarnation. “As God was incarnated, man was endivinized.”<sup>25</sup> *Theosis* reflects the Incarnation not only through the union of the two natures, however. The union and filling of the Christian with the divine energies is an

inversion of the *kenosis* or the laying aside undertaken by Christ.<sup>26</sup>

In addition, Eastern Orthodox theology will note that *theosis* is the result of union with God in Christ. As the divine Christ profoundly and intimately indwells humanity, humanity is consequently lifted up by the divine life that indwells it.<sup>27</sup> The notion of *theosis* “implies our being intertwined with Christ, an influx of the divine, or the attainment of similitude with God.”<sup>28</sup> For the Orthodox, *theosis* is not simply divinization. *Theosis* is more particular than just that. While *theosis* is union with the divine, it is not with a faceless, impersonal divine. Jesus Christ is the content of *theosis* in that it is the indwelling of Christ through the agency of the Holy Spirit that results in the communication of the divine energies. “It is through Jesus, the God-man, that [humanity is] ‘ingodded’, ‘divinized’, [and] made ‘sharers in the divine nature.’”<sup>29</sup> “To be deified is, more specifically, to be ‘christified.’”<sup>30</sup> Divinization is the communication of not just the divine, but the Divine One, in the particular person of Jesus Christ.

For the Orthodox, *theosis* is the intent of God for all of humanity. By divine design, deification is not relegated to being the destiny of an elect or select few. Rather, the divine target of *theosis* is the whole of humanity. As the call of salvation is offered to the whole race, so too, the call to pursue *theosis* is genuinely and sincerely addressed to all humanity.<sup>31</sup> It is the normative *telos* of the Christian life, not the exclusive attainment of a few. As such, *theosis* is not an elective addendum to salvation which humanity is free to take up or not. Ultimately, salvation is *theosis* and *theosis* is salvation. To understand otherwise is to truncate and ultimately destroy the purpose of salvation.<sup>32</sup>

<sup>20</sup> Ware, *The Orthodox Way*, 125.

<sup>21</sup> Ware, *The Orthodox Way*, 23. v

<sup>22</sup> Ware, *The Orthodox Way*, 22. cf. Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, 232.

<sup>23</sup> Christoforos, “Partakers,” 184.

<sup>24</sup> Christoforos, “Partakers,” 184.

<sup>25</sup> Clendenin, *Eastern Orthodox Christianity*, 131.

<sup>26</sup> Lossky, *Image and Likeness*, 97. Daniel Clendenin, quoting Cyril of Alexandria, notes, however, that this comparison should not be pushed too far. While Christ is human and divine by nature, humanity is called to be divine merely by participation. Clendenin, *Eastern Orthodox Christianity*, 128.

<sup>27</sup> Ware will argue that this very idea of mutual inherence—Christ indwelling humanity and humanity living in God—is at the heart of John’s Gospel and is at the heart of what the Apostle Paul refers to when he invokes the term “in Christ.” Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, 231

<sup>28</sup> Clendenin, *Eastern Orthodox Christianity*, 131.

<sup>29</sup> Ware, *Orthodox Way*, 74.

<sup>30</sup> Ware, *Orthodox Way*, 74.

<sup>31</sup> Christoforos, “Partakers,” 184.

<sup>32</sup> Vladimir Lossky has asserted that the reason that the idea of *theosis* may ring strangely in Western ears is that it has been disassociated from the doctrine and heart of soteriology. For Lossky, Anselm was one of the key culprits behind the separation of the doctrine of divinization from the larger doctrine of soteriology to which it ought to inhere. Lossky, *Image and Likeness*, 99.



While certainly a mystical doctrine of the Eastern Church, it should not be assumed that this doctrine, then, is relegated to the spiritual realm alone. In Orthodox teaching, which possesses “a highly developed theology of the body,”<sup>33</sup> divinization touches, renews, and raises the whole of human existence, body and soul, to a higher plane of existence.<sup>34</sup> The Eastern doctrine of *theosis* believes that as the spirit is supernaturally charged and improved, the physical aspect of humanity, too, is invigorated.<sup>35</sup> The human body, in its interaction with the indwelling Christ, tastes of its eschatological hope in the present. In *theosis*, the body becomes the “firstfruits of [the] visible and bodily glorification”<sup>36</sup>

This does not mean that the Eastern Church possesses an over-realized eschatology. While the Christian may experience earnestness of the coming kingdom in the present day, divinization only finds its fullness in the eschaton and the final transformation and glorification of humanity—the “third birth.”<sup>37</sup> This change in nature inaugurates at regeneration but also, and especially, engages more intently at a point subsequent to conversion. This event is identified by John Meyendorff as “the unction of the Spirit”<sup>38</sup>—a point where the practical work of deification is undertaken with a higher level of intensity.

For the Orthodox, the central doctrine of *theosis* while fundamental to its soteriology remains *mysterium*. At the same time, however, it is relatively definable. The work of deification is clearly Christocentric, finding its source in the overflowing life of the Christ who indwells the Christian. It is the complement to both the Incarnation of Christ and the *kenosis*. This salvific act has universal intent. It is to be the destiny of all Christians and is to affect the whole of human nature—spiritual and material, body and soul. Finally, *theosis*, while finding its full realization only in the eschaton, begins to some degree at conversion though it finds its greatest impact and progression in a distinct work of God at some point subsequent to it.

### Simpson’s Mystical Doctrine of Sanctification

The Rev. Albert Benjamin (hereafter A. B.) Simpson (1843–1919) was a late nineteenth-/early twentieth-century evangelical noted for a number of achievements

and contributions to the content and mood of the Evangelicalism of his time. Simpson is best known for having founded The Christian and Missionary Alliance, originally a parachurch organization, the purpose of which was to promote and achieve two related pursuits: the Deeper Christian Life and the task of world evangelization. This organization was centered around and sought to inculcate Simpson’s message of “The Fourfold Gospel—Jesus, Our Saviour, Our Sanctifier, Our Healer, and Our Coming King.” The Fourfold Gospel encapsulates both the central themes of late nineteenth-century Evangelicalism and Simpson’s observation of the greatest needs of the Church of his day. Donald Dayton, and a myriad of other scholars, also rightly point to Simpson and his *Fourfold Gospel* as providing the theological and, to a lesser degree, the material background for the Pentecostal Revival that would occur near the end of Simpson’s life.<sup>39</sup>

Simpson came from staunch Scottish Calvinist Covenanter stock and, in his Canadian birth and upbringing, was early trained in the Westminster Confession and its attendant Calvinist doctrinal assumptions and standards. In preparation for Presbyterian ministry, Simpson attended and excelled at Knox College, in Toronto, Ontario, the school of nineteenth-century Canadian Presbyterianism. Following graduation, Simpson served prestigious Presbyterian congregations in Hamilton, Ontario, Louisville, Kentucky, and, finally, in New York City. During these pastorates, Simpson would begin to move theologically from his Presbyterian training to such a degree that both he and the synod agreed that a parting of the ways would be best. Because of this separation, and in part the cause of it, Simpson formed a small congregation organized under the name the Gospel Tabernacle whose goal was to reach the growing, poor, immigrant, and non-Christian population of New York City. This group, in turn, would give birth to a number of other ministries, not the least of which would include The Christian and Missionary Alliance.

Theologically, at least early on, Simpson was trained in a thorough-going and staunch Western Calvinism. Yet, this was not Simpson’s only theological influence. Simpson dove deeply into the theology, mood, and practices of late nineteenth-century Evangelicalism that flowed from and was deeply

<sup>33</sup> Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, 231.

<sup>34</sup> Lossky, *Mystical Theology*, 155.

<sup>35</sup> Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, 231; Meyendorff, *The Orthodox Church*, 177.

<sup>36</sup> Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, 231.

<sup>37</sup> “The deification or θεοσις of the creature will be realized in its fullness only in the age to come, after the resurrection of the dead.” Lossky, *Mystical Theology*, 155.

<sup>38</sup> Meyendorff, *The Orthodox Church*, 177.

<sup>39</sup> In addition, Simpson founded a vibrant publishing company that would churn out millions of pages of devotional and theological material authored by Simpson and others (including A. J. Gordon, George Palmer Pardington, and A. W. Tozer). Lastly, as a means of promulgating the *Fourfold Gospel* and bringing to a close the task of world evangelization, Simpson founded the Missionary Training Institute, now known as Nyack College, which has sent out thousands of graduates into both lay and clerical ministry.

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influenced by the theology and methods of the nineteenth-century Revivalism, particularly the Second Great Awakening. Evangelicalism of Simpson's day was one that was deeply touched, in theology and practice, by a growing emphasis on the voluntary nature and personal intimacy of one's relationship to God. Perhaps consequently, there arose during the nineteenth century a movement whose particular emphasis was the exploration of the Christian doctrine of sanctification, its nature and means. This Deeper Life Movement, despite its many shades and forms, was not merely interested in and satisfied with cognitive mastery of this doctrine. Its greater goal was the retrieval of a fuller orb'd understanding of the fullness and extent of salvation. Simpson was both deeply influenced by and a teacher within both movements.

Simpson was not alone among his peers in addressing these doctrines, but he did go beyond his most of his Evangelical contemporaries and a strict Calvinism in his assertion of the nature and the *telos* of salvation. For Simpson, the goal of the work of God in salvation was not merely some type of objective holiness but a change in the very nature of the believer—a change that was not merely quantitative in nature but seemingly qualitative as well. The change that would occur was clearly a divinization, a deification, or a *theosis*, of sorts.

For Simpson, the change that occurs within humanity in salvation is obviously profound. This alteration, however, is not merely quantitative. It is neither the enhancement of the human constitution nor the amplification of an inherent, yet dormant human capacity or potentiality. "It is not the old life improved."<sup>40</sup> "[It] is not the improvement of our natural character, not even the cleansing of our own spirit."<sup>41</sup> It is far more than a return to or renovation of some Edenic, pre-Fall innocence.

The change that occurs is that which results in something that is truly supra-human, not just superhuman. This work of God "offers . . . something infinitely higher than mere human perfection."<sup>42</sup> It is, rather, a change that results in a new estate, a new nature,<sup>43</sup> and so thorough going as to truly result in a "new life."<sup>44</sup> It is something far beyond simply that of a fully-realized natural human capacity. Simpson wrote that this work of God "is not a degree of progress on the old plane [of human existence], but it puts us entirely

upon a new plane, and we pass out of the human into the divine, and henceforth it is not the best that man can be and do."<sup>45</sup> Those who are so affected "have risen to an entirely different sphere,"<sup>46</sup> to live in an entirely new "atmosphere"<sup>47</sup> of existence. "[This] life is not self-improving . . ., it is wholly supernatural and divine."<sup>48</sup> This new life is an eternal life. Eternal, not only because it has "neither beginning nor ending, but [because] it lifts us into a higher sphere of life. It is a kind of life that belongs to a loftier plane than the things that are seen and temporal. It is a life as infinite in its scope as it is enduring in its length, a great unfathomable ocean of boundless fullness and glorious all-sufficiency."<sup>49</sup>

Simpson likens the difference of this change to the remodeling of a shack, which God would not be interested in pursuing. Instead, God seeks to build something completely new, a mansion, where the shack once stood.<sup>50</sup> God is not involved in a work of renovation but of reconstruction. This new life is something beyond merely human nature supercharged by divine impulse. It is a new structure altogether. So intense and far-reaching is this change that Simpson will assert that the one so changed is no longer the same person.<sup>51</sup> For Simpson, this change "is the entrance into a sinful heart of a new life which excludes the old and takes its place. It is not the cleansing of the flesh or the improving of the life of the self; but it is the imparting to us of a new life . . ., even the holy life of God."<sup>52</sup>

This supra-human condition is due to the arrival and infusion of another, alien element.<sup>53</sup> The arrival of this new element results in a "translation" of what existed previously into something new. It is now a "higher and loftier scale of being."<sup>54</sup> Following this reception humanity is no longer what it once was. It has been foundationally and essentially changed and affected by the infusion of this new element. That which results is such that the former ceases to exist *per se*. The old is supplanted, removed, and replaced by the new. So great is this change that Simpson hyperbolically asserted that

<sup>40</sup> A. B. Simpson, *Philippians*, 99; cf. A. B. Simpson, *Wholly Sanctified*, 6.

<sup>41</sup> A. B. Simpson, *Peter, John*, 57.

<sup>42</sup> A. B. Simpson, *Life More Abundantly*, 31.

<sup>43</sup> A. B. Simpson, *Walking in the Spirit*, 7.

<sup>44</sup> A. B. Simpson, *Peter, John*, 57.

<sup>45</sup> A. B. Simpson, *Peter, John*, 58; A. B. Simpson, *Salvation Sermons*, 12.

<sup>46</sup> A. B. Simpson, *Walking in the Spirit*, 6.

<sup>47</sup> A. B. Simpson, *Walking in the Spirit*, 8.

<sup>48</sup> A. B. Simpson, *The Self Life and The Christ Life*, 18; A. B. Simpson, *Salvation Sermons*, 12.

<sup>49</sup> A. B. Simpson, *The Christ Life*, 14–15.

<sup>50</sup> A. B. Simpson, *The Christ Life*, 56.

<sup>51</sup> A. B. Simpson, *Wholly Sanctified*, 27; A. B. Simpson, *In Heavenly Places*, 25.

<sup>52</sup> A. B. Simpson, *Walking in the Spirit*, 9.

<sup>53</sup> A. B. Simpson, *The Christ Life*, 19.

<sup>54</sup> A. B. Simpson, *Walking in the Spirit*, 7.

the new being has nothing in common with the previous, sinful nature. What now exists is not simply the superlative of the old. It is something new. It is something of “divine nature.”<sup>55</sup> It is something greater than humanity could ever have achieved on its own. Those who have been so blessed have “received a nature as much above the intellectual and the moral as God! (1 Jn. 3:1)”<sup>56</sup> It is “the very nature of God [which] passes into us.”<sup>57</sup> For Simpson, the life to which humanity receives is “a higher mode of being—that of God Himself.”<sup>58</sup> Humanity is clearly, in Simpson’s opinion, divinized.

Simpson, like his Presbyterian forebears, held to a soteriology that was firmly grounded Christologically. For Simpson, however, this Christological foundation of soteriology was not merely associative. That is, the Christian’s salvation was not tied merely to an association or a relationship with Christ. The connection was dramatically far more profound. It was not based on mere association but on intimate identification, in the strongest sense of the latter word. That is, for Simpson, salvation was based on the integration of the life of the divine Christ into and *as* the very life of the Christian. It was not simply an objective reckoning or forensic declaration on God’s part that revitalized the believer. Rather, it is Christ Himself living in, with, and through the Christian that itself results in salvation and newness of life. It is “the incarnation of Jesus Himself into [the human] life.”<sup>59</sup> It is not merely impersonal, divine energy or the radiance of some kind of divine influence that inhere humanity in this way. Rather, it is “[Christ who] becomes the Course and Strength of our very life.”<sup>60</sup> It is not just life *from* Christ, but the life *of* Christ—Christ Himself—that the Christian receives.<sup>61</sup> In this act of personal indwelling, Christ imparts to humans his “very nature” and makes it their “second nature.”<sup>62</sup> This new life, which Simpson regularly identified as *The Christ Life*, is “a vital and divine experience through the union of the soul with the living Christ Himself.”<sup>63</sup>

Ultimately, for Simpson, what occurs in this indwelling is not a matter of forensics but is more foundationally a matter of new life. The key metaphor

for Simpson is biological rather than juridical. It is not simply a “divine reckoning” as those tied to a strictly forensic paradigm may assert. For Simpson, what occurs is not merely a case of judicial bookkeeping and a change of standing. It is an actual change of nature—one which is dead for one which, by its divine nature, is necessarily alive—and, therefore, it is an impartation of life. While there are certainly forensic consequences to the metamorphosis that occurs, the heart of the matter is one more vital and biological than forensic. It is not that forensic categories do not apply. Certainly, Simpson understood the legal implications of the change and identified them. They are not, however, the heart of the issue but consequential to it. Ultimately, the issue of salvation is contained neither by the issue of freedom from guilt nor in a penal-substitutionary understanding of the atonement. Rather, (and here I do not think he necessarily strays too far from his Reformed roots but expands on them) the result of this encounter is the arrival of life. More pointedly, it is the reception and engagement of divine life. It is this new life, in turn, which results in freedom from condemnation and death.

For Simpson, this regeneration is truly a rebirth. While Simpson does not overlook the biblical assertion that membership into the family of God is based, at some level, on the legal concept of adoption, the concept does not exhaust the profoundness of the reality of the Christian’s new standing.<sup>64</sup> Here, too, the ruling metaphor is biological rather than juridical. This new standing in the family of God is not based merely, or even foundationally, on the legal designation of adoption. It is more foundationally based on the reality that one is a son of God by “actual birth.”<sup>65</sup> Christians become the children of God, not just “legally,” as in adoption, but “actually,” as they become the “[children] of God by receiving the life and nature of God.”<sup>66</sup> As one is regenerated in this invasive work of God, one is born of God. It is the bestowal of this new nature and new life that result in “introducing [the soul] into the family of God himself.”<sup>67</sup> But, again, the Christian is not merely born of God instrumentally, but born of God

<sup>55</sup> A. B. Simpson, *Peter, John*, 58.

<sup>56</sup> A. B. Simpson, *Walking in the Spirit*, 6.

<sup>57</sup> A. B. Simpson, *Peter, John*, 58.

<sup>58</sup> A. B. Simpson, *Walking in the Spirit*, 10.

<sup>59</sup> A. B. Simpson, *The Christ Life*, 25; A. B. Simpson, *Philippians*, 99; A. B. Simpson, *Walking in the Spirit*, 8.

<sup>60</sup> A. B. Simpson, *Philippians*, 99.

<sup>61</sup> A. B. Simpson, *Walking in the Spirit*, 61.

<sup>62</sup> A. B. Simpson, *The Christ Life*, 31–32.

<sup>63</sup> A. B. Simpson, *The Christ Life*, 25.

<sup>64</sup> A. B. Simpson, *The Christ Life*, 112.

<sup>65</sup> A. B. Simpson, *Walking in the Spirit*, 7.

<sup>66</sup> A. B. Simpson, *The Christ Life*, 112.

<sup>67</sup> A. B. Simpson, *Walking in the Spirit*, 7. “Not by adoption merely are we thus admitted to the Father’s house, but by actual birth; from the very bosom of the Holy Ghost, as from a heavenly mother, has our new spirit been born; just as literally as Jesus Christ Himself was born of the eternal Spirit in the bosom of Mary. So it might be said of every newborn soul: ‘The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore, that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.’ Beloved, do we thus live in the Spirit? This is everlasting life.”

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by nature.<sup>68</sup> That is, the Christian is born of God not only in the sense that the regeneration is an act of the Holy Spirit. The Christian is also born of God in the sense that the Christian's life is divine life from the very nature of the Divine One.<sup>69</sup> Christians are sons and daughters *genetically* through their inheritance of the nature of the Father. They are truly offspring. Simpson wrote, "[Christ's] own being is imparted to us, and [, therefore,] we share His actual relation to the Father."<sup>70</sup> The Father, then, is Father, by nature and not merely by assertion.

It is true that for Simpson, this work of *theosis* begins, to some degree, at conversion. Yet, there is an equally strong sense that it begins in its greatest intensity in the life of the Christian in a moment distinct from and subsequent to the conversion moment—for Simpson, the crisis of sanctification. It is at this point where the practical work of *theosis* and the manifestation thereof begins in earnest.<sup>71</sup> Simpson also asserted that this change in nature is also progressive. While there is a real divinization that occurs at regeneration, this change in nature may and should be progressive in the life of the Christian. While one is divinized really and to some degree at the "crisis" of regeneration, the depth and maturity of this divinization is liable to increase<sup>72</sup> until, one day, the Christian "shall be the Pearl of great price, the most glorious object in the universe of God."<sup>73</sup> The key point of this maturing process is the second work of grace—sanctification—where the divinization that began at regeneration is effected in a new way and taken to new and greater heights.<sup>74</sup> Simpson wrote that while "Christ is completely formed within us [at regeneration], . . . He is the infant Christ, and grows up to the maturity of the perfect man in us just as He did in His earthly life."<sup>75</sup>

The divinization of humanity is also of practical necessity in Simpson's soteriology. If God created humanity to be in communion with Himself, and if God seeks to make good on that original telos, the spiritual

death that has resulted from the Fall must be overcome. Simpson asserted that it was spiritual death, more than spiritual separation, which has left humanity incapable of relationship with the God.<sup>76</sup> Again, while the forensic categories of guilt and penalty serve as significant hurdles to this divine-human relationship, they are not the heart of the problem for Simpson. The ruling metaphor, again is more foundationally biological than juridical. Rather, the difficulty lies in the spiritual deadness of humanity. The dead cannot commune with the One who is, by very nature, life.<sup>77</sup> Therefore, if communion is to happen, regeneration must occur. One must be reborn. One must receive a new life.

Moreover, Simpson asserted that *full communion* can only happen between parties who not only share both life but share a common life, a common nature. That is why Simpson wrote, "You must have another nature before you can enter the kingdom of heaven."<sup>78</sup> If humanity is to fulfill its divine purpose of operating within the divine sphere and fulfill its purpose—communion with God—it must possess a divine nature.

Furthermore, not only does this sort of rebirth allow communion with God, it expands the connection with Christ that was initiated in the Incarnation. In an effort to relate to humanity, God, the Son, humbled himself and took the form of a servant. That is, the eternal and divine Son took on human nature in the Incarnation. Simpson noted that it is through the work of divinization that the identification with Christ, who is both fully God and fully human, is more fully developed. Those who are, by birth, human in nature are made, by rebirth, divine, as well. As such, they reflect both natures of Christ. "Not only [did Christ] come down into our humanity, but he also [took] us up into His Divinity; for we are, indeed, through Him, 'partakers of the Divine Nature.'<sup>79</sup> Our connection with Christ, then, is not based solely on his humanity. For the converted, the human identification with Christ is further entrenched by our very real participation in his divine nature.

The heart of *The Fourfold Gospel* and the expressed aim of Simpson's organization, The Christian and Missionary Alliance, was the inculcation and practice of the doctrine of the deeper Christian life. It is this topic and its pursuit that absorbed the greatest share of Simpson's time and effort. According to Simpson, it is the divine nature which is the necessary condition of achieving sanctification. Simpson asserted that it could not be otherwise because, "It requires a divine Force to

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<sup>68</sup> "We are not children of God by virtue of creation . . . but through the new birth, initially, which makes us partakers of the divine nature, and, still more, through our personal union with the Lord Jesus Christ, who so comes into us and dwells in us that we partake of his own relation to the Father, and are children of God, even as He is. This is especially true after we enter into the deeper life of abiding in Christ, and receiving the full baptism of the Holy Ghost." A. B. Simpson, *Wholly Sanctified*, 100.

<sup>69</sup> A. B. Simpson, *Walking in the Spirit*, 7.

<sup>70</sup> A. B. Simpson, *The Christ Life*, 112.

<sup>71</sup> A. B. Simpson, *Walking in the Spirit*, 8.

<sup>72</sup> A. B. Simpson, *Walking in the Spirit*, 8.

<sup>73</sup> A. B. Simpson, *Echoes of the New Creation*, 39.

<sup>74</sup> A. B. Simpson, *Wholly Sanctified*, 100.

<sup>75</sup> A. B. Simpson, *The Larger Christian Life*, 53.

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<sup>76</sup> A. B. Simpson, *Wholly Sanctified*, 39.

<sup>77</sup> A. B. Simpson, *Salvation Sermons*, 14.

<sup>78</sup> A. B. Simpson, *Wholly Sanctified*, 36.

<sup>79</sup> A. B. Simpson, *The Christ Life*, 112.

live the divine life.”<sup>80</sup> It is the divine nature that alone enables humanity to live to holiness and the example of Christ.<sup>81</sup> It is only in this way that one can hope to be free from the power of sin.<sup>82</sup> It is not that the new nature aids the Christian in the struggle to live the sanctified life. Rather, it is the divine life by itself that “expels all evil and continually renews and refreshes our entire being, keeping us ever clean and pure.”<sup>83</sup> For all intents and purposes, it is, then, not only the **necessary condition** but the **sufficient condition**, as well. For Simpson, the divine life of the Christian does not make sanctification merely possible. Its residence makes it actual, “so filling us that we become like him.”<sup>84</sup>

Furthermore, for Simpson, it is only divinization that makes God’s call to holiness a legitimate one.<sup>85</sup> The holiness to which God calls humanity is more than just innocence. It is holiness analogous to that of God himself and properly attributed to the divine alone. The holy life is impossible even for pristine humanity. Yet, it is the call of God. It would be unjust and illegitimate of God to require of humanity that which, by its nature, it was unable to achieve. That is, of course, unless He also provides another way to do so. Humanity is only able to achieve this holiness through divine intervention, by partaking of the divine nature itself.

Simpson’s theotic soteriology is not limited to the spiritual or moral realm. The indwelling of Christ and the change in nature affects the whole of the human constitution—the spiritual and the physical. Simpson asserted that the indwelling divine life could not help but bring about real change in the physical nature of humanity. He wrote, “We can often see in the lower world how a piece of clay can be so filled with a higher principle as to be transformed and to be endued with higher properties than its own nature was capable of expressing.”<sup>86</sup> Such is the case for the human condition. The divine life enhances physical existence. It is this divine life that “will carry us above our physical infirmities on the high tide of a supernatural vitality which is not dependent upon our organic conditions.”<sup>87</sup> Not only do we gain the vitality of the divine life for our bodies as a result of divinization, we also gain the mind of the divine. Simpson noted that as a result of the indwelling divine nature, “We have the mind of Christ. Into this weak and erring brain can come the very

understanding of our blessed Master, so that, as John Kepler, we may say, ‘I am thinking God’s thoughts after God.’”<sup>88</sup>

## Conclusion

Simpson’s own theology bears a number of key similarities with the Eastern doctrine of deification. For both, the work of divinization remains ultimately ineffable. Each agrees that there is no earthly parallel or analogy that accurately comprehends this *mysterium*.<sup>89</sup> Further, each would argue that despite this work, the ultimate ontological distinction between the Creator and the creature remains. For Simpson, while the human participation in the divine nature is real and profound, at no point does humanity ever, of itself, achieve, obtain, or maintain its “divine nature.” It is, rather, only possessed by a state of constant dependence<sup>90</sup> and “abiding in Christ,” a constant mutual interpenetration of Christ and the Christian. Like the Orthodox, Simpson, too, would argue that humanity is only, in any sense, divine by grace. Yet, for Simpson, the antinomy remains. One remains human in nature while at the same time being lifted to the divine realm of being.

The greatest and, perhaps, the key similarity between the two theologies is the primary role of biological metaphors. The hurdle that salvation seeks to overcome is that of death more than that of guilt. Second, both Simpson and the Orthodox are radically Christocentric in their teleology, soteriology, and theology. For both, Christ is both the means and the content of divinization. Divinization is the result of union with Christ and when one is divinized, one may be understood more particularly to be “christified.” For both, the work of divinization is complementary and reciprocal to the Incarnation. Third, both assert universal dimensions to soteriology and *theosis*. For neither is deification to be the exclusive attainment of the “spiritual elite.” It is by design and intent the goal for all. Neither is deification something particularly spiritual. It is intended to affect the whole person—body and soul. Furthermore, both the Orthodox and Simpson understand this work to find its genesis in

<sup>80</sup> A. B. Simpson, *Life More Abundantly*, 24.

<sup>81</sup> A. B. Simpson, *The Christ Life*, 19.

<sup>82</sup> A. B. Simpson, *Walking in the Spirit*, 8.

<sup>83</sup> A. B. Simpson, *Wholly Sanctified*, 81.

<sup>84</sup> A. B. Simpson, *Echoes of the New Creation*, 39.

<sup>85</sup> A. B. Simpson, *Peter, John*, 58.

<sup>86</sup> A. B. Simpson, *Wholly Sanctified*, 73.

<sup>87</sup> A. B. Simpson, *Wholly Sanctified*, 72.

<sup>88</sup> A. B. Simpson, *Wholly Sanctified*, 49.

<sup>89</sup> A. B. Simpson, *The Present Truth*, 51; A. B. Simpson, *Echoes of the New Creation*, 37. A. B. Simpson calls it a “stupendous mystery.” *Walking in the Spirit*, 7.

<sup>90</sup> “There is always a little danger of seeing our experience more that the source of that experience, the person and work of the Lord Jesus, we have ever been led to rise above all our experiences and recognize our new and resurrection life wholly in Him, not a fixed and crystallized state but an attitude of constant dependence and abiding so that our holiness is not self constituted but dependent every moment on our union and communion with Him.” A. B. Simpson, “Editorial,” *Christian and Missionary Alliance Weekly*, (June 3, 1899), 8.

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regeneration but is especially fuelled by a post-conversion work of God. Both agree that this work of God is progressive in nature. While it begins in a moment in time and has a particular completeness of its own, it is, still, a progressive and maturing work.

Many in the West may feel that the Eastern doctrine of *theosis* is an esoteric doctrine. It is believed that it is a teaching of the Eastern Church that, while ancient, does not adhere to the heart of the Gospel. Certainly, Eastern theologians would argue that for the East, at least, this is simply not the case. It is not an obscure doctrine. Rather, it is central to Orthodox soteriology and the keystone to the whole of the Orthodox theology. Furthermore, *theosis* does not appear to be as foreign to Western soteriologies as one might think. Not only did

it appear in the theology and soteriology of A. B. Simpson, one cannot rightly assert that it is ancillary even to it. Certainly, there are some dissimilarities between Simpson's view and those of the Orthodox church.<sup>91</sup> Nevertheless, divinization lies at the heart of both the means and the goal of *The Fourfold Gospel*—what appears to be and has been described by a number of scholars as a thorough-going homegrown and contextually developed Western theology. Perhaps, then, the East and West are not so far apart after all.

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<sup>91</sup> For instance, Simpson has no role for sacraments *per se* in the process of divinization while they are central in Orthodoxy.

## Reading 11.1

**Divine Healing in the Atonement\***

A.B. Simpson

Does the Atonement of our Lord Jesus Christ cover the healing of these mortal bodies? Let us see.

1. If sickness has come into the world through sin, which is conceded, it must be got out of the world through God's great remedy for sin, the cross of Jesus Christ. If sickness is only a natural condition it may be met by natural means, but if it be abnormal, and but a stage of death, which has passed upon all because all have sinned, then its divinely appointed remedy is the atonement of Jesus Christ, which God has set over against all the effects of the fall. It is probably included in the comprehensive language of the apostle in his superb antithesis in Rom. v: "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned, For if by one man's sin, death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ." This "abundance of life" is no doubt the life of the body as well as the soul.

2. The types of the Old Testament contain very remarkable foreshadowings of the healing of our bodies through the atonement of Jesus. Look at the cleansing of the leper for example, in Lev. xiv. It was through the sacrifice of two birds, one of which represented the death, the other the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Look again at the deliverance of the people from the fearful plague that had fallen upon them because of their murmuring and lusting. How was it accomplished? By Aaron the high priest taking his censer full of burning coals off the altar of sacrifice and then filling it with sweet incense and standing between the living and the dead and making atonement (Num. xvi: 46-50). Look again at the story of the brazen serpent. It was a clear case of physical suffering through the sting of the serpent, representing the power of Satan in our bodies as well as our souls. The healing was accomplished by the uplifting of the brazen serpent, a direct type of Jesus in His Atonement. It is idle to spiritualize this. True Christ applies it to the salvation of the soul, the receiving of eternal life, but eternal life is life in all its fullness, and Christ constantly uses the term "life" in reference to the body as well as the soul. "Man shall not

live by bread alone but by every word which proceedeth out of the mouth of God," has exclusive reference to the body. "That the life of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh has also exclusive reference to the body. What right has any man to take a narrative, whose primary reference is to a case of physical healing through a look of faith to that which symbolized a crucified Redeemer, apply it exclusively to the spiritual aspect of salvation, and, although it belongs to the broader dispensation of the Gospel, actually narrow it down and make it mean less than in the days of Moses? Undoubtedly it includes the greater salvation of the soul, but certainly it does not exclude the salvation of the body and its deliverance from the venomous stroke of Satan through a look of faith at the crucified Redeemer.

3. Other Old Testament references to Divine Healing through the Atonement. The thirty-third chapter of Job is the most profound discussion of God's government and God's chastenings, of any part of the Old Testament Scriptures. There Elihu, speaking as the voice of God, expounds the gracious and paternal purposes for which He sends us our afflictions. The philosophy of disease and healing is perfectly given. It is very simple. Sickness is God's second voice to the man who will not hear His first. It is His loud and solemn call to the soul to draw back from some forbidden path or to step forth in some line of neglected duty. Its remedy is therefore, first, instruction. "If there be a messenger with him, an interpreter, one among a thousand, to show unto man His unrightness." Its next prescription is the atonement of Christ and confidence in the merciful deliverance of God on account of the great ransom. "Then He is gracious unto him, and saith, 'Deliver him from going down to the pit: I have found a ransom,'" or rather, as it is in the margin, "an atonement." Surely this is all plain enough to a candid mind.

But we find it all still further emphasized by the strong language of David in the one-hundred-and-third psalm. "Bless the Lord O my soul, and forget not all His benefits: who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases; who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with loving kindness and

\* *Christian and Missionary Alliance Weekly*, (August 1890): 122-124.

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tender mercies; who satisfieth thy mouth with good things so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's." Why does he use the word "redeem?" Simply because he is thinking the same thought that Elihu expressed. The healing of his diseases is through the redemption which his prophetic faith had already anticipated through the coming of the Messiah. True, he may not have taken it in all the depths of its meaning, but the Holy Spirit knew the meaning of the word which He was afterwards to explain, and doubtless he used it in its full significance through the mouth of the Psalmist.

4. Allusions to the atonement in the later prophetic Scriptures. Of course the highest and boldest of these is Isaiah, and the central chapter of his sublime book and the entire Old Testament, is the fifty-third chapter. There we behold the atonement for sin and wickedness in the most vivid light, prefixed by God's great "Amen," "Surely," or "Amen, He hath borne our sicknesses and carried our pains." We need not now stop to prove, as no one can deny, that the word, "borne" means, as a substitute, to bear in the sense of atoning. It is simply enough to say it is the very same word used in the book of Leviticus to describe the atonement which the scape-goat made for the sins of the people, when he bore them away to a forgotten land, and it is the same word in this chapter when it is said that He bore the sins of men. But if anything more is needed it is supplied in the next verse where the great catalogue of the blessings of the redemption of Christ is crowned by the last clause, "By His stripes we are healed." The only retreat left for those who question this simple teaching is to apply the healing here mentioned in a spiritual sense. This would make the verse a weak and unworthy tautology. The spiritual healing has already been described in three clauses, covering the whole field in detail. Our transgressions are first specified, that is, our acts of sin; our iniquities, that is our more inward sin; our peace, that is, our positive spiritual blessings. What more is left except our bodies, and what more natural than to add another literal reference to them, "by His stripes we are healed." If it meant anything else it is simply a weak repetition of the same idea already expressed in the previous clauses without any necessity or reason. To strain a passage from its literal or natural meaning simply to prove a passage or a doctrine is unworthy of true exegesis, and will soon smother the possibility of faith in anything on the part of the man or woman who does it. The Lord give us all a simple-hearted readiness to take Him at His word and to take His word to mean what it says.

5. New Testament references. It is an easy step from Isaiah to Matthew viii: 17, for this is but a translation of the Old Testament verse. Happily it is a translation by the mouth of the Holy Ghost, and leaves

no doubt of the meaning of Isaiah. The meaning of sickness and infirmities, especially when taken in connection with the context and the healing of human bodies in which He was at the time engaged, which this verse was quoted to explain, is beyond the possibility of a question; and the verbs employed--"took" and "carried"--are even stronger than those used in the Old Testament. But, some may say, this passage may refer, not to Christ's death, but rather to His earthly ministry and benevolent works of healing, that thus He took our infirmities and bore our sicknesses by healing, with His touch and power, and that it has no reference whatever to His cross, which had not yet been erected and endured. We are glad, therefore, to have another passage with which to sum up this series of biblical foundations, and which admits of no shadow of a question. It is the clear, strong statement of Paul in Galatians iii: 13: "Christ had redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, "Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." Here it is absolutely certain that it is the death of Christ on the accursed tree that is the ground and price of redemption. Whatever the curse is, it is removed by the death of the cross, the atonement of Jesus, direct substitution of His life for ours.

Now what is the curse that is removed? It is the curse of the law. All that is necessary, therefore, is to find from the Old Testament what the curse of the law was. Of course we know that it was a far-reaching and eternal curse, but it was also a temporal curse, a physical curse, a curse involving sickness, suffering, infirmity, disease, pain. If this can be explicitly shown, it is as certain as the truth of inspiration that the death of Christ has removed all cause for such sickness, disease, infirmity, pain, in so far as it comes on account of sin. Now "to the law and to the testimony." How was the curse of the Old Testament actually specified? It is simply wonderful how exact the correspondence is to the very terms we have been using. Read Deut. xxviii: 15-22. Therefore it is perfectly scriptural to say Christ has redeemed us from consumption, fever, inflammation, having been made curse for us.

Beloved, what solid ground we are getting beneath our feet. It is in this connection that Isaiah uses the literal words respecting Christ's suffering on the cross, "Thou hast made Him sick in smiting Him." Our dear Lord actually bore, in His dying agonies, our sicknesses, and physicians tell us that He, who was never sick in His life-time, really died of a ruptured heart through the awful pressure of His woe.

Have we not then in these Scripture passages a sure foundation for the simple, glorious statement on which faith may stand, nay, may lie down in everlasting rest, that the atonement of Jesus Christ covers our



sicknesses, and furnishes solid ground for claiming, in His name, divine healing through simple faith, and when we are walking in holy obedience, which, of course, is the indispensable element within which we can continue to receive any of the blessings of the Gospel?

Let us remember in conclusion a few simple inferences that will necessarily follow this great truth.

1. If our healing is provided for by Jesus Christ, then it is a redemption right which we may humbly yet boldly claim while walking obediently with the Lord.

2. That it is a gift of grace, as all that Christ's blood has purchased will ever be, and therefore cannot be mixed up with our own works or the use of human means, but must be received wholly in His name, and in such a manner that He shall have all the glory.

3. That it must be by faith, through which alone all the blessings of the Gospel can be claimed.

4. That it is not the exceptional privilege of a few favored ones, the occasional special and sovereign gift of God where He is pleased to manifest His healing power for some exceptional cause or special end, but that it is the heritage of all the children of faith and holy obedience.

5. If our healing be the purchase of Christ's blood, and cost us His stripes and agonizing death, how sacred a thing it is! How costly a gift! How lovingly and entirely it should be returned to the Giver in living sacrifice, and how devotedly His gift of healing should be consecrated to His service and glory alone! So may the Lord help us to receive and to use this precious birthright of faith and purchase of Christ's redeeming blood.

## Reading 11.2

# How To Receive Divine Healing\*

A.B. Simpson

Dear friends: I never feel so near the Lord, not even at the Communion Table or on the borders of eternity, standing beside the departing spirit, as when I stand with the living Christ, to manifest His personal touch of supernatural and resurrection power in the anointing of the sick. Be quite sure, beloved, that you are doing something that is dearer to God than it can be to you; that you are not going to be wrung from Christ, by force or persuasion, a blessing that He is not willing to give, but you are coming into the very line of His own will. It is not that your will is overcoming His, but your will to be healed because He wills it, and you have His Holy Word under you and at the back of you, as your authority for what you do. For seven years, I believed that Christ healed a great many people. I saw Him heal some I prayed for, but I could not take it for myself, because I was not quite sure that it was included in the Gospel of Jesus Christ, as purchased and finished for all who accepted Jesus fully. I did not feel that it was my redemption right. I thought it was something I might have, or might not. It was a reality when it came, but it was an uncertainty in each particular case; and, never, till I saw it in His Word, in the redemption of Jesus, as my redemption right, could I stand upon it and take it,

without hesitation or doubt. You cannot have it, if there is a grain of doubt, consciously or wilfully, mingling with your faith; you must come, believing; God does not require much faith, but what you have must be entire. There must be no "perhaps," or "if" in it; there must be no questioning whether it is His word and will that you should realize it, for He has invited and bidden you. He has provided it for you, and will be grieved if you do not take it.

It may be simpler to many hearts to look at it this way. The personal ministry of Jesus when on earth is our first ground for claiming healing. He was anointed to heal all who had need of healing, and did heal all who really touched Him. The poor leper came and said, "Lord, if Thou wilt," and He said, "I will." He never said anything but this to anybody, for He is "the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever." Christ's own work on earth was uniform - He healed all who came to Him for healing, all who touched Him and really believed on Him; and He is still the same.

The second ground is His death on the cross. On Calvary, in His own body, He bare all our bodily liabilities for sin. Everything that was ever against you, every claim against your body was met by His body.

\* *The Word, Work and World* (July - August, 1885), pp. 204-205.

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And there is now no reason why that body of yours should be punished a second time for anything which His body has borne already, and once for all. The atonement of Christ takes away sin and the consequences of sin for every believer who accepts Him.

The third ground is His marvellous resurrection. His death would not have done it if He had not risen. His death took away your liability to disease, but it did not give you the life that would sustain you. You wanted a positive fountain of real vital energy, therefore Jesus rose in the body, and that form which the disciples saw, was His bodily form. He stood among them with hands, and feet, and brain, and heart, exactly like your own, and to-day, in the heavens, if you could see Him, He is a man just like ourselves. He has such a heart as man, only glorified; such a brain, such a set of nerves and vital organs. His body is not for Himself, nothing that He has is for Himself, all the fullness of Christ is for His Church, His spiritual fullness has sanctified your soul, His bodily energy vitalizes your body, and you can take it, you have a right to take it, today. I take it afresh today from the living Christ - His nerves, and heart, and brain and bodily strength for my own life. I think whole people need it as much as sick people. It is like the water which Christ turned into wine. It is a better kind of health. I have been trying it in all ways, and working on it for four years. We who are well can take it; and live on it, day by day, and I do take it every morning, and it has given me many times the strength of my natural energy.

Now, you have seen Christ on earth healing; you have Christ crucified putting away the causes of disease; then you have Christ, the living One, a Fountain giving out - always His own life; so that He does not put into you today a little bit of health that only heals the old disease and staunches the old wound; but He, the living One, comes into you, and henceforth lives in you Himself in your body, so that your bodies are members of Christ, and you are "members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones." Oh, is it not wonderful? "Handle Me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see Me have." The bones of Christ are for your weak bones. Have you weak knees and limbs? Well, if you cannot stand upon your own bones, you can stand upon the bones of Christ, which he lends to you, and gives to you, and with which He holds you up. Have you a weak heart? Never mind that. Don't wait to see if that heart is better, but take His great throbbing Heart, and let His life be the impulse of your physical life. It is not something you receive, or something you thought you had secured, but it is Somebody, it is Christ you get. It is Jesus Himself, your Life, manifested in your mortal flesh. Now that is the foundation of it.

There is a great deal that could be added, but this is enough for today.

How are you to take it? First, be sure to be definite. Don't indulge in any generalities about this thing, any haziness, any sponginess, softness, or half and half believing; come right out to a definite point, and cross it, and put a stake down, and mark it forever; and date from this afternoon till the great day of His coming, as an epoch in your life when something was settled, and passed out of your hands forever, so that you have no more to do with it. Be definite. In what respect? First, definitely settle it forever, so that you will never discuss it any more, that this is God's Word, that this way of healing is His way; and don't come here to be anointed, and then go away and talk to your pastor and Christian friends, to see whether this is true or not, for this would be mocking God, deceiving your own soul, and wearing out and corroding your capacity for faith. This is a dreadful thing to do. I have known a great many do this, and then, after going back, seem to become like an old rusty nail, without any grip, and with nothing left to take hold of. Come now, and commit yourself to God's truth first. Say "This is God's truth, and I stand upon it."

Secondly, commit yourself and your disease, your life and your strength to Him, and say, Lord, not only is this true, but this is true for me, and this is mine. Thou dost offer it to me in Thy Word, as my redemption right, purchased for me and paid for, that if I do not take it, nobody is the richer, and I let it go by default. Now, Lord, I come today, and unworthy in myself, I simply claim it because it is given me for Jesus' sake, and I solemnly and definitely take it now. I just step up here and put down my name for it, and henceforth, Lord, remember - remember in every trial of life, and remember in the great day - that today I take Thee as my physical life, just as I have taken Thee as my spiritual life. And now, from this moment, I believe it is mine, and, God helping me, I will never doubt again that from this moment it is given to me according to Thy Word.

I remember saying that to God with an awful sense of its solemnity, and I do not think He has permitted me to doubt once since. Just for a second there came a doubt, and it seemed to me, that if I cherished it, I and lose with God, that I just staggered for a moment. Then I recovered, and felt I dared not raise the question again. God could not lie: it was His Word, I took it and, whether I felt it or had any sense of it or not, I just went out and acted as if it were true, and I found it true.

Then, one thing more - be sure you use it for Him. It is an awfully sacred thing to have the very blood of Christ flowing in your veins; it is a solemn thing to have the life of Jesus quickening your heart, and lungs, and nerves, and it would be a dreadful thing to

defile it by contact with sin and the world. I could no more go now and spend an evening for my own selfish entertainment, that I could go and deliberately walk in to sin. I feel this life belongs to Jesus; I feel it is Jesus Himself; and He expects me to walk through the world as He walked, and to use every breath, thought and power constantly for Him.

Now, there is another question which I must not overlook. I feel I should be speaking only to part of this company, if I did not say a word about it. The question will come up in your mind, "Am I myself right with God; am I in a position where I have a right to claim this?" Well, dear friends, it is a very important, a vital question; and you must settle it before God, because any doubt about your own position or standing would hinder the rest of faith. You must be right with Him yourself. But it need not take you a month in order to get right, you can get right here where you are, if you are really willing to be led by the blessed Holy Spirit. If there is any sin you are conscious of, lay it at His feet, thoroughly - and utterly, claiming the atoning blood, and now believe that it is forever cleansed and washed away, and then take Him as the rectification of it, as the righteousness over against it. Are you conscious of being wrong with anybody, or wrong with Him? Instantly let the will and the whole being yield and surrender in the purpose of obedience at any cost, and then go forth from this place to lose no time in living this thing right out practically. I believe, before coming here, you have done this, but if it should be that you are conscious of anything that the Lord would frown upon, before you go any further, put your will in His hands, choose His will in the matter, and then, remember He will accept that will, and will enable you to carry it out promptly.

Are you conscious of a lack of faith, or a lack of holiness or spiritual power? Take the Lord Jesus Christ Himself for that as well as for the healing. One of my greatest stumbling blocks was this - I found healing was promised to the obedient ones, to those who are righteous with God, and I could not feel conscious of being so myself. But then the Lord showed me that He was my righteousness as well as my healing, and that He was my faith as well as my healing, that I was not anything but a babe, and that He did not expect anything from me in myself, that He knew when He took me, that I was helpless and useless; and so I threw myself upon Him and covenanted with Him that He should be to me righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, and so, to this hour, if I need faith for anything, I don't try to work up faith, I don't agonize in prayer until I get a certain degree of faith; I just say, "It is Thy faith, not mine; Thou hast it for me, just as Thou hast the blood, and the power, and the cleansing; it is all Thine, and I just

borrow it for the time. Lend me Thy faith for this hour;" and I take His faith, and depend upon it to be mine, I go forward and act as if I had it, and I find that He meets me and gives me the blessing of confidence in His healing and His power. I trust this will help you. Are you conscious of being weak or wrong? I wish you were more conscious of it. God expects nothing from your own natural life. Let the whole thing be done with, and just identify yourself with Jesus, and say, "Jesus is within; not I, but Christ; He is my righteousness, and my faith, and He is my bodily life too." He does not promise you that you will never be sick, He does not promise you that you will never die; but He does promise you that, until your work is done, until His purpose is fulfilled concerning you, He is the strength of your life, your victory for bodily as well as spiritual infirmity and oppression. Just go forth now, and walk in His strength, moment by moment, step by step, with sweet and thankful rest.

Be sure that you do not depend upon the anointing, be sure that you do not depend upon the touch - these are like Gehazi's staff. Be sure that you do not depend on any feeling. Be sure that you are not looking for any thrill or any consciousness or any physical sensation. Keep your mind off all these, and just reckon that a definite transaction is being finished between you and a definite, honest Christ today - that He means it, you mean it, and that it is settled forever. That is what trust is. It is an insult to God to have anything less. It is as much as to say that He does not mean what He promises, and that it is a farce. It is truly awful for us to act so. It is intensely real with Him, and it must be so to you.

Now, dear friends, will you do this, not in your emotional nature, but just with your will? Do you choose and purpose and determine - feeling or no feeling - that you will take His Word, and that you will put in your personal claim to Him to be your righteousness, your faith, and the power to keep you right; and for the grace to consecrate your life in the future? If so, you may say, Lord, this is all that I can do, but this is what Thou dost expect of me, as far as I know, with the very best light I have, and with a true and honest heart, I take Thee thus. Now, Lord, I believe Thou hast taken me, and here, before these witnesses, and before the great judgment, do I settle this question forever. I commit my whole being to Thee, and henceforth it is Thy care, and it is Thy responsibility; and now, Lord, Thou art mine - Thy body is mine, all Thy strength is mine, and day by day I shall draw upon it to my utmost need, for all the services Thou hast given me to do.

Then, begin to go forth, walking and stepping out, quite like one who is healed, quite like one who has

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a Christ walking by your side and giving you all his physical strength to lean upon; and don't be too careful of yourself; don't be rash and silly, trying to show how strong you are, but when He calls you to any service, just calmly go forward, and rationally do it, expecting Him to give you the necessary strength to carry you through. And when you have got through, don't expect to have a spell of weariness and reaction, but just take Him for the reaction too, and don't first lie down when you are tired, but get to your knees and pray it off, and then lie down. I cannot sleep mightily things for the heathen world. He is waiting for us to count Him faithful to do mighty things for the Christian church. He

is waiting for us to trust Him to do mighty things in the way of healing. We spend too much time in imitating the men of Nazareth, where He could not do "many mighty works...because of their unbelief." I have now and then seen such glimpses, during this Conference, of what our God could do, and what our God would do, if only a little band of us understood His heart, if only a little band of us would get from the human to the divine side of prayer. If we could abandon our own energy, and that strange, almost blasphemous idea of working upon God until we compel Him to do a thing, and see the glorious reality, that God only waits for our united trust to move ----

### Reading 11.3

## Divine Healing and Medical Science\*

A.B. Simpson

*Every good and perfect gift is from above and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. (James 1:17).*

There is a place for natural and scientific healing. In the economy of nature in almost every form of life and organism there is a certain recuperative power. The abrasion of a branch heals itself and frequently is stronger in the place affected than before. The severed bones of a dislocation knit by a natural process, and it is said they seldom break again in the same place, which has been not only healed but reinforced by nature's recuperative power. The chief reliance of the intelligent physician is upon this innate force in the human frame which the doctors call *vis medicatrix naturae*.

This natural principle has been turned to account by the skill and experience of centuries in connection with the medical art. While there have been in every age quacks, pretenders, and charlatans, yet, upon the whole, the science of medicine and surgery has made much progress and accomplished undoubted results for the relief of suffering and the benefit of humanity, especially in the past century. While its skill is limited and its work marked by much human imperfection, yet he would be a very narrow-minded critic who should refuse to class it among the good gifts of God's creation and providence. It is not a perfect gift by any means, but there is much in it that is unquestionably good.

And there are multitudes of people who know no better way. They do not know the Lord either as a Saviour or Healer, and to deny them the only help they are able to avail themselves of would be short-sighted, cruel, and fanatical.

But God has a better way for His children. Divine Healing is the heritage and privilege of the family of God, while like Joseph's boughs that ran over the wall, its blessings reach beyond the people of God and often bring help and deliverance to those who are strangers to His love, yet it is primarily intended for Christians. "Is any among you sick, let him call for the elders of the church, and the prayer of faith shall heal the sick and the Lord shall raise him up." This is the "perfect gift" which recognizes no limitation of functional or organic disease as human remedies do, but claims the boundless promise of the infinite God for all our needs.

### Divine Healing Supernatural.

And Divine Healing is wholly different in its principle and processes from natural healing. It is distinctly supernatural although not always miraculous. It means the direct touch of God, a divine addition to the innate forces of human nature. It is not the mere improvement of old organs, functions, and conditions, but it is the beginning of a new kind of life, even the resurrection life of the Lord Jesus Himself imparted to

\* A.B. Simpson, *Earnests of the Coming Age*, New York: Christian Alliance Pub. Co., 1921, pp. 98-103.

us through our union with His person. It is the beginning, the germ, the earnest of our own future resurrection.

Therefore, it is as impossible to combine it with natural healing as it would be to combine a journey to Albany by a stage coach and an express train, or the ascension of the latest skyscraper with one foot on the elevator and the other on the winding stair. The truth is medical methods are mechanical while Divine Healing is not by external applications but by an internal and subtle vital force which medicine cannot supply or imitate. If a combination is attempted, it will probably result in a conflict instead of a union of forces and do more harm than good. It is all right to ask God to bless the use of means, but this is wholly different from the direct operation of Divine Healing which needs no help from man and where the attempt to help may only hinder.

### **Divine Healing a Gift.**

Divine Healing, being part of the redemptive work of the Lord Jesus Christ, comes to us on the principle of free grace and by simple faith without works. We cannot work it out any more than we can work out the salvation of our soul. We can only receive it by simple trust as the gift of God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Indeed, the double action of the mind in "looking this way and that way" as between the doctor and the Lord is very apt to weaken faith. We know that the faintest prop is often sufficient to tempt us to lean our weight upon it and lessen our supreme confidence in God alone. We all remember the story of the man who in his dream heard a voice calling to him, "Let go that twig;" and as he let go, he fell into the arms of mercy which were waiting to receive him. A very little twig is often sufficient to keep us swinging with part of our weight at least withheld from the entire committal which is essential to effectual faith.

In order, therefore, to receive divine life for our body, it is necessary that we should turn from all other hopes and reliances, realize our entire dependence upon the Lord, and commit our case definitely to Him, believing that He undertakes it and refusing to doubt or question even though there may be some testing and delay. It is the prayer of faith that heals the sick, and Christ has defined faith in this explicit way, "When ye pray, believe that ye receive the things ye ask for and ye shall have them."

### **Divine Healing an Imparted Life.**

As Divine Healing is the direct imparted life of the Lord Jesus Christ to our body, it is essential that we shall know Him and know how to touch Him to

appropriate His strength and live by His life. It is as true today as it ever was, that as many as touch Him are "made perfectly whole." But to touch Him is much more than to mingle in the jostling crowd and to run after other people who appear to us to have some gift of healing or power of faith that we do not possess.

Therefore in this work we teach people first to come to the Lord for salvation and to become personally acquainted with Him, and then as they learn to live upon Him for other things, it will be perfectly natural for them to take Him also for their bodily needs and find experimentally true such precious words as these, "In Him we live and move and have our being." "The life, also, of Jesus is made manifest in our mortal flesh." "Because I live ye shall live also." "The Lord is for the body and the body is for the Lord." "He that eateth me even he shall live by me."

### **No Retreat.**

After we have known the Lord as our Healer it is a very serious thing to go back to the "beggarly elements of this world." Faith can go forward forever, but there is no divine provision for retreat without great peril and loss. The pathway of life is strewn with mournful examples of the children of God who have turned aside and fallen by the way. Medical treatment does not appear to have the same effect upon those who have learned the better way and given up the good for the perfect gift. Even drugs have a doubly deleterious influence upon a body that has been cleansed and purified by the life of the Lord Jesus. Let us be very careful about even looking back after we have taken advance ground. "If they had been mindful of that country from which they went out, they might have had opportunity to have returned, but now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly. Wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God." Let us not make our God ashamed of us.

### **Cautions**

As law abiding citizens, however, let us be very careful about ignoring or violating the laws of the State. While you may not think, and I do not think, that vaccination makes a material difference for one who is really trusting God, yet it would be a very arrogant and discourteous attitude to refuse to conform to the requirements of the public schools and the medical authorities with regard to this matter, as well as the whole system of sanitary legislation, which is a matter affecting the interests of the community quite as much as your own.

Finally, let us be very careful about assuming the responsibility for the healing of others, and thus making ourselves liable as criminals in many cases through the

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death of persons who were in no condition to trust the Lord for themselves. We have no right to assume the responsibility for others beyond their own faith in God. It is well to remember that far-reaching direction which

the apostle has given us respecting our social attitudes, "He that in these things serveth Christ is acceptable to God and approved unto men."

### Reading 11.4

## A Cloud of Witnesses Concerning Divine Healing\*

### REV. HENRY WILSON, D.D.

*Assistant Minister St. George's Church, New York  
(Prot. Epis.)*

Words are always feeble to express truth, and especially spiritual verities. None that I can command would ever express what I now desire to say, and nothing but a sense of duty would tempt me to put into print statements of facts which have to do with the very springs of my being, and with the most momentous crisis of my life. But, for the glory of God, and in the hope that this may meet the eye and possibly bring a ray of comfort to the heart of some of the great host of suffering children of God, among whom I was so long numbered; out of the fullness of a heart overflowing with thanksgiving for the great things He has done for me, I venture to tell, in as few words as possible, how the Lord Jehovah became to me Jehovah Rophi, the Lord my Healer.

At the age of twenty-five I left college, very much broken down through overwork, and entered the ministry in a parish where for seventeen years and a half I laboured with a weak body, twice seriously injured by accidents almost fatal; for years a prey to dyspepsia of the worst kind; to liver disease and all its attendant miseries; with nervous depression and fainting fits after the slightest unusual exertion. A burden to myself, a source of constant anxiety to my family and friends, a nuisance to the doctors, and a kind of walking apothecary shop, I dragged through my work with what sickly weariness and painfulness they only know who have suffered like things. After passing through the great spiritual crisis of my life, and into the glorious liberty of the sons of God, I came to New York in the fall of 1883, with a heaven of joy in my soul, but in great weakness of body, and physically unfit for much ministerial work. After a rest of a month or two, during

which I followed the usual course of invalids, a dear friend invited me to attend one of Mr. Simpson's meetings in the Tabernacle on 23d Street.

Of Divine Healing at that time I knew nothing, except by hearsay and the evidence of one or two friends who had been wonderfully healed in answer to prayer.

But as the greatest spiritual blessing of my life had come to me a short time before by God's mercy in giving me the spirit of a little child and the willingness to be counted a fool for Christ's sake - so now I prayed Him to give me the same spirit, to take away from my mind all pride and prejudice, and that if this doctrine of Divine Healing were indeed His truth, and His truth for me, I might receive it and act upon it at once. The prayer was not long unanswered. The light soon shone, and the glorious Truth that Christ Jesus came not simply to save my soul from sin by His death, but to save my soul and body by His life - by the outpoured blood to redeem me, and by the in poured blood to sanctify and invigorate my whole being - this blessed truth came to me with all the freshness of a new revelation, and Jesus, through it, came and stood in the midst of my being as the source of all its energies, bodily and spiritual. Having once thus seen Jesus as never before, and accepted Him as my life for soul and body, the rest was easy. Thankfully acknowledging his "unspeakable gift," I was anointed for healing, consecration, and fuller service. From that hour of blessing - never to be forgotten - peace has reigned in my soul, and health in my body. More than two years have passed, the richest and best of my life. The body, instilled with the life of God, and the soul joyful in His salvation, have gone on from strength to strength, "one new man in Jesus Christ;" both working for Him today with a vigour and freshness never before known. I am a younger man, in every faculty of my being, than I was twenty years ago. More than twice the work, parochial and other, ever

\* A.B. Simpson, ed. *A Cloud of Witnesses Concerning Divine Healing*. New York: The Word, Work and World Publishing Co., 1887, pp. 10-14, 109-114, 118-128.

attempted by me, is now done with an ease and pleasure never mine before. The body that for years hardly knew what one day's freedom from pain was, now rejoices in robust health. Throat and lungs used nearly every day and night in the week in public speaking on the street and in the Church and Mission Hall, grow stronger instead of weaker through their continual exercise. The mind is clearer - thinks and studies with ease and comfort - while the soul seems to enlarge daily in its capacity for God and His truth. In a word, the old, dry pump of my former being, trying with laboured effort to produce the little pail of water once or twice a week for my thirsty people, has been turned into a springing well, perpetually flowing and overflowing in the service of perfect freedom, which leaves me stronger at the close of each duty than at the beginning. Not, as I once thought, does God give me strength only for service, but strength in service, for every new or further call upon me.

I need hardly add that the body once filled with every new or old remedy for disease, has not touched or tasted medicine for nearly three years. A physician has never once been consulted, and yet my oldest friends have expressed their astonishment to me at the marvellous change.

To God be all the glory for all the wondrous things He has done for me; and on His altar, for fuller service to the souls of man, I hereby re-consecrate this saved, healed, and fulfilled life, to be His and His only, my Lord and my God, my Saviour of soul and body!

"And so the years flow on, and only cast Light and more light upon the shining way. That more and more shines to the perfect day; Always intenser, clearer than the past. Because they only bear me on glad wing Nearer the Light of Light - the presence of the King!"

#### **MISS S. LINDENBERGER**

*Deaconess Berachah Home*

About fifteen years ago the dear Lord saved my soul and won my heart to Himself, and from that moment I have been conscious that I was redeemed by the precious blood of Christ. Soon after this the truth of divine healing was presented to me, and at that time I was ill with serious chronic disease, including my eyes, affected with granulated lids and farsightedness, and had been very frail in my body all my life.

I believed it at once and attempted to trust for healing, but I was very ignorant of the teaching of the Word of God. I had simple faith, believing Jesus could do all things, but did not know of the definite promises in His Word, and that I could claim and have them made real to me in the day of suffering and trial, or that healing is in the atonement of Christ, and free to all as they meet the conditions.

The Lord was very patient with me and so faithful. I trusted in a way, but wavered and questioned when all around me protested and insisted upon medical skill, and argued that remedies are provided by the Lord.

I was not strong enough to meet all this opposition, not having the Scriptures for my foundation and a "thus saith the Lord" to fall back upon, so I yielded and went back to the old way of remedies.

I can never forget the tender love of God in not reproving me, but so patiently helping me on even in the path that was not the most pleasing to Him, with the intention of bringing me out into the freedom of the full Gospel in later years.

He seemed to say to me, "My child, I want you to understand for yourself every step you take, and see this truth in the Word of God, and not depend upon the testimony of others, and I will teach you from My Word and by my Spirit, and lead you into light and liberty, and enable you, by My grace, to walk in the path I have chosen for you!" I trusted Him to do so, having learned my helplessness to even have any faith, and also the precious lesson to sympathize with others who are slow in understanding His will for them, and that we must be established in the Word and rest on this sure foundation, if we are to stand in the severe testings that come to us all.

I had no religious influences around me when a child, and was brought up in a life of luxury and ease, having almost every wish gratified; so when the Lord took me in hand He saw it necessary to discipline and teach me many lessons not pleasing to the flesh, but important in preparation for my future work.

I stumbled on for years, serving Him as best I could and receiving much blessing in my spiritual life and the opening up of His precious Word to me, with an earnest desire, implanted by the Holy Spirit, to fully follow Him.

It is about six years since He sent me to England and permitted me to meet with His dear children in London and Switzerland, and learn more fully of the teaching of Divine healing and a life of union with Christ.

At this time He called me to lay aside my glasses, which I had worn for several years when reading, writing or sewing, and trust my eyes to Him alone for healing. They were very weak and in such a condition that it caused great suffering and inflammation to use them for any length of time without the glasses, and they had been so all my life.

I gave up the glasses, wishing to obey God, and having the assurance that He would make my eyes strong. I commenced using them just the same as if I was wearing the glasses, without being conscious of any

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change in any way, only the clear conviction in my soul that God was working.

From this time the Lord met with me in healing, and my expectations were more than realized and the "exceeding abundantly" given to me, and I have had for the last few years literally new eyes, and am able to use them constantly - and often by lamp light for hours late into the night - without the least trouble, and in fact no thought about them, only that it is a delight to use them and be so free from any trouble in this way.

This encouraged me to trust fully for healing for my body and strength for my work, and laying aside all means, I was entirely healed and made to praise the Lord for His marvellous goodness to me.

Since I entered Berachah Home nearly five years since I have learned to know and trust the Lord in a deeper sense than ever before, and prove Him to be a complete Saviour, as I could not have done in an easy place. Day by day I have taken my strength from the living Christ, and it has been a wonderful lesson to learn how to feed upon Him daily for physical strength, and to find in actual experience that He giveth "power to the faint; and to them that have no might He increaseth strength."

I have again and again seen my natural strength fail and my body wither under the pressure of work and testing in many ways, but at the same time I have been conscious of a Divine life, flowing in and sustaining me, a life which was not my own, but from God, and I understood a little of the meaning of II Corinthians 4:10,11,16 and John 6:57.

It has taught me to walk very softly before Him, and whenever I let care and the many petty trials of life touch my spirit, my body will wither under it very quickly, but as I spring into my position in Christ and hide under His protecting wing, letting Him fight the battles for me and walking in obedience, all is well and a glorious springing life sufficient for my work is given to me, and I am enabled to run and not be weary, and walk and not faint. I do believe that it is not overwork which breaks down so many of God's dear children, but the failure to mount up with wings as eagles, and to sit in the heavenly places in Christ.

In the summer the victory Christ has given me over the heat and sun has made me sing songs of praise. I have suffered for several years with my head when in the sun, and His Word has been now fulfilled to me, "The sun shall not smite thee by day," and entire victory given, and I rejoice to know, but actual experience, that Jesus is the Saviour of soul and body, our Keeper every moment, and a present help in every time of need. In our work in Berachah Home God is with us. Hundreds have found Christ to be their Saviour, Sanctifier and Healer, and continually notes of praise come from all

parts of the country from those who have been with us, telling of what the Lord has done for them and how markedly He is using them in service for others.

### GEORGE P. PARDINGTON

*Brooklyn, NY*

#### **The Crooked Made Straight**

I am the son of Rev. R.S. Pardington, a minister of the Methodist Episcopal Church. In 1876 my father was pastor of the Fort Street Church, Detroit, Michigan. I was then ten years old, in very good health, and attending one of the public schools. In May, while in school, I received a severe injury through the carelessness of my teacher, a lady, who, seizing me by the coat-collar and jerking my right arm up and back till I felt something snap, gave me a severe shaking. I was greatly frightened. The injury extended to the right arm, shoulder, neck, and back, giving a terrible shock to my nervous system.

When I reached home I was in a very excited condition, and denounced the conduct of my teacher in wild and incoherent terms. My parents, alarmed by my confused, unnatural language, sent for our family physician. I became delirious; and, by the time he arrived, my pulse had risen to 140, with a very high fever. Nausea and diarrhea set in, and for twenty-four hours my condition was critical.

I soon recovered from this intense nervous excitement. My pulse fell from 140 to 120; but at this latter height it remained, with slight change, during my entire illness. I complained of a severe aching throughout my right arm and shoulder, as if the muscles and ligaments had been strained. The closest examination by the most skilful physicians revealed no injury. Soon the two middle fingers of my right hand began to twitch, then the hand moved spasmodically, and, finally, the whole arm became utterly uncontrollable. My parents insisted that I should control the movements of my arm, but I could not do so. The muscles of the right arm gradually contracted, drawing the hand toward the shoulder. This increased, till the palm of the hand settled between the shoulder-blades, where the hand remained day and night for three and a-half years. The muscles of my neck also contracted, drawing my chin to my breast. The muscles assumed great rigidity. I was under the special care of the best surgeon in Detroit, who administered electricity to me, and ordered a brace, which I could not wear. My spine was curving laterally, and was also thrown forward, so that my chest and abdomen projected abnormally. The only comfortable attitude which I could assume was to lie on the floor, flat upon my stomach, my chest and head being supported by my elbows. In this position my spine curved still more. I was twisted entirely out of



shape, and when lying upon the floor, on my back, my body formed a complete arch, my head and heels only touching the floor. I was, indeed, a helpless cripple.

I continued to grow worse. A change of physicians would occasionally prove beneficial to me; but the disease, every feature of which baffled medical science, was every day more deeply seating itself in my system. Every physician who investigated my case was puzzled. My general health was excellent and there seemed to be so much to encourage us. The unanimous judgment of the members of a medical society, who met to consider my case, was that the nerves of sensation were in a normal condition, but that the nerves of motion were thoroughly disorganized.

In 1877 my father was appointed to the pastorate of another church in Detroit. Although our new home was less than three miles distant, it was with the greatest difficulty that I was removed there. During that and the next year, I was taken to various mineral springs and summer resorts to try the effect of a change of climate and scenery, but I grew steadily worse. Steel corsets and plaster-of-paris jackets were in turn tried. It often took a whole afternoon to put a plaster cast on me, so crooked and helpless was I. After the case was put on me, I was placed upon my back on a board, one or two persons sitting on my body to keep me, by main strength, in as straight a position as possible while the jacket dried. So great was the tension of the muscles up and down my back, that upon regaining my feet the case would often break over at the back.

My right arm still retained its position over my head. Nothing that was used affected it the least. Ointments, liniments of all descriptions, every expedient that medical science could suggest was tried, but all failed. I was rubbed night and morning for an hour, in the hope of softening the muscles. As a last resort, my dear mother, unknown to any member of our family, took the matter to the Lord. It seemed to her that, if the arm did not soon come down to its proper position, she would die. Despairing of earthly help, she committed the arm to Him, desiring that His will should be done in the matter. One evening soon after, while conversing with a friend, I took my arm from over my head and it fell at my side naturally. The movement was one of ease and rest. My arm was instantly healed, and has caused me no trouble since then. As I think of that hour I wonder that we did not then claim perfect healing of the Lord; but our hearts were blinded; we did not know the way of faith.

In the fall of 1880 we moved again; this time to a beautiful little village in southern Michigan. It was almost impossible for me to be taken to our new home. I was placed under the kind and tender care of a Christian physician in the village, and at first success

seemed to attend his efforts to relieve me. My head, through a change in my case, having been straightened from my breast, now began to be drawn backward. I lost all control of it. When not supported by my hands, clasped together at the back of my head, it fell on my shoulders. The muscles of the neck enlarged, I became as helpless as a babe, and the days of my life appeared to be numbered. The hour was a dark one.

Having been converted at the age of seven, I enjoyed the love of God in my heart, during my illness. From the first I was resigned to my lot, willing to suffer or do anything for Jesus' sake. Soon after my injury, I received the assurance that I should get well. While others gave me up, I was hopeful and happy. I knew that God would heal me, though how I did not know. And, now, in the spring of 1881, while my death would not have been a surprise at any time, I was confident that in some way I should yet be cured.

In the summer "The Prayer of Faith," by Carrie F. Judd, was placed in the hands of my mother by a friend. It came like a revelation to her. Before I had read the book, I was so impressed that the dear Lord had sent it to me, that I was ready to accept healing. After reading the first few pages I dropped on my knees and thanked God for revealing Himself to me as my healer. Without the knowledge or advice of any one I stopped the use of my medicine, and committed myself to the Lord for healing. I wrote to Miss Judd to pray for me. My parents were in sympathy with me, but I did all the acting. I dismissed my physician immediately. Yielding to the persuasion of my parents, I did not take off my plaster jackets. Friends in Michigan united with those in Buffalo for my complete recovery. I expected that the Lord would heal me instantly. As I felt no better, and my friends saw no change in me, I was perplexed and disappointed. And here was my great struggle. I did not know, as I do now, that faith is not sight, and that we must believe before we see. The Lord taught me a lesson then which has since enabled me always to conquer in His strength. First, He renewed the assurance that I had always had that I should be healed; but He taught me to look to Him and not to what He would do. Secondly, He impressed me with the conviction that I have always had since, and which has proved so true, that, as my disease had come upon me slowly, so would my recovery be gradual. This to many may seem strange and not in harmony with the experience of others; but time has shown me that the glory of God has been advanced in my gradual recovery. Many, very many, have found in my case ground for their own faith, and I thank God that, although my health has been regained slowly, it has been no less the power of the Lord in my body. The lessons He has taught me in my time of waiting have been so precious to me that I

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would not exchange my experience if I could. After all He knows best.

In a few days my head was healed instantly. I regained the complete use of it in a moment of time. The water on the brain, signs of which were appearing, all passed away, and the muscles of my neck relaxed so that I could move my head at pleasure. But my form was still out of shape. My spine was as crooked as a letter S. My abdomen projected so far that my shoulders and hips nearly touched. I still wore my brace, as without it I could not walk.

From the time I accepted Christ as my Healer the following question had confronted me, "Can I trust the Lord to heal my crooked and diseased spine!" I was quickly forced to a decision. My former physicians and friends were watching me to see if my faith would reach to my deformed condition. I had a fearful struggle. In Buffalo Miss Judd was praying for me. On Thanksgiving Day I gained the victory! I decided that I could and would trust God to make me "every whit whole." I took off my plaster case and walked out in the strength of Jesus. Oh, how weak my spine was! I was sorely tempted to put my case on again, but His power proved sufficient for my need. I was permitted at this time to realize Christ's death as an atonement for sickness as well as for sin. With this light, notwithstanding my deformed condition, I boldly claimed that I was "every whit whole on the finished work of Christ." This ground, once taken, I steadfastly

maintained. I confessed my belief to every one. In order that I might fulfill the command of James v., 14,15, in the summer of 1882 I visited Miss Judd in Buffalo. There I was anointed and was taught the secret of faith in a most precious manner. My trip was a source of great blessing to me. My life was quickened spiritually and physically, and I returned home greatly improved and strengthened. I improved steadily, to the joy of my friends. I reasoned that if I was healed I should act as if I was well. This I did in acting my faith. I gained in a marked manner only as I acted my faith.

In 1883 my father was transferred to an Eastern conference and appointed pastor of the First church, Hartford, Conn. Here I was able at once to have a private teacher and to resume my long neglected studies. In 1884 I entered school again. My spine had become straight and I was well. My health improved steadily in every manner, and my parents and friends rejoiced in the fact that the dear Lord had restored me entirely to health. In 1885 we moved to Brooklyn, and since then I am no more the helpless boy, but the strong, firm, vigorous young man. Can anyone wonder that I have dedicated myself to God, to do whatsoever He shall bid me? With a sound body, a consecrated life, and a willingness to be used in any way for Him, I am waiting His summons to my life work, which, I feel assured, He will point out to me in His own time and way.

They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength.  
- Isa. 11:31.

Reading 12.1

## The Psycho-Spiritual Dynamics of Physical Healing in Alliance Spirituality

Rev. David John Smith

### INTRODUCTION

The experience of God in physical healing is one of the most profoundly affirming and undeniably irrefutable demonstrations of God's power and love in Christ to humanity. The experience of dramatic and authentic physical healing quickens the individual beyond a realm of spiritual ecstasies, psychological placebos, or psychical phenomenon. Healing opens the seeker to a true dimension of reality, namely, to encounter the Risen Christ.

The Christian and Missionary Alliance has been committed to physical healing since its inception as an integral part of the good news of Jesus Christ. In the face of the modern, scientific mind and the categorical denial of the supernatural dimension as well as the continuing and baffling medical conditions facing our generation, the ordinary believer in Jesus with a physical need struggles to grasp any hope of receiving a desperately desired and needed physical healing.

This document briefly traces the historical framework relative to physical healing in The Christian and Missionary Alliance denomination, and then develops psycho-spiritual dynamics of experientially processing physical healing in Alliance spirituality.<sup>1</sup>

### A. THE HISTORICAL FRAMEWORK FOR PHYSICAL HEALING IN THE ALLIANCE DENOMINATION

The historical framework for physical healing in The Christian and Missionary Alliance begins with the personal experience of its founder and later articulation of its denominational theology.

<sup>1</sup> Some underlying presuppositions include: The Old and New Testament Scriptures are authoritative. People can know God personally through Jesus Christ. Physical healing is part of the good news of Christ.

Since I am focusing on Alliance spirituality, most of my primary resources are Alliance authors. Many of the older resources are out of print. Thanks to Mr. Sandy Ayer, Director of Library Services at Canadian Bible College/Canadian Theological Seminary, in Regina, Saskatchewan, for providing access to these. *The quotations used from Alliance leaders reflects their original gender usage.*

### 1. THE EXPERIENCE OF HEALING SHAPES A THEOLOGY

The theology of Dr. Albert Benjamin Simpson (1843-1919), the founder of The Christian and Missionary Alliance, was shaped by his own life-changing experience of physical healing. He was a weak and frail man with a chronic heart disorder who learned to trust Christ as healer of his physical body.<sup>2</sup> Not only did Simpson find new strength for ministry, but he developed Friday Healing Meetings and Berachah Healing Homes.<sup>3</sup>

In the formative years of the Alliance, literally thousands of people were healed of life-threatening and incapacitating sicknesses in answer to prayer.<sup>4</sup> Even if

<sup>2</sup> For Simpson's personal testimony of healing, see A. B. Simpson, *The Gospel of Healing, Revised Edition* (=GH) (Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: Christian Publications, Inc., 1915), 153-172. In brief, he had a nervous breakdown at age fourteen while preparing for college which took him near death. In his first pastorate at twenty-one he broke down with heart trouble and worked for years with constant remedies and hundreds of times felt as if he would fall in the middle of a service. He had two other collapses of long duration that threatened his life. While serving in New York, a prominent doctor told him that he would succumb to his illness in a few months. While recuperating at a camp meeting, he heard people testify of healing. He went to his Bible, found the answers he was searching for, and became convinced that healing was part of the good news of Christ. There he made a covenant with God and appropriated healing. After several tests of faith, his strength was renewed, and he enjoyed phenomenal health until he was seventy-five.

<sup>3</sup> For a contemporary summary and analysis of Simpson's healing and healing ministry development, see Drake W. Travis, *Christ Our Healer Today: The Ministry of Healing in the Christian and Missionary Alliance* (=CHT) (Camp Hill, Pennsylvania: Christian Publications, Inc., 1996), 105-131.

<sup>4</sup> One such historical record listed healings from: "rheumatism, hay fever, poor eyesight, spinal trouble, tumor, dyspepsia, nervousness, paralysis, complication of diseases, diphtheria, Bright's disease, heart disease, nervous prostration, asthma, deafness, severe dose of poison, neuralgia, fever, pneumonia and malaria." A. B. Simpson, *The Word, the Work & the World* (=WWW) (July/August 1887): 81; quoted in Ernest Gerald Wilson, *The Christian and Missionary Alliance: Developments and Modifications of its Original Objectives* (Ann Arbor, Michigan: University Microfilms International, 1984) (Ph.D. diss., New York University, 1984), 176-177. For an early compilation of healings, see GH 173-184; and A. B. Simpson, ed., *A Cloud of Witnesses for Divine Healing: Second Edition* (=CW) (New York: Word, Work and World Publishing, Co., 1887). For a record over fifty

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some of these healings could have been explained away -- the nature of recovery was inevitable, a positive mental attitude apparently influenced a physical improvement, the natural self-healing of the body took place, later developments in medicine could have interpreted the resulting change for the better -- there were still many physical healings that could not be explained away medically or scientifically. The healings were too extraordinary, too dramatic, too numerous for anyone to categorically dismiss. God had extended grace to heal.

### 2. THE EXPERIENCE OF HEALING FRAMES A DENOMINATION

The Christian and Missionary Alliance is a Protestant, evangelical denomination founded in 1887 with two ministry passions -- deeper life in Christ and worldwide evangelization. Its historic roots grew from five movements prominent in the late nineteenth-century: gospel evangelism, the holiness movement, the divine healing movement, the modern missionary movement, and the rebirth of premillennialism. Today The C & MA has a worldwide constituency of over two and one half million people in fifty-six nations and is one of the fastest growing denominations in Canada.

The early Alliance leaders made affirmations about healing as part of the good news of Jesus Christ. Beginning with their 1887 constitution came the assertion of "divine healing through the name of Jesus for those who believe and obey him."<sup>5</sup> Belief in healing, however, was "not the whole gospel, nor perhaps the chief part of it, but it is a part."<sup>6</sup> Jesus' commission was to "preach the gospel, heal the sick." Adherents to this movement accepted a simple fourfold gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour, Sanctifier, Healer, and Coming King.

Later as the self-identity of The Christian and Missionary Alliance began to shift from a deeper life movement or missions society and into denominational status, an official Statement of Faith was adopted.<sup>7</sup> This document includes a potent declaration:

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years later, see David J. Fant, ed., Modern Miracles of Healing (Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: Christian Publications, Inc., 1943). For a current compilation of testimonies, see "Chapter 5. Healing Today," CHT 133-182.

<sup>5</sup> "Constitution of the Christian Alliance," The Christian Alliance Yearbook (1888): 48.

<sup>6</sup> GH 6. See also 182.

<sup>7</sup> While a Statement of Faith was written in 1965, official self-acknowledgement that The C & MA had become a denomination did not occur until 1974. Eternity magazine reported in 1974 that "After 87 years as a para-denominational organization dedicated to missionary activity, the Christian and Missionary Alliance has officially recognized what many people have known for years: the Alliance is a denomination." "C & M Alliance Converts to Denominational Status," Eternity 25 (August 1974): 8. There were

8. Provision is made in the redemptive work of the Lord Jesus Christ for the healing of the mortal body. Prayer for the sick and anointing with oil as taught in the Scriptures are privileges for the Church in this present age.<sup>8</sup>

This emphasis is based on Scriptures such as Exodus 15:25-26; Psalm 103:2-5; Isaiah 53:4-5; Matthew 8:16-17; Romans 8:11; 1 Corinthians 6:12-14; and James 5:13-16.<sup>9</sup>

Some shifts have already taken place in understanding healing in the brief history of the Alliance. In early Alliance spirituality, there was a greater acknowledgement of a sacred worldview emphasizing God's providence in circumstances while minimizing the analysis of medical causes of sickness or pursuing medical cures.<sup>10</sup> Today, while still holding to supernatural healing, there is a greater appreciation to discern causes and view the medical profession as an ally rather than as an antagonist.<sup>11</sup> According to a recent survey of roughly two-hundred Alliance pastors, missionaries and educators, the commitment to the

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earlier doctrinal statements made but not officially adopted by the larger constituency.

<sup>8</sup> Manual of The Christian and Missionary Alliance in Canada: 1996 Edition (Willowdale, Ontario: The Christian and Missionary Alliance in Canada, 1996), 3, 39. While Simpson taught that the basis of faith in divine healing was in the atonement of Jesus Christ, he did not conceive of its availability as equal to the offer of salvation. Thus healing was viewed as a provision for God's children yet subordinate to salvation. See John Sawin, "The Fourfold Gospel," in The Birth of a Vision (=BV), ed., David F. Hartzfeld and Charles Nienkirchen (Beaverlodge, Alberta: Buena Book Services, 1986), 12.

<sup>9</sup> While the Alliance believes in divine healing and has some similarities to Pentecostalism, it also predates the emergence of the Pentecostal movement and has traditionally distanced itself from it.

<sup>10</sup> See Kenneth Mackenzie, Divine Life for the Body (=DLB) (New York: Christian Alliance Publishing Co., 1926), 112-115.

<sup>11</sup> Simpson's position was that it is the will of God to heal all who believe apart from medical practices for the Scriptures never commanded the use of these means. See GH 67-69, 120-121. For example, he wrote that when a person is sick, God's Word does not say, "Let him call for a doctor and a prescription," but, "Let him call for the elders of the church." A. B. Simpson, Friday Meeting Talks, Or Divine Prescriptions for the Sick and Suffering: Series No. 2 (=FMT2) (Typewritten bound reprint without place, publisher or date), 48. Writing in 1990, Siplely proposed that the will of God needs to be discerned for the specific situation and that God may choose to use medical means because nowhere in the Scriptures is there the injunction to refuse medical treatment. See Richard M. Siplely, Understanding Divine Healing (=UDH) (Camp Hill, Pennsylvania: Christian Publications, 1990), 153-154. Does this not express the common fundamental difference between something being discarded when not supported by clear Scriptures, and something being retained unless clearly rejected or prohibited by Scripture? For a helpful historical overview and biblically balanced analysis on this issue, see Keith Bailey, "10. Divine Healing and Modern Medicine," in Divine Healing: The Children's Bread (=CB) (Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: Christian Publications, Inc., 1977), 177-186. Bailey further suggests that physicians are authorized to diagnose diseases not churches. CB 184.

ministry of divine healing is declining.<sup>12</sup> In light of these shifts and with sensitivity to our historical roots, a contemporary, systematic synthesis of the theology and practice in physical healing within Alliance spirituality is proposed.

## **B. THE PSYCHO-SPIRITUAL DYNAMICS OF PHYSICAL HEALING IN ALLIANCE SPIRITUALITY**

How does a believer in Jesus Christ experientially process their own physical affliction and move toward receiving divine physical healing? The answers are fraught with further unanswered questions and mystery for faith and healing are both delicate and complex. Observations of those seeking healing suggest general psycho-spiritual phases that they will often pass through in processing their own healing. Lindstrom suggests that an underlying psycho-therapeutic theory for healing needs to include the following five elements.

(1) Clarity, rationale, and a conceptual framework - A structural framework is needed to cognitively process the chaotic, anxiety-loaded situation of being sick.

(2) Social recognition of the therapist and their role - A social network recognizes the healer including their education, training, experience and practice.

(3) Healing setting and rituals - A legitimate process provides a focal point of trustworthy content and for actual healing practice.

(4) Emotional arousal - A therapeutic faith is created to facilitate changes in attitude and perspective by combining the first three elements and by further fostering hope and expectation.

(5) Repetition of the therapeutic gains of the procedure - A follow-up program is included as part of the treatment package.<sup>13</sup>

This paper attempts to integrate these underlying elements and break down the healing factors into incremental steps for diagnostic purposes in Alliance spirituality.<sup>14</sup> This will enable a person to discern where

they are at in the process of seeking a cure and will serve as a guide for a person helping others to take further steps. At every step, however, there is mystery never fully unraveled, for these steps are not proposed as a magical formula nor a mechanical methodology to achieve healing, nor are all of these factors necessarily evidenced in every case. The three overarching inner phases of the individual seeking healing are: a personal preparation to be healed, a culminating crisis of the healing event, and an ongoing process of healing and health.

### **1. PERSONAL PREPARATION TO BE HEALED**

What happens when a believer in Jesus becomes physically sick? What goes through their mind? What are they feeling inside? What resulting, internal movements begin to ensue? What and how are they processing their condition as they contemplate the possibility of healing? The first phase in the movement toward healing is the phase of personal preparation to be healed.

## **A. PERSONAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF A PHYSICAL PROBLEM AND THE NEED FOR HEALING**

When a person comes to God for physical healing, they initiate a series of heart-searching questions. They begin to ask themselves and God what is the problem. They may discover that their physical need is symptomatic of a deeper spiritual need, or they may find themselves entering a deeper level of their faith journey, for the mind, body and spirit are integrated.

Obviously, the individual must come to some personal acknowledgement that they are indeed sick in some way and in need of some kind of cure. God's ideal standard for people is health and wholeness in every respect and sickness means that they are less than whole. The idea that God cares for bodies dismisses Platonic dualism, Gnostic notions and fanatical asceticism. Episcopal minister with close connections to the Alliance, Kenneth Mackenzie, wrote that "a sick body is not the normal condition for ... expressions of the divine presence."<sup>15</sup> Human nature tells us to avoid physical pain, suffering, weakness, and the shortening of life and to do whatever we can to be delivered from these conditions. If one denies that they have a physical need, then there will be no quest toward a cure. Indeed, the Lord's Prayer calls us to pray, "Deliver us from evil." Essentially, the individual begins to focus on their

<sup>12</sup> . CHT 1-6, 193-217.

<sup>13</sup> Lars G. Lindstrom, *Christian Spiritual Healing: A Psychological Study: Ideology and Experience in the British Healing Movement (=CSH)* (Uppsala, Sweden: Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis, 1992), 20-22.

<sup>14</sup> Lindstrom proposes four basic traditions that approach healing methodologies from different ideologies based on their theological preferences: pastoral-psychological, evangelical, sacramental and charismatic traditions. According to his limited definitions and explanations, the Alliance would be somewhere between evangelical and charismatic, between a primary focus on Jesus as Saviour for conversion from sin and the Holy Spirit as power released through spiritual gifts. CSH 132-137, 140-141. Simpson rejected the notion that all who were sick were sinning, nor did he major on manifestations of the spiritual gifts during the healing event. Three main forms of healing in pastoral praxis are mentioned in Robert L.

Kinast, "Healing," in *The New Dictionary of Catholic Spirituality (=NDCS)*, Michael Downey, ed. (Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1993), 467-468. They are: sacramental healing in anointing the sick, charismatic healing with manifestation of the grace of the Holy Spirit, and pastoral counseling and spiritual direction.

<sup>15</sup> DLB 39.

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condition by admitting their need for a cure and by stating their physical need in a concrete and exact way.

### B. DESIRE TO BE HEALED AND RESISTANCE OF SICKNESS

After acknowledging their need, the person must also desire to be healed.<sup>16</sup> Some people have little, underdeveloped or misplaced desires to be healed. Some people even enjoy their sickness.<sup>17</sup> Perhaps the attention they receive because of their malady prevents them from considering or expecting to be healed. Others may only "wish" to be healed. Others may seek healing for a minor physical need, when a greater healing could be sought after. There must be the driving motivation to "want" to be healed. Their use of ordinary psychological coping mechanisms facing a chaotic, anxiety-loaded situation are perceived as ineffective.

A corollary to the desire for healing proposed by Simpson is the resistance against the evil of sickness. We must take the attitude of resistance of the evil. We must not succumb to it, and accept it as an inevitable necessity, but take our stand against it and hold it steadily, refusing to yield or retreat.... Are we standing against our sorrows, sicknesses and calamities and holding steadily our position in battle?<sup>18</sup>

The seeker must desire to be healed and be motivated to seek after it specifically. In later steps, desire is not enough, but it is an important part of the process to receive healing. At times this desire will be intense, desperate and persistent. Sometimes, however, intense desire does not culminate in healing, and in these cases Christ's death on the cross can become a source of acceptance rather than a stumbling block.

Moreover, it is not even enough to desire to get rid of physical suffering. For the believer in Jesus, an underlying motivation for healing is for the pleasure of God and the glory of Christ, rather than to waste a life on selfish pleasures and pride. Simply, what does this person want Jesus to do for them physically? Further, what are their reasons for wanting to be healed?

### C. LEARNING TO KNOW GOD AND LEARNING LESSONS FROM GOD

While the individual contemplates their need for healing, they also become more receptive to know God more intimately and to learn various lessons from God.

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<sup>16</sup> While acknowledging that some sickness is a discipline from God, some mystical and devotional writers have sometimes unwisely encouraged Christians to embrace sickness as an angel, rather than to resist sickness as an enemy. But sickness is a curse, an infirmity, a weakness, an affliction, a bondage, an enemy, and has the smell of death. To resist it is both natural and spiritual. CB 195.

<sup>17</sup> UDH 79.

<sup>18</sup> FMT 20.

Sickness often becomes a prompting to seek beyond oneself to God. Mackenzie stated:

God insists that if we would experience His life, we must first know His personality.... If it is healing we need, let that go, until we get God. And having Him, we shall have all that He has to confer. Beware of beginning at the wrong end of the divine method of life impartation.<sup>19</sup>

A season of waiting upon God in stillness aids in making the divine presence real.<sup>20</sup> The practice of stillness is not laziness of faith, but a definite part of faith development in learning to know the mind and will of God in quietness. During this time it may be helpful to forget about the sickness for a while, in order to focus on God alone. Ultimately, people need God more than they need healing. It is necessary to take preliminary steps to know Christ as Saviour and then to press on to know God in a more intimate way on their journey to take Christ as Healer.

While considering healing, there may also be lessons about God or oneself to be learned from God. Simpson affirmed:

Sickness is not in itself a means of sanctification, but rather of calling our attention, and compelling us to be still and listen to the Divine voice, and also of revealing to us ourselves in all our weakness and imperfection.<sup>21</sup>

Sometimes a person is not prepared to receive healing all at once. They may need to learn patience or humility, while God is preparing that person to receive healing.<sup>22</sup> Sometimes God quickly heals a person at the beginning of their spiritual journey, but later in life they struggle with sickness, unhealed, and unable to understand why. Perhaps God is leading them into a deeper experience to know God and to learn deeper lessons of faith.<sup>23</sup> Knowing God and learning spiritual lessons is intensified when facing illness.

In the process of seeking a cure, the seeker may also be confronted with larger issues of human suffering.

In this meantime, between the "already" arrival but "not yet" fulfillment of the kingdom of God, what role does evil play? If God is omnipotent and benevolent, how can such a God cause and/or permit humans to suffer? How and why does a good God permit birth defects, epidemics, earthquakes, famines, and hurricanes? How

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<sup>19</sup> DLB 144.

<sup>20</sup> DLB 167.

<sup>21</sup> FMT 10.

<sup>22</sup> A. B. Simpson, Friday Meeting Talks, Or Divine Prescriptions for the Sick and Suffering (=FMT) (New York: The Christian Alliance Pub. Co., 1894), 135.

<sup>23</sup> FMT 91-93.

should individuals or communities assess and respond to life's hurts and disappointments?<sup>24</sup>

There are no comfortable answers. The admission that evil is mysterious is expressed side-by-side with the affirmation that God is incomprehensible. As the psalmist recognized:

Our God is in heaven;  
he does whatever pleases him (Psalm 115:3).

Part of knowing God includes acknowledging that God is incomprehensible, sovereign, and cannot be controlled. God *may* or *may not* heal, for while healing is hoped for and believed in, God is God whatever the outcome. The knowledge of God and the transformation of a life are greater than the temporal healing of the body, for God's purposes in healing or not healing are always redemptive.

#### D. SETTLED BELIEF THAT THE BIBLE TEACHES PHYSICAL HEALING

Another factor an ailing believer will face is a theological one. They must come to a settled belief that physical healing is indeed taught in the Word of God. Certainly, if the Christian believes the age of miracles has past or has never personally known someone to be healed, then their mind will probably not entertain the notion that healing is even a possibility. Though the testimony of healing from other people can bolster one's faith, the fulcrum of authority is the Old and New Testament Scriptures and not the experience of others. There are many often overlooked references and stories of sickness and healing in the Bible.

Faith begins by resting on these external principles and promises as assurances from the Bible. The rational mind looks for a foundation on which to build sincere faith. A thorough and honest search of the Scriptures will prove beneficial to the nurturance of faith.<sup>25</sup>

Consistent with Alliance spirituality is the progressive affirmation of Jesus as Saviour, Sanctifier and Healer who is willing and able to save, sanctify and heal.<sup>26</sup> It is the Scripture texts that provide the ground to believe that "provision [is] made for the bodily life of a saint; that there is a decree of spirituality which insures

the infusion of the life of the Lord Jesus for the demands of the physical nature."<sup>27</sup>

Albert Simpson's seminal publication on The Gospel of Healing contains a full forty percent discussing the scriptural texts that testify of God's healing work through both Old and New Testaments.<sup>28</sup> Clearly the basis for healing was and is realized on the authoritative biblical record. Healing is documented in the Bible and is to be believed as a scriptural doctrine.

The essential theological questions being asked by the suffering person are: "Can and does God heal? If so, on what basis?" They may find themselves stuck or advancing theologically on varying points of a continuum such as this:

(1) "God does not heal today." A person may be fully convinced that God healed in Bible times or that Jesus healed to prove his deity, but is theologically or culturally hemmed in from accepting the reality of healing in contemporary life. Sickness must be accepted. Complete healing will only be seen in the second advent.

(2) "God can heal if God sovereignly chooses to heal." This notion presumes that God can heal because God is powerful and God has the prerogative to suspend the laws of nature, but God may also withhold healing. This position sees healing as rare and does not concur that personalized prayer will make any fundamental difference.

(3) "God might heal in answer to prayer." This idea takes healing a step further, believing that prayer may make a difference but may also be full of doubts. Consideration is given to a sickness as the basis for going to God for healing, suggesting that perhaps the affliction is a call to prayer. In other words, prayer certainly will not hurt, and it may indeed help in a general way.

(4) "God heals today." This approach becomes acceptable when a person thinks of others' needs, perhaps those distant from themselves, but becomes less satisfying when they themselves are suffering.

(5) "Jesus heals today." The incarnation of Christ makes this affirmation of the transcendent God more immanent to the individual.

(6) "God wants to heal." This idea is based on the premise that the Bible teaches healing which expresses

<sup>24</sup> Richard Sparks, "Suffering," NDCS 950.

<sup>25</sup> Bailey wrote: "The Scriptures provide the seeds of faith. Time given to study, meditation, and prayer will promote the germination of those seeds of faith." CB 191.

<sup>26</sup> For example: "God our Saviour ... wants all ... to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth" (1 Timothy 2:3-4). This is followed by: "It is God's will that you should be holy" (1 Thessalonians 4:3). Then, "Lord, if you are willing, you can make me clean.... I am willing.... Be clean" (Matthew 8:2-3). See DLB 34-38.

<sup>27</sup> DLB 30.

<sup>28</sup> Bailey develops a biblical theology of healing in CB 59-141. Simpson also made an expository assessment of the scriptural position of divine healing in A. B. Simpson, The Lord for the Body: Discovering God's Plan for Divine Health and Healing (=LB) (Camp Hill, Pennsylvania: Christian Publications, 1996). (This volume was first published in 1925, revised in 1959, and has now been edited and republished for today's reader.) For the best, up-to-date exegesis of the biblical texts on healing, see CHT 7-103.

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God's will to heal. God's desire to heal is seen in God's mercy and compassion.

(7) "Jesus suffered on the cross to redeem fallen humanity." This statement implies that humanity may have access to wholeness in spirit, soul and body, and healing can be a possibility because of the redemptive work of Jesus on the cross. (This is a general affirmation, rather than a specific one.)

(8) "Jesus desires to heal today." The conclusion here is that the same incarnate Jesus that healed while on earth in the first century is the same risen and ascended Lord Jesus who is alive today, responds in mercy and compassion to suffering humanity, and acts with power to heal.<sup>29</sup> (Some Alliance people would maintain this position.)

(9) "Healing is in the atonement of Christ." Included in the message of Jesus is the good news that he died and rose again to redeem our physical bodies in need of healing in a similar way that he died to redeem our spiritual condition of separation from God. Healing is available and is a privilege for the believer. Faith is a necessary catalyst, but healing cannot be demanded. The mystery of those not healed thus falls under the theology that the kingdom of God "has already come" and "is not yet." (Most Alliance people would maintain this position.)<sup>30</sup>

(10) "Jesus heals everyone today just like he did in the Gospels." Healing is guaranteed and faith compels God to act. The problem with this presumptuous attestation is that if a person is not healed, the conclusion is that the problem resides with them. (This view, of course, goes beyond Alliance theology and practice.)

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<sup>29</sup> This is affirmed in Hebrews 13:8, "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever."

<sup>30</sup> The Alliance Statement of Faith would be understood by most to take this position though it does not expressly use the phrase "healing in the atonement." Even though Simpson believed and taught that healing was in the atonement, he also stated that "a single promise [of the Scriptures] is enough [to be healed] if you really grasp it, even if you do not see it in the atonement." FMT 100. A contemporary Alliance pastor briefly exegetes a key text from Isaiah: "Jesus Christ ... the Great Physician ... does heal us. Along with Isaiah we believe that He not only bore our sins on the cross, but He also bore our 'griefs' (Isaiah 53:4). That word *griefs* is always translated as 'infirmities,' 'sicknesses,' 'griefs'; it is never translated 'sin' or 'sins.' It refers to the physical ailments of the body. Christ bore them on the cross. That statement is followed by the words: 'Our sorrows He carried.' In the original Hebrew, the word *sorrows* means literally our 'mental anguish.' On the cross Christ made provision for the whole man: body, soul and spirit. He will give each of us the measure of healing that we need in order to carry out the spiritual service to which He has called us." Philip P. Ronzheimer, "Trust Me! Trust Me!" *Healing and the Sovereignty of God* (Camp Hill, Pennsylvania: Christian Publications, 1992), 2. Siple added that it is a "misconception that healing in the atonement automatically implies perfect physical health." Christians are not always healed. UDH 115.

This continuum suggests that fundamental to understanding healing theologically, the theology of God is a critical component. Is God more transcendent or more immanent? What is the interplay between divine sovereignty and the human will? To what degree is God's action in history applicable to present contemporary life? Depending on the individual, these questions will be addressed on varying levels.

Under the duress of affliction, knowledge of correct doctrine intellectually can then lead to an inner knowing of truth. Included in this cognitive, theological search is also an affective submission to the authority of God's Word and God's will. This combination is an essential component in nurturing the highest faith and leading into the experience of healing.<sup>31</sup>

### E. CONVINCED OF GOD'S PERSONAL LOVE

Basic to healing is the assurance of an all-loving and completely dependable God. While seeking healing, God's attribute of love may even appear to crest higher than God's sovereign power or mysterious ways. Furthermore, the person needs to become convinced of God's personal love toward them. The person in need may ask, "Does God really love me? Why would God want to heal me?" This can be a difficult factor for the person who struggles initially with a poor self-esteem, but it is definitely an important step in preparing to be healed.

The journey toward healing thus becomes a self-identity quest in relationship to God. With the historic emergence of self as a separate entity, there has equally come a deep sense of anxiety, negativism, lostness, inferiority and self-doubt. In today's North American culture, it is difficult for individuals to embrace the belief that God fully accepts and loves them as a person just the way they are. A feeling of unworthiness tells them that they are not good enough to deserve or claim any of God's specific mercies. The seeker will gradually become convinced that God loves them and wants to heal them.<sup>32</sup> Furthermore, this personal encounter with the living God of the Bible that leads to divine healing is not confused with concentrating upon an impersonal mind or force as in Christian Science or Buddhism.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> FMT 66, 99.

<sup>32</sup> For a compelling presentation on Christ's compassion for the sick, see Fred Francis Bosworth, "The Lord's Compassion," in Christ the Healer: Sermons on Divine Healing (=CH) (Chicago, Illinois: F. F. Bosworth, 1924), 62-83.

<sup>33</sup> The early Alliance leaders persistently distanced themselves from healing within Christian Science and other religions which they viewed as a counterfeit of divine healing and antithetical to Christianity. See DLB 104-111; GH 185-191. According to McFague, there has been a movement during the last two centuries away from the model of personal agency for God and a countervailing movement



## F. PERSUADED THAT AN EXTERNAL DIVINE REALITY CAN BE APPLIED FOR A PARTICULAR NEED NOW

The person seeking healing further needs to apply the principles of physical healing for their particular need at that time. Their reasoning begins with the revelation of God as extrinsically external to themselves, but then moves to the revelation of God as applied internally to their current experience. The external, written Word of God must move to the personalized, specific word for the individual for that moment.

The person in need of healing will ask these practical questions: "Will God heal **me**? Will God heal **me now**?" It is not enough to wonder *if* God can heal, for "most persons are ready enough to admit the power of Christ to heal."<sup>34</sup> Rather, the individual gradually becomes persuaded that an external divine reality *can* be applied to their particular need in the present now.

This hope that God desires them to be made whole may be evidence that faith is being born in them. The person may also conclude that there is a great difference between having faith in faith as an internal reality that merits God's intervention, and having faith in God as an external reality that releases God's love in a powerful way. God's hand cannot be forced nor God's will manipulated. Faith for healing is not developed but imparted. This is a fundamental difference between faith healing and divine healing.<sup>35</sup>

## G. DISCERNING AND CONFRONTING THE CAUSE OF ILLNESS

In more recent years in Alliance spirituality, there has emerged a greater sensitivity to the causes of illness. The implication for healing is that an underlying root cause may have direct impact on the physical illness. Similar symptoms can have a variety of underlying causes. Causes may stem from physiological diseases, psychological disorders, mental illness, emotional hurts,

mental habits, personal or family sins,<sup>36</sup> divine discipline or action, demonic influences or activity, unfortunate accidents, birth defects, abuses to the body, improper diet, inadequate exercise, old age, or a sickness unto death.<sup>37</sup> At this point, the seeker is asking God to search them and begin to deal gently with anything that may not be right before God.

The relationship between mind and body, spiritual and physical, needs to be taken into account.<sup>38</sup> For example, the failure to forgive someone may ultimately create a physical problem. Once properly discerned through prayer and counsel, the underlying cause may need to be confronted.<sup>39</sup> The cause may signal what specific strategy to take toward healing. Fortunately, the cause ultimately did not make any difference to Jesus, for on various occasions he healed all that came to him.<sup>40</sup> Simpson assured his readers that the Risen Christ "knows how to diagnose the case, to probe the wound, to detect and reveal the source of the trouble, and then to apply the right remedy in the right proportion."<sup>41</sup>

<sup>36</sup> Bailey listed seven sins in the Bible for which the retribution was sickness: jealousy, rebellion, adultery, discontent, and over-indulgence as seen in drunkenness, gluttony or inordinate appetites. *CB* 192-194.

<sup>37</sup> Bailey listed seven sins in the Bible for which the retribution was sickness: jealousy, rebellion, adultery, discontent, and over-indulgence as seen in drunkenness, gluttony or inordinate appetites. *CB* 192-194.

<sup>38</sup> This insight was not overlooked in early Alliance spirituality. For example: "There is an intimate connection between a spirit of thankfulness and physical health. In the first place, the very atmosphere of praise and the spirit of joy and gladness are physical tonics and wholesome stimulants, and lift up our whole being to a higher condition of vitality and spring; just as, on the other hand, moroseness, gloom, and depression have a tendency to exhaust and depress the vital system." *FMT2* 22. Also see *CH* 24-27 for scriptural parallels between the "inner man" and the "outer man."

<sup>39</sup> Some underlying causes result in afflictions not dealt with in this paper. See Joseph Arthur, "Chapter 10. Prayer for Healing," in *Prayer Voices: A Popular Theology of Prayer*, ed., H. Robert Cowles and K. Neill Foster (Camp Hill, Pennsylvania: Christian Publications, 1993), 133-146. Arthur approaches healing in five corresponding areas by first discerning the basic sickness and cause. Those five areas are: sickness of the spirit caused by sin; damaged emotions caused by past hurts; physical distress caused by physical damage, disorder or malfunction; demonic activity; and a sickness unto death.

<sup>40</sup> No doubt Jesus encountered people whom he did not heal. It would seem that the crippled beggar at the temple gate who was later healed through Peter and John must have been noticed by Jesus (Acts 3:1-10). Also, when Jesus healed the man at the pool who had been an invalid for thirty-eight years, it appears that Jesus walked by many others to demonstrate his power to this one man (John 5:1-15). On some occasions Jesus and the disciples did heal *all* the sick (Matthew 4:23-24; 8:16; 10:1; 12:15; 14:35-36; 15:30; Mark 6:56; Luke 4:40; 6:19). On other occasions he healed *many* (Mark 1:32-34; 3:10; 6:13; Luke 7:21) or even *not many* (Matthew 13:58). Is there the possibility that Jesus may have deepened the faith of those who were left in their infirmity?

<sup>41</sup> *FMT2* 34.

toward it. Sally McFague, "Chapter 3. God and the World," in *Models of God* (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: Fortress Press, 1987), 81. Critical to Alliance spirituality is a personal relationship with God through Jesus Christ. The Alliance emphasizes the personal God of the Bible who can be known and experienced.

<sup>34</sup> *GH* 76.

<sup>35</sup> The early Alliance leaders preferred the term divine healing over faith healing, because they believed that "faith has no power to cure anybody intrinsically, but that the real power in every case of true healing must be a personal God and not a mere subjective state of mind in the person concerned or anybody else." A. E. Thompson, "Chapter 14. The Ministry of Healing," in A. B. Simpson: *His Life and Work: Revised Edition* (=ABS:LW) (Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: Christian Publications, Inc., 1960), 145. For a current differentiation between the Alliance and the faith movement, see Paul L. King, "A. B. Simpson and the Modern Faith Movement," in *Alliance Academic Review: May 1996*, ed., Elio Cuccaro (Camp Hill, Pennsylvania: Christian Publications, 1996), 1-22.

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Removal of any obstacles continues to pave the way for healing.

### H. REMOVAL OF ANY BARRIERS

Following the discernment of causes is the removal of any barriers, obstacles or sins that may interfere with or preclude a divine intervention. These barriers of wrong living include: repentance of any harbored and unconfessed sin, removal of false or wrongful attitudes, abandonment of impure motives, restitution of any concern toward others, overcoming psychological or demonic pressures,<sup>42</sup> renunciation of occult participation or practices, changing thought patterns of the mind, making lifestyle changes, obedience to any specific command of God, and responding to any corrective measures brought into the life by the Holy Spirit. These represent psychological and spiritual blocks. Not all sickness is linked to particular sin, but sometimes sin produces emotional and physical pain which needs to be removed. These reparations and amendments of life are to be hereafter lived.

It is the humble and obedient life that is open to receive. Obedience to God's will in a general way to the best of one's knowledge of God's Word, as well as obedience in specific areas which could be applied by God's Spirit, are both needed at this juncture. Perhaps the person seeking healing needs to die to their own selfishness and pride, forgive someone who offended them, be willing to receive help, make a reordering of their priorities, cast out all fears, overcome all doubts and unbelief, or get rid of worry, anger, bitterness, hatred, resentment. Rightness of life before God is a condition for healing. Simpson told seekers that they "must be right with God. The holy Gospel only remains in a holy life and heart."<sup>43</sup> Bosworth, an Alliance evangelist greatly used by God in the ministry of healing in the 1920s, challenged seekers to press beyond barriers:

... like the woman who pressed through the throng and touched Him, you must "elbow" out of your way, and press beyond, selfishness, disobedience, unconfessed sins, lukewarmness, public opinion, traditions of men, articles written against Divine healing; in fact, often press beyond your own pastor, who may be unenlightened in his part of the Gospel; press beyond doubts, double-mindedness, symptoms, feelings and the lying Serpent.<sup>44</sup>

<sup>42</sup> Depression, fear, hopelessness and self-pity are examples of psychological pressures that quench faith. Moreover, Bailey stated that the weakened emotional state of a suffering person makes them especially vulnerable to demonic attacks from which they need to find release. CB 194-195.

<sup>43</sup> WWW (July/August 1887): 75; quoted in BV 13.

<sup>44</sup> CH, 96.

For those who have an overactive conscience, it is helpful to recognize that God does not demand perfection, but God expects them to be sincere in their desire to please God and walk in all the light God gives them.<sup>45</sup> This stage of preparation fosters a faith that wants only what God wants. The later claim for healing is not then for its own sake, but because God wants it and wills it.<sup>46</sup>

### I. DELIBERATE PREPARATION OF THE INNER LIFE

Deliberate preparation of the inner life breeds both solemnity and praise. Consideration of the seriousness of the requested healing creates a solemnity within the inner life to prepare to be healed. As in a marriage ceremony, the seeker is moving toward a deliberate and final transaction. Before the healing event, they "ought to weigh every question thoroughly and then regard them as forever settled."<sup>47</sup> At this stage the aspirant may review in their mind all the previous data they have cognitively, volitionally and affectively processed in a summary form. The soul may move into stasis -- a state of waiting before God, realizing that all previous issues or concerns have now been thoroughly dealt with and set behind them, the preparation stage is coming to an end, perhaps the seed of faith is ripening and ready to blossom, and they have only now to commit their whole person to God and ask.<sup>48</sup>

The seeker may also move beyond solemnity and enter into a fuller expression of praise, not for what God has done, but for what God may do. Cognitively, this notes a shift from negative thought patterns and into right ways of thinking. This life of praise is not intended to move God to act, but attunes itself to the harmony of God's plan. <sup>49</sup>A song of triumph begins to breathe a spirit of expectation. It is the prayer of faith energized

<sup>45</sup> A. B. Simpson, "How to Take It," Tracts for the Times: Divine Healing Series (=TT) (New York, N.Y.: The Christian Alliance Publishing Company, n.d.), 3-4. This series of eleven practical tracts now out-of-print is worth editing and compiling into a short book.

<sup>46</sup> FMT 67; LB 105.

<sup>47</sup> GH 87-88.

<sup>48</sup> Bosworth suggested an unfortunate analogy that tries to put God into our categories and deal with God accordingly. "Getting things from God is like playing checkers, when, after one person moves, he has nothing to do until the other player moves. Each man moves in his own turn. So, when God has provided healing, or any other blessing, and sent us His Word, it is our move before He will move again. Our move is to expect what He promises *when* we pray, which will cause us to *act* our faith before we *see* the healing; because the healing comes in the next move, which is God's move. God never moves out of His turn, but He always moves when it is His turn." CH 98-99. God, however, cannot be manipulated, tricked, forced or commanded.

<sup>49</sup> DLB 153.

by the song of triumph that will heal the sick.<sup>50</sup> A grateful and praiseful life is befitting preparation for faith. Sometimes praise to God in a corporate setting can quicken faith and result in instantaneous healing.<sup>51</sup>

## J. COMMITMENT OF THE WHOLE PERSON TO GOD

The final factor of the preparatory phase culminates in a full, final and definite commitment of the will. The person desirous of healing presents their whole person, and specifically, their body, to God for God's ownership. Thus, Mackenzie could testify:

This body in which we live is no longer ours. We have vacated all right to ownership. Every nerve, as well as organ has been passed over to Him. And this temple is dedicated to His glory by this transfer.<sup>52</sup>

Moreover:

In saying, 'The body is for the Lord,' we express the desire to regard our body as wholly consecrated, offered in sacrifice to the Lord, and sanctified by Him. In saying, 'The Lord is for the body,' we express the precious certainty that our offering has been accepted, and that, by His Spirit, the Lord will impart to our body His own strength and holiness.<sup>53</sup>

This special consecration of the body to God is specific as preparation for healing separate from a prior total surrender to God. Healing and the work of the Holy Spirit are closely intertwined, as Simpson expressed: Therefore, we say to the sick and suffering, surrender yourselves to God for a baptism of the Holy Spirit. Receive Him in His personal indwelling as your inner life, and as He fills your spirit His life and power will overflow into your physical being, and every extremity will feel the touch of life and blessing.<sup>54</sup>

Handing over one's body to God in full surrender and perfect trust is an exchange of weakness for strength, disability for ability, and the impartation of the resurrected life of Jesus.<sup>55</sup>

Some people are not ready to be healed. Some have to deal with personal baggage. Others need to nurture faith. In some cases, people are healed *without* processing any of the above "steps," and others are *not* healed in spite of moving through them all. Our ability to reason does not guarantee our ability to understand. Even the "best" preparation may lead to greater spiritual

vitality without physical healing. God's ways are beyond our ways. Sometimes good and godly Christians get sick, suffer and die, and sometimes unprincipled and unbelieving people get better, stay well, live long and prosper. These steps of preparation do not measure the validity or authenticity of faith by the healing that results. The right inner dispositions and quality of faith do not command God's response.

Nevertheless, a consistent theme in all Alliance writings on healing is a strong emphasis on personal preparation for healing though this does not guarantee healing for healing and faith are still mysteries. This preparatory phase of heart and mind may take a week, a month, or only a brief moment. Often the more serious the physical need, the greater the time of preparation is required. The steps in the preparation phase to be healed are foundational in leading into the next.

## 2. CULMINATING CRISIS OF THE HEALING EVENT

Following a personal preparation to be healed is a culminating crisis of the healing event. Preliminary to this phase is the acceptance of illness in a responsible way and being responsible to do all that can be done to prepare the way for God to do what only God can do. There is hope for a cure. The sick person interfaces with the Christian community for this culminating healing event. Contemporary Alliance pastor, Drake Travis, affirms that "faith is the spark that starts a fire."<sup>56</sup>

## A. NURTURING PARTICULAR FAITH AS READINESS TO RECEIVE

Faith needs to be nurtured for the specific situation as a readiness to receive. A personalized faith could be connected with a specific Bible text or personage. Simpson recognized this specificity:

Having got hold of the truth in general, take some particular promise and claim it by faith. It must be definite. You cannot take hold of one hundred cables, but you can take hold of one and grip it fast and firmly, until it brings you to the shore.<sup>57</sup>

In regard to a biblical personage, there can be a role-taking and role-adopting process that elicits the divine Healer to appear. For example, the seeker may identify strongly with the Gospel story of the blind man who wanted to receive his sight or the woman with a hemorrhage who wanted to touch the hem of Jesus' garment. As they see themselves in a similar situation and identify with a particular Bible personage, they expect God to do the same thing with them and anticipate that the same kind of healing will happen to

<sup>50</sup> DLB 156-158.

<sup>51</sup> CHT 175.

<sup>52</sup> DLB 89.

<sup>53</sup> DLB 91. See also 122-123.

<sup>54</sup> FMT 38.

<sup>55</sup> FMT 44.

<sup>56</sup> CHT 66.

<sup>57</sup> "How to Take It," TT 4.

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them. As healing is anticipated, the divine Healer appears.<sup>58</sup> Bible texts cause the divine presence to appear. God comes to them *in* their experience. Faith is both propositional and personal. Biblical doctrine evokes Christian experience.<sup>59</sup>

If the person's faith is weak, they can ask God to give them special faith for the occasion. Faith for healing is a distinctive gift from God and not a purely human act nor the product of inner will-power. A person cannot make themselves believe, force faith, or insist on healing, for faith is a gift of God.<sup>60</sup> Mackenzie wrote that "faith, then, is a divine quality and is divinely imparted to those who will reach out to the divine method."<sup>61</sup> It is not much faith God requires but honest faith, full of trust, believing without doubting. Sometimes that expression of faith emerges from the individual and sometimes from the elders.

Notwithstanding, even honest faith, strong or weak, does not always elicit *visible* healing. There may be no lack of faith in the seeker or the elders, but the individual does not get any better and may even get worse and die. The faith solution in these cases may ultimately be found in the innocent suffering of Job:

"Naked I came from my mother's womb,  
and naked I will depart.  
The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away;  
may the name of the Lord be praised."  
In all this, Job did not sin by charging God with  
wrongdoing (Job 1:21-22).

In these cases some *invisible* healing may have taken place in response to faith. The inner life or the human psyche may have received a genuine and even profound touch from the Risen Jesus.

There was an important shift in understanding divine healing within early and later Alliance leaders on discerning the specific direction to pray for healing. Simpson's position was that it is the will of God to heal all who believe. God's highest will is always to heal.<sup>62</sup> Writing in 1990, however, Alliance pastor and speaker, Richard Siple, proposed that the will of God needs to

be discerned for the specific situation.<sup>63</sup> This later position seems to present a more balanced approach by leaning more heavily on discerning the causes, avoiding the danger of having faith in faith, and asking God what God intends to do for that particular individual. On nurturing faith, Siple encouraged listening prayer:

Wait in His presence until we have *a word from Christ*.  
Wait in His presence until the Holy Spirit speaks to us  
and tells us what God wants to say to us.... Then a word  
will come from Christ by the Spirit of God that will give  
us an answer to our situation, whatever the answer of  
God might be, whether it is healing or not. If He gives  
that word of assurance for our healing, we will be  
healed!<sup>64</sup>

Genuine faith is also distinguished from simplistic and distorted understandings of faith. Siple cautioned against misplaced faith and the dangers of the faith healing movement.

(1) Faith is not "confessing and possessing." We cannot verbalize anything needed, confess it on our own before God, and keep on confessing it until we finally possess it.

(2) Faith is not "claiming the promises." We cannot choose any scriptural promise, take it to God in prayer, and claim the answer from God.

(3) Faith is not "obeying the Word." We cannot assume that following a series of biblical steps or commands will necessarily bring healing.<sup>65</sup>

Travis also clarified what healing is not. Healing does not mean that we will live in an enduring state of perfect health as if healing is a fountain of youth -- those healed by Jesus did not feel nineteen years old at age ninety-one -- nor is healing a Hebrew health care plan. The aging process and death are inevitable.<sup>66</sup>

God will either give divine healing that quickens the body or divine grace that enables the person to live above the affliction. "Seek to be healed until you are either healed or God gives you an answer why you are not."<sup>67</sup> The issue that the seeker is processing at this point is particular faith for their specific situation with "the clearcut conviction that it is God's will to heal them ... knowing what the specific will of God for them is in a particular sickness or disease."<sup>68</sup> The goal is to

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<sup>58</sup> CSH 151-158.

<sup>59</sup> See Dermot A. Lane, *The Experience of God: An Invitation To Do Theology* (New York: Paulist Press, 1981), viii, 22, 68, 72.

<sup>60</sup> Only God knows all the factors in heaven and on earth, past, present and future, why healing should or should not take place. There is also a sickness unto death according to 2 Kings 13:14; 20:1; and Isaiah 38:1.

<sup>61</sup> DLB 128.

<sup>62</sup> Bosworth also recommended this approach: "Faith is to receive the written promise of God as His direct message to us. His promise means the same as if He appeared and said to us, 'I have heard your prayer.'" CH 103. This is a simplistic and distorted view of faith for healing and not rational and safe as he suggests.

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<sup>63</sup> UDH 82-88. In reference to terminal illness, while Siple has participated in many dramatic healings, he states, "I never take it for granted that God wants to heal them." UDH 146.

<sup>64</sup> UDH 86.

<sup>65</sup> UDH 124-126.

<sup>66</sup> CHT 69-70.

<sup>67</sup> UDH 99.

<sup>68</sup> C. Doughty, *Healing from Heaven (=HH)* (South Holland, Illinois: The Christian and Missionary Alliance Church of South Holland, Illinois, n.d.), 19.

prayerfully discern the mind of God for their suffering at that time. Faith can be further grounded upon a specific Scripture text, biblical principle or personage as uniquely appropriate to their situation and serve as a focal point for nurturing particular faith.

## **B. CALLING FOR THE ELDERS TO PRAY AS A FAITH EXPRESSION**

Most often in Alliance circles, the elders of the local church are then called upon to exercise the prayer of faith according to James 5:14-16. It is true that some are healed without this anointing by claiming healing on their own, or by the administration of those with gifts of healing potentially at mass meetings or through other believers in the local church.<sup>69</sup> Practically speaking, the individual who is not well has often already spent significant time in prayer for their own healing. If they have not received a healing yet, calling for the elders to pray for healing is a faith expression. Depending on the circumstance, there may be further discussion, discernment, confession and counseling with the elders prior to specific prayer for healing.

When requested the elders of the church endeavor to follow the admonition of James:

Is any one of you sick? He should call the elders of the church to pray over him and anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise him up. If he has sinned, he will be forgiven (James 5:14-15).

The elders pray as God leads them.<sup>70</sup> They anoint the person's forehead with oil as a symbol of the ministry and working of the Holy Spirit and pray in the name of the Lord Jesus. It is hoped that at least one of the elders gives utterance to the prayer of faith, confession of sin is applied, and the Lord Jesus heals. The small group of elders that have been called to pray publicly or privately as well as the congregation's prayerful support combined with the individual's own personal preparation intensifies and elicits the entire faith dynamic.

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<sup>69</sup> These three avenues of healing -- through the faith of the individual, gifts of the Spirit being exercised in small or large group settings, and the role of the elders of a local congregation -- are recognized in HH 45-57. Nevertheless, more focus is traditionally given to the role and ministry of the elders in Alliance spirituality. Bailey also devotes a chapter to gifts of healings in the context of the local church. CB 143-155. Certainly, Jesus ministered in private and public settings and the apostles were involved in individual and mass healings. Richard Leever, "Healing: Mass Meeting or Local Church Elders?" His Dominion 14 (Summer 1987): 27-34.

<sup>70</sup> See Appendix for guidelines for administering healing from the perspective of the elders, entitled, "The Ministry of Healing in the Church: Training for Anointing with Oil for Healing. Quinte Alliance Church Board of Elders."

Although faith is exercised in God to heal, those involved in the prayer of faith are socially and spiritually recognized as trustworthy channels of God's grace because of their education, training, experience and practice in healing. The collective group of praying elders, a godly pastor, a supportive congregation and an earnest supplicant generates an atmosphere of faith, hope and expectation in which God can work. The oil as a symbol of the Holy Spirit stimulates faith and the elders anointing with the oil inspire faith. The faith of the seeker is thus mingled and heightened with the faith of others.

## **C. CLAIM OF GOD'S ASSURANCE TO HEAL THROUGH A DEFINITE ACT OF FAITH NOW**

The person then takes a transactional step of appropriating the assurance of God to heal by a definite act of faith. Simpson urged the believer to "step out solemnly, definitely, irrevocably, on new ground, on God's promise, with the deep conviction that it is forever."<sup>71</sup> Moreover:

There is a great difference between asking and taking, between expecting and accepting. You must take Christ as your Healer -- not as an experiment, not as a future, perhaps, but as a present reality.... Do not merely believe that He *will* do so, but claim and believe that He *does* touch you now, and begin the work of healing in your body.<sup>72</sup>

Specific and definite faith is necessary to receive healing from God, that is, the definite belief that God gives the healing being claimed and gives it now.<sup>73</sup> The answer to prayer is taken in the present now, and God is given time to work out its actual fulfillment.<sup>74</sup> Faith is not an inactive acquiescence to passively receive, but an active receptivity to forcefully take. Simpson advised:

It is not enough to believe that we may be healed, or to believe in God's power to do this; but we must definitely claim the blessing, count upon it, confess it, and commit ourselves to it by going forth to reckon upon it, and act as if it were a reality.<sup>75</sup>

This kind of faith, says Mackenzie, "gets to the place where it can take God at His word, no matter what the feelings, or sight, or Satan may interpose."<sup>76</sup> Simpson added:

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<sup>71</sup> GH 87-88.

<sup>72</sup> GH 87.

<sup>73</sup> FMT 36.

<sup>74</sup> FMT 136.

<sup>75</sup> FMT 36-37.

<sup>76</sup> DLB 131.

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The seeker must come to 'a definite point and cross it, put down a stake and take it forever.' He will say, 'This is God's truth and I stand upon it.'<sup>77</sup>

At this stage, faith is more than desiring to be healed or believing that God can heal. Faith for healing is a definite step in the present now believing that God is going to heal in answer to prayer now. While acknowledging this on the one hand, faith for healing is admittedly quite elusive on the other. Even Jesus at times healed when there was no apparent evidence of faith at all, and sometimes even sincere faith asks amiss (James 4:3).

### D. THE EXERCISE OF AUTHORITATIVE FAITH THAT TAKES

At times there may be the exercise of an authoritative faith that commands the will of God to be realized in the name of Jesus and through the Holy Spirit. Authoritative faith that takes or commands the will of God is not compelling God's will to be realized. Rather this faith activity is characterized by the work of the Holy Spirit acting through the person's faith commanding nature and the body to obey God's will and be healed.

Authoritative faith supernaturally rises within people when there is an overwhelming sense that God is definitely at work. Over one hundred years ago, Simpson understood that "it is not your will that demands these things, but God's will in you that commands His power."<sup>78</sup> In other words, God desires what the pray-er seeks and the prayer of faith lays hold of what God wants. Delegated power is given to the pray-er through the name of Jesus. Identifying with Jesus in prayer on this level is to "ask just as if Jesus Himself was asking it."<sup>79</sup> There may also be a conscious force of intense desire coming from the Holy Spirit through the pray-er. This kind of authoritative prayer is not a lackadaisical or weak asking, but a confident and forceful taking and results in a demonstration of the Holy Spirit's power.

The individual goes beyond mere personal contact with Jesus and seeks union. Bosworth stated, "As the sick touched Him and were made whole when Christ walked upon earth, so, now, it is the privilege of all to actually touch Him, and the touch now unites us to

Christ in a closer union than it did then."<sup>80</sup> Faith, then, is believing God and the Word of God for what God said God would do, "expecting God to do what we know ... is His will to do."<sup>81</sup> The seeker expects something to happen "with that expectancy that shuts out doubt or fear of failure, and shows unshakeable confidence."<sup>82</sup> Faith believes that Jesus is able and willing to heal. Authoritative faith reaches out to touch and to take healing from the hand of the living Saviour.

### E. EXPERIENCING FURTHER "TRIGGERS" OF FAITH

God is gracious to our psychological makeup. Often further "triggers" of faith accompany the healing event in the form of sensations. The experience of divine healing is often connected to these different sensations of varying intensity, before, during or after the healing event, separately or combined. They include: a sensation of warmth and even heat, an infusion of light or being flooded with light, a surge of power going through the body, a sense of well-being and complete rest or peace, an experience of deep joy, an inner total conviction not dependent of the feeling itself of being healed, paranormal experiences like visions or hearing the voice of God speaking, a feeling of the divine presence, an identification with Christ particularly in his sufferings, or changed perceptions where known or familiar things take on new meaning.<sup>83</sup>

Although sensations may have minimized in previous decades because of a fear of focusing on experience rather than Christ, these sensations can be authentic triggers of faith and may be genuine evidences of God at work.<sup>84</sup> The healing event can include both seeing and hearing, both knowing and feeling.

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<sup>80</sup> FMT 170.

<sup>81</sup> CH 85.

<sup>82</sup> CH 99.

<sup>83</sup> CSH 90-94.

<sup>84</sup> I think Simpson did make a passing reference to sensations in this statement: "You must somehow get into contact with Him. The *senses of your soul* and the very functions of your body must somehow come into touch with Him, must be responsive to Him." LB 19. (Italics mine.) On the other hand, he also balanced this with another comment: "Be sure that you are not looking for any thrill or any consciousness or any physical sensation. ... choose and purpose and determine -- feeling or no feeling -- that you will take His word [for healing]...." A. B. Simpson, How to Receive Divine Healing (Minneapolis, Minnesota: Bethany Fellowship, Inc., n.d.), 11. There are, of course, testimonies in Alliance history of those who experienced sensations of healing. Mrs. M. J. Clark was healed of a heart disease: "Dear Brother Simpson came to me and anointed me with oil and offered the prayer of faith, and instantly, as quick as a lightning flash, shocks of Divine power went through me from head to foot, and it seemed as though a Divine hand was laid on my heart, and I was *healed*; every symptom left and never returned." CW 139. Rev. R. C. Oliver was healed of severe headaches (migraines?) which he

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<sup>77</sup> WWW (July/August 1885): 204; quoted in BV 13.

<sup>78</sup> FMT 168. For a fuller presentation on authoritative faith, see "Chapter 19. The Imperative Mood and the Present Tense of Faith," FMT 164-176. In my opinion, this chapter particularly needs to be reprinted. Simpson's entire first volume on Friday Meeting Talks, Or Divine Prescriptions for the Sick and Suffering is very worthwhile and his second series contains some valuable insights.

<sup>79</sup> FMT 170.

## F. ENCOUNTER WITH THE RISEN CHRIST

Finally, there is an encounter with the Risen Christ. This is more than the appropriation of healing, for healing is not an "it" to be taken, but healing is an encounter with Jesus. *This is the fundamental core in understanding and experiencing divine healing.* Flowing out of an intimate relationship with Jesus Christ, a person seeks healing. Couched in that relationship of love with God, a person encounters Jesus Christ in their crisis, and the divine-human relationship continues whatever the outcome.

Fundamental to divine healing is the theological affirmation of the bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ.<sup>85</sup> Central to Alliance understanding of healing is an encounter with the Risen and Living Lord Jesus Christ. Travis summarizes:

Divine healing is the supernatural divine power of God infused into human bodies, renewing their strength and replacing the weakness of suffering human frames by the life and power of God.... Divine healing comes through the life of the resurrected Christ, who bodily rose from the dead.... Divine healing is the healing that comes via the work of the Holy Spirit. Jesus healed by the Holy Spirit while on earth, and He is still the same today.<sup>86</sup>

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described as "something like brain fever": "I then requested prayer for immediate healing. ... Directly I felt a power in my body similar to currents of electricity passing from head to feet, and in twenty minutes I sprang up and declared that the Lord had healed me ... that I was well." CW 198-201.

<sup>85</sup> Simpson wrote: "We must remember that the resurrection of the Lord Jesus was a physical fact. It was His body that died, and it was His body that was raised from the dead. There came forth from Joseph's tomb that day a physical man with a real body. True, it was a spiritual body, but an actual physical organization, which had been refined and perfected to the very highest possible condition.... Not only has this blessed Christ given His flesh *for* us, but He has given it *to* us, and our very bodies may be vitalized with His vitality, strengthened with His strength, inspired with His energy and one day glorified with His likeness." "The Lord for the Body," TT 3,7,8.

<sup>86</sup> CHT 122-123. This emphasis on divine healing was expressed in several places, and, in my opinion, stands unique. "Divine healing is the result of a personal union with a personal Christ." FMT 38. "Divine healing is just the touch of His personal and blessed life. ... so Jesus will come so near to us and touch us so vitally with His very being, that we will receive even His physical life into our worn-out bodies...." FMT 72. "Healing is the life of Christ imparted to our body. There is a real person back of it." FMT 103. "Divine healing, as I understand it, is the indwelling life of Jesus Christ in my body." Theologically speaking, Simpson added that "the blessed Son of man is not an ethereal spirit, but a man like you and me with a physical form." FMT 256. "Divine healing is to me the incoming and indwelling of a new personality.... Divine healing is the continuous inflow of a river of life into our whole being from the indwelling body of Jesus Christ." UDH 34. "Divine healing, therefore, is just the life and power of the Holy Ghost added to the human body, and so filling it as to supply motive power to every vital function and physical organ." "Temples of the Holy Ghost," TT 3. The secret of divine healing "is union with One who is our physical Head as well as the source of our spiritual life. It is to be in touch with the Son of Man

The infusion of divine life with the seeker brings supernatural, if not miraculous, healing. Healing is personally imparted by God. "The real secret of divine healing is to reach out to the divine life and become united with the Living One. Then His supernatural life will fill not only our spiritual but our physical nature...."<sup>87</sup> When once that union is effected, nothing remains to prevent the unobstructed inflow of divine energy.<sup>88</sup>

God supernaturally adds resurrection life to stimulate, quicken and revive the natural, physical forces that are infirm, exhausted and weak. Ultimately, divine healing is not the mere restoration of ordinary, physical health, nor the harmony of balancing all aspects of body, mind and spirit, nor the proper alignment of the natural powers of the body to heal itself, though these are not avoided nor denied.<sup>89</sup> Divine healing is the impartation of the strength and life of Christ through the Holy Spirit. God can certainly use medical means, alternative healing methods or psychotherapy as part of the healing process. But divine healing means that the sick person is intrinsically brought into union with the body of the Risen Christ and receives an impartation of his resurrection life. The sufferer can affirm with Paul, spiritually as well as physically, "I no longer live, but Christ lives in me" (Galatians 2:20). Physical healing thus becomes a foretaste of the future resurrection of the body.<sup>90</sup>

Certainly an encounter with the Risen Christ is multifold. John Packo is a noteworthy example of an Alliance pastor who took steps toward the healing of his cancer but was not healed in a dramatic way believing that God gave him strength to face the ordeal. He summarized the processing of his "healing" in twelve creative choices:

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who is risen from the dead, in the power of an endless life, and who is the Head of our body and has taught us to understand that 'we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones' (Ephesians 5:30, KJV)." LB 115.

<sup>87</sup> DLB 161-162.

<sup>88</sup> DLB 167-168.

<sup>89</sup> Simpson explained that divine healing is **not**: *medical healing*, *metaphysical healing* by mental force like Christian Science, *magnetic healing* like some energy current that flows from one body into another, *spiritualism* by calling on any spirit other than Jesus Christ, *prayer cure* as if the power of prayer itself will effect healing, *faith cure* as if faith itself heals (like auto-suggestion?), *will power* to take hold of oneself and lift themselves up, *defiance of God's will* as if to say, "I will have this healing, whether God wills it or not!", *physical immortality*, or *mercenary healing* that seeks to adopt healing as a professional trade. A. B. Simpson, The Four-Fold Gospel (Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: Christian Publications, Inc., n.d.), 47-56. (Italics mine.)

<sup>90</sup> FMT 50-53, 59, 62.

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(1) I did not choose cancer, but I choose to trust God for courage to cope with cancer.

(2) Cancer is a divine appointment to receive Christ's miracle of His life into one's heart.

(3) Since our sovereign Lord permits cancer for His glory and our spiritual growth, I will glorify God and grow.

(4) Because Christ's death on the wondrous cross is the basis for divine healing, I choose His supernatural power to supplement my doctor's treatments.

(5) I pick James's prescription administered by the elders of the local church, then leave the healing results to God.

(6) If I select the wonders of modern medicine, I must be prepared to manage the not-so-wonderful side effects.

(7) I practice positional thinking that produces power to live above tough circumstances.

(8) When God withholds the miracle of instant healing, I humbly embrace His alternative of amazing grace that creates inner strength and a joyous disposition.

(9) I love God who specializes in the miracle of turning cancer into my ultimate spiritual good of Christlikeness.

(10) I dedicate my body to Christ and separate it from unhealthy eating habits, chemical abuse and over-exposure to sun.

(11) I accept death as the departure into heaven made possible by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

(12) I celebrate the wonder of life by filling my heart with the joy of worshiping Jesus.<sup>91</sup>

For some an encounter with the Risen Christ means grace for physical healing and for others it means grace for active endurance. Both kinds of faith are dynamic. When it is the later, the faith solution is not passive acceptance, but it is encounter nonetheless. Faith and healing present a very subtle and complex relationship as faith gropes toward a God whom we have no power to control. Whenever faith is evident, whatever the end results, authentic faith elicits an encounter with the Risen Christ.

### 3. ONGOING PROCESS OF HEALING AND HEALTH

Following the personal preparation to be healed and the culminating crisis of the healing event, there comes the ongoing process of healing and health.

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<sup>91</sup> John E. Packo, Coping with Cancer: 12 Creative Choices (Camp Hill, Pennsylvania: Christian Publications, 1991).

### A. BELIEVE AND ACT AS IF GOD HAS HEALED

God brought the seeker to a crisis of faith in divine healing and continues to enable them to claim God's truth, to mature in holiness, to grow in faith, and to be established in hope, and to believe in God's love. Faith for healing is both a specific act and an ongoing activity. Simpson encouraged those who claimed healing to keep right with God, to keep reckoning that God will take care of them and honour God's Word, and to keep receiving new life from God.<sup>92</sup>

Though this exercise of faith is delicate to be sure, as much as possible, the person seeking healing now begins "to act as one that is healed."<sup>93</sup> There are certainly dangers and consequences of taking steps that are ill-advised, presumptuous and foolhardy. But to the degree the person feels the freedom, they can begin to ignore symptoms, feelings and impressions, attempt to do what was previously impossible, and continue to claim and trust the reality of healing. Caution is advised even though Simpson advocated this:

And as old infirmities, symptoms, or sufferings appear, you can treat them just the same as you did the spiritual conditions. Count them temptations, treat them as foreign to yourself, refuse to fear them, identify yourself with them or obey them, and draw your strength directly from your living Head, from a source outside you, and yet in touch with you -- Him in whom you now live and move and have your being....<sup>94</sup>

It is helpful for the person who has prayed definitely for healing now to stop thinking about the sickness, to stop fearing it, to stop talking about it. This is not intended as some psychological trick, but to detach oneself from the infirmity as an honest and courageous expression of standing firm in faith. This kind of "faith can 'keep on believing' though every evidence which is given is but to contradict its expectation."<sup>95</sup>

Simpson emphasized that some concrete expression of faith is also necessary. "The Lord Jesus never healed anybody on his back. The command always was to do something and take the divine life in action."<sup>96</sup>

The processes of faith go beyond the boundaries of rational logic and empirical evidence, though faith is not irrational nor unreasonable. When God is truly at work, the expression of faith becomes realized as actual fact in

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<sup>92</sup> "How to Keep It," TT 3-6.

<sup>93</sup> GH 90.

<sup>94</sup> FMT 44-45.

<sup>95</sup> DLB 134.

<sup>96</sup> "How to Help Others," TT 5. Here are biblical examples: "Stretch out your hand," "Get up, take your mat and walk," "And as they went, they were cleansed," "Go wash in the Pool of Siloam," "Stand up on your feet" (Matthew 12:13; Mark 2:9; Luke 17:14; John 9:7; Acts 14:10).



one's physical body. Faith counts upon healing and considers it done as a finished reality before it may actually be seen, felt or experienced.<sup>97</sup> When the inner life is dominated and consumed with a physical condition and the struggle for health, it may be difficult for the soul to focus upon the God of health. Sickness and evil are almost hypnotic. Yet it is vital to take the mind off the physical condition and place it onto God. Simpson counseled:

Don't watch your feelings. Don't superintend God. Don't note the ups and downs of your case.... Keep busy with Him and for others and pass on to the next thing in life's unselfish ministry; and you will find as you are occupied with God and for God, He will be occupied for you. Get saved from your anatomy. Get saved from all your bad feelings. Keep out of yourself.<sup>98</sup>

Again, healing does not occur because of exercising faith in faith, but by expressing faith in God. Divine healing is elicited by faith, but it is not faith that heals. God heals and faith receives that healing.<sup>99</sup> True faith is not shaken by failure to receive immediate healing, and people who are not healed do not necessarily have less faith.

It is true that Simpson held that doubt, remedies and treatments at this point were inadmissible and viewed them as retreating from a final act of faith.<sup>100</sup> Many today, however, feel more comfortable maintaining treatments until a medical authority has pronounced them healed or they have felt or seen marked improvement. Siplely suggested that "if God has healed you, you will know it, and you will not need medical treatment," yet he also applied common sense in going to a physician for confirming tests.<sup>101</sup>

## B. BE PREPARED FOR TRIALS OF FAITH

Symptoms may linger, not always disappearing immediately. Discouragements, doubts and temptations may come. The healing occasion may occur over a short or long period of time, or can be with instant or delayed

effect. If the speed of healing is gradual and in process over time, rather than instantaneous and complete, or if the realization of healing is only partial, then faith is further challenged. Yet no matter how remarkable the specific healing event may have seemed, it is only a part of that process.<sup>102</sup>

Mackenzie reassured the seeker that "trials always test and strengthen faith in proportion to what is real."<sup>103</sup> Simpson illustrated the kind of internal questioning which diminishes faith that may occur: "How do we know it if God's time? Or, perhaps, we have not fulfilled all the conditions. Or, perhaps, we have asked too much."<sup>104</sup> Doubts are to be treated like any other temptation by setting the will against them. One must will to believe and not to doubt. Simpson asserted, "I do not feel any faith, but I choose to believe."<sup>105</sup> True faith tenaciously continues to hold on to God until the full answer comes and in whatever form the answer comes.

## C. CONTINUE TO DRAW LIFE FROM THE RISEN CHRIST

If no immediate answer to prayer comes, it may be fitting to review earlier steps and pray again until a clear answer comes from God. The humble question of the trusting heart may be, "God, what am I yet to learn?" while still believing the answer is on the way. Even while answers may be unclear, a deeper love for God can be cultivated.

If a person persistently asks God for healing, but gets progressively worse, then perhaps God's answer is "no."<sup>106</sup> Moreover, divine healing goes no further than

<sup>97</sup> "Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see" (Hebrews 11:1). Simpson reacted to those who "say that they are healed, but they have not the evidence of it. If you believe you are healed, the evidence is there, for faith is the evidence.... If you wait until you see a thing, you have not faith for that thing." A. B. Simpson, Christian Alliance and Missionary Weekly VIII (4 March 1892): 153; quoted in William Boyd Bedford, "A Larger Christian Life": A. B. Simpson and the Early Years of The Christian and Missionary Alliance (=ALCL) (Ph.D. diss., University of Virginia, 1992), 283.

<sup>98</sup> "How to Keep It," TT 6-7.

<sup>99</sup> Kenneth Mackenzie, Our Physical Heritage in Christ (New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1923), 87-88.

<sup>100</sup> GH 88.

<sup>101</sup> UDH 154.

<sup>102</sup> See CSH 87-90.

<sup>103</sup> GH 92.

<sup>104</sup> FMT2 64.

<sup>105</sup> A. B. Simpson, Christian and Missionary Alliance XXVI (8 September 1906): 146-148; quoted in ALCL 285.

<sup>106</sup> Simpson did address the issue of death and why some are not healed. While first acknowledging that we do not always know why, his reasons were: (1) a person's life-work was completed and God was calling them home to himself; (2) God gives grace to triumph even in death itself; (3) sometimes life is shortened by disobedience to God; and (4) there can be a lack of faith of those who are sick. On this fourth point he made this illuminating point: "Faith for Divine healing is not mere abstinence from remedies, an act of intellect or will, or a submission of anointing, but it is the real, spiritual touch of Christ, and it is much more rare than many suppose. In our intercourse with thousands of people who are interested in this matter, we have not found a great many cases that we would clearly recognize as distinct, undoubting faith in God for present healing. There is plenty of faith in doctrine, plenty of readiness to give up remedies, plenty of faith in the prayers of others - especially if they are eminent saints - plenty of faith for healing in the future; but personal, real faith, that takes God now, and, pressing through the crowd, touches His garment, is not much oftener found now than in the days when only one struggling

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the promise of God. God does not promise that we will never die, but only that we will fulfill our number of days and complete our life's work.<sup>107</sup> The sovereign God gives grace in suffering and in death.

Thus, even when healing is delayed, the faith of the believer remains active by continuing to draw life from the Risen Christ. They began to look to God for healing and they keep looking for healing by abiding in Christ. After wholly yielding to God to use their life for God's glory and service and believing without doubt in the assurance of God's Word for healing, the seeker is called to abide in Christ for their physical life and draw their strength moment by moment through personal dependence upon Him.<sup>108</sup>

### D. LIVE IN HEALTH AND HEALING

Once healing has been realized, a consistent prayer life in communion with God and the avoidance of psychological and spiritual blocks can be the source of continuous dependence upon God for ongoing health and healing and the continuous impartation of the divine life.<sup>109</sup> The divine life of Christ can ceaselessly flow into the mortal body. One of Mackenzie's books focuses primarily on maintaining divine life for the body. "There is a quiet, normal receiving of divine life for our physical frame which becomes as natural as breathing, and almost as spontaneous."<sup>110</sup> If an ailment returns or another sickness befalls, it may mean that there is some fresh lesson to be learned. Certainly the spiritual life is a continuous journey of faith. God may heal on one occasion and not another.

The secret of ongoing health is found in continuously taking God's strength for the body, in living upon God's life, in having not only divine healing but divine health also.<sup>111</sup> This is a mystical view of participating with the living Christ in his resurrection life.<sup>112</sup> Even when bad things do happen to good people, since we have no guarantee of good health, a dimension of divine life and wholeness can be realized. Beyond divine healing is divine life, that is, being lifted to a higher spiritual plane and then continuing to live

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through the crowd that surrounded Him, really touched Him." FMT2 36-38.

<sup>107</sup> CH 34-36; GH 45; "Faith and Fanaticism," TT 5.

<sup>108</sup> ABS:LW 147.

<sup>109</sup> DLB 138-141. "Keep sweet" was Simpson's admonition in "How to Keep It," TT 7-8.

<sup>110</sup> DLB 131-132.

<sup>111</sup> FMT2 62.

<sup>112</sup> Simpson stated: "We do possess this strength in ourselves; it is the strength of Another, and we just appropriate it, and so Christ is our life. It is not self-contained strength, but strength derived each moment from One above us, beyond us, and yet within us." ABS:LW 146.

there all the time. It is the overflowing life of God in the whole human life.<sup>113</sup>

Sarah Lindenberger, who coordinated an early Alliance home for healing, emphasized divine health over and above divine healing. We not only receive divine touches of healing, but we can receive divine life which comes from union with our Risen Lord. She recommended these steps to receive this life for the body:

(1) Surrender your body, as you did your soul, in consecration.

(2) Definitely accept Christ as your strength, instead of your own natural health.

(3) Cultivate the habit of constantly depending upon Him for strength, recognizing the Spirit in you to quicken your mortal frame.

(4) Choose to keep your body obedient and holy, in your living, eating and drinking, in the use of your eyes, your ears, your tongue, and keep your whole being separated unto Himself.

(5) Learn to feed upon Him and drink in His life.<sup>114</sup>

Alongside these metaphysical emphases, practical measures are also to be taken into account, such as, self-responsibility, nutritional awareness, stress management, physical fitness, proper diet, and environmental issues. Recognizing these will minimize the perceived differences between the sacred and the secular. God is, indeed, over all.

### E. USE NEW STRENGTH AND HEALTH FOR GOD

Divine healing is given so we can fulfill God's purposes, not for preventing growing old or death. Healing is a sacred act of God, and new strength and health are to be used as a sacred trust for God and kingdom work. The person who has been a recipient of grace is to become a giver of grace in service to others. Rejuvenated physical life is not to be used for personal enjoyment, but for God's pleasure.<sup>115</sup>

When healing does not apparently happen, divine grace more than compensates. Simpson understood this:

Sometimes, in our physical life, when we take the Lord for healing, the physical pain or symptom is not removed, but God gives us such an inflow of vital energy, strength and vigor that we are able to rise above

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<sup>113</sup> LB 75.

<sup>114</sup> Sarah A. Lindenberger, Streams from the Valley of Berachah (New York: The Christian Alliance Publishing Co., 1893), 45, 50.

<sup>115</sup> Simpson wrote: "It is not the health that takes us to the ball game, the dance and theater, but the health that takes us to the slums, the alleys and garret." LB 9-10.

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it, and go on with our work irrespective of the apparent disease.<sup>116</sup>

More strength is given than if the ailment had been removed. The Christian can continue to be full of God's love and grace whatever the outcome.<sup>117</sup>

### CONCLUSION

Alliance spirituality provides a theology and a practice for physical healing. The experiential

processing of certain psycho-spiritual dynamics can elicit a faith encounter with the Risen Christ resulting in physical healing within Alliance spirituality. From the seeker's perspective, preparation, crisis and process are three key psycho-spiritual components for processing divine healing, each with their own dynamic features and factors. Physical healing remains filled with mystery for God is Holy Mystery, yet this God continues to extend grace to heal today..

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<sup>116</sup> FMT 26.

<sup>117</sup> LB 117.

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Reading 12.2

## Healing: Biblical Basis and Procedure

Andy M. Reimer

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### I. Introduction

I had a conversation recently with my pastoral trainee who was suffering with an illness which had lingered for several months. He asked me why it was that in the past when he had prayed for others they had been healed, but now when he prayed for healing for himself nothing seemed to change. I believe that it is the paradox between serving a healing God and the persistence of illness and even death which ultimately lies behind most theological debates about divine healing in the Church. On either extreme one or the other of these realities is denied. But if it is our goal to be faithful to biblical teaching within the context of the “real” world, we will have to find a mediating position which both embraces God the Great Physician and the reality that we continue to live with sickness and death.

### II. Biblical Basis

#### A. The Traditional Alliance Approach

The “traditional” Alliance approach to undergirding their practice of prayer for physical healing is, or was, largely based on debates current in the late eighteen and early nineteen hundreds. It is also shaped by the fourfold gospel scheme, which includes as a doctrinal emphasis *Christ* as healer. It is not surprising then that the biblical evidence should be cast in terms of the debate over whether *Christ’s death* was merely for our sin or for our physical healing as well. The crux of the debate centered around one’s interpretation of Isaiah 53:5, “But he [was] wounded for our transgressions, [he was] bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace [was] upon him; and with his stripes we are healed” (KJV).<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>A.B. Simpson, *The Gospel of Healing* (Camp Hill, PA: Christian Publications, 1986), 16-19; K.M. Bailey, *Divine Healing: The Children’s Bread* (Camp Hill, PA: Christian Publications, 1977), 43-58; R. M. Siple, *Understanding Divine Healing* (Wheaton: Victor Books, 1986), 115-118. All three of these Alliance writers also begin their discussion on healing in Exodus 15:22-26 which conclude with YHWH’s words in Exodus 15:26, “He said, ‘If you will listen carefully to the voice of the LORD your God, and do what is right in his sight, and give heed to his commandments and keep all his statutes, I will not bring upon you any of the diseases that I brought upon the Egyptians; for I am the LORD who heals you’” (NRSV)(Simpson, 14-15; Bailey, 18-22; Siple, 8-11). As a “proof-

While the debate over Isaiah 53:5 is not unimportant, in terms of the debate over divine healing and healing ministries within churches, I think that developments within the field of New Testament theology since those formative debates have transformed the playing field as it were. It seems to me that the paradox of a healing God alongside the reality of ongoing sickness and death is better dealt with by casting our net broader and seeing the forest, rather than individual trees. And the shape of the debate as I prefer to cast it can be found in a less developed form already in the writings of A.B. Simpson himself.<sup>2</sup>

#### B. New Testament Eschatology

New Testament scholars such as Oscar Cullman, George R. Beasley-Murray, and G. E. Ladd have done a great service to evangelical theology with their emphasis on New Testament eschatology as a necessary framework for understanding a large number of apparent paradoxes.<sup>3</sup> Space does not permit a detailed accounting for the evidence, only a summary which is best laid out with the following chart borrowed from Fee and Stuart.<sup>4</sup>

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text” this remains highly problematic as the covenantal framework in which it is found also promises wealth and security if Israel remains faithful—hardly something most people in touch with the teaching of Jesus and the general thrust of New Testament theology would wish to affirm as having ongoing significance in our present eschatological age.

<sup>2</sup>“We are in the age of miracles, the age of Christ, the age that lies between the two advents. Underneath the eye of a ceaseless Divine Presence, this is the age of power, the age which above all ages of time should be intensely alive” (Simpson, 43).

<sup>3</sup>O. Cullman, *Christ and Time: The Primitive Christian Conception of Time and History*, trans. F.V. Filson (London: SCM Press, 1951). G. R. Beasley-Murray, *Jesus and the Kingdom of God* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1986). G. E. Ladd, *The Presence of the Future: The Eschatology of Biblical Realism* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1974), and *A Theology of the New Testament*, rev. ed. (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1993), 54-67.

<sup>4</sup>G. D. Fee and D. Stuart, *How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth* (Grand Rapids: Academic Books, 1982), 120. I thoroughly enjoyed discovering someone else who saw the relevance of this eschatological chart with respect to a theology of healing when I found a nearly identical chart in Ken Blue, *Authority to Heal* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1987), 95.

<u>Already</u>	<u>Not Yet</u>
righteousness	completed righteousness
peace	full peace
health	no sickness or death
Spirit	in complete fullness

This already/not yet framework is not only necessary for understanding the nature of divine healing, but just as necessary for understanding the nature of the ongoing struggle with sin as well. Given that one will find little or no disagreement with the premise that Jesus dealt decisively with sin on the cross, one might well query why it is that believers who have apparently had their sins removed would fall back into occasional sin. The point of this chart is to affirm that in Christ's death all the effects of the fall and the enemies of God's people are decisively dealt with--sin, sickness, death, alienation from God and, of course, Satan himself. The OT prophecies concerning the redemption of God's fallen humanity have found fulfillment in Christ and his saving work. However, to use Oscar Cullman's analogy, Christ's death and resurrection are akin to D-Day in World War II when the defeat of the Germans was sealed by the landing of the allies in France. However, it took several months of the most severe fighting in the war before VE-Day, in which that defeat was finalized. We live in the "in-between" times between D-Day and VE-Day,<sup>5</sup> already experiencing the benefits of God's rule, but not experiencing complete liberation from "this evil age" which is passing away.

What does this mean in terms of our theology of divine healing? First, it means that we can, and ought to affirm, that all the benefits we accrue as believers come to us only through the saving work of Christ on the cross, whether that be forgiveness of sins, emotional healing, physical healing or victory over temptation. On the other hand, we affirm that we will continue to experience the effects of living in the age which is passing away. That is, we will continue to fall into sin, be emotionally damaged, suffer illness, and ultimately physical death. As I consistently point out to those who tend towards an "over-realized" eschatology in terms of physical healing, even Lazarus whom Jesus revived from the dead ended up dying ultimately.<sup>6</sup> We are being naive about our present eschatological position if we think we can live completely free of sin and sickness (as every funeral should drive home rather forcefully).<sup>7</sup> On

the other hand, we are being faithless if we do not claim as ours the freedom from "this age" offered to us in Jesus.<sup>8</sup> We hope not just for benefits when the Kingdom is consummated, but also believe that God is interested in his will "being done on earth as it is in heaven" even as we pray for the Kingdom to come (Matt 6:9-10). This eschatological framework then, especially when coupled with the larger biblical narrative from Genesis to Revelation, goes a long way toward answering some persistent questions with regard to divine healing.<sup>9</sup>

## C. Other Persistent Questions

### 1. Sin and Sickness

First, what is the connection between sin and sickness? Are people sick because of their sin? The answer is "Yes"--and "No"! First, all human suffering is ultimately attributed to the sin of the first human pair. With human sin came sickness and ultimately physical death (Gen 3:14-19; Rom 5:12-14).<sup>10</sup> Most people asking the question, however, are more interested in whether *the sick individual's personal sin* is the cause of their illness. Here is where the "no" response fits quite often.<sup>11</sup> There are obvious cases where someone's

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effects of living in "this age"—ultimately every bit as much as illness in the course of one's life en route to the grave (37-38).

<sup>8</sup>The gospels are teeming with stories of individuals, particularly from among the Pharisees, who fail to discern the "times" as it were and therefore are unwilling to concede that the forgiveness and healing after Israel's long exile are now being poured out in a ridiculously merciful fashion by God through his Messiah (Mark 2:6-7 and parallels; 3:1-6; Matt 20:1-15; Luke 15:11-32).

<sup>9</sup>This eschatological framework as also proven its practical value especially within the third wave charismatic movement (of which the Vineyard movement is the prime example) which unlike previous Pentecostal and Charismatic renewal movements has adopted this framework and thus avoided many of the excesses and pitfalls which accompanied these previous movements. While Pentecostalism and charismatic renewal movements in the 1970's tended toward an over-realized eschatology which demanded a full experience of all the benefits of Christ's saving work, and thus ended up living in denial about sickness and death; third wave writers such as John Wimber, *Power Evangelism: Signs and Wonders Today* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1985) and Ken Blue (79-116) have had a considerably more balanced approach.

<sup>10</sup>A point well made by Bailey, 14-15. An excellent discussion of the biblical view of sin and sickness integrated into our already/not yet framework can be found in Peter H. Davids, "A Biblical View of the Relationship of Sin and the Fruit of Sin: Sickness, Demonization, Death, Natural Calamity," in *The Kingdom and the Power*, ed. G.S. Greig and K.N. Springer (Ventura: Regal Books, 1993): 111-132.

<sup>11</sup>The potentially troublesome phrase in James 5:15, "and anyone who has committed sins will be forgiven" (NRSV) begins with the *ka/\n* (*kai/ + ea/\n*). BDF suggest that this term "combines in itself the meanings 'and if' (purely conditional) and 'if only, even if' (*etsi*, i.e., concessive in itself)", §374. Clearly the clause is simply suggesting that if unforgiven sin is *also* a problem with the sick individual it can be taken care of immediately as well, suggesting by implication that this is not always the case. Davids, *James*, 194-195;

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<sup>5</sup>O. Cullman, 84, and picked up by Ladd, *Theology*, 64.

<sup>6</sup>Any claims to originality on this were subsequently shattered when I read a similar statement in Siple, 122.

<sup>7</sup>In this regard Ecclesiastes 7:2 is instructive. Simpson's concept of a life lived free of all illness with death at an old age is a "half-utopia" which fails to fully appreciate death itself as evidence for the ongoing

## Section 12. Developments in the Alliance View of Healing

personal sin has led to the illness they face--striving for success leading to stress-related illness, excessive alcohol consumption leading to liver damage, sexual promiscuity leading to STD's, etc. But in some cases one can identify *someone else's sin* as the cause of one's suffering--an injury after being hit by a drunk driver, lung cancer from second hand smoke, etc. But in many cases, there is no immediate link to human sin per se. It is NOT the individual's sin which has caused the illness, but simply the fact that one is in this present age where humanity's fallen state means that physical breakdown is inevitable.<sup>12</sup>

Another question we might then want to answer is whether we ought to pray for healing for an illness which we can attribute to sin. Here there can be only one emphatic response—"Yes." Jesus death and resurrection effectively reverse all the effects of the fall, and that includes both sin and sickness as the combination of healing and forgiveness in James 5:15 make clear. James 5:15 would also deal with those instances which fit under "sickness as God's punishment for specific sin" which one finds in Acts 13:9-11 and 1 Cor 11:30-32.<sup>13</sup> Should we pray for healing for a sickness attributable to sinful behaviour a person is unwilling to give up? Individual contexts will determine what is or is not an appropriate course of action, but my sentiments would be that one would pray for the sickness *as well as* for

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and for a more thorough discussion on this and the mutual confession and healing in 5:16 see Reimer, 153-155. See also Davids, "A Biblical View," 118.

<sup>12</sup>I would subsume the story of the blind man in John 9:1ff in this category. Jesus claims that neither the blind man's sin nor the sin of his parents is responsible for the blindness, but rather "he was born blind so that [i/(n)a] God's works might be revealed in him" (John 9:3). If one reads the i/(n)a clause as result rather than purpose, as it clearly is in John 5:7, one could conceivably read the statement as Jesus stating that the result of the man being born blind would be that he would play a role in the revelation of God's eschatological activity in Jesus without making a statement about ontological cause (J.A. Brooks and C.L. Winbery, *Syntax of New Testament Greek* [Lanham, MD: University of America Press, 1979], 120, 121 180; BDF §379). This might be regarded as a bit of sophistry to attempt to get God off the hook for causing blindness for some unfortunate soul only so that he might be utilized for a christological statement in the future, especially given passages which speak of God causing blindness, death, and even sending evil spirits on people (Acts 13:9-11; 5:1-11; 1 Sam 16:14). However, it seems in keeping with the canonical narrative from Genesis to Revelation that evil is not from God, but God reveals himself by turning evil on itself to work out his purposes (e.g., Gen 50:20). This is hardly a cause for celebrating the original evil so much as reveling in the God who can turn circumstances into his favor, as the cross so ably demonstrates (Col 2:15).

<sup>13</sup>These rightly deserve a greater treatment than the scope of this paper allows. In a preliminary fashion I would suggest that this is the exception, not the rule, and that it ought to be invoked rather infrequently, if ever, when dealing pastorally with individuals. Siplely makes some valuable points with regard to the Corinthian passage in his chapter entitled, "Understanding the Lord's Body" (100-113) as does Bailey, 127-130.

conviction of and victory over the obvious sin causing the illness.

### 2. Is it Always God's Will to Heal?

Is it always God's will to heal? The only answer when cast within our NT eschatological chart is, "Yes, God's will is for his redeemed humanity to be completely liberated from the effects of the fall, including sickness and death."<sup>14</sup> God's will in this regard is expressed in Revelation 21:4. When we ask for healing in our present already/not yet age, we can be certain that we are asking for exactly what it is God wants for us. As Jesus himself instructs in the Lord's prayer, "Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven" and "Your Kingdom come" (Matt 6:10 NIV).

The question is better put, "Will God heal me now in this present age or will he wait for the consummation?" As I stated earlier, we cannot live in denial that we still live with one foot in "this age." Even those people Jesus himself healed fell ill again and died. The mystery of who experiences what benefits and to what degree from Christ's death and resurrection even in our present age cannot be explained, and pastorally I have no answer.<sup>15</sup> What I can reassure those seeking divine healing is that they are indeed asking for exactly what it is their loving God wishes to give them. The only question is "When?", and the only response to "later" is carrying on living out a life based on faith and hope in the knowledge that a perfectly whole body awaits us. As Paul's "firstfruits" language points out, Christ's resurrection proves it!<sup>16</sup>

### 3. Role of Faith

A most troubling and potentially tricky question is that of the role of faith in divine healing, particularly as certain Christian groups have committed some gross atrocities in the name of "faith healing." The New Testament repeatedly hints there is a connection between faith and experiencing God's divine healing.<sup>17</sup> This should hardly be surprising given all our benefits accrued on the cross and resurrection become available as we put our faith in Christ and his saving work. The problem lies with those who chalk up failure to see results from healing prayer to lack of faith, usually on the part of the ill *victim*.

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<sup>14</sup>In this regard I couldn't agree more with Simpson's sentiments on the matter (43, 46-49, 59-60) even if one might feel uneasy about his subsequent disregard for human medical means (33-34, 52-54, 61).

<sup>15</sup>This is where the overwhelming confidence of Simpson on God maintaining the health of a believer until they die at a ripe old age in their sleep (to only slightly exaggerate his claims) is problematic pastorally because this is *not* the experience of some very godly individuals (37).

<sup>16</sup>1 Cor 15:20-23.

<sup>17</sup>Matt 8:10-13; 9:2, 22, 29; 13:58; 15:28; 17:20; Mark 2:5; 5:34; 6:5-6; 10:52; Luke 5:20; 7:9; 7:50; 8:48; Acts 3:16; 14:9.

I usually assure those who seek healing and worry about the faith dimension with the following observations. First, to attempt to “hype up” one’s faith so one can experience healing is to rely on personal work, not faith--ultimately it is not your faith that heals you but God’s graciousness (Jam 5:15b). Second, Jesus’ faith “demands” were not particularly burdensome. He talked about “mustard size” faith (Matt 17:20). This lines up with an observation I have made with regard to the faith/healing miracle connection in the NT narratives--that is, the references to “faith” in the Gospels and Acts are less an issue of amount (i.e., persons having greater faith receive healing as a result) as correctly oriented faith (i.e., they have chosen to put their trust in *Jesus* to heal them).<sup>18</sup> So long as our attitude is that of the father of the possessed boy who cried, “I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief,” we have met the faith requirement (Mark 9:24). In fact, the very act of asking for prayer for healing demonstrates one has at least the seeds of faith within.<sup>19</sup> Entertaining doubts about whether one will or will not be healed is not going to prevent God from healing us through that same Jesus who accepted the distressed father’s cry.

There is another dimension to faith and healing occasionally forgotten, and that is that frequently the “faith demand” is on the part of those praying for healing, rather than the ill person themselves. I have discusses this at greater length in my thesis and will only site an example from James 5:14-15 where it is clearly the elders praying to whom the remark about “the prayer offered in faith” applies.<sup>20</sup> This of course has some practical implications to which we shall now turn.

<sup>18</sup>This most obvious in the healing of the Gentile centurion’s son who correctly describes Jesus’ mission and role and for that is congratulated with having “more faith” than the Jewish people (Matt 8:5-13; Luke 7:1-10). The healing of the Syro-Pheonician woman’s demonized daughter has similar overtones (Mark 7:24-30; note that Bailey reads this woman’s faith in terms of “quality” not “quantity”, 191). The hemorrhaging woman likewise demonstrates her faith that it is *Jesus* who will heal her by her desperate attempts to touch his clothing (Mark 5:24-34).

<sup>19</sup>Bailey seems to make a similar point when he states, “Faith is the hand reached out to accept God’s blessing....The blessings are to them that ask. Asking is a high level of prayer. Asking is also a process of faith” (196).

<sup>20</sup>In my thesis I have argued that the “faith” of Acts 3:16 which is instrumental in the healing of the temple beggar is that of the apostles, not the beggar (Reimer 59-61, on the “prayer of faith” of James 5:15a and its referents see 152-153).

### III. Procedure

#### A. Personal Research Results on NT Healing Practices

While at Regent College, I completed a 200 page dissertation on the topic of healing rites in the New Testament era churches under the supervision of Peter H. Davids. Space here only permits a summary of my findings, which I have further supplied in chart form in [Appendix A](#).

My conclusion was that the New Testament church varied in its approach to healing depending on the context. In Acts we find traveling preachers performing public healings to underscore their message of a saving and healing Savior. In 1 Corinthians, we find that in Paul’s charismatic community healing was done by those who believed the Spirit was gifting them to perform a particular healing or healings. In James’ more structured context, based most likely on a Jewish synagogue model, it is the role of the elders to carry out healing rites. Those who claim that we must get back to “doing it the way the early church did it” must first answer the question, “Which church, where and when?”<sup>21</sup> NT diversity suggests that there is a good deal of freedom we have in structuring our healing ministries, so long as we are doing so with a sensitivity to our context, and with an eye to what I believe unifies all these various approaches.

Fundamental to all the approaches was that the healing was attributed to the exalted Christ and the presence of a human healing mediator. That is, it is Christ doing the healing, but he mediates that healing through human believers. Christ through the Spirit is in the business of ministering to our needs by using one believer to meet the needs of another. This is not to say that individuals cannot ask for healing directly from God, but that the model given to us in the NT is that Christ’s *modus operandi* is typically to involve someone else in the process of meeting that need.

#### B. Suggestions for Praxis within an Alliance Context

Within the Alliance church the approach to healing ministries has been structured largely on the basis of James 5:13-16 and is adequately discussed by both Siple and Bailey.<sup>22</sup> The merit and appropriateness for this approach within the Alliance context is obvious. Alliance church ministry is quite formalized with salaried official workers and voluntary elders. One

<sup>21</sup>Needless to say I would disagree with Bailey’s statement that “the only authorized healing service for the church is James 5:13-18” (135).

<sup>22</sup>Bailey, 132-140.

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would assume (or at least hope) that this means those involved in prayer for healing would be persons of faith who truly believe that God's will is to heal through Christ. One would also assume that these individuals would be sensitive to the guiding of the Holy Spirit and sensitive to the true needs of the person who has requested prayer. That is, they would be the sort of people to whom the Spirit might give a word of knowledge as to what is God's timing in all of this or whether there are underlying sin or emotional issues that need dealing with. One would also hope they would be mature enough to maintain confidences, especially if you are asking the ailing person to divulge information about the nature of their illness or whether there is sin which needs dealing with. This latter issue particularly needs a sensitive hand as one would never wish for an innocent victim of an illness to feel as if they are being blamed for their own condition and there must be reassurance that sin exposed is dealt with immediately so that prayer for healing may also be offered. Bailey also mentions something which I emphasized in my thesis, and that is that a plurality of elders prevents the dramatic enhancement of an "individual" who is then perceived to be "super-spiritual" because of their having manifested the Spirit through a gift of healing.<sup>23</sup>

As for the "symbolic" gestures associated with the James 5:13-16 "healing format", that is, the laying on of hands and the anointing oil, I would say these are still very appropriate.<sup>24</sup> I would regard these as forms of "non-verbal" communication, often more powerful than words, in which human touch communicates love, as well as the mediation of Christ's healing *through* another believer, the oil a sign of *God's* activity in setting the person apart to receive a special blessing from him, and perhaps, the "oil" as a visible manifestation of God's invisible "medicine." One could add other symbols to the process depending on context as well. For instance, I have participated in healings "by proxy" in which someone sits in for the person needing healing but unable to be at a service.

In my personal experience, one of the greatest failures in the typical Alliance "healing service" is the failure to spend time with the person, to ask some important questions, to make the person feel loved and cared for whether instantaneous healing occurs or not. We pray for healing for one another because we love one another--our approach to healing ministry must reflect this. "Healing services" are themselves a bit of a

<sup>23</sup>Bailey, 135. As I pointed out in my thesis, when a plurality of elders successfully heals, the inevitable status gain accrues to the office rather than any individual, thus reinforcing existing ministry structures (Reimer, 158-159).

<sup>24</sup>On these two features and their significance within the James 5 passage see Reimer 145-148.

limiting format and I believe that pastors must do a more adequate job of informing their congregation that if they are ill, they have every right to call the elders together to pray for them. Many people in the pew are unaware that this is a "standing offer". A private session with a person is often far more effective in meeting some of the deficiencies of a typical "altar-call healing service."

For all the strengths of the James 5 approach to healing, the NT churches did not seem constrained by this model but had alternative approaches. This means I believe that we must remain open to alternative formats for healing ministry, especially being sensitive to our context and what we are communicating through our forms of ministry.<sup>25</sup> I have on occasion incorporated elements of what I see as the 1 Corinthians approach by allowing those who believe gifted to pray for a healing to join the elders in prayer for a sick individual. Peter Davids stated to me that in his personal experience, children were often effective in prayer for healing. This ought to be hardly surprising given Christ's word about children modelling our approach to God and the "prayer of faith." I believe there is no need to abandon James 5 as a primary model, but I also believe there needs to be an openness to alternative approaches.

### IV. Conclusion

As I stated above, we pray for healing for one another in the church because we share Christ's love for one another and his concern that we should be liberated from the devastating effects of our sin, corporately and individually.<sup>26</sup> The surest test of our healing ministry is not whether we see paraplegics walk, but whether those who pray for healing and those who are prayed for understand that we are doing this out of love and care

<sup>25</sup>Ken Blue rather eloquently states, "In examining the healing models within the church today, I found no structural or procedural elements common to all. Each tradition has a model of ministry which reflects its own history and theological ideals. It was liberating for me to discover that God works through the peculiar character and beliefs of each group to facilitate healing and deliverance. In developing our own healing models, we need not feel pressured to conform to technique or expectations of other groups nor should we sit in judgment on them. Particular methods of healing are not essential in themselves but rather appropriate or inappropriate, depending on their context" (122). C. Peter Wagner, while suggesting a methodology based on the work of John Wimber, also states up front that his "... suggestion is not to look for the right or the wrong way to pray for the sick, but to look for the way that best fits you and your particular philosophy of ministry" (*How to Have a Healing Ministry Without Making Your Church Sick!* [Ventura: Regal Books, 1988], 224).

<sup>26</sup>One need only note how frequently in the gospels Christ is moved by compassion to heal (to cite but two explicit examples Mark 1:41 and Luke 7:13).

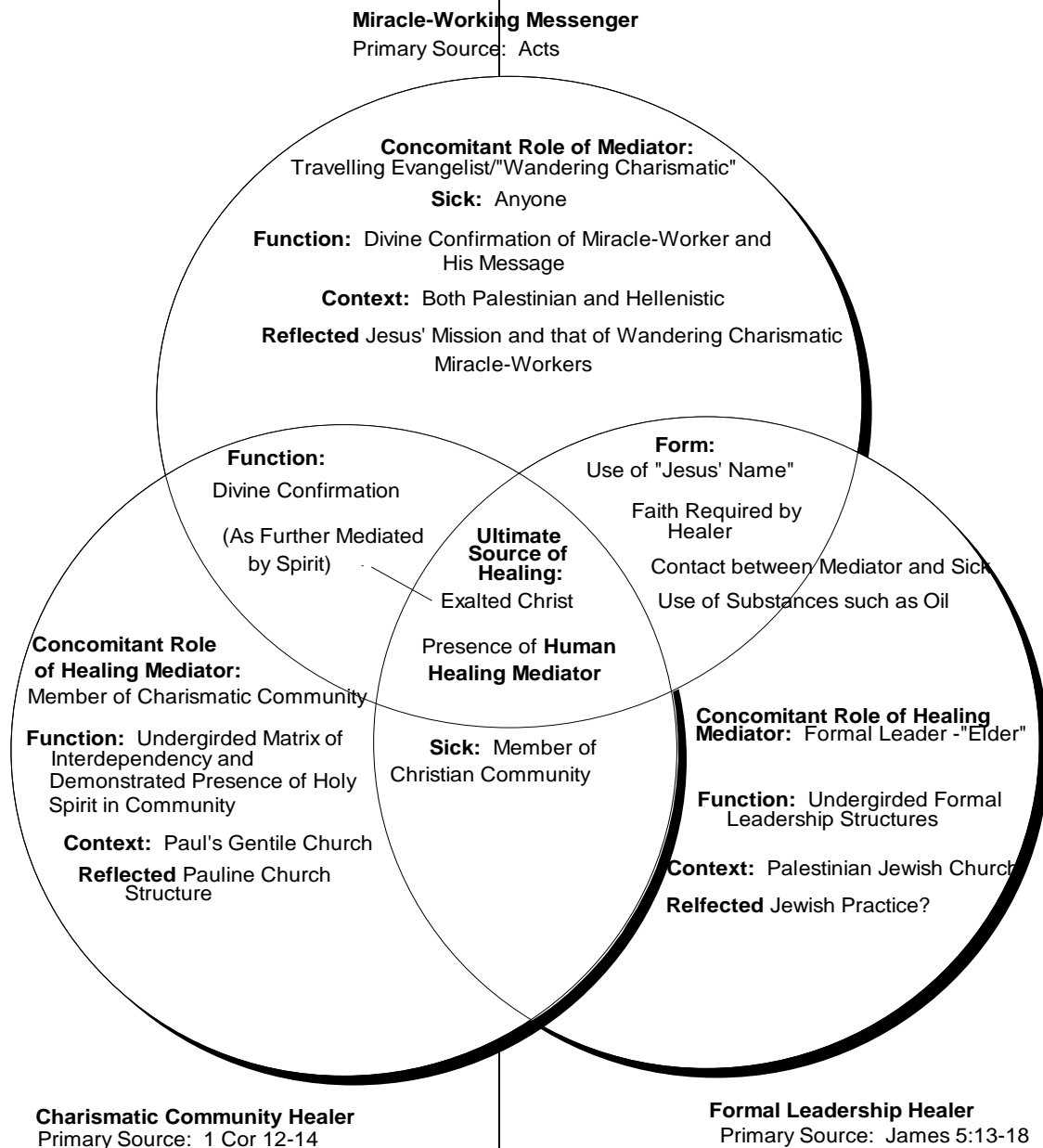


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and concern.<sup>27</sup> If God cares for our ultimate physical well being, we share that care and concern for our brothers and sisters. If those involved in healing ministry

within our church walk away from a time of healing ministry profoundly touched by God's love for us and his people's love for one another, I believe one has an effective healing ministry.

### Appendix A: Diversity and Unity of NT Healing Rites



<sup>27</sup> 1 Cor 13, inserted as it is in the midst of a discussion on spiritual gifts in 1 Cor 12 and 14, is particularly instructive in this regard.

Reading 12.3

## Cautious Co-belligerence? The Late Nineteenth-Century American Divine Healing Movement and the Promise of Medical Science

Bernie A. Van De Walle

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### Introduction

The late-nineteenth century was a time of monumental change. It witnessed a cyclone of transformation and progress rivaling, at least, that of any preceding era. Not surprisingly, it was a time of key advances in medical science. This era was home to Pasteur, Röntgen, Lister, and a number of lesser known, but still significant medical pioneers. These inventors and their discoveries radically reshaped and significantly advanced the practice of medicine. New advances seemed to be dawning with every new day. At the end of the nineteenth century, the promise of medical science seemed unlimited.

At the same time, significant change was seen in other areas; religion was no exception. It was the birthplace of the Divine Healing movement, a loosely associated group of religious teachers and practitioners who sought to promote and practice the healing power of the indwelling and resurrected Christ over that of natural means. This movement gained tens of thousands of adherents in a significantly short span of time. Key figures in this group included people from a wide-variety of denominations, men and women, ministers and physicians. Furthermore, this movement played an essential role in the birth of Pentecostalism,<sup>1</sup> the greatest religious movement of the twentieth century.

Therefore, there rose simultaneously on the American landscape at least two significant approaches to health and healing in the late nineteenth century, each with its own biased and ardent champions and devotees. In fact, the opinion of the late nineteenth-century Divine Healing teachers did not, as one might expect, thoroughly dispense with the value and goodness of physicians, their diagnoses, and medical treatment. While they did not completely dismiss the advances, usefulness, and propriety of medical science, they did assert that it was, at best, a deficient approach to the gravity, complexity, and depth of human disease. While they believed that physicians and their medical

treatments may be gifts from God, they were convinced that medical science was fundamentally unable to bring to humanity the kind of health and life intended for them by God and found solely in the redeeming work of Jesus Christ.

This chapter will explore those common and key responses—both the affirmations and the denials—of the late nineteenth-century Divine Healing proponents to the growing popularity and use of medicine, remedies, and physicians.

### Divine Healing Affirmations of Medical Science

Almost to a person, Divine Healing advocates readily granted that doctors and many of their treatments exist by the providence of God. A. B. Simpson, founder of The Christian and Missionary Alliance, noted that physicians and their medical treatments are “among God’s good gifts” to humanity.<sup>2</sup> Charles Cullis, the renowned Boston homeopath and father of the Divine Healing movement in the United States noted the “valuable” role that doctors and their treatments may play and continued his own homeopathic medical practice in harmony with his ministry of Divine Healing.<sup>3</sup> Carrie Judd Montgomery, one of the Divine Healing movement’s more celebrated authors, speakers, and founder of the “Home of Peace” in Oakland, California, granted the skill of those physicians that worked with her during her own infirmity.<sup>4</sup> One lesser-known figure, Kenneth McKenzie, a member of Simpson’s Christian and Missionary Alliance and author of no fewer than two significant texts on the theology and practice of Divine Healing, noted that only those with an immature theology of Divine Healing and “extremists” would deny that there is good in doctors

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<sup>1</sup> See Donald W. Dayton, *Theological Roots of Pentecostalism* (Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow, 1987).

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<sup>2</sup> Albert Benjamin Simpson, *Earnests of the Coming Age and Other Sermons* (New York: Christian Alliance Publishing, 1921), 98–99; Albert Benjamin Simpson, *The Old Faith and the New Gospel* (New York: Christian Alliance Publishing, 1911; repr., Harrisburg, Penn.: Christian Publications, 1966), 59.

<sup>3</sup> Charles Cullis, *Faith Cures; Or, Answer to Prayer in the Healing of the Sick* (Boston: Willard Tract Repository, n.d.), 6.

<sup>4</sup> Carrie F. Judd, *The Prayer of Faith* (Chicago: Revell, 1880), 12.

and medicine.<sup>5</sup> Furthermore, the fact that most Divine Healing proponents continued to refer to physicians as “Dr.” shows that only by caricature could one assert that Divine Healing movement saw absolutely no good or use in consulting with physicians and implementing their prescriptions.<sup>6</sup>

These affirmations of physicians and medical treatment by Divine Healing proponents, however, were not blanket endorsements. Rather, as we will see, they were limited to particular and specific arenas. What is particularly interesting is the seeming unanimity of the Divine Healing proponents in regard to those particular areas that they affirmed in regard to medical science. Almost universally, the Divine Healing teachers affirmed three separate but related aspects of the goodness of physicians and medical science: 1) the recent and substantial advances in medical science, 2) the physicians’ ability to diagnose the physical cause of disease, and 3) the physicians’ occasional ability to alleviate symptoms of disease.

#### **Affirmed the Recent and Substantial Advances in Medical Science**

The nineteenth century, as noted earlier, was a time of significant progress in the realm of medical science—advances not always appreciated by the religious establishment. The Divine Healing proponents were not so biased, however, as to deny that there were any real and worthy developments. Observing that the general progress in knowledge was a fulfillment of Daniel’s prophecy,<sup>7</sup> Simpson also noted, “The progress of medical science in the past half century has been phenomenal. No fair-minded person can refuse to concede its value, notwithstanding all its limitations, counterfeits, and failures.”<sup>8</sup> On another occasion, he called recent scientific progress “radical and astounding.”<sup>9</sup> Cullis, in defending to the local authorities his establishment and placement of a “Cancer Home” in Boston, cited the recent progress in medical science as that which made the presence of such a home no real threat to the surrounding population.<sup>10</sup> These advances, though, were not without scrutiny and criticism. One of

the advances, for example, that Simpson questioned was the developing medical science of eugenics that alleged that disease in all of its manifestations could, at the very least, be significantly limited by the legislated and selective breeding of humanity to do away with “the imperfect product.” He described such a program as “foolishness with God.”<sup>11</sup>

#### **Affirmed the Physicians’ Ability to Diagnose the Physical Cause of Disease**

Second, the Divine Healing teachers also affirmed physicians’ ability to often accurately diagnose the physical cause of disease. This affirmation, though, was more often implicit than explicit. R. Kelso Carter, a noted professor, author, and composer (he wrote the hymn “Standing on the Promises of God”), while eventually pursuing an avenue of physical restoration other than medicine, at no point doubted that the diagnosis his doctors gave him of “incurable heart disease” was accurate.<sup>12</sup> Montgomery never questioned that she suffered from spinal fever as her physicians had diagnosed.<sup>13</sup> Cullis often relied on his own medical training and expertise to identify the particular physical distress of those who came to him and trusted implicitly the diagnosis of others in the medical profession.<sup>14</sup> A. J. Gordon, noted author, educator, and pastor of the Clarendon Street Baptist Church in Boston, asserted that physicians are those who have the “ability to interpret . . . the laws of health to the sick” and implies that they are right to do so and may do so rightly.<sup>15</sup>

One example of particular interest is found in Simpson’s discussion of the cause of the death of Jesus Christ. In order to make a theological point, Simpson appealed to the opinion of contemporary physicians, diagnosing across the centuries and relying on the biblical accounts, regarding the cause of Jesus’ death. He noted that many physicians attributed the death of Jesus, medically, to a “rupture of the heart. He did not die from the ordinary causes incident to crucifixion, but He died from a spasm that caused His heart to burst.”<sup>16</sup> Simpson not only leaned on the diagnosis of contemporary physicians of an event centuries previous

<sup>5</sup> Kenneth McKenzie, *Divine Life for the Body* (New York: Christian Alliance Publishing, 1926), 1–2.

<sup>6</sup> Judd, *Prayer of Faith*, 85.

<sup>7</sup> Simpson, *Earnests of the Coming Age*, 5.

<sup>8</sup> Albert Benjamin Simpson, “Divine Healing,” *Living Truths* 3:4 (October 1903): 172.

<sup>9</sup> Albert Benjamin Simpson, *Life More Abundantly* (New York: Christian Alliance Publishing, 1904), 38.

<sup>10</sup> W. H. Daniels, ed., *Dr. Cullis and His Work: Twenty Years of Blessing in Answer to Prayer. The Hospitals, Schools, Orphanages, Churches, and Missions Raised Up and Supported by the Hand of the Lord through the Faith and Labors of Charles Cullis, M.D.* (Boston: Willard Tract Repository, 1885), 224–25.

<sup>11</sup> Simpson, *Life More Abundantly*, 38.

<sup>12</sup> Russell Kelso Carter, *The Atonement for Sin and Sickness: Or, A Full Salvation for Soul and Body* (Boston: Willard Tract Repository, 1884; repr., New York: Garland Publishing, 1985), 19.

<sup>13</sup> Carrie Judd Montgomery, *Under His Wings: The Story of My Life* (Oakland, Calif.: Office of Triumphs of Faith, 1936), 50.

<sup>14</sup> Cullis, *Faith Cures*, 16.

<sup>15</sup> Adoniram Judson Gordon, *The Ministry of Healing: Miracles of Cure in All Ages* (Chicago: Revell, 1882), 144.

<sup>16</sup> Albert Benjamin Simpson, *The Lord for the Body*, rev. ed. (Camp Hill, Penn.: Christian Publications, 1996), 79; Albert Benjamin Simpson, *Discovery of Divine Healing* (New York: Alliance Press, 1903), 117.

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but cited them as authoritative and accurate on an issue as theologically significant as the crucifixion.

### **Affirmed the Physicians' Occasional Ability to Alleviate Symptoms of Disease**

Third, the Divine Healing proponents affirmed the medical community's ability to occasionally alleviate, if not eliminate, symptoms of disease. In his later retraction of one aspect of his earlier Divine Healing assertions, Carter noted that the actual practice of the key proponents of Divine Healing shows that, while their rhetoric may seem to leave no room for the use of natural means, each of them both prescribed and practiced the use of natural means.<sup>17</sup> Such is most evident in the life of Cullis who never relinquished his medical practice and continued to think of and identify himself as a member of the medical community with a practice, at least to a great degree, founded on the use of natural means.<sup>18</sup> Montgomery, speaking about the malady from which she was eventually divinely healed, did note that often her grandmother's "old-fashioned home remedies" afforded her some level of comfort and relief as did the medication provided by physicians.<sup>19</sup> Gordon affirmed the "recuperative forces of the natural world."<sup>20</sup> Even Simpson, who so strongly warned against the use of medicine, granted its "limited value" and cautious employ.<sup>21</sup> The Divine Healing proponents noted that, by divine providence, there was woven into the very fabric of creation some level of medical relief. The goal and practice of physicians was to identify these recuperative, "mechanical" powers of nature and apply them to those in need.<sup>22</sup> Some of the proponents called the employment of this recuperative power of nature which existed by the purposeful, beneficent, and creative power of God, the *vis medicatrix naturae*.<sup>23</sup> As it was part of the providential structure of creation, it should

not be rejected, as far as it went, and may have been the best help that some could obtain.<sup>24</sup>

It should be noted that one of the internal debates between the Divine Healing proponents concerned whether or not one could legitimately ask God to give his blessing to the use of means. Implicitly, the very discussion shows that, to varying degrees, each side admitted that natural means may bring about some measured effects, at least. If there were no effects, the question of blessing is, at the very least, much less pressing.

### **Denials and Critiques of Medical Science**

Certainly, however, the endorsement of physicians and medical treatment by those involved in the Divine Healing movement was cautious and limited. While they affirmed the recent real progress made by medical science and affirmed its ability to diagnose and alleviate the physical cause of disease, they also made some stark denials that set them clearly at odds with the medical community. While some of the promoters of Divine Healing had critiques that were peculiar to themselves, there were five critiques that they all held in common and that were, for each of them, the central critiques of medical science.

### **Denied There is Either Scriptural Precedent or Prescription to Consult Physicians or to Use Medicine**

First, the Divine Healing promoters denied that there is either scriptural precedent or divine prescription to utilize medicine, remedies, or to consult physicians. Simpson asserted that nowhere in Scripture did God prescribe medicines or remedies for his people.<sup>25</sup> When medical means are mentioned in Scripture, he noted, "such 'means' are referred to in terms not at all complimentary."<sup>26</sup> There is no mention of God's institution or blessing of the medical profession. When the people of God are sick, Montgomery noted, they are not to turn to the created order for relief. Instead, they are to seek God alone.<sup>27</sup> The only prescription found in Scripture for the sick is to turn to God in faith to be their healer,<sup>28</sup> to be *Jehovah Rophi*. In the New Testament, in particular, the only means the sick are to follow is found in James 5, to call upon the elders of the Church, whose credentials do not lie in their ability to manage the *vis medicatrix naturae* but in their being full of the Holy

<sup>17</sup> In Chapters 7 and 8 of his measured retraction of previous doctrinal convictions, Carter points out how leading figures in the Divine Healing Movement all "practically" used medical means personally or referred others to them. These figures include but are not limited to Cullis, Simpson, Gordon, Montgomery, and Dowie. Russell Kelso Carter, *"Faith Healing" Reviewed after Twenty Years* (Boston: The Christian Witness Company, 1897; repr., New York: Garland Publishing Co., 1985). Carrie Judd Montgomery acknowledges that they all had been inconsistent in their treatment of faith and medicine (*Prayer of Faith*, 80).

<sup>18</sup> Paul G. Chappell, "The Divine Healing Movement in America" (Ph.D. diss., Drew University, 1983), 141; Cullis, *Faith Cures*, 5–6.

<sup>19</sup> Montgomery, *Under His Wings*, 50.

<sup>20</sup> Gordon, *Ministry of Healing*, 144.

<sup>21</sup> Albert Benjamin Simpson, *The Gospel of Healing*, rev. ed. (Harrisburg, Penn.: Christian Publications, 1915), 70.

<sup>22</sup> Daniels, *Dr. Cullis*, 348; Gordon, *Ministry of Healing*, 144.

<sup>23</sup> Simpson, *Earnests of the Coming Age*, 26, 98; A. J. Gordon uses a slightly different name, the "*vis medicatrix*" (Gordon, *Ministry of Healing*, 186).

<sup>24</sup> Simpson, *Gospel of Healing*, 41, 70, 114, 183.

<sup>25</sup> Simpson, *Gospel of Healing*, 67.

<sup>26</sup> Simpson, *Gospel of Healing*, 68.

<sup>27</sup> Judd, *Prayer of Faith*, 82.

<sup>28</sup> Simpson, *Gospel of Healing*, 45; Albert Benjamin Simpson, *Genesis and Exodus*, Christ in the Bible 1 (New York: The Word, Work, and World Publishing, 1888), 205.

Spirit able to exercise the prayer of faith.<sup>29</sup> Given the absence of any other divinely prescribed means of dealing with sickness, Simpson asserted that to turn to medicine, remedies and doctors is not only unwise, it is, simply, both dangerous and impertinent.<sup>30</sup>

### Denied Cessationist Theology

Second, they all denied the doctrine of *cessationism* that affirmed that, upon the establishment of the Church, the age of miracles came to an end.<sup>31</sup> Simpson asserted that the lack of the historic manifestation of Divine Healing, which he did not deny, was based on the promotion of a theology of cessation and the consequential lack of belief in its possibility, rather than on a change in the character or ministry of God in Christ.<sup>32</sup> Montgomery asserted that unbelief in the continuation of the miraculous was the reason that most people, both Christian and non-Christian, did not bother to pursue Divine Healing.<sup>33</sup> Gordon argued that, with the establishment and rule of a cessationist theology, average Christians who might otherwise assume the ongoing exercise of the supernatural were bullied into submission and unbelief.<sup>34</sup> They all noted that cessationism could not be sustained by Scripture.<sup>35</sup> Gordon wrote, “[Jesus] made no provision for the arrest of the stream of divine manifestations which he had started, either in the next age or in a subsequent age.”<sup>36</sup> To those who would want to limit the miraculous gifts to the founding era of the Church, he wrote, “[A]ntiquity has no monopoly of God’s gifts, and ancient men as such had no entrée into God’s treasure-house which is denied to us.”<sup>37</sup> He also showed how cessationism in regard to Divine Healing could not be sustained by a thorough study of Church history.<sup>38</sup> For these teachers, the ministry of God in Christ did not change from one

era to another.<sup>39</sup> In one of his more famous hymns, Simpson reminded people that the Jesus who walked the Earth and healed was the same Christ “Yesterday, Today, Forever,” and his ministry did not significantly change either.<sup>40</sup>

The Divine Healing practitioners credited the new instances of Divine Healing that were being manifest in their day to the renewed faith of some not only in the power of Christ but in the subsistence of the miraculous. That is, a more scriptural theology, or as Gordon called it, “primitive faith,” was reemerging in the church and, consequently, so was a more scriptural practice and manifestation.<sup>41</sup> This resurrection of a more scriptural theology, though, was not understood to be merely coincidental. It was, rather, part of the restoration of biblical Christianity that they believed would precede the return of Jesus Christ.

With a reviving faith, with a deepening spiritual life, with a more marked and Scriptural recognition of the Holy Spirit and the Living Christ, and with the nearer approach of the returning Master Himself, this blessed gospel of physical redemption is beginning to be restored to its ancient place, and the Church is slowly learning to reclaim what she never should have lost.<sup>42</sup>

### Denied the Legitimacy of Medical Science’s Exclusive Naturalism/Materialism

Third, they denied the legitimacy of the late nineteenth-century medical community’s predominant and excessive, if not exclusive, “materialism.”<sup>43</sup> Such a perspective believes that people are nothing more than bio-mechanical/physical beings and, therefore, cure is a strictly secular and physical affair. Consequently, the

<sup>29</sup> Carrie Judd, “The Lord Our Healer,” *Triumphs of Faith* 5:12 (December 1885): 272.

<sup>30</sup> Simpson, *Gospel of Healing*, 44, 70.

<sup>31</sup> Gordon noted that the opinion of the Divine Healing figures is at odds with the greatest majority of Christians on this issue. Gordon, *Ministry of Healing*, 3; Carter, *Atonement for Sin and Sickness*, 23.

<sup>32</sup> Simpson, *Gospel of Healing*, 10–11; Albert Benjamin Simpson, *Messages of Love; Or, Christ in the Epistles of John* (Nyack, NY: Christian Alliance Publishing, 1892), 76; Simpson noted that unbelief resulted in a lack of healing in Jesus’ day and it continues in the same way (*Gospel of Healing*, 19).

<sup>33</sup> Judd, *Prayer of Faith*, 26.

<sup>34</sup> Gordon, *Ministry of Healing*, 3.

<sup>35</sup> Judd, *Prayer of Faith*, 26.

<sup>36</sup> Gordon, *Ministry of Healing*, 54.

<sup>37</sup> Gordon, *Ministry of Healing*, 37.

<sup>38</sup> Gordon, *Ministry of Healing*, 1f. Gordon also appealed to the Church Fathers who identified the ongoing role of the miraculous in their own day, a time past that when a cessationist theology would say that miracles had ended. Gordon, *Ministry of Healing*, 60f.

<sup>39</sup> Carrie Judd, “The Name of Jesus,” *Triumphs of Faith* 4:5 (March 1881): 34.

<sup>40</sup> Particularly verse three:

Oft on earth He healed the sufferer  
By His might hand;  
Still our sicknesses and sorrows  
Go at His command.  
He who gave His healing virtue  
To a woman’s touch  
To the faith that claims His fullness  
Still will give as much.

Albert Benjamin Simpson, “Yesterday, Today, Forever,” *Hymns of the Christian Life*, rev. and enlarged ed. (Harrisburg, Penn.: Christian Publications, 1978), 119.

<sup>41</sup> Gordon, *Ministry of Healing*, 64.

<sup>42</sup> Simpson, *Gospel of Healing*, 10–11; Albert Benjamin Simpson, *Leviticus to Deuteronomy*, Christ in the Bible 2 (New York: The Word, Work, and World Publishing, 1889), 119.

<sup>43</sup> Albert Benjamin Simpson, *The King’s Business* (New York: The Word, Work, and World Publishing, 1886), 71; Albert Benjamin Simpson, *The Present Truth* (South Nyack, NY: Christian Alliance Publishing, 1897), 106; Kenneth McKenzie, *Our Physical Heritage in Christ* (New York: Revell, 1923), 17, 53.

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training of physicians occurred in a purely naturalistic way, biasing, if not blinding, them from the spiritual aspect of human being and certainly dismissing any chance of a psycho-somatic unity. If humanity is a purely physical being, then disease is understood as being purely physical as well. The supernatural, in general, and the spiritual aspect of humanity, in particular, is not only largely ignored in such a perspective, it is practically denied. The Divine Healing advocates noted that the very ideas of the miraculous, spiritual, and supernatural were illegitimate to the medical community and that “any *anti-miraculous*” theory was automatically favored.<sup>44</sup> Simpson noted that manifestations of Divine Healing had not subsided (certainly not to the same degree) in those countries, cultures, or eras that were less “modern” in their worldview and that expected the involvement of the supernatural in the whole of one’s being. He wrote, “It is not surprising, therefore, that [Divine Healing] comes natural [*sic*] to our simple-hearted converts in heathen lands, who know no better than to trust the Lord for both body and soul.”<sup>45</sup>

### Denied Medical Science’s Ability to Diagnose the Ultimate Cause of Disease

The Divine Healing proponents, consequently, denied medical science’s ability to diagnose the central root and cause of all disease. For them, no physical aspects of disease are foundational but are, instead, always consequential and symptomatic. At the most foundational level, the cause of all sickness and disease is sin. Medical science’s excessive, if not exclusive, naturalism and its understanding of sickness and disease solely as a chain of physical causes and effects prejudiced it from considering this option. This is medical science’s fatal flaw. For the Divine Healing proponents, sin is the ultimate cause of all human suffering, including human disease.<sup>46</sup> Sin, as a force in the cosmos, has led to the disruption of the good created order and has resulted in the move to chaos and the disintegration of the created order of which human disease is but one manifestation. Therefore, medical science and its exclusive naturalism, at best, can only identify the symptoms of disease and can never get to the heart of the human predicament. “The doctor’s eyes are often more at fault than his hand,” wrote A. J. Gordon; he continued, “He cannot cure because he

cannot comprehend the cause of our plague.”<sup>47</sup> Kenneth McKenzie granted that medical science may make accurate diagnoses, to a degree. It fell short, however, since the heart of the human predicament is supernatural. Science may see the “fruitage” of human sickness, but “the roots of sickness . . . are spiritual.”<sup>48</sup> Given medical science’s naturalistic presuppositions, the Divine Healing promoters asserted that it cannot diagnose the cause of human disease at its most fundamental level. It is not that the human dilemma is “contranatural” but it is supernatural.<sup>49</sup> Therefore, if medical science hoped to accurately diagnose the cause of disease, it must lay aside its exclusive naturalism. The understanding of sin—a supernatural entity—requires the supernatural means of revelation and illumination.<sup>50</sup>

### Denied Medical Science’s Ability to Treat the Ultimate Cause of Disease

Consequently, the Divine Healing proponents also denied medical science’s ability to provide a cure suitable to the cause of humanity’s ills. By nature, medical science was only interested in the physical treatment of humanity. Consequently, medicine could never be a “sufficient remedy”<sup>51</sup> to the root and breadth of human disease. As such, it was an “imperfect institution”<sup>52</sup> and must be content with being symptomatic, at best.<sup>53</sup> Alleviation is within its grasp, for a time. The finality of cure, however, is not. It may address, to a degree, pain and discomfort but it cannot address and eliminate the root of the disease.<sup>54</sup>

Sin is ultimately a supernatural matter and, therefore, it must be addressed with a supernatural response.<sup>55</sup> Like many in the medical profession, the Divine Healing proponents assumed that only “like cures like.”<sup>56</sup> The nature of the cure must be of the same kind as the disease. The cause of disease, while

<sup>44</sup> Carter, *Atonement for Sin and Sickness*, 23; Gordon, *Ministry of Healing*, 4; Charles Cullis, M.D., introduction to *Dorothea Trudel; Or, The Prayer of Faith, Showing the Remarkable Manner in Which Large Numbers of Sick Persons Were Healed in Answer to Special Prayers*, 3<sup>rd</sup> and enlarged ed. (Boston: Willard Tract Repository, 1872), 18.

<sup>45</sup> Simpson, *Discovery of Divine Healing*, 11.

<sup>46</sup> Simpson, *Gospel of Healing*, 30; Judd, *Prayer of Faith*, 66.

<sup>47</sup> Gordon, *Ministry of Healing*, 191.

<sup>48</sup> McKenzie, *Divine Life for the Body*, 103.

<sup>49</sup> Gordon, *Ministry of Healing*, 44.

<sup>50</sup> Daniels, *Dr. Cullis*, 345; Simpson, *Lord for the Body*, 101.

<sup>51</sup> Albert Benjamin Simpson, “Question Drawer,” *Living Truths* 4:3 (March 1904): 179.

<sup>52</sup> Judd, *Prayer of Faith*, 81

<sup>53</sup> Simpson, *Gospel of Healing*, 30.

<sup>54</sup> For this reason, Simpson cautioned against seeing medical means as cure. He wrote, “It is no use to apply your medical treatment to mere symptoms and try invigorating air and good nourishment so long as that cancer or ulcer is feeding on the vital organs. Get the root of evil removed, then your hygiene will be of some value”; Albert Benjamin Simpson, *Practical Christianity* (New York: Christian Alliance Publishing, 1901), 108.

<sup>55</sup> Simpson, “Divine Healing,” 172.

<sup>56</sup> Richard Harrison Shryock, *Medicine in America: Historical Essays* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1966), 171.

manifesting itself physically, is in essence supernatural. Therefore, its cure must be supernatural, too. For the promoters of Divine Healing, only one remedy is both suitable to the address the supernatural aspect and adequate to address the breadth of the diseased human condition. Only in Jesus Christ can one find relief from consequences of the onslaught of sin. “Christ is the remedy for the Fall, for sin and, therefore, for disease which is the result of sin.”<sup>57</sup> Faith in the “Great Physician”<sup>58</sup> is not only the only appropriate response to sin, it “is *God’s remedy* for disease as well as sin” (emphasis added).<sup>59</sup>

As important as physical healing is for the Divine Healing teachers, it is not the priority. The need for regeneration and sanctification—the spiritual blessings of Christ’s work—is more fundamental. Consequently, the healing homes and retreat centers operated by some of these individuals focused their work on these essential items early in their regimen.<sup>60</sup> In addition to and prior to the exercising of an explicit ministry of healing, these homes sought to ensure that its guests had experienced the regenerative work of Christ and had, subsequently, experienced the sanctifying work of Christ, as well.<sup>61</sup> This would often occur through a routine of spiritual therapy that had as its base careful Bible study, pastoral counsel, and the exercise of the “Prayer of Faith” according to James 5. Charles Cullis wrote that his own practice was “to get [those under his care] to give themselves to the Lord Jesus first, and then . . . to pray for them [for healing].”<sup>62</sup> As a result, while many found the healing that they sought, many more would find spiritual blessing, even if they were not ultimately physically healed. Cullis boldly reported that while not all who came to his homes were physically healed, “none died until [their] soul [was] healed.”<sup>63</sup> This was not seen as underperformance of any measure. Rather, they reported that such was an even greater blessing than the healing that was pursued. In Cullis’ homes, which were exclusively reserved for those who had been pronounced “incurable” by their own physicians, this spiritual restoration far outnumbered the cases of physical healing and, Cullis reported, both host and guest believed that such ought to be considered

success.<sup>64</sup> Those who were fortunate enough to be physically healed also had “as great a blessing . . . come to the soul as to the body.”<sup>65</sup>

### The Notable Exception: John Alexander Dowie

Those acquainted with the late nineteenth-century Divine Healing movement will note the conspicuous absence of one leading figure. John Alexander Dowie, the founder of the International Divine Healing Association, the Christian Catholic Apostolic Church, and the settlement of Zion, Illinois, was one of the best-known, if not notorious, figures in the late nineteenth-century Divine Healing movement.<sup>66</sup> Dowie echoed many of the denials made by the other Divine Healing advocates. He, like the others, denied, that there was scriptural precedent or prescription to employ medical science.<sup>67</sup> He staunchly opposed the assertion that the age of miracles was past.<sup>68</sup> He believed, too, that the root of disease was ultimately spiritual<sup>69</sup> and that science’s excessive naturalism disqualified it from being able to diagnose the ultimate cause of sickness and disease.<sup>70</sup>

Dowie is distinct from the other figures, however, in his outright and vitriolic rejection of even the limited good of medicine and the medical profession.<sup>71</sup> First, he

<sup>64</sup> Daniels, *Dr. Cullis*, 19, 344.

<sup>65</sup> Cullis, *Faith Cures*, 31. The proponents of Divine Healing also noted that there were many Christian doctors who would in their private practice operate in much the same manner. In their consultation with patients, they would ascertain their spiritual condition and proceed accordingly (Simpson, *Gospel of Healing*, 81).

<sup>66</sup> Kenneth McKenzie noted that Dowie, along with Cullis and Simpson, constituted the “three great figures [that] loom against the sky-line of the last quarter of the nineteenth century” when it comes to Divine Healing. In particular, Mackenzie called Dowie “the apostle of healing in his day” (McKenzie, *Physical Heritage in Christ*, 17, 20).

<sup>67</sup> John Alexander Dowie, “Prayer and Testimony Meeting,” *Leaves of Healing* 1:6 (October 5, 1894): 84; John Alexander Dowie, “Doctors and Medicines,” *Leaves of Healing* 1:4 (September 21, 1894): 61; John Alexander Dowie, “Zion’s Onward Movement,” *Leaves of Healing* 2:25 (April 10, 1896): 389.

<sup>68</sup> John Alexander Dowie, “The Opening of the Beautiful Gate of Divine Healing,” *Leaves of Healing* 1:1 (August 31, 1894) 5.

<sup>69</sup> “Disease, the foul offspring of its father, Satan, and its mother, Sin, was defining and destroying the earthly temples of God’s children, and there was no deliverer”; John Alexander Dowie, “He Is Just the Same To-Day,” *Leaves of Healing* 1:22 (February 15, 1895): 341.

<sup>70</sup> The only thing that Dowie seemed to affirm in medical science was its intermittent ability to diagnose the physical cause of human sickness. Like the others, Dowie would cite the diagnosis of physicians approvingly and without question while at the same time denying their ability to either understand it fully or do anything about it.

<sup>71</sup> Dowie’s writings on the medical profession must be read in light of the persecution he faced, especially during the mid-1890’s, at the hands of the Chicago medical community, who brought Dowie and his Healing Homes under the scrutiny of the Chicago press, Health

<sup>57</sup> Simpson, *Discovery of Divine Healing*, 18; Judd, *Prayer of Faith*, 66.

<sup>58</sup> Gordon, *Ministry of Healing*, 191.

<sup>59</sup> Simpson, *Lord for the Body*, 19; Judd, *Prayer of Faith*, 66.

<sup>60</sup> Simpson, *Old Faith and the New Gospel*, 60.

<sup>61</sup> Daniels, *Dr. Cullis*, 347; Simpson, *Old Faith and the New Gospel*, 61.

<sup>62</sup> Charles Cullis, *Tuesday Afternoon Talks* (Boston: Willard Tract Repository, 1892), 24.

<sup>63</sup> Cullis, *Faith Cures*, 30.

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strongly and repeatedly denied that there was anything that could legitimately be called “medical science.”<sup>72</sup> Quoting numerous figures within the medical community itself for support,<sup>73</sup> Dowie claimed that medical practice had no scientific method and was nothing more than an on-going and disconnected series of guesses on the part of the practitioner.<sup>74</sup> There was no real science to it. Consequently, the concept of medical advance was an “ILLUSION” established by the medical community solely to establish its own reputation and power.<sup>75</sup> The whole business was, actually, an “infamous humbug.”<sup>76</sup>

Dowie also denied that medical “science” could alleviate symptoms. He believed that there is no cure in medical science<sup>77</sup> and that is was, therefore, of “no value.”<sup>78</sup> Rather, Dowie asserted that the means employed by medical “science” did far more harm than good. He labeled the drugs administered by physicians “poisons”<sup>79</sup> and surgical procedures “butchery.”<sup>80</sup> Hospitals were “murderous vivi-section holes from which the victims rarely escaped with either money or life.” These institutions were “sacred to Disease and Death” wherein physicians practiced “prolonged and nameless tortures.”<sup>81</sup> Most, if not all, medical patients were worse off after their treatment than they were before. Worse still, Dowie charged that medical practice

was responsible for “hundreds of thousands of deaths,”<sup>82</sup> more than “WAR, PESTILENCE AND FAMINE COMBINED.”<sup>83</sup> Not only were people physically poorer than they were before, Dowie contended that many were driven into poverty paying their medical bills, as well.<sup>84</sup>

It will come as little surprise, then, that Dowie denied that physicians and medicine were in any way manifestations of the grace of God. Rather, Dowie boldly alleged that their source was diabolical. Physicians, “AS A PROFESSION, ARE DIRECTLY INSPIRED BY THE DEVIL” and, in their medical practice, are the Devil’s servants.<sup>85</sup> Dowie described these “MONSTERS” as worse than either Herod, who killed the children of Bethlehem, or the pagan Druids, who offered up virgin sacrifice.<sup>86</sup> The diabolical character of the medical community was manifest in the performing of abortions, the murder of patients, the doctors’ addiction to drugs, and their insincerity regarding the legitimacy of their practice.<sup>87</sup> The diabolical nature of the practice of medicine, however, is most clearly seen in its desire to stop the practice of Divine Healing, attempting to remove Christ from his rightful place as the Healer.<sup>88</sup> Consequently, Dowie would contend “DOCTORS AND DRUGS ARE NECESSARILY THE FOES OF CHRIST AS THE HEALER.”<sup>89</sup>

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Department, Building Department, Police Department, and, even, the local Post Office.

<sup>72</sup> “Where is the science in medicine? There is none. There are no physicians of any standing to-day in any department of medicine who will declare it to be a science” (Dowie, “Opening of the Beautiful Gate,” 5). “There is no science in medicine; not the first atom of foundation for science in medicine” (Dowie, “Zion’s Onward Movement,” 390).

<sup>73</sup> Dowie, “Opening of the Beautiful Gate,” 5; Dowie, “Doctors and Medicines,” 61–63.

<sup>74</sup> Dowie, “Zion’s Onward Movement,” 390.

<sup>75</sup> “THE ALLEGATION THAT DOCTORS AND SUREGEONS ARE IN THE POSSESSION OF A FORMULA OF A WELL ESTABLISHED SCIENCE, IS AN ABSOLUTE LIE” (Dowie, “Zion’s Onward Movement,” 390). Note that all capitalizations in Dowie quotations in this section are original to Dowie.

<sup>76</sup> Dowie, “Zion’s Onward Movement,” 393.

<sup>77</sup> “I believe, and I can prove it, that doctors and medicine do not heal” (Dowie, “Prayer and Testimony Meeting,” 84). “The alleged cures are not cures, and the patent poisonous drugs are shams and lies” (Dowie, “Zion’s Onward Movement,” 394). The abandoned crutches, braces, etc., that were displayed at the front of the tabernacle show Dowie’s belief that Divine Healing is powerful and effective and that medical science is impotent. These appliances were aids, at best, and never cures.

<sup>78</sup> Dowie, “Zion’s Onward Movement,” 389.

<sup>79</sup> Dowie, “Doctors and Medicines,” 61.

<sup>80</sup> Dowie, “Zion’s Onward Movement,” 390; John Alexander Dowie, “A Letter to the Friends of Zion Tabernacle,” *Leaves of Healing* 1:22 (February 15, 1895): 337.

<sup>81</sup> John Alexander Dowie, “Divine Healing and the Chicago Doctors: A New Attack on the Divine Healing Homes,” *Leaves of Healing* 1:36 (June 14, 1895): 563.

### The Popular Reputation of Late Nineteenth-Century Medical Science

From an early twenty-first century perspective, we can see that the late nineteenth century, undoubtedly, was a time of great and monumental change in medical practice. The late nineteenth century saw the advancement of microbiology under Louis Pasteur, the vast improvements to an antiseptic surgical context resulting from the work of Joseph Lister, and the development of x-ray technology by Willhelm Röntgen. The implementation of these advances vastly improved not only medical diagnosis and practice but, perhaps more importantly, the chances of full recovery from

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<sup>82</sup> Dowie, “Prayer and Testimony Meeting,” 84.

<sup>83</sup> Dowie, “Zion’s Onward Movement,” 392.

<sup>84</sup> Dowie, “Zion’s Onward Movement,” 389.

<sup>85</sup> Dowie, “Zion’s Onward Movement,” 390.

<sup>86</sup> Dowie, “Zion’s Onward Movement,” 390, 393.

<sup>87</sup> Dowie, “Zion’s Onward Movement,” 393–96.

<sup>88</sup> “Men were doubtless willing then, as they are now, to give glory to one another, and account for Divine Healing in every way but the right way.” Dowie, though, is also sure to note that many within the Church are accomplices in this move. “They declare that medical science has taken the place of Divine Healing, and that no longer do we go to Christ but to the doctor. This is the teaching of a great part of the church concerning Divine Healing to-day” (Dowie, “Opening of the Beautiful Gate,” 5; Dowie, “Zion’s Onward Movement,” 393).

<sup>89</sup> Dowie, “Zion’s Onward Movement,” 394.



medical and surgical procedure. Despite these very significant advances, however, medical science and medical practitioners in the late nineteenth century were held in low esteem by the general public and the denigration of the American physician was common.<sup>90</sup>

Scholars of the history of medicine have pointed out no fewer than four separate though related reasons for this low view of medicine in late nineteenth-century America. First, during this period, the licensing requirements of government for those practicing medicine was rather low.<sup>91</sup> This afforded various practitioners no level of civic endorsement and, consequently, no level of civic respect. Practically, many physicians operated on the fringes of society and were, for the most part, not accountable to the magistrate or anyone else for their methods.

Related to this idea is the second reason for the low level of esteem: the relative lack of formal education that most physicians of the day had received.<sup>92</sup> Prior to the late nineteenth century, the training in the practice of medicine was usually limited to an apprenticeship. New candidates would receive their training at the hands of an older practitioner and, consequently, be limited in their training by the opinions, practices, and resources of that particular mentor. Given this method of training, many of the great advances taking place in the wider medical community were not known, endorsed, or widely practiced, in some cases, for decades. Physicians and their apprentices simply continue to use those methods that had held sway for decades, which they knew best, or those that they personally felt were most effective and appropriate. While medical schools were present and enrolled large numbers of students, the quality of both the schools and students was suspect. Most medical schools of the day, since they did not need any type of sanction, were little more than “diploma mills.”<sup>93</sup> Furthermore, it was possible, in those days, for one to be admitted to a medical school when that same person would not meet the most basic requirements of a good liberal arts school.<sup>94</sup> The curriculum at most of these medical schools “required attendance at only two four-month lecture sessions. There was generally no clinical training sessions, no laboratories, and, for that matter, no admissions requirements. Even as late as

1870, only a very small percentage of medical students had earned a bachelor’s degree.”<sup>95</sup> It was not until the 1890’s when American medicine would begin to come of age.<sup>96</sup>

A third reason that the medical community was held in low esteem in the public eye was due to the medical community’s constant, public, and often vitriolic internal disagreements on both the diagnoses and, consequently, the method of treatment of almost any illness.<sup>97</sup> Part of the reason for this stems from the medical “doctrine that there was one cause and therefore one cure of disease.”<sup>98</sup> Post-enlightenment healers, following the lead of Isaac Newton, sought to understand the single “fundamental force or principle responsible” for disease in all of its manifestations. This would lead to the various “sectarian” schools of medical science such as mesmerism, Grahamism, hydropathy, etc.”<sup>99</sup> Disagreement, of course, rose over the nature of this singular and rudimentary cause of disease. Consequently, there were equally divergent opinions and practices concerning the mode of effective treatment. Having put all of their proverbial eggs in one diagnostic basket meant that if one were to disagree with a practitioner on any level, it would be understood to be a lethal attack on the whole of that practitioner’s medical understanding and ability. Such attacks could not be taken lightly if one wished to continue practicing medicine and attracting patients as the competition for business was great. This led to constant internal yet very public sniping and “professional quarrels.”<sup>100</sup> This level of division did little good for the reputation of physicians or to instill the confidence of a watching public.

Finally, the unpleasant, strange, and often fatally ineffective methods of many physicians did not help the profession’s reputation. “Bleedings, sweatings, blistering, and the use of drugs aimed at inducing vomiting or diarrhea were the most common therapeutic techniques.”<sup>101</sup> Mercury, now widely known for its deathly effects, was used to treat a variety of diseases in the nineteenth century including tuberculosis,

<sup>90</sup> Shryock, *Medicine in America*, 150–51. John Duffy notes “while individual physicians were admired, the profession collectively continued to have little public respect”; Duffy, *From Humors to Medical Science: A History of American Medicine*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Urbana, Ill.: University of Illinois Press, 1993), 167.

<sup>91</sup> James H. Cassedy, *Medicine in America: A Short History* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991), 67.

<sup>92</sup> Shryock, *Medicine in America*, 152.

<sup>93</sup> Duffy, *From Humors to Medical Science*, 167.

<sup>94</sup> Shryock, *Medicine in America*, 152.

<sup>95</sup> Robert C. Fuller, *Alternative Medicine and American Religious Life* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 16.

<sup>96</sup> The men who would bring about this change “were [not only] far better educated than their predecessors, [but] nearly all of them had studied [outside of America] in Vienna, Paris, and other European medical centers” (Duffy, *From Humors to Medical Science*, 192).

<sup>97</sup> Shryock, *Medicine in America*, 151.

<sup>98</sup> Shryock, *Medicine in America*, 171.

<sup>99</sup> Fuller, *Alternative Medicine and American Religious Life*, 13.

<sup>100</sup> Shryock, *Medicine in America*, 155.

<sup>101</sup> Fuller, *Alternative Medicine and American Religious Life*, 14; A. J. Gordon lists these as well, showing not only their ineffectiveness but their barbarism (Gordon, *Ministry of Healing*, 176).

## Section 12. Developments in the Alliance View of Healing

constipation, and headache. “Those hardy patients who did not die in the course of these largely futile endeavors were at the very least weakened by the ordeal.”<sup>102</sup> The terms “butchery” and “stupendous humbug” were words used in the secular media to describe the medical profession.<sup>103</sup>

No single case brought more attention to the inability of medical science in the late nineteenth century than that of President James Garfield. The well-publicized and closely-watched case of Garfield’s ultimately ineffective medical care showed the inability of, assumedly, the nation’s best doctors and latest techniques to deal with something as straightforward and as common as a gunshot wound. Garfield succumbed to his wound after a number of days despite round the clock medical care. The failure of the nation’s leading physicians and their “medical science” to restore him shone clearly and brightly in the spotlight.<sup>104</sup>

### Conclusion

Though it may come as a surprise to some, the view that the Divine Healing proponents held of medical science was not at all out of step with that of American society. The American public, in general, held medical science and medical practitioners in low esteem. The vicious attacks of John Alexander Dowie were not necessarily the isolated rantings of an extremist. The secular media was just as likely to use the words “poisons,” “butchers,” and “murderers” when talking about contemporary medical practice and practitioners. On balance the Divine Healing practitioners actually appear to have been more gracious than many in the secular press when it came to discussing the promise and possibilities of medical science. They cited medicine and physicians as providential. They believed that creation was divinely and intentionally endowed with properties that could assuage human suffering. The mandate of medical science, they said, was to discover these and to apply them appropriately.

Still, the Divine Healing proponents suggested only a limited appropriation of the offerings of medical science. While the Divine Healing proponents did not completely dismiss the advances, usefulness, and propriety of medical science, they did assert that it was, at best, a deficient approach to the gravity, complexity, and depth of human disease. Therefore, they encouraged

only the guarded employ of these “scientific” means and methods. Their reasons for doing so were numerous.

First, they realized that much of what was promoted as medical science had not been well-proven and may have had side-effects as distressing as the disease itself.

Second, they were convinced that medical science’s anthropology and hamartology were both myopic and, therefore, its means to relieve human distress was short-sighted and deficient as well. Finally, they realized that there was a tendency for the advances and successes of medical science to usurp the primary and necessary, if not exclusive, role of Jesus Christ as Healer. This, above all, was intolerable for the Divine Healing proponents.

The champions of Divine Healing argued that Christians, especially, should seek their healing, not from a deficient medical science, but from the omnipotent and unchanging Christ directly and alone. In addition to those cautions listed previously, they argued that such an approach was the sole and repeated prescription of Scripture. Therefore, it was the only sanctioned course for the believer. Second, they believed that Christ alone was the only appropriate and adequate solution to the depth and breadth of human disease. Humanity’s disease was more than just physical. It affected the totality of the human condition. Only the atoning work of Jesus Christ was able to deal with the destructive effects of sin on humanity, in its depth and in all of its manifestations—spiritual and physical.

Both medical science and the practice of Divine Healing have long histories. Each also saw momentous growth and popularity in the late nineteenth century as part of the larger and wider interest in holism and health. It is of no surprise, then, that key figures related to these movements would interact with the nature and developments of the other. They did, after all, seek to address the same human needs even if from two different perspectives. While both medical science and the Divine Healing movement sought to combat the problem of human disease, they did have fundamental disagreements about how it ought to be pursued and the legitimacy of the other perspective. Therefore, their relationship could be described as a cautious co-belligerence, at best.

<sup>102</sup> Fuller, *Alternative Medicine and American Religious Life*, 14.

<sup>103</sup> Shryock, *Medicine in America*, 151.

<sup>104</sup> Duffy, *From Humors to Medical Science*, 190. Simpson pointed to the Garfield case, and that of President McKinley, as well-known examples of the ineffectiveness of physicians and medical treatment; Simpson, *Lord for the Body*, 131; Albert Benjamin Simpson, “The Doctors and the Lord,” *Living Truths* 1:6 (December 1902), 307.

Reading 13.1

## The Practical Influence of the Blessed Hope\*

A.B. Simpson

*"And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as He is pure" (1 John iii. 3).*

What is the practical value of the blessed Hope? Is it a speculation in theology, or is it a living and blessed hope and inspiration, linked in the Scriptures with almost every aspect of the Christian life?

### An Incentive to the Unsaved

The apostles used it as an appeal to the careless and indifferent to urge them to decision for Christ. "Repent, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord, and He shall send the Lord Jesus which before was preached unto you, whom the heavens must receive until the times of restitution of all things." And again Paul speaks of the Thessalonians as having "turned from idols to serve the living and true God, and to wait for His Son from heaven, even Jesus, which saved us from the wrath to come."

It must therefore have been presented to them as a practical incentive and message of warning. It is a message of awakening and conviction which we should use more freely and effectually than we do. It was the message of God's coming judgment which led to Nineveh's repentance, and the proclamation of Christ's coming to the heathen has brought many to bow at the feet of Jesus.

### A Motive to Personal Holiness

So the apostle teaches in his letter to Titus, "The grace of God which bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men; teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts we should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present evil world, looking for that blessed Hope, and the glorious appearing of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for us that He might redeem us from all iniquity and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." So again in writing to the Thessalonians he presents the coming of the Lord as the great goal of holy aspiration. "The very God of peace sanctify you through and through, and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and

body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."

The beloved John likewise links this hope with the practice of holiness. "When He shall appear we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is; and every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself even as He is pure." Because we are going to be like Him then we wear His image now. We anticipate our coming glory, and like the Lord Himself, who began to wear the garments of His Incarnation long before He came to earth, so we try on even here the robes of our approaching coronation. The glory of the Holiest: shone through the curtains, and so the glory of our future state should cover us even here.

This is our peculiar preparation for his coming, and such a preparation on the part of His Church is the most marked sign of His Advent. When you see the bride arrayed in her wedding robes, you know the Bridegroom must be near. And could we see the Church of Christ robed in the beauty of holiness and putting on her wedding garments, we would know that day was near, and that the angel voices were about to proclaim, "The marriage of the Lamb has come and His wife hath made herself ready."

### An Incentive to Heavenly Mindedness

Mrs. Stowe has pictured in her wonderful little tract, "He is coming to-morrow," the consternation of a millionaire, and the consolation of a poor suffering child of God at the announcement that had just been made to the waiting ones, "He is coming to-morrow."

This was what Paul meant when he said to the Philippians (iv. 20), "Our conversation (our citizenship) is in heaven, from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change the body of our humiliation that it may be fashioned like unto the body of His glory."

There is nothing except the love of Jesus that can so separate us from the world as the hope of Christ's coming. Dr. Chalmers describes the inhabitants of a pestilential marsh, who had again and again been urged to emigrate, but they could not be induced to leave a certain for an uncertain good. At last one day they saw

\* *The Coming One*, (New York: Christian Alliance Publishing Co., 1912), pp.201-211.

## Section 13. The Coming King

approaching and slowly passing by a beauteous isle clothed with a verdure and loveliness they had never seen before, and breathing the balmy air of its glad and eternal spring over all their unhealthy plains. Then they began to eagerly enquire if they might enter its blessed harbor. They sent out their boats across the sea, they entreated permission to land upon its shores, and they gladly let go their old cabins and treasures, and hastened to the happy shores of this bright and holy Paradise. So is the vision of His coming. It falls like a withering spell on earthly ambition and avarice, and makes us cry:

My hopes are passing upward, onward,  
And with my hopes my heart is gone;  
My eyes are turning skyward, sunward,  
Where glory brightens round yon throne."

### It Keeps Us Close To Him

"And now, little children, abide in Him, that when He shall appear we may have confidence and not be ashamed before Him at His coming." When Elisha knew that Elijah's translation was near, he kept very close to his side. To every suggestion that he should leave his side, he answered, "As the Lord thy God liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee." So, if we are waiting and watching for His coming, we will not let a moment separate us from Him. It was but one evening that Thomas was absent, but that very evening Jesus came.

### An Incentive to Brotherly Love

"The Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you, to the end He may establish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints."

How embarrassing it would be for you and your brother to meet tomorrow at His right hand, and, looking in His face, to say, "Lord, I do not speak to him." There is a day coming when we shall all clasp hands and look into each other's eyes, and say, "Well, we did not understand each other, but it is all right at last." Why not assume that we may be mistaken, and love even His erring children for His sake?

### A Call to Vigilance

"Watch ye therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour when the Son of man cometh."

"Let your loins be girded about and your lights burning, and ye yourselves like unto men who watch for their Lord when He will return from the wedding, that when He cometh and knocketh, they may open to Him immediately. Blessed are those servants whom the Lord when He cometh shall find watching. Of a truth I say unto you that He shall gird Himself, and make them sit

down to meat, and will come forth and serve them. And if He shall come in the second watch or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants.

"And this know, that if the good man of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken through.

Be ye therefore ready also, for the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not."

Here are two ways of receiving the Master. One is to "open to Him immediately." The other is to "leave his house to be broken through." Which will we have? Purposely the time is unknown, that we may be ever ready, but we know enough to know that it is near.

The late Dr. A. J. Gordon once sent word to his family in the country that he was coming to them some day the following week. Every evening his little children, washed, and dressed, went down to the one suburban train that came to the village to meet him. He did not come till Saturday, but his wife told him that the hope of his coming had kept them in garments clean the whole week. So may this blessed hope purify us "even as He is pure."

### Patience in View Of His Coming

"Be patient, therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruits of the earth till he receive the early and the latter rain. Be ye also patient, stablish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh."

"Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand. Be careful for nothing." He whose hopes are above the world is not greatly tried by its passing clouds. Oh, how easy it will make our little worries, frets and conflicts to truly realize

A few more struggles here,  
A few more partings o'er,  
A few more toils, a few more tears,  
And we shalt weep no more.

### An Encouragement to Steadfastness

"Be ye therefore steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, for as much, as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord." "Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward, for yet a little while and He that shall come will come and will not tarry." Hold on, the end is near, the reward is great. Too much has been already suffered to lose the victory now. "Hold fast that thou hast, that no man take thy crown." Standing on yonder battlements He holds the crown in view. You can almost hear the plaudits and the shouts. Shall you falter now?

### An Inspiration in Our Work

"Behold I come quickly, and My reward is with Me, even to give every man according as his work shall be." And so to the humble reaper, to the faithful pastor, to the soul winning evangelist the New Testament holds out evermore this great Hope as his inspiration and recompense. How ashamed some of us would feel if we received a crown! We would almost walk through the palaces of glory as if we had stolen it! Not so Paul. He will know the name of every jewel in his diadem. There is Lydia. There is Timothy. There is the jailer. There is Sosthenes, who attacked him at Corinth and was saved in glorious revenge. There is the soldier that was chained to his side. Are you forging your crown and gathering its jewels, or shall you be "ashamed before Him at His coming"?

### A Consolation in Sorrow

"I would not have you ignorant concerning them that are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others that have no hope. For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, and with the voice of the archangel

and the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall be caught up together with them in clouds to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we be forever with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words." This doctrine is the balm of sorrow and the consolation of bereavement. It gives us back our lost in immortal beauty and everlasting love, and it wipes every tear away. "Therefore, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, for as much as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord."

There shall be no more crying,  
There shall be no more pain,  
There shall be no more dying,  
There shall be no more stain.

Hearts that by death were riven  
Meet in eternal love;  
Lives on the altar given  
Rise to their crowns above.

Jesus is coming surely,  
Jesus is coming soon;  
Oh, let us walk so purely,  
Oh, let us keep our crown.

## Reading 13.2

# The Lord's Coming and Missions \*

A.B. Simpson

*This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness to all nations: and then shall the end come (Mat. 24:14).*

*And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him: for the hour of his judgment is come (Rev. 14:6-7).*

These two passages present to us the evangelization of the world in the light of the Lord's coming. Surely the double message which the Holy Spirit has been echoing and re-echoing all through these days is, "Behold, I come quickly." "Go ye."

I. The coming of Christ is the great end of creation and redemption. This is the day for which all other days

were made, the one event to which all other things are tending.

Even nature itself foreshadows the New Creation. This fallen world with its minor key of sadness echoes in every tone the cry for something better than nature knows. "The whole creation groaneth and travaileth together in pain, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of the body." Every radiant morn, every returning spring, every bursting bud and breathing blossom, and every humming insect emerging from its wintry tomb and opening chrysalis is but the prophecy of the resurrection and the *Palingenesis*, when He that sitteth upon the throne shall say, "Behold I make all things new."

Man's highest philanthropy aims to develop and improve the conditions of this old earth of ours so that

\* A.B. Simpson, *The Challenge of Missions* (New York: Christian Publishing Co., 1926), p. 42-56.

## Section 13. The Coming King

some day it shall fulfill the dreams of that golden age of which poets have sung.

But it were a poor reflection upon God if this old world at its best were the best that His power and goodness have for the human race. When we think of the ravages of sickness, sin and sorrow, when we realize the malign elements of the earthquake, the tempest and the devouring sea, and when we look at the mouldering dust and the hopelessness and agony of death and remember that after all the fairest scenes of the earth are but cemeteries and the spots that tell of broken hearts and blighted hopes, well may we say,

Were this poor world our only rest,  
Living or dying, none were blessed.

Or as the Apostle has expressed it, "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable."

No, God's wisdom and love have something better for our race than civilization, reformation, social reform and scientific progress; something better even than a spiritual millennium and the world-wide triumph of the Gospel and the grace of God.

Just as for the individual God's highest thought is not self-improvement, nor reformation, not the best possible result out of natural character and human culture, but a new creation, a regeneration so complete that old things pass away and all things are made new; so for the world itself God's plan is the same. The mark of the cross must pass upon the earth itself and through death and resurrection it must come forth a new earth to take its place with God's new heavens in the coming age. The City of God does not spring up from the earth, but, as the new Jerusalem, it comes down from heaven. Jesus Christ is the "Nobleman who went into a far country to receive for Himself a kingdom" and return. Ages have passed since he went away and He has been from generation to generation gathering the stones for that glorious city which in a little while will burst from the heavens upon an astonished world and take the place of all our puny structures and all our petty plans.

This was the vision of the ancient prophets, this was the promise of the departing Lord, and this is the great perspective that climaxes the vision of faith and hope throughout the whole New Testament.

The first chapter of Acts gives us a magnificent example of this perspective.

First we have the "Passion" or death of our precious Lord which stands in the foreground of the future. Next we have His resurrection in the nearer distance. Then just beyond is the promise of the Holy Ghost and the commission to be witnesses unto the uttermost part of the earth which fills up the Christian age.

Too long the church of God has closed the vision with this scene, and we have been working as though the establishment of the church and the conversion of the world was the real end for which the Spirit was working in this age. But if we look at the inspired record we find there is yet another scene in the picture that lifts our thoughts to a higher plane and a more distant horizon. It begins in the tenth verse, where two men stood by them in white apparel saying, "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven."

Ah, this was needed to complete the perspective. Away beyond the church, the mission field, the present age, stretches the vista of millennial years with the glorious light of the Lord's return as the real goal toward which redemption is ever moving forward and the Holy Ghost is ever leading on. Until we get this fully in view we have not grasped the whole conception of God's great plan, we have not got our eye upon the true goal and our course will be unsteady and our work unbalanced.

It was for this the Apostolic church was ever watching, praying, working and waiting. This was the message which the Apostle preached to the Thessalonians and which made them "turn from idols to serve the living and true God and to wait for His Son from heaven." This was the comfort He held out to the bereaved and sorrowing saints as they bade farewell to the martyred forms of their beloved ones, that Christ was coming soon and they should be "caught up together with them to meet the Lord in the air." This was the joy and crown of his own intense ministry that he might present his people to the heavenly Bridegroom in the day of His coming as his "crown of rejoicing in the presence of Christ at His coming." And this was his own inspiring hope as he was about to lay down his ministry and meet his Lord, "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which the Lord, that righteous judge, will give me in that day."

Thus it was the supreme end which they ever kept in view. And to make it more impressive and emphatic, the Lord Jesus Himself came back to John at Patmos for one last revelation, and gave him the vision of the Apocalypse and the picture of His coming and His kingdom as "things that must shortly come to pass" and left him with this as the burden of the church's latest prayer and the Master's latest promise, "Surely I come quickly. Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

When the apostles were starting out to the great task of the world's evangelization a great council was held in Jerusalem to settle certain principles for the guidance of the church of the present age. And to that council the Holy Ghost revealed through its leader, the

Apostle James, as he quoted from the ancient prophet Amos, the divine order of events in the program of the Lord. The first of these steps was stated thus, "At the first God did visit the Gentiles to take out of them a people for His name." The second stage was as definitely stated in the next sentence, "After this I will return and build again the tabernacle of David that is fallen down." Here we find the Lord's coming presented as the sequel of their immediate ministry, the great event for which they were gathering out a people from the Gentile nations. If the church had ever kept this in view she would have saved herself the waste of much vain effort and bitter disappointment in her attempts to build up a permanent earthly institution and create on earth a kingdom without the King. For the church itself has been as much at fault in her objects and ambitions as the word in its mere human policy. Men have tried to found their kingdoms and cities as if they should reign forever and make this earth a paradise of pleasure without the Lord. And sin has cursed all their ambitions and policies, and turned the vision of earthly pride and power into that fearful menagerie of wild beasts which Daniel saw when he looked at the governments of the earth as they appeared in the light of heaven. But just as foolish and short-sighted is the policy of the Christian worker who aims to establish even through the church the Gospel and the religion of Jesus Christ an earthly millennium. Earth offers no foundation stable enough for the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem. Our business is to gather stones, timbers and jewels for that glorious edifice and pass them on to the great Architect that is building over yonder "The city that hath foundations" and the "kingdom that cannot be moved." We are just like Hiram's carpenters and Solomon's stone cutters, working in the mountains of Lebanon and the quarries of Judah and passing the cedar and the granite to its future site. One by one we are gathering the souls which He is fitting into the living temple and in a little while the vision of its glory will burst upon our view and admiring angels will say, "Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife." And we shall behold "that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God: like a jasper stone, clear as crystal; . . . And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; . . . and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass. And the city had no need of the sun, nor of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. And the nations of them which were saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honor into it."

Beloved, this is God's glorious goal. This is the future toward which the cross of Calvary and the Holy Ghost are leading the generations on. This is the true

end for which it is worth our while to work and pray. This is the transcendent outlook of faith and hope and love. This is the kingdom that Daniel saw, superseding the pride and power of Babylon, Persia, Greece and Rome, when "the kingdom and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the saints of the most high, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom and whose dominion shall never pass away." This is the glorious consummation which the voices of heaven celebrate in the eleventh chapter of Revelation when they cry, "The kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever. We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, . . . because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned." This is what the Master meant when He said, "When these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and bend yourselves back, for the hour of your redemption draweth nigh." And this is the glorious thought of Peter when he admonishes us to be "looking for and hasting on the coming of the day of God."

That glorious day is to bring our full redemption. It is to give us transfigured bodies and glorified spirits, conformed to His beauty and glory and immortality. It is to restore to our arms the long divided friends of time and wipe away earth's latest tear of sorrow. It is to end earth's story of sickness and sin and death, to sheath the cruel sword of war, to silence the battle drum and to make real over all the earth the Bethlehem song, "Glory to God in the highest, peace on earth, good will to men." And that day is to bring our glorious and long rejected Christ, His kingdom and His throne. Best of all, it is to bring us to be with Him and to be like Him as the partners of His throne and the bride of His love. Oh, do not our hearts exalt to think, to know as we see the signs of His appearing in earth and heavens today that it is near and answer back,

Morn of morns, O haste Thy glad appearing,  
Day of days, speed on, speed on.

II. The work of missions is the great means of hastening that end. The work of the Holy Ghost through the church was chiefly intended to gather out from all nations a people for His name, a bride for the Lamb. It was not God's purpose at the present time by any stronger compulsion than the persuasion of the Gospel and the influence of the Holy Spirit to bring men to acceptance of Christ as their Saviour and King. In the next age every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that He is Lord, but at the present time the Gospel is preached to men as a witness, the opportunity is given to every one and then it is left to their voluntary choice. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned." The purpose of the present dispensation is to give this universal Probation

## Section 13. The Coming King

for a brief time to all the races of mankind, and after the opportunity has been given and all that are willing to come to Him have accepted the gracious invitation to close the day of grace and bring the nations before Him in judgment and then establish a visible kingdom on earth which shall compel the subjection of all mankind and bring earth's millions without exception to bow to His scepter. This is clearly intimated in the passage already quoted in part in connection with the council at Jerusalem. "God at the first did visit the Gentiles to take out of them a people for His name," that is the present mission of the church and the object of foreign missions. When this is accomplished the second stage will come, "After this will I return, saith the Lord." Then comes the final stage after His coming, "That the residue of men may seek after the Lord and all the Gentiles upon whom my name is called." Then the whole race shall be brought under the Gospel and the reign of Christ and earth's generations for a thousand years in millions and billions shall own His sway and crown Him Lord of all. But today it is the few that He is calling, not the subjects, but the rulers of the coming age. Just as David called out the heroes that followed him in the days of his exile and afterwards made them the princes of his kingdom, so the Lord Jesus today is training the men and women who will share with Him the government of the age to come. This is our high honor and privilege to be kings and priests unto God and to reign with Him upon the earth.

Until the whole number of His elect shall have thus been called and gathered home, He cannot come. This elect company is universal in its scope, while limited in its numbers. It embraces the people of every language, tribe and tongue. Therefore, today the work of missions must be world-wide. It is not enough for us to be zealous in gathering a great number of converts among the favored people in Christian lands; God wants us to bring representatives of every earthly tongue, and when this shall have been done, then, He tells us, the end shall come. The bride of the Lamb, like the Son of man, must represent humanity as a whole. The Lord Jesus is not a Jew, an Anglo-Saxon or a Greek, but He is the Son of Man, the representative of every race, the universal man. So His bride must be the daughter of humanity, the composite photograph, embracing every feature, every color and every kindred of the human family.

III. The practical bearing of all this on the work of missions.

Many persons who do not believe in the literal return of Jesus Christ try to prejudice this truth by saying that its tendency is to paralyze missions and to discredit the Holy Spirit and His work in the present age.

It is not discredit to the Holy Spirit for us to teach that the world will not be converted under His agencies, because Christ never said it would be. The Holy Ghost came simply to carry out Christ's plan and His plan in the present age is to gather out of the world His own people. When He appeared to Paul in Corinth, He did not tell him that all Corinth would be converted, but He said, "I have much people in this place." There will be an age during which "the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth, as the waters cover the sea." But that is not the dispensation of the Holy Ghost. Of this age we have been told that "iniquity shall abound and the love of many shall wax cold." Again it is said that "in the last days perilous times shall come," that "evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse" and that "when the Son of man cometh shall he find faith on the earth?" It is, therefore, no dishonor to the Spirit for us to express the very conditions that Christ Himself predicted.

In regard to the other objections, that the Lord's coming paralyzes missionary effort, it would seem to be enough to say that the men and women who are today most prominent, earnest and successful in prosecuting the evangelization of the world, are in the majority of instances ardent believers in the personal and pre-millennial coming of Christ.

Consider some reasons why the hope of Christ's coming should rather encourage and inspire missionary efforts.

1. It gives us a definite and practicable plan of work. It does not send us out in some vague way to sweep in wholesale all earth's multitudes. But it teaches us that God's plan in the present age is "to visit the Gentiles to take out of them a people for His name." He is only visiting the Gentiles; they are having their turn as the Jews had, and the day of opportunity is limited. The visit will end in due time.

And He is not doing this with the expectation of gathering them all into His kingdom, but rather of gathering out of them "a people for His name." It is a taking out, rather than a taking in. It is an election and selection, only each one has the casting vote for himself. It is not arbitrary, but voluntary. Knowing this to be God's present plan, our work is very clear and specific. We know that He has some people in every nation whom His Providence and Spirit are preparing to accept the Gospel, and our business is to find them and bring them to Him. We cast our nets into the great sea, but we do not gather all the fish that are in the sea, and when we shall have gathered all who are willing to accept the Gospel message, this commission is ended.

Now this is an extremely encouraging and practicable plan. If we were sent to convert whole nations we might well be discouraged. The Master did not do this; the early Church did not do this; the modern



Church has not done this, even in Christian lands, during the past century. We are told that the number of heathen and Mohammedans has increased two hundred millions, so that numerically we are not making any headway in converting the whole world. Our hearts might well sink in despair, if this were our aim.

But if, on the contrary, we are seeking "the other sheep whom He must bring," there is no failure; there is no discouragement. We are gathering first fruits; He Himself will gather the full harvest. We are "sampling" the race. We are seeking and finding the "little flock," the chosen bride, the hidden ones who are to unite from every land and tribe and tongue to sing the millennial chorus that is to welcome the coming King.

2. Not only does this give us a practicable plan, but it also gives us a powerful motive and incentive. We know that our missionary work is not in vain, but, in addition to the blessing it is to bring to the souls we lead to Christ, best of all it is to bring Christ Himself back again. It puts in our hands the key to the bridal chamber and the lever that will hasten His return. What a glorious privilege. What a mighty incentive. Do we long to see Him in His glory and to meet our loved ones once more? Then we shall work with re-doubled energy to spread the Gospel, to tell the story, to evangelize the world and to "prepare the way of the Lord."

3. The hope of the Lord's coming gives us also a message to the heathen. It was Jonah's message of the God that reigned in heaven and earth, and that was coming in judgment to Ninevah, that awakened that wicked city; and it is the message of the coming judge that is most fitted to awaken a careless world. Paul says

of the Thessalonian Christians that, "they turned from idols to wait for His Son from Heaven." Paul had told them He was coming and thus aroused them to prepare to meet Him. Our missionaries sometimes tell us how the native chiefs of Africa listen with awe as they proclaim to these savage men that the Great Chief is coming soon to call them to account and to reward them if they are found true to Him.

In the fourteenth chapter of Revelation we have the vision of an angel flying in the midst of heaven, having "the everlasting Gospel" to preach to all the tribes of earth, and we are told his message was, "Fear God and keep His commandments, for the hour of His judgment has come." Does this mean that in the last days the voice of missionaries is to be raised in solemn and authoritative announcement of the immediate coming of the Lord, and that this message is to bring conviction to the heathen and to be followed and vindicated by the glorious coming of the Lord Himself?

O let us then His coming haste!

O let us end this awful waste

Of souls that never die!

A thousand millions still are lost,

A Saviour' blood has paid the cost

O hear their dying cry!

The Master's coming draweth near,

The Son of man will soon appear,

His Kingdom is at hand.

But ere that glorious day can be,

This Gospel of the Kingdom we

Must preach in every land.

Reading 14.1

## The Missionary Eschatology of A.B. Simpson

Franklin Arthur Pyles

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One never attends the annual American Council or the Canadian Biennial Assembly of the Christian and Missionary Alliance without singing stirring hymns about the second coming of Christ. Any visitor would assume that such a display of strong feeling reflects a deeply held doctrinal position which is crucial to the life of the church. But is this so?

More and more people think that the Alliance emphasis on the soon return of Jesus to reign personally on this earth is not really part of the gospel, but simply one of several possible interpretations of obscure biblical texts. However, this was not the case for A.B. Simpson. For him, eschatology was the fountain from which was to issue the work of the church in his day. But, as we shall see, the Alliance has not only moved on to an eschatological emphasis quite different from that personally held by her founder, she has also lost the connection between this doctrine and the missionary mandate.

### Overview

Let us first take an overview of Simpson's basic position. The inner spiritual struggle that he experienced in Louisville, climaxed with his being filled with the Holy Spirit. He tells us that at approximately the same time he became convinced that the pre-millennial teaching concerning the Lord's return was correct.<sup>1</sup> Pre-millennialism says that Jesus Christ will visibly return to earth and establish a kingdom over which he will personally rule for a thousand years. In the closing decades of the nineteenth century, this teaching rapidly grew in popularity as it was proclaimed in Bible conferences across England and the United States.

A particular stream of pre-millennialism is an interpretive system called dispensationalism. Dividing the Bible into seven epochs, it is claimed that God's saving activity is organized differently in each. Thus, the word dispensation is akin to the word management.

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*From Birth of a Vision*, ed by David F. Hartzfeld and Charles Nienkirchen (His Dominion Supplement No. 1), pp. 29-47.

1. A.B. Simpson, "How I was Led to Believe in Pre-Millennarianism," *Christian Alliance and Missionary Weekly* 7, no. 19 (November 13, 1891): 298-299 (hereafter cited as *CAMW*).

One of the teachings of dispensationalism is that the present age will end with a terrible seven-year manifestation of the wrath of God upon the whole earth. However, the true church will not partake of this tribulation, for immediately prior to it, Christ will have secretly come and taken the saints away to heaven. This coming, it is taught, may occur at any moment.

Certainly, this school of thought influenced Simpson. He was in close contact with its leadership as can be seen by his speaking in 1892 at a convention at the Congregational Church pastored by C.I. Scofield of Scofield Bible fame.<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless, as shall be demonstrated, he never fully accepted dispensationalism. Although he believed that the church would escape the tribulation, he did not think it possible to say how long this period would be. As well, he did not believe that the coming of the Lord could occur at any moment.

One Bible teacher with whom he had almost perfect agreement on the doctrine of last things was the Baptist theologian and holiness preacher, A.J. Gordon. Gordon interpreted the Book of Revelation using a method called historicism. According to historicism, the visions given to John prophesied the future of the church. However, most of those prophesied events have already occurred. Simpson and Gordon were of one mind in their firm adherence to historicism.

On one issue, Simpson disagreed with Gordon and agreed with the dispensationalists, that is, on the relation of the second coming to the tribulation. Gordon thought that the tribulation would happen and the church would live through it.<sup>3</sup> Simpson, however, was certain that the

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2. Simpson, *Christian Alliance Weekly*, 8, no. 24 (June 10, 1892): 370.

3. However, he did not believe that the tribulation is the 70th week of Daniel, and therefore, he denied that we could know its length. His exegesis of Daniel's weeks from Daniel 9 is as follows: "The decrees" is that issued by Artaxerxes in 457 B.C. In 7 weeks (49 years), the walls were rebuilt in troublous times. In 62 more weeks (434 years), we are brought to the Messiah, in A.D. 26. Because of an error in dating Christ's birth, Simpson says that makes Christ 30 years old. "He shall confirm the covenant." Simpson says the "pronoun refers to Christ who is the subject of the whole prophecy." Christ confirms the covenant by calling Israel to himself and the apostles continue to preach to Israel for about three and a half years after the crucifixion. "In the midst of the week shall cause sacrifices and oblation to cease." "After three and one-half years of public ministry, in the midst of the final week, our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, was offered on the

saints would be raptured into heaven by Christ before the Great Tribulation began on earth. He based his belief in a pre-tribulational rapture on Luke 21:28, "Lift up your heads, for your redemption draweth nigh," and Luke 21:36, "Watch that you may escape."

Before we look more closely at the implications of these verses for the time of the Lord's coming, it is necessary to address Simpson's apparently temporary adherence to a view known as "partial rapture." This view links the attitude of "watching" (Luke 21:36) to sanctification and eschatology by claiming that only those believers who have been baptized by the Holy Spirit will be caught up in the rapture.

In his sermon on the wise and foolish virgins, reprinted in the two-volume set titled *The Holy Spirit*, Simpson says that those Christians who have not been filled with the Holy Spirit will be left behind by the returning Bridegroom, presumably to undergo the tribulation. It is easy to understand why he might get caught up in such a theory. It strongly links the second coming to personal holiness, by stressing that the hope of seeing Jesus is a motivation to purity (I John 3:2,3) as well as to seeking the fullness of the Spirit. However, it is certain that "partial rapture" was a fleeting fancy in Simpson's thinking, for after this one reference to it, he never mentions it again.<sup>4</sup> But, he always stressed that the second coming is a motivation to holiness. He loved to tell A.J. Gordon's story of how his daughters knew he would return on the train sometime during a given week, but they did not know on which particular day. So every day that week, they dressed in their finest and waited at the station, hoping each time that this train would bring their father.

This story aptly drives home the implications for both holiness and imminency of the word "watch" in Luke 21:36. The church is to wait eagerly in her best garments, garments of holiness. She is to watch, for while the exact time of his coming is unknown, there are signs that tell us it will be very soon. For Simpson, it was almost as if the church was standing on the station platform on the last day of the week. The very fact that trains have arrived and departed on previous days only serves to strengthen hope, for they are, as it were, the signs that have already occurred. Thus, for Simpson,

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cross...and that caused other sacrifices to cease." The other half of the week was spent by the apostles offering the covenant to Israel until the martyrdom of Stephen.

Simpson, "The Seventy Weeks of Daniel," *The Christian and Missionary Alliance*, 27, no. 22 (June 1, 1907): 254, 255. This view is virtually identical with that set forth by A.J. Gordon in his book, *Ecce Venit*. See also the works of H. Grattan Guinness.

4. Simpson, "Just one thing they lacked, but it was enough to prevent their entering in," *Holy Spirit, or Power From on High Part II* (New York: Christian Alliance Publishing Co., 1924), p. 31. Again, "but it will be too late to enter into the joys of the marriage and escape the sorrows of the great tribulation," p. 33.

imminency means precisely this: Christ will appear when the last sign has been fulfilled, and there is only one last sign to wait for.

Here we turn the key that unlocks both his doctrine of last things and his view of the mission of the church. We are not to watch passively for the last sign, as the daughters at the station. We are to bring it about, for the awaited last sign is the preaching of the gospel to every tribe and nation. Thus, all of the Bible's diverse prophetic teachings were held together in Simpson's mind by their relation to the missionary task. Every single point of his end-time thinking had a definite impact on his plan to preach the gospel across the world. And, at the same time, his missionary theology guided his eschatology, for if a point of prophecy had no impact on missionary strategy, he had little concern for it.

An examination of Simpson's eschatology in more detail will reveal how each point served and was served by his missionary theology.

### Historicism

Simpson's conversion to pre-millennialism did not result in a complete acceptance of the dispensational format because he viewed its futurist method of prophetic interpretation as a mistake. Instead, he vigorously advanced historicism, which, as we have noted above, believes that the visions of the Book of Revelation denote events that have already occurred and which can be identified in church history. Thus, historicism radically differs from the futurist school which, in its interpretation of the Book of Revelation, considers the seven churches of chapters two and three to be a portrayal of seven periods of church history, while the remainder of the book, after chapter 4:1, is thought to deal with the future Great Tribulation and subsequent events.

Simpson's historicism would most likely have been learned as an intimate part of his Presbyterian upbringing. An example is his commitment to viewing the Pope as the Antichrist, a view that is incorporated into the Westminster Confession. Referring to a prophecy conference address by A.J. Gordon<sup>5</sup> in which Gordon forcefully denied that the Antichrist is an individual, arguing instead that the Antichrist is none other than the papacy as it has existed throughout church history, Simpson says,

...in Dr. Gordon's address especially, the full and able presentation of the historical rather than the futurist view of the Antichrist, the only view we are persuaded consistent with Scripture, the face of ecclesiastical

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5. This address by A.J. Gordon was subsequently printed in *The Word, Work and World* (November 1886): 296-309 (hereafter cited as WWV).

## Section 14. Developments in Alliance Eschatology

history, and the true testimony of the church of Christ respecting the vital issues and real perils of today.<sup>6</sup>

As we have already seen, the soon return of Christ dominated Simpson's view of the Bible. For him, the historicist interpretive method strengthened this conclusion, for the more Scriptural prophecies that have been fulfilled, the fewer remain to be fulfilled before the Lord returns. Thus, the view that the papacy at all its stages in history is the Antichrist, relieved him of any necessity to anticipate Antichrist in the future. This sign then, is past.

Hand in hand with his literalist-historicist model is Simpson's penchant for date-setting. For him, the papacy, as the Antichrist, corresponds to the little horn (Daniel 7) and the beast of Revelation 13. To the decrees of Emperor Phocas in A.D. 607-610 establishing the supremacy of the Bishop of Rome, he adds 1260 years, the days of the beast.<sup>7</sup> This brings us to 1867-70, when, as a result of the Franco-Prussian war, the Pope was virtually put under house arrest by Italian patriots. Of that event, Simpson says, "the Pope fell forever from his throne, and the little horn, as a political system, ceased to exist."<sup>8</sup> Thus, he believed he had already witnessed the end of the Antichrist.

The destruction of the little horn was not the only prophetic countdown Simpson was listening to. There is also the little horn of Dan. 8:9-12, which "was to rise in the East, out of the subdivisions of the Greek Empire, and become the most prominent figure in the subsequent history of the Jewish people."<sup>9</sup> This, Simpson says, is Islam, and the Bible predicts not only the rise, but also the time of the fall of this world religion.<sup>10</sup> The significant date is A.D. 637, when "Omar captured Jerusalem and set up the Mosque of Omar on the site of Solomon's Temple. The place of the sanctuary was indeed cast down and the old Bishop went out of the city crying, 'The Abomination of desolation is set up.'"<sup>11</sup> Although his calculations on the dates are again confusing, this much is certain—he expected the Ottoman empire to collapse and for that event to signify the end of the little horn of the East, the False Prophet. When World War I did indeed bring its end, Simpson wrote, "We are in the time of the end, we are in the

border zone. We are on the edge of everlasting things."<sup>12</sup>

However, while believing that the chronology, as he projected it, was both correct and significant, he realized that God might be operating in a different fashion. In 1910, he wrote, "God does not count time by chronology, but by spiritual conditions, and a single year may count as much for the Lord's appearing as a century."<sup>13</sup> In 1914, he cautioned that, although it was a special year in the prophetic calendar, there might still be years left. And, in 1917, he says,<sup>14</sup>

Behold, I come quickly [or swiftly is perhaps better], at the same time there is evident provision for a long procession of fulfillments of providential developments and political and spiritual preparations.<sup>15</sup>

Such a view is compatible with his date-setting because he did not hold to an absolute distinction between dispensations, but rather, an overlapping of ages. Drawing from Romans 8:23, he points out that the leaf is contained in the bud which the tree has had all winter.<sup>16</sup> Every age contains the bud of certain evil characteristics that will become a full leaf in the end. As well, certain blessings that properly belong to the millennium can, to an extent, be appropriated by the believer now, especially healing and holiness.

Because of these hedges, Simpson is saved from plunging into the abyss of predictions concerning the exact year of the Lord's return. In fact, Simpson criticizes the Millerites (forerunners of the Seventh-Day Adventists) for this very thing.<sup>17</sup>

But why did he involve himself in date-setting at all? Because these studies convinced him that the return of the Lord was very soon. Again and again he recites current events and comments on them in relation to prophecy. He was, as it were, a man who read holding the morning newspaper in one hand and the Bible in the other. But, his historicist perspective protected him from foolish attempts at forecasting the next event in international relations, economic cycles and what-not, on the basis of a supposed correlation with prophetic Scriptures. For example, only after an event such as the British capture of Jerusalem had occurred, was he

6. Simpson, *WWW* 7 (October 1886): 251.

7. Simpson, *The Coming One* (New York: Christian Alliance Publishing Company, 1912), p. 83. Simpson here specifically says he is using solar years (365 days) for the calculations.

8. *Ibid.*

9. *Ibid.*, p. 102

10. Simpson, *The Coming One*, p. 102-109; *Gospel of the Kingdom*, p. 153-164.

11. Simpson, *The Coming One*, p. 108.

12. Simpson, "The Fall of Jerusalem in the Light of Prophecy," *The Alliance Weekly*, 49, no. 20 (February 16, 1918): 307 (hereafter cited as *AW*).

13. Simpson, *The Christian and Missionary Alliance*, 35, no.5 (October 29, 1910): 72 (hereafter cited as *CMA*).

14. Simpson, *AW*, 42, no. 13 (December 26, 1914): 193.

15. Simpson, "Were the Apostles and Early Christians Disappointed and Mistaken in Their Expectation of the Lord's Immediate Return?," *AW*, 47, no.25 (November 24, 1917): 386.

16. Simpson, "Overlapping of the Coming Age," *AW*, 49, no. 16, p. 242.

17. Simpson, *WWW*, 1, no. 1, p. 3.

willing to comment on what he considered to be its significance, not before.<sup>18</sup>

This brings us to the place where we can understand that, in Simpson's thinking, historicism and imminency went hand in hand. Futurism, in his opinion, effectively denied imminency by reason of the sheer number of things yet to happen. If we are yet to see a ten-nation confederation that corresponds to the ten toes of the image in Daniel, the rise of the little horns of the East and West, and the introduction of an individual who is the Antichrist to the world, then there are yet these many things that must occur before Christ can come, in which case the second advent is not imminent by any stretch of the imagination. Thus, it is not only in Simpson's writings, but in those of the writers he published that one sees a consistent promoting of the historicist's view that the ten-nation league has come and gone; the papacy as an institution is the Antichrist, the little horn of the West, the great apostasy, but it is now fading away; Islam is the false prophet, the little horn of the East, and it is being destroyed before their very eyes in the destruction of the Ottoman empire; and the Jews are even now returning to the land.

### Imminency

However, while Simpson used the word imminent, he did not think the Lord could come at any moment. He was quite clear on this, writing in 1894:

We cannot truthfully say that we are expecting the instant return of the Lord Jesus, but rather, that we are looking for it as an imminent event, that is, as one that is impending and rapidly approaching.<sup>19</sup>

The key here is his correlation of the terms "imminent," "impending," and "rapidly approaching." Because of his historicist view, he could say that most of the signs of the Lord's return were already past. Only two remained to be fulfilled: the restoration of the Jews, and the mandate of Matthew 24:14--"For this Gospel of the Kingdom shall be preached to the whole world as a witness and then shall the end come." He was certain that the Jews were being restored to Palestine and would soon re-emerge as a national state. Subsequent events have shown him to be correct in this, even though the State of Israel was established at a later date than his calculations led him to believe. That left the missionary task as the one sign yet to be accomplished. Once a testimony had been established in every tribe and nation, this last sign would be complete, and the church would then expect the Lord's return at any moment. To this end, he and the people who, with him, founded the

missionary society, committed themselves to "bring back the King" by fulfilling the missionary mandate.

### Millennial Reign

Implicit in this program is the conviction that the second coming of Jesus Christ will occur prior to the inauguration of this kingdom; in other words, pre-millennialism. Simpson understood the Bible to teach three truths about this kingdom which form three pillars that uphold pre-millennial teachings. These are: the personal reign of Christ, the establishment of justice, and the total evangelization of the world. Let us examine each of these along with their implications.

Of great importance in Simpson's interpretation is the implicit relationship between a kingdom and the King.<sup>20</sup> To him it is a truism that a kingdom can only be established by, and ruled over by, an actual King. Thus, *the personal rule of Jesus Christ* on this earth forms the first and central pillar of this millennial theology.

Implicit in this affirmation of the necessity of a personal rule is his polemic against post-millennialism. Simpson asks, what kind of kingdom does post-millennialism offer, with no King? He seems to imply that post-millennialism strips the word kingdom of its majesty, offering instead a vague vision of a worldwide church.

Furthermore, he contends that a coming of Christ that is anterior to the victory removes the anticipation of a personal encounter with the returning Lord as an effective motivating force in the life of the individual and the church. In post-millennialism, only those who live at the close of the golden age can hope to see Christ return and all know that we are not now living in the last days of a peaceful millennium.

Instead of looking for Christ, multitudes are looking for the millennium, the conversion of the world, the regeneration of the nations....His charge was, "Watch not for the millennium, but for the Lord."<sup>21</sup>

Simpson's point is that if the millennium must come and go before the second advent, then we would know for a certainty that the Lord is not coming in our lifetime, nor in the lifetime of our children. Why then should we be commanded to "Watch!"?

If it were true that 1000 years of spiritual blessings and universal righteousness must certainly precede His personal coming, then, how irrelevant, how absurd, that command to watch for His coming as an ever impending event?<sup>22</sup>

18. Simpson, *AW*, 49, no. 12, p. 177.

19. Simpson, "Editorials," *The Christian Alliance and Foreign Missionary Weekly*, 12, no. 20 (May 18, 1894): 527 (hereafter cited as *CAFMW*).

20. Ibid., "How I Was Led to Believe in Pre-Millennarianism."

21. Simpson, "That Blessed Hope," *WWW*, 1, no. 4 (May 1882): 166.

22. Ibid., Also, see "Looking For and Hastening Forward," *CMA*, 20, no. 23 (June 8, 1898): 533.

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Thus, for Simpson, while post-millennialism speaks of a personal return of Christ, it destroys whatever impact that return might have on the daily Christian walk. In practical effect, the personal return is nullified.

Post-millennialism was rejected because Simpson felt that the vision of the church converting the whole world was impossible and impractical. The spread of the truth of Christianity to the whole world is obviously something that requires time, more than a lifetime, and thus no one living could reasonably expect to see even the inauguration of such a kingdom.

So long as our theology puts it far distant as a condition of the world at large which is to come about through the gradual spread of truth and righteousness, we can scarcely expect to live to see that consummation.<sup>23</sup>

Simpson's argument is very unconvincing here since post-millennialism says that this is precisely where we are called to have faith in the sovereign ability of God to send great revival to the church and for her to be so Spirit-empowered that she will rise up and sweep across the world bringing in a great missionary harvest and inaugurating the golden age with the conversion of the nations.

In the "Queries" column of the *Weekly*, a response to this very issue was once requested. The answer given was that pre-millennialism does not deny the power of the Spirit to convert the world, it is simply that such a thing is not part of God's program as revealed in the New Testament.<sup>24</sup> But, one is left to wonder, why, if Simpson really believed this, he continued to assert that it was unrealistic to say that the church could see the conversion of the world in this dispensation.

Simpson rejected not only any post-millennialism, but any understanding of prophecy that denied Christ's personal reign. He relates that the Scottish school of theology in which he was raised, considered that Christ's coming meant:

His manifestation to the Soul of the believer by the Spirit, his coming at death to the saint, and his coming spiritually by the spread of the gospel.<sup>25</sup>

This interpretation may be a variant of either post-millennialism or a-millennialism. The spiritualization of the personal appearing eliminates the basic difference between those two views, leaving only the post-millennial claim that the church will evangelize the world, and the a-millennial denial of such a total victory is a point of divergence. While Simpson's deep reaction to post-millennialism might lead us to believe that he somehow identified it with the teachings of his

youth, we must not think that he was unaware of the a-millennial alternative. Although he never mentions it by name, he was as firm in his rejection of it as he was in his rejection of post-millennialism.

His focus was on a-millennialism as it appears in Roman Catholic doctrine. In this strand, the Kingdom of God began with the ascension and is now active in the Church. Simpson rejected this for three reasons.

First, a-millennialism made the kingdom "of this world" in contradiction to the words of Jesus that "my kingdom is not of this world."<sup>26</sup> The fact that the same verse could be used as an objection to pre-millennialism did not seem to deter him.

Secondly, he saw the church as called to engage in warfare to prepare for the King's coming. The kingdom parables of Matthew 13 were, for him, a positive proof that the church is not the kingdom, but labours for the kingdom. In an analysis that cuts against both traditional post-millennialism and a-millennialism, he says that these parables teach that "much of the work of the church would apparently be a failure," but that after the angels have separated the wheat from the tares, "then shall the righteous shine."<sup>27</sup>

His final objection to this brand of millennial interpretation is that it confines the reign of Christ to the spiritual, whereas he saw it as being historical, and therefore having social implications. He affirms that wherever you find "goodness, and love, and peace, and purity, there you have the Kingdom." Yes, "the holy heart and the unselfish life are the sign manuals that you belong to the Kingdom." But after each admission, Simpson emphatically asks the rhetorical question, "But, is that all?"

Is right forever to the on the scaffold and wrong forever on the throne, and goodness and patience only manifested through the tears and sorrows of the oppressed?<sup>28</sup>

And Simpson was indeed very sensitive to the issue of economic oppression. He speaks out directly against the injustices visited on the working man<sup>29</sup> and attacks "modern business methods... hoarding, having and holding, immense wealth, luxury, and the oppression of working people."<sup>30</sup>

Go to the sweat shops of our manufacturing cities, see the poor, attenuated women and children that are toiling for a pittance in suffocating workrooms with long hours of half-remunerated toil, and read the sickening story

23. Ibid., "Looking for and Hastening Forward," 533.

24. Simpson, "Queries," *CAFMW*, 12, no.21, p. 577. It is possible that this column was not written by A.B. Simpson himself.

25. Ibid., "How I was Led to Believe in Pre-Millennarianism."

26. Simpson, "Thy Kingdom Come," *AW*, 43, no. 4 (October 24, 1914): 51.

27. Ibid.

28. Ibid.

29. Simpson, "Our Attitude Towards the Lord's Coming," *Christian Alliance and Missionary Weekly*, 40, no. 16 (October 20, 1893): 244.

30. Simpson, "The Practical Hope of the Lord's Coming," *CMA*, 34, no. 19 (August 6, 1910): 305.

that has sometime come to us of struggling girls that have been told to their face that they cannot expect to earn a living merely by honest toil, but must also expect to sell themselves as well as labor of their hands to eke out a sufficient livelihood to help those who are so often dependent on them.<sup>31</sup>

At times, Simpson switches to the second person, showing that he knew of working people sitting before him as he preached, and he speaks to them of going home and seeing their little family hungry and ill-clothed and of shedding tears.<sup>32</sup>

What is the answer? The only satisfying answer, says Simpson, is the advent of a King who will restore to the poor all that was lost.<sup>33</sup>

That day will bring the righting of our wrongs. That day will pay us the long-deferred hire. That day will put us in our right place and displace the sons of pride.<sup>34</sup>

Thus, in contrast to a-millennialism, we see that the second pillar of Simpson's pre-millennial view is *justice*. We must be patient for the return of the King.

Perhaps his thinking on the relation of the future kingdom and justice could be summarized in this way. A-millennialism with its spiritualization of all things contains no cry for justice. Post-millennialism, with its unrealistic expectations, proposes an impractical program for justice (in places, Simpson speaks directly against the socialist programs of his contemporary post-millennialists). Only pre-millennialism has a final answer to injustice: the coming of the King who will, in this world, set all things to right. Without the pre-millennial hope we are, in Simpson's opinion, left only with the words of Solomon:

So I returned and considered all the oppressions that are done under the sun, and beheld the tears of such that were oppressed, and they have no comforter.<sup>35</sup>

Regrettably, Simpson, who began his New York ministry with a strong practical ministry to the poor, gradually turned his back on philanthropy. In so doing, he was following the lead of some pre-millennialists as well as reacting to the rising social-gospel.

This abandonment of any attempt to have an impact on society, including even the early promotion of the temperance movement, left Simpson with evangelism as the sole kingdom activity, but not evangelism in the sense that as one by one people are converted, their lives will change, and thus gradually the world will change. He would identify that with the rejected post-millennarian view. For him, the relation

between evangelism and the kingdom is this: God has decreed that a witness be established throughout the whole world and then the end will come.

*Evangelism* is the third pillar of Simpson's millennial view. Through the witness of the church in this age, a people of God will be gathered out of the Gentiles, some from every tribe and nation. The task of evangelism is to give to everyone at least one chance to hear the gospel and to see some from every group converted. Rightly understood, Simpson tells us, this commission saves us from discouragement with the actual results of missions and gives a simple and practical aim within reach of the church.<sup>36</sup>

However, the story does not end with the second coming of Christ. The world is to be converted, but not by the church in this dispensation. This great missionary harvest will be brought in by the converted Jews during the time of the millennium.<sup>37</sup> In this way, the nations will be converted and a rule of peace will cover the earth.

This conviction, that the church was to establish a testimony, but the millennial Jews would carry forward the work of converting the world, guided the early missionary strategy of the Alliance. Men and women were hastily sent overseas with a minimum of training, sometimes as little as six months, because of the felt urgency of the hour. It was not expected that a national church would rise up, but only that a few would be converted as a testimony. Hence, indigenous principles were not used. Yet despite many mistakes, national churches did begin to emerge, and Alliance missionary methodology began to run on tracks other than those laid by Simpson's eschatology.

Simpson was convinced that the completion of this missionary mandate was the key to the return of the Lord. The clues given by dates were important, but that timetable would be hurried or delayed in accordance with the obedience of the church.

The Lord has left to us in some degree the determination of the time of His coming. There is a sense in which our chronology may be condensed into briefer limits by intense activity....There is such a thing as accelerated as well as retarded time and we may accelerate the time of the Lord's return by meeting the spiritual conditions and preparing the way.<sup>38</sup>

Thus, eschatology was the life blood of Simpson's missionary theology. That the imminent return, not in the sense of "any moment," but in the sense of an event that could be soon, could be within this generation, if the

31. Ibid., p. 306.

32. Simpson, "The Practical Value and Influence of the Doctrine of the Lord's Coming," *CAMW*, 9, no. 15, 16 (October 7, 14, 1910): 305.

33. Simpson, "Times of Salvation; Times of Refreshing; Times of Restitution," *CMA*, 34, no. 22 (August 27, 1910).

34. Ibid., "The Practical Hope of the Lord's Coming," p. 306.

35. Ibid.

36. Simpson, "Christ our Coming Lord," *CAMW* (July 15, 1892): 42.

37. Simpson, "Editorials," *CMA*, 28, no. 3 (January 15, 1897): 60.

See also *The Coming One*, p. 64.

38. Simpson, "The Scriptural Principles of Missions," *CMA*, 24, no. 24 (June 24, 1905): 398.

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church obeys, was the wellspring of his missionary motivation. His fascination with the "signs of the times," his playing with date-setting and his support of Zionism, all are colours on the spectrum of the truth of the soon return of Christ, shining through the prism of the missionary task.

### Conclusion

The Christian and Missionary Alliance has stood in a certain tension with the eschatology of its founder since his death. Perhaps nothing better illustrates this tension than the refusal of the society's book publishing house to reprint any of Simpson's four books on that doctrine. Yet, the society claims to stand now, as it did then, on the assertion that part of the gospel is that Jesus is the coming King. What are the causes of this ambivalent attitude and how might a solution be formulated?

The central tension is between imminency and practical theology. For Simpson, these two concerns interlocked. However, they so interlock for very few today. The reason for this is that Simpson's rather elastic definition of imminency has been rejected by many in favor of the "any moment" version. But, any moment imminency cuts the nerve of missionary motivation as it should arise out of Matthew 24:14, for it leaves no relation between the church's obedience and Christ's appearing.

As well as this tension caused by redefinition, there is the problem of the overall shift in missionary strategy caused by the church-growth movement and the recent hidden-peoples movement. Simpson and his contemporaries thought that the number of language groups to be reached was relatively small. Missions researchers now know that there are a vast number of languages, and some estimate there are 17,000 distinct people groups without a Christian church.

Neither the Alliance nor any other missionary agency could be satisfied with merely winning a few converts from each of these groups as "a testimony." We now realize that people are not truly having a gospel communicated to them until it is being communicated by a church indigenous to their culture. To this end, the contemporary goal of missions is to establish churches and for these churches to grow until every idol is cast down and the cross is lifted over the people.

But is this pre-millennialism? Perhaps, but at first it sounds suspiciously like the old post-millennial goal of converting the world. Hence, there lies before the Christian and Missionary Alliance a theological task: once again to develop a missionary-eschatology. In the next few paragraphs, I will endeavour to propose a profile for such an eschatology.

The statement of Jesus in Matthew 24:14 is quite clear and should continue as the foundation for our missionary work. We must once again realize that imminency is compatible with the fact that there is yet something to do. Even as the apostle John prayed, "even so come, Lord Jesus," we must be active in prayer and obedience in order to hasten the day of His appearing. To that end, we, along with evangelical churches around the world, must double and redouble our efforts at sending missionaries, especially targeting the yet-unreached people groups. In this way, imminency will cease to be a slogan and will again be a pulse beat for our churches.

Simpson's view that the conversion of the world is too great a task for the church and must await the millennial work of the Jews is self-contradictory. If it is too great a task now, why will it be any less difficult then? The presence of Jesus on this earth would not, in and of itself, reduce the stubborn pride of men's hearts. Without at all denying that there is a future work for converted Israel (Romans 11:12), it must be said that the church has been commanded and empowered by the risen Lord and the descended Spirit to preach the gospel to all the world, to disciple and to baptize the nations.

Here, Simpson's concept of "the overlapping of the ages" comes to our aid. We tend to think of the beginning of the millennium as a clear-cut moment, the moment of Christ's return. This is certainly true. But, there is a sense in which the reign of Christ is manifested in the church now. Wherever the church pushes forward its boundaries, the darkness and terror of Satan's kingdom is pushed backward. Simpson is right--this will not be done completely by the church, but awaits its consummation when Christ returns. But this inability to complete the task before He appears is not because of an inherent weakness of the Holy Spirit and the church, it is simply a decree of God. This is seen in Psalm 2:8, "I will give you the nations as your inheritance," and Philippians 2: 10,11, "Every knee shall bow...and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord." These verses indicate that the worldwide recognition of Jesus as the Messiah will be a result of the Parousia. That the church is now doing kingdom work provides us with an eschatological foundation for building churches, for we are indeed building for the future, even the future millennium. At the same time, it provides us with a standpoint from which we can act as citizens in the world, even though our true citizenship is in heaven. It must be said with sorrow that many evangelicals in the generations that followed Simpson not only rejected any action to alleviate the oppression of the poor, they took the side of the rich and denied the existence of oppression.



A truly missionary church must be ready to proclaim clearly that it is the Bible, not Marxism, that not only condemns the exploitation of the poor, but provides whole societies a way of escape from the grinding wheel of economic privation. The Bible teaches that the individual has worth because he or she is made in God's image; work is a God-honoring activity; all buying and selling is to be done in fairness, including the buying and selling of labour; and it also gives many other teachings on the family and society. Whenever a people have accepted these teachings as a whole, they have risen above the poverty that binds them. This is not simply because they, as individuals, one at a time, change their ways. The church itself, as a viable community, becomes an agent to change the structures of society that promote oppression.

This total message must be seen as a part of the gospel of the kingdom, for it is an extension of the call to practical holiness in light of the second coming. Again, Simpson was right. Justice is an integral part of

the millennial kingdom, and it is the failure of either post-millennialism or a-millennialism to provide for justice that causes us to insist that there must be a personal rule of our King. But, we must understand that we are no more allowed to await passively His appearing to establish justice than we are to wait for the trumpet to sound before we seriously begin the task of converting the world.

The current divorce between our missionary practice and our eschatology can be overcome by again asserting the strengths of pre-millennialism: a real kingdom will soon be inaugurated on this earth by the personal presence of Jesus Christ. But, even now, the church prepares for and, to an extent, can share the victory and blessings of the kingdom. To that end, she purifies herself and presses ahead with the task of evangelizing, discipling and modeling the life of a spiritual community that functions on the basis of love. The church can know that every day that she lives in such obedience, she hastens the return of the king.

## Reading 14. 2

# Ethics and the Coming King

Michael Tymchak

What bearing, if any at all, does the doctrine of the "coming King" have upon the character of Christian ethics? The answer depends in part upon the view taken of the King's return, with the various possible views yielding a corresponding variety of ethical stances. Naturally there is not strict determinism in detail, but certain tendencies appear evident from the historical record.<sup>1</sup>

Our eschatological position in the Christian and Missionary Alliance is the view commonly known as premillennial.<sup>2</sup> The impact of premillennialism upon Christian ethics has recently come under scrutiny, not always with flattering results. The purpose of this

article is, in Part I, to survey this scrutiny, which amounts to a serious indictment, and to explore the connection between premillennialism and the ethic it has allegedly generated. In Part II, we will develop the argument that whatever may have been the case, it is certainly possible on a biblical basis, even within a premillennial framework, to support a very different ethical thrust. Part III will draw matters to a conclusion.

## Part I

### The Ethical Implications of Premillennialism

The charge against an ethic conditioned by premillennial theology is that whatever merits it may possess in terms of encouraging personal evangelism and promoting the missionary enterprise, it is woefully lacking in terms of providing any impetus to social ethics. The "imminence of the King's return" is a fine note upon which to sound the call to send missionaries out to reap the harvest, perhaps even a call to personal holiness and the dedication of one's life to Christ, but hardly a call to reform society, or to the devotion of one's life to the amelioration of oppressive or unjust social conditions. At best such issues must take second

*His Dominion*, 15(4):2-13 (1989).

<sup>1</sup>For an interesting discussion of the implications of the various eschatological positions, at a more popular level, see *Christianity Today*, vol. 31, no. 2 (February, 6, 1987), CT Institute, "What to Make of the Millennium," especially pp 5-1 and 6-1 on "Eschatology, evangelism, and social action."

<sup>2</sup>"The Christian and Missionary Alliance Statement of Faith," [see Reading 15.3] article #11: "The second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ is imminent and will be personal, visible, and premillennial."

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place; at worst they are a distraction and an impediment to the evangelist, pastor or missionary whose focus is steadfastly set upon the Great Commission. On such an agenda concern for issues of justice, the poor, the oppressed, racism, imperialism (military and economic) and even issues of social vice, abortion, homosexuality, prostitution, lotteries, and business ethics, fall well down the ladder of premillennial priorities.

The logic of all this is simple enough: the King is coming soon; things may be bad but they will get worse; there is no use the church wasting its time and resources on matters of secondary importance. The future is bleak; the psychology is pessimistic, the time is running out; and our reaction should be one of urgency. The ethical implications are, apparently, as obvious as the prophetic scenario upon which they are based is inevitable.

Recognition of the negative impact of premillennial eschatology on Christian ethics appears to be widespread, sometimes including evangelicals generally speaking, without separating out those of premillennial stripe. A sociological study, for example, charges that:

Evangelical Protestantism tends to take a miraculous view of social justice... Thus they concentrate their energies on conversions and evangelism and largely ignore social issues except for occasional efforts to make unlawful what they judge to be personal vices. They also largely ignore the empirical fact that "born-again" and regenerated Christians remain noticeably sinful and thus offer their followers little guidance in ethical behaviour.<sup>3</sup>

The "miraculous view of social justice" is the conviction that human effort through the normal channels of social change in existing institutions, such as government, are worthless; real change can only be brought about in an apocalyptic way, by divine intervention, with the return of Christ Himself. But what are the origins of social attitudes such as those described in this study? Perhaps they have little or nothing to do with any particular eschatological view.

The editor of a recent collection of essays on the various millennial views suggests otherwise. R. G. Clouse, an historian at Indiana State University, concludes in his Postscript to *The Meaning of the Millennium*:

An individual who takes a premillennial view will generally be more pessimistic about society than those who accept one of the other eschatologies... In his view the only hope for humanity is the Second Coming of

Jesus Christ. *This discourages involvement in social action and fosters a supernatural ethic which supports the status quo. Many evangelicals, heavily influenced by premillennialism, do not wish to see social change which would improve the lot of their fellow men.*<sup>4</sup>

Clouse highlights what he perceives to be the psychological and theological force of the premillennial withdrawal from social issues: the premillennialist is "pessimistic" about social improvement, leading to a quietistic stance which, in effect, simply endorses the status quo; and the premillennialist's assessment of the instrument of possible social improvement is virtually negative with regard to human effort, and positive only with regard to the return of Jesus Christ Himself. What Clouse is calling a "supernatural ethics" is the view that since all human efforts are really impotent and only the return of Christ Himself will bring about real social improvement, there is little point in evangelical Christians expending efforts to effect such changes in the present era. Sociologically and politically, persons persuaded by such an ideology may be expected to support the *status quo*, if only because they view the attempt to bring about social change in the ordinary sense and through the "normal" channels as basically futile.

Church history appears to lend some support to the negative influence of premillennialism on concern for social issues. Writers analyzing the contrasting social vision of early and mid-nineteenth century evangelicals with twentieth century reaction and withdrawal from such issues, for instance, identify the rise of premillennial eschatology as a significant factor in this reversal. John Stott, in his book *Involvement*, having noted the British evangelical heritage of social concern in such late eighteenth and early nineteenth century notables as William Wilberforce, the Clapham Sect and the Earl of Shaftesbury, goes on to diagnose the "reversal" of this heritage and notes amongst other factors:

...there was the spread (specially through J. N. Darby's teaching...) of the premillennial scheme. This portrays the present evil world as beyond the improvement of redemption, and predicts instead that it will deteriorate steadily until the coming of Jesus... If the world is getting worse, and if only Jesus at his coming will put it right, the argument runs, there seems no point in trying to reform it in the meanwhile.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>3</sup> R. Stark and C.Y. Glock, *American Piety: The Nature of Religious Commitment* (Berkeley: U. of California Press, 1968), pp. 68; quoted in R.G. Clouse, "The Evangelical Christian, Social Concern, and a Theology of Hope," *The Evangelical Quarterly*, XLIV, 1972, p. 74.

<sup>4</sup> R.G. Clouse, ed., *The Meaning of the Millennium* (Downers Grove, Ill: InterVarsity Press, 1977), pp. 209ff [emphasis added].

<sup>5</sup> John Stott, *Involvement*, vol. 1 (Old Tappan, New Jersey: Revell), p. 27.

American evangelical historian Donald Dayton arrives at similar conclusions.<sup>6</sup> Having documented the concern for reform even of the great revivalist Charles Finney,<sup>7</sup> Dayton identifies the shift in eschatology as a contributing factor in the reversal of this vision:

Finney's revivalism, as well as that of Jonathan Blanchard, the Wesleyan Methodists, and other Evangelical reformers, was tied to postmillennialism... But this vision collapsed after the Civil War and was replaced by an eschatology that looked to the return of Christ to rescue the "saints" *out of this world*. Premillennial teaching implied that the world was in such bad shape that it would only get worse until the return of Christ. *Some even argued that efforts to ameliorate social conditions would merely postpone the "blessed hope" of Christ's return* by delaying the process of degeneration.<sup>8</sup>

Dayton does acknowledge that the impact of premillennialism was "somewhat mixed": though in some cases the imminence of Christ's return in this teaching freed people "to give themselves wholeheartedly to inner cities and missions" leading to "contact with poor and oppressed peoples,"

... more characteristic was the tendency to abandon social amelioration for a massive effort to preach the gospel to as many as possible before the return of Christ.<sup>9</sup>

He concludes:

The extent to which this *shift in eschatology* was felt throughout Evangelical life and thought is *difficult to overestimate*.<sup>10</sup>

### Analogies from Other Religions and in Secular Thought

There are some rather sobering analogies to this attitude found in other religions and in the secular world today. The eastern notion of *karma*, for example, typical of Hinduism and currently being marketed in the West under the guise of New Age thinking, teaches that this life is inevitably assigned as a consequence of a

previous life. The resultant attitude taken toward social life is obviously fatalistic and induces a helplessness of spirit favourable to the status quo. Similarly, the powerful latent fear of nuclear holocaust in the West appears to be generating a kind of "eat, drink and be merry" carelessness about long-term social reform: the cause is hopeless, tomorrow we die! Of course premillennialists will point out that their eschatology, far from being fatalistic and sapping initiative, is a powerful motivating factor for evangelism and missions; this is doubtless true, but if its critics are right, *in other social spheres* the results of premillennialist eschatology begin to look alarmingly like "karmic" fatalism or the despair of imminent holocaust. The examples which follow certainly appear to be cases in point.

### Historical Example: Pentecostalism

In his history of Pentecostalism, R.M. Anderson highlights the impact of an "imminent Millennium" on early Pentecostal attitudes to social issues. He quotes the English Pentecostal J.T. Boddy, addressing an American audience (1920):

In the face of the appeals made to Christians today to join hands with the world in pushing its noisy reforms (most of which, whether secular or religious, are Satan-inspired), what course should we pursue?... While reforms may serve as temporary plasters upon the moral ulcers of the world, they can never reach the seat of the trouble, to effect a permanent cure....<sup>11</sup>

And to the question as to whether he would let the world go to the devil, Boddy responded:

No certainly not, we don't have to, it is there already... The only permanent remedy...and the hope of this old, sin-wrecked world is the personal coming of Jesus into it.<sup>12</sup>

Anderson further documents early Pentecostal social attitudes (which probably reflect a fairly wide spectrum of evangelical churches) by quoting a 1934 article in the *Latter Rain Evangel* entitled, "The Solution to the World's Problems:"

These troubles, political, social, religious and otherwise can never be settled until the glorious Son of God comes back.... The question is now, How can we escape the tribulation period?<sup>13</sup>

The emphasis is on an "all or nothing" approach to the variety of problems society faces; we are not to "try to do the best that can be done under the circumstances." Rather, the implication that anything less than a total solution is worthless is underlined by the question: "How can we escape?"

<sup>6</sup> D.W. Dayton, *Discovering an Evangelical Heritage* (New York: Harper and Row, 1976).

<sup>7</sup> Dayton draws attention to the somewhat scandalous fact that: "Modern editions of his works are often expurgated. Offending passages are removed....Ibid., p.19.

Dayton notes several quite shocking instances where in later editions of his works, for example, Finney's views on "hindrances to revival" of a social nature, i.e., relating to human rights and reform, were subtly eliminated and the omission masked. In another case the contents of one letter, entitled, "The Pernicious Attitude of the Church on the Reforms of the Age," were censored and the contents of another letter substituted under the heading of the first!

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., pp. 125f [emphasis added].

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., pp. 127.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., p. 127 (emphasis added).

<sup>11</sup> R.M. Anderson, *Vision of the Disinherited* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979), p. 200.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., p. 200.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., p. 201.

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Anderson is led to the following conclusions:

The Pentecostal movement was a force for social conservatism in that it abstained from social improvement and disparages all social ameliorative efforts by others. Reform was futile because the degeneration and dissolution of the present world system was prophesied in the Bible.<sup>14</sup>

Even taking into account Anderson's extreme reductionism of the history of Pentecostalism to primarily sociological forces, an approach with which we would differ, his observations are not entirely wide of the mark. Certainly the note of fatalism apparently induced

by the fulfilment of prophecy offers sobering reflection even for evangelicals today.

### Historical Examples: Simpson and the C&MA

Not entirely different sentiments can be picked up in early Christian and Missionary Alliance history as well:

Philanthropic schemes and social reforms are absorbing the interest and enthusiasm of thousands of redeemed men and women who ought to be giving their strength and wealth to do the best things and not the second best. We admit there is something good.... They have a place and a value, but let the world take care of them....<sup>15</sup>

These words of A. B. Simpson, though tempered by the recognition of some value in social concern, still appear to assign "social reforms" to the category of "second best" for the Christian and, indeed, to suggest that the redeemed not bother with such matters at all but rather leave them to the "world." Simpson had joined the premillennialist stream and was to some extent at least being conditioned in his assessment of social issues by its powerful current.

To inject a note of caution, and perhaps to suggest that the historical tale has not yet been fully told, it is well worth noting that in a recent article, "The Social Interest and Concern of A.B. Simpson," from which the above quotation is taken, J.V. Dahms surveys the impact of Simpson's work and is able to conclude that "the *social welfare impact* of his movement was both *enormous and magnificent*."<sup>16</sup> It must also be remembered that Simpson was no elitist in his church polity; in Louisville he was deeply troubled by the "social exclusiveness" of his fashionable Presbyterian church, and at the first service of their elegant new Broadway Tabernacle in 1878, made it clear that the

supreme purpose of a church building, whatever its design, was to bring within its wall "the great masses of every social condition...."<sup>17</sup> Such sentiments simply do not reflect a narrowly defined sociological vision and, in the end, his vision would mean moving on, which he did within eighteen months of that first service.

Nevertheless ambivalence remains. Dahms notes the "decline" in concerns towards the end of Simpson's life and quotes remarks such as:

If we had a hundred million dollars, we would not spend one cent of it establishing another school at home, or an institute abroad, unless it were simply for the purpose of training persons directly to preach the gospel.<sup>18</sup>

Of course, the commitment to focus exclusively on gospel and missionary training institutions does not in itself amount to the abandonment of the social dimensions of Christian ethics, but on the other hand the tone, i.e., the exaggerated figures, certainly implies that other sorts of involvement even in Christian education have little if any value at all.

### After Indictment?

Nevertheless, our purpose is not to establish the validity of the thesis that premillennialists neglect the social dimension of Christian ethics, so much as openly to acknowledge this indictment and, as premillennialist ourselves, to ask whether premillennialists *must* adopt such an ethical stance. Happily, we can leave to well-equipped church historians the task of sorting out the pros and cons of the historical thesis in question; for ourselves, we shall be content if we can establish on a biblical and theological basis the extent to which premillennialism must counsel evangelicals to withdraw from the arena of social concern if they really want their lives to count for God.

## II

### Eschatology and Ethics: Psychological and Biblical Implications

While eschatology doubtless should be related to ethics, and systematic theologians do us the service of exploring these ramifications, the thesis I wish to advance is that the prevailing interpretation of premillennialism, in terms of an ethic without significant social implications, has been more a matter of succumbing to a psychological temptation than of sound theological deduction. Whatever implications for ethics we may draw from eschatology, acceptable theological method would surely dictate that they *confirm, not sabotage*, explicit biblical principles relating to doing

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., p. 201f.

<sup>15</sup> J.V. Dahms, "The Social Interest and Concern of A.B. Simpson," in *Birth of a Vision*, D.F. Hartzfeld and C. Nienkirchen eds., (Regina: His Dominion, 1986), p. 49.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., p. 64 [emphasis added].

<sup>17</sup> R.L. Niklaus, J.S. Sawin, S.J. Stoesz, *All for Jesus*, (Camp Hill, PA: Christian Publications, 1986), p.17.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., p. 65.

the will of our heavenly Father. My basic argument is that the extent to which the historical accusations surveyed in Part I have validity, will depend on the degree to which premillennial evangelicals have designed their ethical views in accordance with a *psychology* appropriate to their reading of the events surrounding the coming King, rather than conforming them to the explicit ethic the King has left for us in *His Word*.

The logic of the mistake I am alluding to is straightforward enough: if A is a long-term principle of action and B is short-term activity, and if we anticipate the King's imminent return, then it is easy to fall into the temptation to promote B with much greater zeal than A, even though there are grounds for believing that the King's will was that we do both. The situation is further exacerbated by our perception that B (the task of evangelism and missions) has consequences that are truly eternal in their significance, whereas A (the amelioration of social conditions) really does not. The cup of water may be a good gesture when we are confronted by a thirsty man, but if his soul is bound for hell and if offering the cup takes resources from evangelism, then there is clearly little worth in it (hence, let Caesar or the world take care of such things).

My reply is that since we do not know just when the King is going to return, however carefully we may read the signs of the times, we are well advised to be found doing His will until He comes, rather than rearranging the priorities He has given. If He has made it clear that we should do A *and* B, then that is what must be done. Should we at some point become convinced that His return is very near, then all the more, and in every way, we must press this two-pronged attack; certainly it would be the height of presumption to jettison A (social amelioration) in favour of B (evangelism and missions) for strategic reasons based on our calculations of His schedule. It would reflect a similar presumption were we to decide, on the basis of our own calculations of eternal worth, to respond to one sort of command but not to the other. Our efforts would be better employed discerning His commands and doing them; He will not assign projects to us which have no eternal worth in His eyes.

The questions that must now be addressed are: What are His commands? What did Jesus teach was "the Father's will?"

### **Ethics and the Great Commission**

In our Saviour's classic teaching on prayer we are told to make the following request of the Father: "your will be done on earth as it is in heaven" (Matthew 6:10).<sup>19</sup> This request, which contains the fundamental

guiding principle of Jesus' own life (Jn. 5:30), should be foundational for Christian ethics: we are to do our Father's will on earth (Mt. 7:21). The Scriptures in general and our Saviour's teachings in particular reveal the essential contents of His will for us. Let us then examine several of Jesus' prescriptions for us in an effort to catch the flavour of the kind of thing our Father wants us to be about. For the sake of brevity, considering the vast amount of material relevant to such a study in the Scriptures, we will limit our exploration primarily to the book of Matthew, the gospel of "the King."

We embark upon our exploration with reflections on a prescription much favoured by premillennialists, the Great Commission of Matthew 28:17b-20b:

All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.

Now the premillennialist, like any other fair-minded reader, draws from this passage conclusions to the following effect: that we should be winning others to Christ: that we must respond to our Saviour's "missionary" challenge; that we have been issued a commission by our Saviour of the utmost import and urgency. Although history does not uniformly reflect a proper response to this challenge, surely no one would gainsay this sort of conclusion being drawn from this passage. However, the questions still to be asked is, does this passage justify "playing off" these conclusions against involvement in socially ameliorative activities either at home or abroad? The question is not whether the normal premillennialist conclusions are valid, but whether they represent the whole thrust of what Jesus is saying here.

The case for making a social ethic a very secondary matter relative to evangelism can only be sustained on the basis of the Great Commission given the following two conditions: 1) being a disciple has no primary social dimensions; 2) the "everything" Jesus commanded, which He tells us is to be taught to the disciples (vs. 20), contains no prescription of behaviours with a social dimension. To put the matter this way is to see at once the mistake, or at least the alleged mistake, of typical premillennial exegesis: the premillennialist is in fact caught in a very deep contradiction, that of playing off the *results* of evangelism against the *task* of evangelism: the task of evangelism is indeed to win people to Christ, to seek "decisions" for Christ; but the Great Commission makes it quite plain that the decision involves, or is meant to involve, a commitment to discipleship, the result of which will be an endeavour to practice "everything" that Jesus commanded. And, as I wish now to argue, the "everything" that Jesus

<sup>19</sup> Note: all biblical references are taken from the NIV.

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commanded contains implications for social ethics which are primary and non-negotiable. The argument against Christian involvement in matters of social ethics, therefore, can only be sustained at the cost of ignoring or misrepresenting the essential character of the Great Commission itself, the logic of which so unmistakably is: evangelism, discipleship, baptism, and the teaching of everything Jesus commanded (surely to be practised).

### **Ethics and the Great Commandment**

What then did He teach? At once we think of the other great pillar of Jesus' teaching, namely, the Great Commandment of Matthew 22:35-40. In response to the Sadducees and Pharisees, Jesus summarizes all the Law and Prophets in the command, first, to:

Love the Lord you God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind (Matthew 22:37).

And secondly, we are to:

Love you neighbour as yourself (Matthew 22:39).

Doubtless these are commands sufficient to challenge the energies and resources of any disciple for a lifetime, even the power of Christ Himself.

The question of the disciples' energies and time, however, is this: does the Great Commandment appear to suggest that "evangelism" and "caring for others" are properly seen as competitors, with the latter inevitably losing out to the former? Surely not! The neighbour is, by definition, social: the neighbour is the "other"; he or she is the essence of my existing not as an isolated atom but as a member of society. In society I have contact with my neighbour not only personally, as an individual, but also through the institutions, corporations, organizations, governments and all the social structures and systems of which I am a part. Moreover, my responsibility for the quality of this contact extends not only to the personal but to the structural and systematic elements as well. Clearly, we can control our personal actions much more easily than the "systems"; nevertheless, insofar as we have opportunity in an appropriate way,<sup>20</sup> our love of neighbour must extend from the important personal and individual contacts through to the policies and practices of the larger social

units and systems, such as my business, club, school, college, union, company, country, not to mention my church or mission society. In this broad spectrum of responsibilities the whole ethic of the Scriptures come into play from the individual gestures of love that are meant to meet a personal or family need, to the sharing of the gospel and the prophetic call to justice and fairness in social structures.

What then does it mean to love our neighbour, presuming that we love the Lord our God to the uttermost? Shall we launch shells from our gunboats if he is attempting to stop the trade in opium which is profitable to us, but harmful to his people? Shall we persuade the Third World mother to stop feeding her baby breast milk and buy our baby formula because it is "modern," "western" and happens to be profitable for our company? Is it loving our neighbour to pay them the lowest possible wage and to threaten them with unemployment if they resist? Is it to avoid associating with someone whose skin is a different colour or who speaks a different language, or who belongs to a lower socio-economic class? Is it to extract him or her from the mother's womb, wrap them in a garbage bag or place them in a bottle destined for the incinerator, or some commercial or experimental laboratory? It does appear terribly difficult to see how the kind of love of neighbour of which Jesus is speaking can be contained in a narrowly defined channel; rather it wants to swell into a mighty river until everything and all of life is swept into its beautiful stream; and it is into this stream that the disciple is invited to plunge.

According to Jesus, love of the neighbour is indeed secondary, not to evangelism but rather to the love of the Lord our God. And this secondary love of the neighbour is the powerful motive both for sharing the gospel with him or her, and for the kind of caring behaviours Jesus so powerfully prescribes. On the basis of the Great Commandment, therefore, it appears unlikely that an individual responding to Christ and becoming a disciple would be counselled to avoid social ethics and social reform.

### **Ethics and Discipleship**

What other sorts of things did Jesus command? What priorities did He call His disciples to adopt?

In His ministry of preaching the good news of the kingdom and healing the sick, Jesus saw the crowds as sheep without a shepherd in Matthew 9:35-38. Then, dramatically changing metaphors, He calls for leadership in the image of the harvest which was plentiful and the labourers who are few. We are then commanded to "ask the Lord of the harvest... to send out workers in his harvest field" (Matthew 9:38). Clearly and most emphatically the disciple ought to be paying heed to such a command as this: just as clearly, on such

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<sup>20</sup> An understanding of "opportunity in an appropriate way" will help us understand why St. Paul did not tackle the issue of the abolition of slavery in the Roman empire of the first century, choosing instead the route of tempering it morally. Neither the apostle's office (he was not the emperor!) nor the position of the Christian church in the first century were such that a radical Christian critique of the institution was propitious. The position of Wilberforce in eighteenth-nineteenth century Britain (and the church in his day), however, or of a Finney or Blanchard (a "violent abolitionist") and the church of their day, in pre-Civil War America, was very different. Thankfully these latter warriors had greater insight than to use St. Paul's assessment of the appropriate Christian response to slavery in the first century as an excuse for social quietism in their own.

a command the call to missions, evangelism and the life of full-time ministry are properly based. Not only premillennialists, but all who take their Bibles seriously will surely be doing their Father's will in this way until the King comes!

Along with the "harvest reaping," however, there are in Jesus' teaching commands which go in another – not competing but complementary – direction. Think of the parable of the sheep and the goats of Matthew 25, a parable which has as its very setting the image that the King has come: "When the Son of Man comes in his glory ...." (Matthew 25:31).<sup>21</sup> Now surely He will tell us in this parable the things we ought to have been about until He returned, and we are not disappointed; in a striking way He goes so far as to claim that these are the sorts of things that will be of decisive significance for the King's judgement. What are they? We know the answer; simply doing the Father's will on earth: feeding the hungry, giving drink to the thirsty, taking in the stranger, providing clothing, looking after the sick and visiting those in prison. All are matters of social ethics and to anyone familiar with the Great Commandment they should come as no surprise whatsoever: each is only an outworking of loving our neighbour and treating him or her *as if* they were Jesus Himself. Again, the disciple will surely be about such a business as this, and the closer the return of the King appears to be, the more zealously he or she will pursue such tasks.

The parable of the sheep and the goats also addresses the issue of the eternal worth of loving the neighbour. However things may appear to work out according to our tables of calculation, and however confident we are of our own perspicuity in the matter, *according to the King* acts of love are of eternal consequence; the dichotomy we feel so strongly between the eternal value of the "decision for Christ" over

against the fleeting value of the "cup of water" is quite foreign to Christ's teaching. Perhaps the answer to our confusion is to be found in our failure to see that a "decision for Christ" *necessarily* is a decision to become the sort of person who will offer the cup of water: viz. to become a genuine disciple.

Evidently then, both the Matthew 9 passage about the harvesters and the Matthew 25 passage about the sheep and goats represent the kind of thing that Jesus, in the Great Commission, intended to be taught to disciples. Do we still dare to play off the one against the other? It is our decision to do so. His intention was clearly quite to the contrary: both harvesting and caring and sharing are part of discipleship. How out of character with our Saviour's teaching to render them competing interests! Moreover, the harvesting in and of itself should result not only in even more harvesters, but also in more caring and sharing, at least if disciples of Jesus Christ are being harvested.

There are, of course, numerous other passages and themes which illustrate similar commands for the disciple (of the Great Commission), and thus principles of a truly Christian ethic: think of the importance of the one lost sheep, leaving the ninety-nine on the hills to search for it, and the implications of this parable for evangelism (Mt. 18:10-14); alternatively, consider the social implications of: "Love your enemies" (Mat. 5:44a), "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth" (Mt. 6:19a), "Blessed are the merciful" (Mt. 5:7), "You cannot serve both God and Money" (Mt. 6:24b), "So when you give to the needy, do not announce it with trumpets" (Mt. 6:21), and "... unless you forgive your brother from the heart" (Mt. 18:35). The picture that emerges of the disciple is one of a transformed person, a member of a New Humanity, who will both share his or her faith boldly and, in the whole network of his or her social relationships, reflect the new life that Christ has wrought.

### III

#### Conclusions

What then is the conclusion of the matter for the premillennialist and his or her ethic? Simply that insofar as we endeavour to fulfil the Great Commission, to make disciples and to be disciples, to teach His commandments and to do them, there are profound implications both for evangelism and social action. Consequently, the prophetic reading of the "signs of the times" should serve as a powerful motive to undertake the whole mission, not a reason to abandon half of it. Eschatology does not provide the substance of ethical principles and priorities, but it can provide motivation for ethical action. The knowledge that the king is

<sup>21</sup> A. The passage is evidently a fulfillment of an earlier statement of Jesus, recorded in Matthew 16:27, "For the Son of Man is going to come in his Father's glory with his angels, and then he will reward each person according to what he has done." See R.V.G. Tasker, *The Gospel According to St. Matthew* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1961), p. 237. On this reading the passage is thus: "... not a parable in the conventional sense ... [but] ... a poetic description of the way in which the prophecy of Jesus in XVI.27 will be fulfilled."

B. For an esoteric interpretation arising out of the "dispensational" school, see *The New Scofield Reference Bible* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1967), notes on Matthew 25:32. This view has the passage relating to the very specific instance of how Gentiles treat the Jews ("my brethren") during the period of the Tribulation: sheep = saved Gentiles; goats = unsaved Gentiles. Whether strained eisegesis or legitimate exegesis, this interpretation has the unfortunate consequence of severely limiting the ethical force of what Jesus is saying, in a manner quite out of keeping with the general tone of His teaching. Of course, it may be in the interests of premillennial pessimism to relegate such an obviously social ethical teaching to a narrowly defined historical moment, thus absolving us of present responsibilities!

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coming challenges us to accomplish the ethical mission He has given, not to alter it.

As premillennialists who believe in the imminence of the “coming King” we have the responsibility of teaching and doing everything that the King commanded us when He lived upon earth in the form of a Servant. Were we to do so, the critics of premillennialism may or may not be silenced, but at least there would be less ground to their accusations.

And, even if we believe the scenario of the world’s future is not a bright one, this conviction need not be translated into social paralysis. (Presumably it will not generate evangelistic paralysis!) Whether the world’s future be bright or dim, let us do as our King has commanded:

...let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven (Matthew 5:16).



## Reading 15.1

## Creeds and the Statement of Faith

Scott Russell Borderud

### An Historical Approach to the Function of Creeds

#### The New Testament

Before investigating art. 7 of the Statement of Faith, we must acknowledge that in some sense, the Statement of Faith is a creed or confession. We also must say something concerning creeds in general, and in particular the form and function of a creed in the Christian and Missionary Alliance. After all, this is the only official form which the C&MA doctrine of sanctification takes in our analysis in the next chapter.

First, let us understand the distinction between a confession and theology.<sup>1</sup> In its purest New Testament form, a confession relates to the simple testimony of belief. Our first example of this is Peter's fundamental confession of Matt.16:16, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." This is also the approach of Paul's evangelistic preaching as reflected in Rom.10:10, "For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved." He applied this personally to Timothy in I Tim.6:12, "Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called when you made your good confession in the presence of many witnesses." This most probably speaks of Timothy's confession of faith at his baptism. These are obviously short and clear expressions of belief in Christ, without the theological baggage which is today associated with creeds.

These are not the only examples of creeds in the New Testament. The outstanding example of this in Paul's letters is the so-called "Philippian hymn" of Phil. 2:6-11, the form and source of which has received much scholarly attention in the last fifty years.<sup>2</sup> This short

hymn climaxes with the blessed hope, "every knee shall bow and every tongue *confess*...that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." There also seems to be credal form in Ephesians 4:5-7, "One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all..." These statements, whether written or employed by Paul, certainly had theological content in the sense of giving meaning to the Gospel, but they were pastoral in tone, with none of the *anathemas* which marked later confessions. Perhaps Paul drew from other literature circulating during the period, but more likely he used liturgical material familiar to the churches under his care.

There was no "theologizing" here in the academic sense of detailed arguments for or against a particular doctrine, although there were times when Paul did this in his letters. Even so, theology and theologians as we know them today did not begin to make their appearance until later, nor was there the *mutual exclusiveness* among the New Testament confessions, as there was among the creeds which began to appear in the 16th century. The confessions of the New Testament were clearly seen by their writers and the early Church as mutually supporting and complementing witnesses to the Good News of Jesus Christ. For these reasons and others it is fair to suggest that the confessions which appear in the New Testament have little in common with the creeds which began to appear within several centuries of the close of the New Testament era, and especially those of the Protestant and Catholic wings of the Reformation. By the standards of the Ecumenical Councils, these terse statements simply did not *say enough* to deal with their matters in question. However, we should keep foremost in our minds when discussing creeds, the central place of the *confession of Jesus Christ as Lord* in the credal material of the New Testament. This will help us to see the developments which follow from the proper perspective, especially as we approach the unique *milieu* of 19th century American church history.

#### The Rise of Formal Creeds

The oldest, simplest, and most widely accepted creed in western Christendom is undoubtedly the Apostles' Creed. The earliest Greek text, that of Marcellus of

<sup>1</sup>\* Scott Russell Borderud, Chapter 3 of "The Doctrine of Sanctification of The Christian and Missionary Alliance as represented in its Statement of Faith of 1965-66" (a thesis completed for the degree of Doctor of Theology at the University of South Africa, 1992).

<sup>1</sup> Biblically, a confession relates to the proclamation of Jesus Christ as Lord. However, in the history of the church, creeds have really become theological positions. This is most evident in the longer confessions. See I.H. Eybers, et al (1982), p.340ff.

<sup>2</sup> In the case of Phil.2:6-11, see Donald Guthrie (1970), p.539-40.

## Section 15. Toward a Doctrinal Statement

Ancyra (336-341) translates into about 85 words in English, which by the 7th century had expanded to about 106 words in the Apostles' Creed we now recognize.<sup>3</sup> The textual additions, such as "Catholic" and "Communion of Saints" tell us that the Church in the West was already well on the road to ever-increasing precision in its beliefs. Today this creed still plays an important role in the liturgy, catechism, and theological discussions in the churches of the West. The Nicene Creed, the oldest creed in the eastern Church, dates in its initial form to the First Ecumenical Council held at Nicea in 325. Important for our discussion is the fact that this creed was born out of the Arian controversy, the subject of that Council. We find concerning Jesus Christ the phrase, "of the essence of the Father, God of God, Light of Light, very God of Very God, begotten, not made..." The creed in its original form adopted at Nicea ends with an *anathema* to the Arians. Thus, in its first major test of doctrine and unity, the church used a creed to *prescribe* the beliefs of those within it and to *proscribe* the beliefs of those outside it. The story doesn't end here: the Nicene Creed appeared with additions to "the Holy Spirit" at the Second Ecumenical Council at Constantinople in 381 to defend the divinity of the Holy Spirit, and again with the word *filioque* at Toledo in 589. This western insertion would, along with papal authority, and some other sources of conflict, bring about the division of the Greek and Latin Churches by 1054.

These councils established a precedent which would govern the function of creeds for over a millennium: to publish the results of theological discussion and agreement; to define orthodox doctrine; and to reject publicly those teachings *and groups* which differ from the majority opinion. This is not a criticism but a statement of fact. The period of the first seven Ecumenical Councils was a time in which theology as we know it today was under construction: the Church Fathers were under immense pressure to define Christian belief in an ambient of conflicting sects and influences. Despite Luther's famous remark "...I believe neither in Pope nor councils alone, as it is evident that they have often erred and contradicted themselves,"<sup>4</sup> it remains that councils did in fact give tremendous credence to doctrinal and theological positions, so much so that Luther's constant battle was not against particular theologians, but against the latter non-ecumenical councils which contradicted Scripture in their pronouncements. The continuing importance of church councils in the formation of doctrine is best proved by how quickly and how often Protestants themselves

formed councils and issued credal formulae during the century following the break with Rome.

This is an important lesson. Protestants generally follow in Luther's footsteps on the principle of *sola Scriptura*, but we also follow his practice when it comes to modern-day attacks on the divinity of Christ, the Trinity, etc., when we constantly refer back to the Ecumenical Councils as the theological lodestar of orthodoxy. This is not because councils have always represented the best in scholarship, logic, good will, or parliamentary soundness. Indeed, the smell of power politics has always been in the air. Yet councils exert a special influence on the life and belief of the Church because they do what no single theologian or preacher can do: they officially and publicly endorse doctrine on behalf of the body they represent. In this thesis it is not enough to examine Simpson's or Pardington's doctrines of sanctification. They may be often quoted and their books frequently reprinted, but they do not represent the *official position* of the C&MA. Only a council which produces a creed can do that. Even the strongest supporters of papal authority in the Roman Catholic Church know that the Pope actually operated with far less freedom in theological matters than Luther ever did because he was bound to support the precedent of Church councils.

### The Reformation Creeds

The credal statements which arose from the Reformation period were many and varied. On the Catholic side stand the Canons and Decrees of Trent (1563) and subsequent tridentine documents, which served several purposes. They unified and codified the Catholic theological and ecclesiological developments of the preceding centuries with special emphasis on the teachings of Thomas Aquinas. They made decisive efforts to curb the worst abuses and corruptions in practice which had developed during the Middle and Late-middle Ages. Most importantly for our discussion, they provided an official rebuttal to the voices of Luther, Calvin, and the other reformers, a rejection of their theology, and a stern warning to all who followed them. Each doctrinal canon was constructed with the introductory "If any man saith..." followed by a Roman doctrine placed in the negative, and concluded with "let him be anathema."

This polemic attitude is repeated in the Profession of the Tridentine Faith (1564), which ends with:

XI. I likewise undoubtingly receive and profess all other things delivered, defined, and declared by the sacred Canons and General Councils, and particularly by the holy Council of Trent; and I condemn, reject, and anathematize all things contrary thereto, and all heresies which the Church has condemned, rejected, and anathematized

<sup>3</sup> Philip Schaff (1931), p.20ff

<sup>4</sup> As quoted by Alfred Th. Jorgensen (1953), p.119.

XII. I do, at this present, freely profess and truly hold this true Catholic faith, without which no one can be saved; and I promise most constantly to retain and confess the same entire and inviolate, with God's assistance, to the end of my life. And I will take care, as far as in me lies, that it shall be held, taught, and preached by my subjects, or by those the care of whom shall appertain to me in my office. This I promise, vow, and swear--so help me God, and these holy Gospels of God.

The confession of Christian faith had indeed come a long way! It was now at the place where "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God!" was not enough; the believer must assent to *every point of teaching* to be saved. This was generally not the approach of the Protestant creeds of the period. Their constant appeal was to the sufficiency of Scripture, grace, and the finished work of Christ. This is not to say that the Protestant divines were totally free from this kind of exclusiveness. The French (Gallic) Confession of 1559 states in the introductory paragraph, "And whatever our enemies may say against us, we can declare this before God and men, that we suffer for no other reason than for maintaining our Lord Jesus Christ to be our only Saviour and Redeemer, and his doctrine to be the only doctrine of life and salvation." The "his doctrine" was of course defined by them in the sections which followed. The same is true of the Second Scotch (*sic*) Confession of Faith (1580), which states in its first paragraph:

We all...confesse with our mouthis, subscribe with our handis, and constantlie affirme before God and the hail world, That this only is the trew Christian Faith and Religion, pleasing God, and bringing salvation to man, quhilk is now, be the mercie of God, revealed to the world be the preaching of the blessed Evangell; and is received, believed, and defendit by mony and sundrie notabil kirkis and realmes, but chiefly be the Kirke of Scotland, the Kings Majestie and three Estatis of this Realme, as Godis eternall trewth, and only ground of our salvation; as mair particularlie is expressed in the Confession of our Faith...To the quhilk Confession and forme of Religion we willingly agree in our consciences in all pointis, as unto Godis undouted trewth and veritie, groundit only upon his written word.

While the major Protestant creeds did not share this narrowness of view, they held something very much in common with the documents of Trent: no longer did confessions cover the principle subjects of our belief; these confessions, including those of Augsburg, Heidelberg, Belgium, Dort, and especially Westminster were really extensive theological treatises on the whole range of Christian doctrine, so that the confessional size and nature of the earliest creeds had been entirely lost and now supplanted by mammoth theological and catechistic masterpieces. Only Luther's short Catechism and perhaps the Heidelberg Catechism were really

suitable for confessional instruction of catechumens. These other documents could better be described as doctrinal handbooks for pastoral candidates and for church government. By this time the creed had long since lost its original unifying function. It was now an instrument of division within Christianity between *us* and *them*, particularly with respect to the Council of Trent.

### The Creeds in America

While the effect of the Reformation and its consequential political events was to compartmentalize Europe into state-churches in which confessional uniformity was accepted and enforced with limited tolerance for other traditions, this system could never hold in America. While Puritans landed in Massachusetts, Baptists originally settled Providence, Rhode Island, Catholics came to Maryland, and Quakers to Pennsylvania, the *reason* for their flight to America more often than not had to do with gaining religious freedom. This attitude was reflected most especially in the *Bill of Rights*, the first ten amendments to the U.S. Constitution, where in its very first sentence it states: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercises thereof..." This open declaration goes beyond *toleration* of minority views to a position where all faiths hold an equal position before the law.

For sure, the English, French, German, Scottish, Irish, Scandinavian and other European immigrants brought with them their confessions and creeds along with their priests and ministers. However, as wave after wave of new immigrants arrived, learned English, and assimilated into the developing American culture, the creeds of the Reformation held less and less *exclusiveness*. They were a form of identification with the past and a source of permanence in a bewildering new environment, but by the mid-19th century they had become for many a burden inherited from their ancestors in the "Old World." In the diverse denominational landscape of an expanding America of the 1800's, the creed served to distinguish one church's beliefs and traditions from another, but they also forced many Americans to question the existence of so many churches under one Lord.

It was in this context of smorgasbord denominationalism that some found meaning in new religions or off-shoots of Christianity. The American Unitarian Association (1825), Latter-day Saints or Mormons (1830), Seventh-Day Adventists (1863), Christian Scientists (1876), and Jehovah's Witnesses (1879) were the outstanding examples of home-grown American religions which took root in the confusing soil of the 19th century push westward across North America.

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In this context other religious leaders saw ripe opportunities for ministry among the various churches. Thus began the great interdenominational movements of the 19th century in America: missionary, evangelistic, holiness, and prophetic. The Evangelical Alliance Mission (TEAM), one of the largest interdenominational missionary sending organizations in America, began in 1890.<sup>5</sup> As of 1979, there were some 74 missionary organizations in America operating overseas which had been founded before 1900.<sup>6</sup> Many of these were interconfessional groups. The same trend can be found in the evangelistic efforts of D.L. Moody (+1899), the rise of interdenominational holiness movements like Keswick in England (1875) with much American participation, and the cresting revival of preaching biblical prophecy under men like J.N. Darby (+1882) and C.I. Scofield (+1921). While denominational mission organizations were generally obliged to stand on the creeds of their parent churches, these interdenominational groups and movements usually had very short inclusive creeds or, in the case of Keswick or the C&MA, no creed at all. These groups saw the Church in America as horribly divided, and saw any effort to create exacting and lengthy creeds as counterproductive to the worldwide missionary task. This was clearly the case with the Alliance, whose doctrinal development we shall now examine.

### Development of Alliance Doctrine

#### The Impact of Simpson

We wish to outline briefly the historical background of the C&MA and its doctrine, with a special emphasis on the events surrounding the creation and acceptance of the *Statement of Faith*.

We must begin with a discussion of A.B. Simpson. Gerald McGraw's dissertation treating Simpson's doctrine of sanctification, covers some 650 pages of text. This was probably demanded by the sheer volume of material: the bibliography of Simpson's writing's consulted alone covers 45 pages. Elsewhere, Alliance historian John Sawin lists 101 publications written by Simpson.<sup>7</sup> Eugene Rivard credits Simpson with writing at least 181 hymns, many of which are still sung today.<sup>8</sup> No doubt, this literary and musical productivity has had a continuing effect on the identity of the Alliance. Over 55 percent of the Alliance centennial history, *All For Jesus*, deals with the 32 years in which Simpson was President. This compares to a

scant three pages for A.W. Tozer, himself a prolific writer. Also celebrating the Centennial (1987) was the scholarly *Festschrift*, *The Birth of a Vision: Essays on the Ministry and Thought of Albert B. Simpson*, previously cited. Articles and sermons written by Simpson are regularly reprinted in *Alliance Life*, the denomination's bi-weekly journal. On the official level, two of Simpson's books, *Wholly Sanctified* and *The Holy Spirit, Vol. 2*, are required reading for ordination in the C&MA.<sup>9</sup>

All of this is to say that the literature of A.B. Simpson casts a long shadow over the Alliance. The best scholar would be hard pressed to refute the idea that the theology of Simpson is identified with that of the Alliance today. Likewise, one would be challenged to find a single instance of serious theological conflict within the C&MA over Simpson's doctrine of sanctification since his death in 1919. As one traces the Alliance writers who succeeded Simpson, up to the General Councils of 1965-66, he will find no significant modification of the positions taken by Simpson, especially in the area of sanctification. For these reasons, the writings of Simpson and their analysis will hold a central place in our understanding and examination of sanctification in the Christian and Missionary Alliance. But the writings of Simpson themselves reflect upon his own personal experience of God's work in his life.

Albert Benjamin Simpson was born on 15 December 1843 in Bayview, Prince Edward Island, Canada.<sup>10</sup> He was raised in a devoutly Presbyterian home where the (Westminster) *Shorter Catechism* was regularly studied, and where the children were nurtured on the classics of Puritanism, such as Baxter's *Saints Everlasting Rest*, and Dodridge's *Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul*.<sup>11</sup> By age 14, he was committed to entering the ministry,<sup>12</sup> and it was during his days at Chatham High School, Ontario, Canada, that he experienced conversion in a manner reminiscent of Luther and Wesley. By the rather early age of 16, he had obtained the certification to teach public school, in order to earn money for college.<sup>13</sup>

At age 17, Simpson appeared before the presbytery in London, Ontario for examination, and was admitted for study at Knox College, the official school of the Canada Presbyterian Church.<sup>14</sup> He was graduated

<sup>5</sup> Samuel Wilson (1979), p.265.

<sup>6</sup> *ibid.*, p.53.

<sup>7</sup> Hartzfeld and Nienkirchen (1986), p.279ff.

<sup>8</sup> Appendix to "Rediscovering the Music of A.B. Simpson" in Hartzfeld and Nienkirchen, *op cit.*, p.100-105.

<sup>9</sup> Christian and Missionary Alliance, "Reading List for Ordination" (Revised, 9/88).

<sup>10</sup> A.E. Thompson (1960), p.3.

<sup>11</sup> *ibid.*, p.9.

<sup>12</sup> *ibid.*, p.14.

<sup>13</sup> *ibid.*, p.18.

<sup>14</sup> *ibid.*, p.27f.

at age 21, and within several months was installed as pastor of Knox (Presbyterian) Church in Hamilton, Ontario. He remained there until 1873. During those nine years, at least 750 members were added to fellowship and the financial situation was greatly improved. Shortly before his departure from Hamilton, he attended as a delegate from Canada what was to be the first of many interdenominational conventions, the 1873 Evangelical Alliance Conference in New York.<sup>15</sup>

The second incident of theological concern (...the first being his conversion) came during his second pastorate, Chestnut Street Presbyterian Church in Louisville, Kentucky, U.S.A. Despite his earlier successes in seminary and at Knox Church, he was without inner peace. He was frustrated by his own intense nature, his physical weakness, and frequent depressions. Added to the inner difficulties were the challenges of ministering in a community where the American Civil War had left an aftermath of bitterness.<sup>16</sup> In the midst of this struggle, he came upon W.E. Boardman's *The Higher Christian Life*.<sup>17</sup> This book spoke directly to Simpson's condition and brought him to a new peace and light. He saw Jesus Christ as his sanctifier *in the present*. Simpson himself relates his profound impressions upon reading this book:

He who had justified us was waiting to sanctify us, to enter into our spirit and substitute His strength, His holiness, His joy, His love, His faith, His power, for all our worthlessness, helplessness, and nothingness, and make it an actual living fact.<sup>18</sup>

A.E. Thompson, Simpson's contemporary and official biographer, in a chapter dealing with this period in Simpson's life entitled "The Life Crisis," quotes Simpson:

We also believe, and this is the emphatic point in our testimony, that this experience of Christ our Sanctifier marks a definite and distinct crisis in the history of a soul. We do not grow into it, but we cross a definite line of demarcation as clear as when the hosts of Joshua crossed the Jordan and were over in the promised land and set up a great heap of stones so that they never could forget that crisis hour.<sup>19</sup>

Although McGraw discusses at length the question of whether or not this "crisis" actually occurred in Louisville,<sup>20</sup> the C&MA has consistently identified this experience as the "secret" of Simpson's power and success in future endeavors. *All For Jesus*, which

replaced Thompson's *Life of A.B. Simpson* on the C&MA ordination reading list, reaffirms Thompson when it states:

During the next forty-plus years of ministry, Simpson would repeatedly refer back to that moment of surrender to Christ as his Sanctifier, the One who alone could make him holy. It was the decisive turning point of his ministry in much the same way as the Apostle Paul looked back upon his conversion experience on the road to Damascus.<sup>21</sup>

This "crisis experience" was to be followed by a period of growing productivity in Simpson's ministry in Louisville. In early 1875, he began a series of revival meetings with the cooperation of other churches in the city. The results of this campaign included the removal of much of the post-war bitterness between churches, the changing of many lives, and the emergence of Simpson as a preacher/evangelist of regional appeal.<sup>22</sup> After six years at Louisville, Simpson accepted the call to pastor New York's 13th Street Presbyterian Church in 1879.

The success which Simpson experienced in his New York City pastorate proved to be the death of his ministry in the Presbyterian Church and the birth of the Alliance. The respectable 13th Street Church was hardly able to contain the energy and vision of Simpson. Beyond eloquent preaching and extensive pastoral visitation, Simpson began a ministry to Italian immigrants and started a missionary periodical, *The Gospel in All Lands*. It was also during this short pastorate that the physical demands of ministry brought about a third crisis in Simpson's life, this time as he took Jesus Christ as his *healer*. During a family vacation in the summer of 1881, Simpson attended a series of healing services held at Old Orchard, Maine, by a Dr. Cullis of Boston, Massachusetts. During those meetings, Simpson responded:

He went into the pines of Old Orchard, raised his right hand to heaven and made "three great and eternal pledges"; He accepted without questioning that divine healing was part of the Gospel of Christ; he took without doubting the Lord Jesus for his healing and health; he promised without fail to use this blessing to the glory of God and for the good of others.<sup>23</sup>

We quote this, not because we wish to deal with the question of healing, but because it is further evidence of a pattern in the development of Alliance doctrine: with the single exception of eschatology (Christ as "Coming King"), the distinctives or *emphases* in Alliance doctrine and practice parallel the distinct

<sup>15</sup> *ibid.*, p.51.

<sup>16</sup> Gerald E. McGraw (1986), p.68, footnote 66.

<sup>17</sup> *ibid.*, p.147ff.

<sup>18</sup> A.B. Simpson as quoted in Robert L. Niklaus, et al. (1986), p.7.

<sup>19</sup> A.E. Thompson, *op cit.*, p.67.

<sup>20</sup> Gerald McGraw, *op cit.*, p.149-204.

<sup>21</sup> R.L. Niklaus, *op cit.*, p.7-8.

<sup>22</sup> *ibid.*, p.11-12.

<sup>23</sup> *ibid.*, p.41. For a detailed discussion of his theology of healing, also see David M. Pett (1989), p.23-33. and John Wilkinson (1991), p.149-67.

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*crises* in the life of its founder, A.B. Simpson. His salvation experience, his sanctification experience, and his healing experience are all manifested in his preaching, writing, and hymnody, which in turn constitute three central teachings concerning Jesus Christ in *The Fourfold Gospel*. If Simpson preached only what he personally experienced (...he is quoted somewhere to that effect), then the obverse is also true: if he did not experience it, he would not preach it. This is certainly the case with the gift of tongues. Simpson did not preach, as did others, that the experience of speaking in tongues was the privilege of every believer. This was because Simpson had never personally spoken in tongues, though he sought the experience earnestly for some time.<sup>24</sup> Had he done so, we would most certainly have had a Pentecostal Simpson and a Pentecostal Alliance.

We must mention in the context of Simpson's life, the contribution of one of his closest friends and co-workers. George Pardington (+1915) produced *Outline Studies in Christian Doctrine*, a theological handbook which remains even today the reference for ordination exams. Pardington taught at the Missionary Training Institute in Nyack (1897-1915), and was considered by Simpson to be the man who most completely understood the Alliance teachings.<sup>25</sup> He also wrote *Crisis of the Deeper Life* (1906), which was recently reprinted and to which we shall refer later. As the title implies, it supports the experience and teaching of Simpson.

### The Years Between: 1919-1965

The death of Pardington and then Simpson was followed by a succession of five Alliance presidents, all of whom were committed to the doctrines formulated by Simpson, but none of whom were as prolific in writing or original in theological thinking. Paul Rader (1917-24) was a prominent evangelist, Frederic Senft (1924-54) was an excellent preacher and administrator, as was Harry Turner (1954-60). Nathan Bailey (1960-78) was both preacher and first-class parliamentarian. Their most significant contributions were not in doctrine or hymnody, but in giving leadership to an expanding missionary society on the road to becoming a denomination.

The death of Pardington and Simpson was followed by a theological drought in the C&MA which would last until the rise of A.W. Tozer (+1963) as editor of the *Alliance Witness* in 1950 and V. Raymond Edman (+1967), president of Wheaton College and editor of the *Alliance Witness* during the 1965-66 formulation of the

*Statement of Faith*. While neither of these men were theologians in the ordinary sense, their devotional books and editorials fairly represented the official understanding of Alliance doctrine as handed-down from its founder. Again, we shall refer to both of them in our exposition of the C&MA doctrine of sanctification in the next chapter.

### The 1906 Conference on Doctrine

The variety of denominational backgrounds represented in the early years of the C&MA, as well as its status as an interdenominational "society" really prevented a formulation of creed until necessity demanded it. This interdenominationalism was so strong and so pervasive in the Alliance that many would question the need for a doctrinal statement applicable to the entire denomination, right up to the point of its adoption in 1965. But the growth of the Alliance, along with the various theological conflicts in 20th century American Christianity called for clear articulation of doctrinal positions. This first occurred during Simpson's tenure as president of the C&MA, with the "Conference for Prayer and Counsel Respecting Uniformity in the Testimony and Teaching of the Alliance, May 25-28, 1906" (see Reading 15.2). Although this meeting of official workers of the Alliance occupies brief space in the centennial history,<sup>26</sup> its results represent the point at which the distinctive C&MA doctrine of sanctification became *formally adopted* through the debate and agreement of a council. This conference apparently did not discuss the recent development of Pentecostalism,<sup>27</sup> but instead concentrated on sanctification and the doctrines of eradicationism and suppressionism, which had made inroads into the Alliance movement. A committee of five, appointed by the Board of Managers, prepared a document which was then sent to all Alliance workers. A.B. Simpson was a member of the committee.<sup>28</sup> The document proposed certain topics for open discussion: church government; the subjects and mode of baptism; Calvinism and Arminianism; and practices such as foot-washing. Important for us is the fact that this paper did not make the central features of the Alliance doctrine of sanctification a matter of debate. Under par.II, "Our Distinctive Testimony," the Alliance teaching was stated, beginning with "1. Christ, our Savior" and then:

2. Christ, our Sanctifier, assuming the following essential points:

a. A definite second blessing, distinct in nature.

<sup>24</sup> For a detailed discussion of Simpson's struggle to experience the gift of tongues, see C. Nienkirchen, "Albert B. Simpson: Forerunner and Critic of the Pentecostal Movement" in Hartzfeld and Nienkirchen, op cit., p. 125f.

<sup>25</sup> See Simpson's posthumous introduction in Pardington (1926).

<sup>26</sup> Niklaus, op cit., p.110-11.

<sup>27</sup> *ibid*.

<sup>28</sup> R. Gilbertson (1988), p.42ff

though not necessarily far removed in time, from the experience of conversion;

- b. The Baptism of the Holy Spirit as a distinct experience not merely for power for service, but for the personal holiness and victory over the world and sin;
- c. The indwelling of Christ in the heart of the consecrated believer as a distinct experience;
- d. Sanctification by faith as a distinct gift of God's grace to every open and surrendered soul;
- e. Growth in grace and the deeper filling of the Holy Spirit as distinct from and the result of the definite experience of sanctification.

It is understood that all our Alliance officers and teachers are at liberty to present the truth of sanctification in such phrases as his own convictions warrant, in general accordance with the above specifications, but with the understanding that such extremes as are sometimes taught under the name of "eradication" or "suppression" shall not be presented in an aggressive or controversial spirit toward those who differ.<sup>29</sup>

R.P. Gilbertson, in a recent dissertation on Simpson, considers this section to be the hermeneutical key to understanding his doctrine of the baptism of the Holy Spirit.<sup>30</sup> Unfortunate for us is the fact that no minutes or papers of this conference are extant. We cannot tell what opposing or modifying opinions were voiced, or even what aspects of this statement produced the greatest discussion. However, an Alliance periodical published soon after the conference stated joyfully:

The spirit of the conference has been exceptional. Some of the questions before it were anticipated with some apprehension, especially those relating to the varied components of the doctrine of sanctification. But the great Teacher has guided us into the truth with singular unity of spirit and judgment.<sup>31</sup>

This would seem to indicate that the position of Simpson and the other committee members on *Alliance distinctives* was well supported by the constituency, and

<sup>29</sup> *ibid.*, Appendix 2, p. 259ff.

<sup>30</sup> *ibid.*, p.38f. Gilbertson's thesis is: This document may best depict the general outline of the distinctives of the early C&MA movement. Moreover, it provides a means of overcoming the difficulties faced in study of Simpson's work: 1) With this guide, the enormous volume of Simpson's material can be more easily sifted through by providing a framework for analysis; 2) The use of this guide provides an analytical structure which flows from within the material; 3) The statements in the 1906 document are also helpful in understanding the genre of Simpson's writing, since the phrases and relationships between various doctrines are formally laid out for the reader. This document therefore greatly assists in unpacking his affirmations in sermons and periodicals. (p.38-39) After this writer's review of the available material, we must congratulate him on extremely clear insight into the problem of and solution to understanding Simpson's doctrine of sanctification.

<sup>31</sup> *ibid.*, p.43.

that this in fact represents an early credal statement on sanctification. We shall explore the meaning of this teaching in chapter IV.

### The 1928 Doctrinal Statement

The next development toward the adoption of a creed came in 1928. The first forty years of the C&MA had witnessed the founding of at least nine Alliance Bible Institutes and schools in the U.S. and Canada, some under control of local districts.<sup>32</sup> General Council in 1928 directed the Board of Managers to reduce and reorganize the higher education program. The result was the immediate closure of four Alliance-wide schools,<sup>33</sup> and important for us, the adoption by the remaining schools in Nyack, St. Paul, and Toccoa Falls, of a common doctrinal statement, known as the Doctrinal Statement of 1928 (see Reading 15.3).

The 1928 doctrinal statement, an important document used in preparation of the later statement, was used in all Alliance Bible Schools and had to be signed annually by each of the teaching staffs. Framers of the statement simply took the nine articles of the Christian Fundamentals Association and attached to them the distinctive Alliance testimony embodied in the Fourfold Gospel.<sup>34</sup>

While other "doctrinal statements" were employed by various agencies or organizations within the Alliance, the 1928 statement was the only *official* credal statement accepted by General Council and listed in the C&MA *Manual* from 1929 until the General Councils of 1965-66. However, this was only official in the sense that it had jurisdiction over schools; neither the local churches nor the Alliance as a whole had a common creed. Paragraph 9 of the *Doctrinal Statement* concerns sanctification:

It is the will of God that each believer should be filled with the Holy Spirit and thus be sanctified wholly, being separated from sin and the world and fully consecrated to the will of God, thereby receiving power for holy living and effective service. This is recognized as an experience wrought in the life subsequent to conversion.<sup>35</sup>

The differences between this paragraph and its corresponding article in the *Statement* of 1965-66 (see Reading 15.4) as quoted in the Introduction are cosmetic with the exception of the final clause, where the latter document clarifies the sanctification experience with the words, "crisis and progressive." Thus, the *Doctrinal Statement*, written only 9 years after the death of

<sup>32</sup> Niklaus, *op cit.*, p.150,174.

<sup>33</sup> *ibid.*, p. 174.

<sup>34</sup> R.L. Niklaus, *op cit.*, p.229.

<sup>35</sup> Christian and Missionary Alliance, *Manual of the Christian and Missionary Alliance* (1964), p.157.

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Simpson, represents a direct and principally unaltered connexion between the theology of A.B. Simpson and the theology of the C&MA ratified by General Councils in 1965-66. The official history admits as much when it states: "Rather than a formulation of new theological positions hammered out by intense debate and exhaustive research, it represents a summary of beliefs long held."<sup>36</sup>

### The General Councils of 1965-66

#### Preliminary Events: 1960-64

While the Bible Schools of the Alliance were raising up several generations of pastors and missionaries under the 1928 *Doctrinal Statement*, the C&MA had no practical need to adopt a *denominational* Statement of Faith which applied to Alliance congregations; the Bible schools were insuring theological unity and consistency at the "front door." This situation would change, however, with certain ecclesiastical developments. By 1960, the Missionary Church Association, headquartered in Fort Wayne, Indiana, U.S.A., had entered into negotiations to merge with the C&MA. The Missionary Church Association brought to the discussions a rather detailed doctrinal statement of their own, while the C&MA had none. In the same year, president Nathan Bailey reported to General Council "the lack of clarity in doctrinal teaching and experience."<sup>37</sup> These two factors forced the C&MA to consider the writing of a denominationally-applicable creed for the first time. At the 1962 General Council in Miami, Florida, a proposed constitution for the merger of the C&MA and Missionary Church Association was submitted for discussion which included "Articles of Faith." The article treating sanctification was decidedly longer and more *restricted in meaning* than the 1928 statement, possibly reflecting the influence of dialogue with the Missionary Church Association:

Sanctification is the work of God whereby the believer is set free from the law of sin, filled with the Holy Spirit and enabled to live a life of holiness. The conditions for being thus filled are death to the self-life, entire surrender, complete dedication, and appropriating faith. When the Spirit fills the believer, He imparts power for holy living and effective service. This is an experience wrought in the life subsequent to conversion, resulting in an obedient walk, a growth in Christlikeness, and a manifestation of the fruit of the Spirit.<sup>38</sup>

While the merger was approved by Alliance delegates at Miami, the Missionary Church Association

voted down the merger by a narrow 42-vote margin (of 5,170 votes cast) in January of 1963.<sup>39</sup> The proposed constitution was scrapped, but the discussion of a new doctrinal statement continued through the 1964 General Council in Columbus, Ohio, where a modification of the above article was submitted for discussion and review by the Board of Managers (the executive body of the C&MA), who had adopted it during their September 1963 meeting:

Sanctification is that experience wherein the believer is wholly separated unto God, enabled to live a life of holiness and render effective service through the infilling of the Holy Spirit. The conditions for being filled with the Holy Spirit are death to self-life and entire surrender in complete dedication to God. This is an experience wrought in the life subsequent to conversion and is followed by a consistent walk, growth in Grace, and manifestation of the fruit of the Spirit.<sup>40</sup>

Although this version was shorter than that proposed in 1962, it was still longer than the doctrinal statement for Bible schools which appeared first in 1928. General Council solicited comments from the Alliance, with a deadline of 1 November 1964, which would allow time for the Board of Managers to review comments and return to General Council the following year with a final draft.

The Board of Managers met in December 1964, and received a "Report of Special Committee on DOCTRINAL STATEMENT." This committee of five consisted of three members appointed by the Board of Managers in April 1963 (who submitted the above article to the Board of Managers at the September 1963 meeting)<sup>41</sup> and two selected personally by president Nathan Bailey at the May 1964 Board Meeting.<sup>42</sup> Those appointed were: Gilbert H. Johnson, first full-time Education Secretary for the C&MA and faculty member at Nyack; Harold Boon, Nyack Missionary College president; and Robert W. Battles, long-time pastor and General Secretary of the Alliance. Those selected by the president were: Samuel Stoesz, who wrote several books on Alliance history and doctrine for Sunday School use, now professor at Canadian Bible College (C&MA) in Regina, Saskatchewan, contributor to the Alliance Centennial history, *All For Jesus*,<sup>43</sup> and author of the recent *Sanctification: An Alliance*

<sup>39</sup> Christian and Missionary Alliance, Minutes of General Council 1963, p. 212

<sup>40</sup> Christian and Missionary Alliance, Minutes of General Council 1964, p.243.

<sup>41</sup> Christian and Missionary Alliance, Minutes of Board of Managers 9:63, bound volume p.228.

<sup>42</sup> Christian and Missionary Alliance, Minutes of Board of Managers 5/64, bound volume p.174.

<sup>43</sup> Hartzfeld & Nienkirchen (1986).

<sup>36</sup> R.L. Niklaus, op cit., p.229.

<sup>37</sup> Christian and Missionary Alliance, Minutes of General Council 1960, p.224-25.

<sup>38</sup> Christian and Missionary Alliance, Minutes of General Council 1962, p.265.



*Distinctive*;<sup>44</sup> and Jack Shepherd, founder of Jaffray School of Missions (1960), which was to become Alliance Theological Seminary in the late 1970's.

The addition of Stoesz and Shepherd to the special committee appears to have had a significant effect on its results. In the preamble to their report of December 1964, the committee reversed the trend which had developed through General Councils of 1962 and 1964, which had been to construct lengthy, exacting, finely-tuned credal statements. After a careful review of all correspondence and the doctrinal statements and references found in the 1964 *Manual of the Christian and Missionary Alliance*, they concluded that:

...The need of the Society would best be served by perfecting the Doctrinal Statement on page 157 ff. of the 1964 Manual and presently subscribed to by the faculties of our Alliance colleges. An endeavor was made in the preparation of this statement to adhere consistently to the spirit and intent of official statements and those affirmations of truth which have been published and have received official endorsement in the history of the Society. Furthermore, the committee sought to keep the wording of the original statements as far as possible.<sup>45</sup>

Indeed, this conservative approach yielded a statement on sanctification differing only slightly from its ancestor of 1928. Words in parentheses were removed or modified. Words in italics were new insertions:

It is the will of God that each believer should be filled with the Holy Spirit and (thus) be sanctified wholly, being separated from sin and the world and fully *dedicated* (consecrated) to the will of God, thereby receiving power for holy living and effective service. This is recognized as an experience wrought in the life subsequent to conversion.<sup>46</sup>

The report was adopted by the Board of Managers without amendment to the article on sanctification. A copy of this doctrinal statement was sent to all official workers of the Alliance during January 1965. Of the 32 letters received, ten gave approval to the entire statement, the remaining offering changes to individual articles, including Article 7 (sanctification).<sup>47</sup> The comments on sentence 2 convinced the Special Committee to recommend its deletion. The committee was troubled by "This is recognized", which they did not consider to be "the language of creed." They also saw redundancy in the

term "subsequent to conversion" because conversion is already implied in the use of "believer" in sentence 1.<sup>48</sup> Finally, they remarked:

The second sentence might restrict all that is said in the first sentence by limiting the scope and meaning of the statement in relation to the process of maturity and growth in the Christian life.<sup>49</sup>

At the April 1965 meeting of the Board of Managers, the motion was made to delete the second sentence. A voice vote was mixed, and the chairman called for a parliamentary division of the house. Before a roll-call vote could be taken, the motion was withdrawn. A subsequent motion was made to delete "recognized as" from the article. It passed. After discussion of other matters, the revised statement was adopted as amended and referred to General Council 1965,<sup>50</sup> held in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

#### General Council: 1965

General Council in Minneapolis was held from 12 to 17 May 1965. On the afternoon of 14 May, the doctrinal statement adopted by the Board of Managers in April was read to the delegates, paragraph by paragraph. At first reading, no amendments were offered to paragraph 7 (sanctification), but after the entire statement was considered, a motion to delete the second sentence was made from Council floor. The motion was lost by voice vote.<sup>51</sup>

Discussion continued on Council floor again on Saturday afternoon, 13 May. A motion was made to delete "an experience" from the second sentence, which would make it read: "This is wrought in the life subsequent to conversion." A parliamentary division of the house resulted in the motion to amend carrying by a 66 vote margin of over 800 votes cast.<sup>52</sup> In the heated discussion which followed, a subsequent motion was made to add "a crisis and a progressive experience" and "of the believer" to the last sentence. The motion passed by voice vote.<sup>53</sup> After discussion of other articles, a parliamentary call for prior question (adoption of the *Statement of Faith* as amended) prevailed and a motion was made and carried to adopt the *Statement of Faith*.<sup>54</sup> This adopted document was then subject to ratification, as stipulated in the C&MA Constitution, at

<sup>44</sup> (1992).

<sup>45</sup> "Report of Special Committee on DOCTRINAL STATEMENT" in *Christian and Missionary Alliance*, Minutes of Board of Managers 12/64, bound volume p.333.

<sup>46</sup> *ibid.*, bound volume p.334.

<sup>47</sup> *Christian and Missionary Alliance*, Minutes of Board of Managers 4/65, bound volume p.15.

<sup>48</sup> *ibid.*, bound volume p.16.

<sup>49</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>50</sup> *ibid.*, p.3 and bound volume p.18.

<sup>51</sup> *Christian and Missionary Alliance*, Minutes of General Council 1965, p.208.

<sup>52</sup> *ibid.*, p.211 and 216.

<sup>53</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>54</sup> *ibid.*

## Section 15. Toward a Doctrinal Statement

the next year's General Council, to be held in Vancouver, British Columbia, 11 to 16 May 1966.

### General Council: 1966

On Friday, 13 May 1966, discussion of the *Statement of Faith* began with a motion to confine deliberations to the question of including it in the C&MA Constitution. The motion carried. A second motion, to vote on ratification by secret ballot, was lost. After a call to consider the previous question (of ratification) passed, the vote to ratify was lost.<sup>55</sup> It would appear that this failure to obtain a majority vote and the lack of necessity of the Council to call for a division of the house, would indicate serious trouble ahead for the new creed. Indeed, there were some on Council floor who felt that a doctrinal statement could be done without. Anita Bailey wrote in the *Alliance Witness* concerning this disappointing showdown vote: "An elaborate *Statement of Faith* would be a departure from the traditional simplicity of the organizational structure of the Alliance."<sup>56</sup>

This remark reflects a problem which plagued the 1966 Council discussion. Whereas in 1965, the central issue was one of doctrinal truth, the 1966 Council discussions focused on the *role* this new statement would fill in the C&MA. There is not one mention in the official records of the Vancouver meetings of any dispute over the doctrinal content or wording of the *Statement of Faith* adopted the year earlier. The real issue was whether this new statement would be ratified *as an amendment to the Constitution and condition of membership in Alliance Churches*.

Thus, a motion was made to return to the short statement found in the 1965 edition of the *Manual of the Christian and Missionary Alliance*:

The condition of membership shall be satisfactory evidence of regeneration, belief in God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit; in the verbal inspiration of the Holy Scriptures as originally given; in the vicarious atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ; in the eternal salvation of all who believe in Him and in the eternal punishment of all who reject Him; recognition of the truths of the Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour, Sanctifier, Healer and Coming King, as taught by the Christian and Missionary Alliance...*The Fourfold Gospel*; full sympathy with the Society's principles and objects, and cooperation by contributing to its work.<sup>57</sup> (italicized words added)

The motion was referred to the Committee on President's Report and General Legislation for deliberation. The committee was unwilling to back

down: They returned the resolution to Council floor with the recommendation that the shorter statement not be adopted as a substitute. The committee recommendation was adopted. The committee also recommended to Council that

the Board of Managers replace all existing statements of faith in all departments, except those in constitutions adopted by Council, by the *Statement of Faith* adopted in 1965.<sup>58</sup>

The recommendation was adopted by voice vote. Thus, the committee had avoided the touchy problem of including the now ratified *Statement of Faith* in the C&MA Constitution, but still managed to get a majority of General Council to approve of it. Strictly speaking, the proposal in 1965 to include the new *Statement of Faith* in the Constitution, was not upheld (ratified) by Council of 1966. However, Anita Bailey spoke for the majority when she wrote concerning this parliamentary maneuver:

The Statement of Faith adopted in 1965 does stand, however, as the position of the Alliance on such matters, and for the sake of uniformity it was voted to insert it in all subsidiary documents of the society in lieu of present statements.<sup>59</sup>

Thus, the *Statement of Faith* adopted at Minneapolis one year earlier was not the official creed of the Alliance. In retrospect, the six years of committee work and discussion at both the executive (Board of Managers) level and legislative (General Council) level yielded little fresh fruit; the *Statement of Faith* of 1965-66 differed little from its predecessor, the *Doctrinal Statement* of 1928 for Bible Schools of the C&MA. Changes are noted below. Again, words in parentheses were removed or modified and words in italics were new insertions:

It is the will of God that each believer should be filled with the Holy Spirit and (thus) be sanctified wholly, being separated from sin and the world and fully *dedicated* (consecrated) to the will of God, thereby receiving power for holy living and effective service. This is (recognized as an) *both a crisis and a progressive experience* wrought in the life of the *believer* subsequent to conversion.

The C&MA does not distinguish between dedication and consecration in its sanctification literature. Also, the insertion of "of the believer" in the second sentence is probably unnecessary in view of the applicability implied in the words "subsequent to conversion" which follow. Therefore, the only significant change relates to the insertion of the words "crisis and progressive". In view of the relative ease

<sup>55</sup> Christian and Missionary Alliance, Minutes of General Council 1966, p.206.

<sup>56</sup> "Vancouver Highlights", Alliance Witness (6/22/66), p.8.

<sup>57</sup> p.6.

<sup>58</sup> Christian and Missionary Alliance, minutes of General Council 1966, p.238.

<sup>59</sup> "Vancouver Highlights", op cit.

with which General Council 1965 passed the motion adding this phrase (without a division of the house), and the subsequent silence at Minneapolis, we should conclude that its inclusion represents a clarification on the part of General Council, of what the Alliance means when it uses the term “sanctification *experience*”. Again the C&MA literature of Simpson and his successors strongly supports this insertion....

## The Role of a Creed in the C&MA

### The Origin of the Creed

Our earlier discussion told us several important things about the C&MA *Statement of Faith*. We found that with full respect for the committee work which preceded the General Council of 1965, this creed was not essentially different (particularly in art. 7) from its predecessor, the 1928 doctrinal statement for Alliance schools. This statement in turn was found to be an Alliance adaptation of a fundamentalist creed, to which the articles dealing with the C&MA distinctives of healing and sanctification were inserted.

We also observed that the Alliance was never doctrinally oriented in the sense of beginning with a well defined set of beliefs. The C&MA was not the product of a preacher-theologian like Calvin or even an evangelist-theologian like John Wesley. It was the result of a pastor-turned-missionary statesman whose arrival in the spotlight was during a period not of polemics, but of refreshing ecumenical cooperation in evangelism and world missions. Simpson never perceived theological orthodoxy to be a major problem of the Church in 19th century America... The focus of the Alliance from its earliest days was upon the development of the deeper Christian life and the aggressive execution of the world-wide missionary mandate of the Church. Simpson saw the Church as unable to reach the world for Christ because believers were living shallow, defeated lives.

The need for a denominationally applicable *Statement of Faith* was not apparent until the early 1960's, when discussions of merger with the Missionary Church Association demanded a doctrinal identity, and when all of the other institutional features of a denominational church body had already begun to coalesce. Even then the C&MA retained a strong interdenominational orientation through its involvement in the NAE and other Evangelical enterprises.

Most important for our discussion was the realization that certain features of the doctrinal statement reflected the personal experiences of the founder of the C&MA, Dr. A.B. Simpson, especially with respect to the crisis experience of sanctification and healing. This historical connexion cannot be gainsaid. This personal experience left an indelible impression,

not only upon the life and ministry of Simpson himself, but also upon the organization which was his legacy: the Christian and Missionary Alliance. We are not far off the mark in suggesting that the C&MA is the institutionalization of Simpson's ministry, and that art. 7 of the *Statement of Faith* is the codification of Simpson's experience of sanctification.

As we said earlier, to a greater or lesser extent the C&MA was a pioneer or participant in each of the movements within the 19th century evangelical ecumenism. As a “movement” or a “society” (two terms which continue to appear in C&MA literature), the *Alliance* sought, as implied in the name, to *unify* Christians of diverse denominations under the banners of the fullness of Christ and the Great Commission. There was also the feeling among some in the Alliance that (systematic) theology had nothing to do with the practical aspects of the Christian life.<sup>60</sup> This is still a problem in Evangelical and especially Pentecostal churches today. For these reasons there was no official creed from the founding of the Alliance in 1887 up until 1965, and even then there was some resistance to adopting one. As Dr. M.E. Vance once remarked: “Our hymnal was our *Statement of Faith*.”<sup>61</sup> This also explains why the NAE creed is so short: any attempt to be theologically explicit would defeat its unifying purpose among a host of Evangelical church bodies of very diverse traditions.

### The Statement of Faith Today

Once adopted, the creed of 1965-66 began to serve two central functions in the Alliance. The first was internal and regulatory. The C&MA now had one standard for all of its higher education institutions, churches, agencies, and especially for the licensing of its official workers and ordaining of its preachers. The second was external and explanatory. In a small, young and relatively unknown denomination which grew

<sup>60</sup> This attitude was reflected in a letter to this writer from John Sawin, Alliance historian, dated 15 April 1987: “systematic theologians of the reformed mold, i.e. B.B. Warfield, have little sympathy with the holiness viewpoints, i.e. Wiley and Miley. You can safely assume the two views are mutually exclusive...Systematic theologians, for all their value, have not shown much interest personally in this area. This statement is not intended to be a negative critique of them, but simply a statement of fact. B.B. Warfield was merciless on A.B. Simpson, et al. Which was hardly required. Deeper/higher Christian life meant to A.B. Simpson the only route to world wide evangelism and bringing back the King. In his day the average Christian, not liberal in theology, was doing virtually nothing in missionary outreach. Commitment, dedication, the filling of the Spirit, sanctification, whatever the phrase, it was this experience that fired up otherwise docile, complacent Christians. The greatest significance of sanctification is not in the area of systematic theology, but practical life and outreach.”

<sup>61</sup> Personal remark made to author on several occasions during 1987-88 in our discussions of sanctification in the Alliance.

## Section 15. Toward a Doctrinal Statement

through evangelism and missionary work, it was and is important for outsiders to understand that the Alliance works within the theological framework of the historic Church. Baptists, Presbyterians, Lutherans, and Methodists generally do not need to explain themselves. The Alliance does. The *Statement of Faith* serves to tell visitors to C&MA churches and unchurched people in a community that the C&MA is a legitimate Church denomination with Christian beliefs. This function is critical for a denomination which doubled its constituency in the period 1978-87 and continues to be one of the fastest growing Protestant denominations in America. The people added during this continuing period of growth have not generally come through the biological reproduction of existing adult members, but from the evangelism of those unaffiliated with any denomination and also from those leaving other churches. While this latter type of growth has never been the Alliance plan, the C&MA has been, along with many other evangelical denominations, benefactor of a massive walkout from large mainline denominations during the 1970's and 1980's by Christians looking for a more biblical (N.B. conservative) expression of their faith.

Absent from this internal-external purpose are the traditional catechistic and liturgical functions. The *Statement of Faith* is not the basis for Christian Education or Sunday school material in the Alliance, although from time to time there have been calls to develop a catechism for new believers and children in C&MA churches. In its now 27 year history the *Statement of Faith* has not been recited aloud in unison in C&MA churches on an even irregular basis. Of course, it was never constructed for such use. Thus it has neither the tradition role of the Apostles' or Nicene Creeds in the worship of some Alliance churches, nor the place of the Westminster and Heidelberg Catechisms in the life of Presbyterian/Reformed

churches. Because of the historic interdenominational roots of the Alliance and its simple forms of corporate worship, we doubt that the *Statement of Faith*, or any succeeding creed will ever attain such a confessional status in the C&MA.

These facts notwithstanding, the *Statement of Faith*, is an important document because it provides outsiders an indication of what the C&MA believes, and it tells church members (and especially official workers) what they *must believe* to remain in good standing. For these reasons alone we should take seriously the words and meaning of the creed. We would hope that it expresses faithfully the traditional understanding which the Alliance has of sanctification. Most importantly we should expect that the creed provide a credible witness to the message of Scripture. This is especially true in a denomination in which the Old and New Testaments "constitute the divine and only rule of Christian faith and practice" (art. 4, *Statement of Faith*). In this connexion especially, Philip Schaff reminds us of "The Authority of Creeds":

The value of creeds depends upon the measure of their agreement with the Scriptures. In the best case a human creed is only an approximate and relatively correct exposition of revealed truth, and may be improved by the progressive knowledge of the Church, while the Bible remains perfect and infallible. The Bible is of God; the Confession is man's answer to God's word.<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> Philip Schaff (1931), Introduction.

Reading 15.2

## Conference for Prayer and Counsel

Respecting Uniformity in the Testimony and Teaching of the Alliance  
May 25-28, 1906

The Committee appointed by the Board to prepare a plan for a conference on the matters above stated, recommend that such a conference be held immediately before the annual Council at Nyack in the beginning of June and that as many as possible of our Alliance workers throughout the country be invited and urged to attend.

The importance of Unity upon a common basis of testimony and teaching is becoming more and more urgent and the need of prayer for the great objects which we hold in common is emphasized at this time as never before. In connection with this conference the following plan is suggested:

1. That it shall be held for at least three days and that at least one hour each session shall be given to prayer and the rest of the time to conference respecting our Alliance testimony and teaching.
2. That the various subjects covered by this report be introduced by a short paper not exceeding fifteen minutes and followed by five or ten minute addresses by the members of the conference.
3. That a Committee be appointed by the conference for the purpose of carefully following the various discussions and drawing up a brief paper to be submitted to a subsequent meeting and adopted as the sense of the conference upon the matter in question.
4. That specific subjects be taken up at the various meetings of the Council for prayer and made the subject of earnest, united, believing intercession.
5. The following outline of subjects to be discussed is respectfully submitted as a basis for the deliberations of the proposed conference:

### I. Open Questions

That the conference recognize certain matters of teaching and testimony as not with the direct province of the Alliance, but open questions about which our brethren agree to differ and hold in mutual charity their individual convictions according to their various denominational connections and previous teachings. These open questions include:

1. Church government

2. the subjects and modes of baptism
3. the doctrines known as Calvinism and Arminianism
4. Various ceremonies and practices such as feet washing, etc.

### II. Our Distinctive Testimony

1. Christ, our Saviour, always assuming that we stand unequivocally upon the Deity of Christ, His vicarious sacrifice and the necessity of regeneration through the power of the Holy Spirit.
2. Christ, our Sanctifier, assuming the following essential points:
  - a. A definite second blessing, *distinct in nature*, though not necessarily far removed in time, from the experience of conversion;
  - b. the baptism of the Holy Ghost *as a distinct experience*, not merely for power for service, but for personal holiness and victory over the world and sin;
  - c. the indwelling Christ in the heart of the consecrated believer *as a distinct experience*;
  - d. sanctification by faith *as a distinct gift* of God's grace to every open and surrendered soul;
  - e. growth in grace and the deeper filling of the Holy Spirit *as distinct from* and the result of the definite experience of sanctification.

It is understood that all our Alliance officers and teachers are at liberty to present the truth of sanctification in such phases and phrases as his own convictions warrant, in general accordance with the above specifications, but with the understanding that such extreme views as are sometimes taught under the name of "eradication" or "suppression" shall not be presented in an aggressive or controversial spirit toward those who differ.

### III. Divine Healing

It is understood the Alliance holds and teaches:

1. The will of God to heal the bodies of those who trust and obey Him by His own direct power without means.

## Section 15. Toward a Doctrinal Statement

2. The atonement of Christ for the body.
3. The life of the risen Christ for our mortal frame received by faith.
4. The ordinance of anointing and laying on of hands with proper recognition of the necessity of faith on the part of the individual anointed.
5. Power over evil spirits through the name of Jesus.
6. The disclaiming of all merit or individual power on the part of the worker and the constant recognition of the name of Jesus as the source of all supernatural power.

### IV. The Lord's Coming

1. The Alliance holds and teaches the personal and premillennial coming of the Lord Jesus.
2. (blotted out - unreadable)
3. Liberty is accorded to our teachers in connection with the various opinions held about Anti-Christ, the Tribulation, the Last Week of Daniel, Rapture, etc., but with the understanding that any spirit of antagonism and strife toward those who may hold different opinions is discountenanced.

HENRY WILSON

J.D. WILLIAMS

A.E. FUNK

F.H. SENFT

A.B. SIMPSON

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## Reading 15.3

### Doctrinal Statement of 1928 for Alliance Bible Schools

The Manual of the Christian and Missionary Alliance, (1929 edition)

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1. The Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the inspired Word of God. They contain a complete revelation of His will for the salvation of men, and constitute the Divine and only rule of Christian faith and practice. -- I Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:21.
2. There is one God, Who is infinitely perfect, existing eternally in three persons Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
3. Jesus Christ is true God and true man. He was conceived by the Holy Ghost and born of the Virgin Mary. He died upon the cross, the just for the unjust as a substitutionary sacrifice, and all who believe in Him are justified on the ground of His shed blood. He arose from the dead according to the Scriptures. He is now at the right hand of the Majesty on high as our Great High Priest, and He will return again to establish His Kingdom of righteousness and justice.
4. The Holy Spirit is a Divine Person, the Executive of the Godhead, the Comforter sent by the Lord Jesus Christ to indwell, to guide, and to teach the believer, and to convince the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment.
5. Man was originally created in the likeness and image of God; he fell through disobedience, incurring thereby both physical and spiritual death. All men are born with a sinful nature, are separated from the life of God, and can be saved only through the atoning work of the Lord Jesus Christ. The portion of the impenitent and unbelieving is existence forever in conscious torment; and that of the believer, in everlasting joy and bliss.
6. Salvation has been provided through Jesus Christ for all men; and those who receive Him are born again of the Holy Spirit, obtain the gift of eternal life, and become the children of God.
7. There shall be a bodily resurrection of the just and of the unjust: for the former, a resurrection unto life; for the latter, a resurrection unto judgment.
8. The church consists of all those who have believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, are washed in His blood, and have been born again of the Holy Spirit. It has been commissioned of the Lord to witness in His name, to comfort and build up its members in the holy faith, and especially to fulfill the terms of the Great Commission to go forth into all the world as a witness, preaching the Gospel to all nations.
9. It is the will of God that each believer should be filled with the Holy Spirit and thus be sanctified wholly, being separated from sin and the world and fully consecrated to the will of God, thereby receiving power for holy living and effective service. This is recognized as an experience wrought in the life subsequent to conversion.
10. Provision is made in the redemption of the Lord Jesus Christ for the healing of the mortal body in accordance with His Word. The anointing with oil, as set forth in the fifth chapter of James, is to be practiced by the Church in this present age.
11. The premillennial coming of the Lord Jesus Christ is a practical truth which should be preached, showing its relation to the personal life and the service of the believer.

Reading 15.4

**Statement of Faith (1965)**

1. There is one God, who is infinitely perfect, existing eternally in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
2. Jesus Christ is true God and true man. He was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. He died upon the cross, the Just for the unjust, as a substitutionary sacrifice, and all who believe in Him are justified on the ground of His shed blood. He arose from the dead according to the Scriptures. He is now at the right hand of the Majesty on high as our great High Priest. He will come again to establish His kingdom of righteousness and peace.
3. The Holy Spirit is a Divine Person, sent to indwell, guide, teach, empower the believer, and convince the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment.
4. The Old and New Testaments, inerrant as originally given, were verbally inspired by God and are a complete revelation of His will for the salvation of men. They constitute the divine and only rule of Christian faith and practice.
5. Man was originally created in the image and likeness of God; he fell through disobedience, incurring thereby both physical and spiritual death. All men are born with a sinful nature, are separated from the life of God, and can be saved only through the atoning work of the Lord Jesus Christ. The portion of the impenitent and unbelieving is existence forever in conscious torment; and that of the believer, in everlasting joy and bliss.
6. Salvation has been provided through Jesus Christ for all men; and those who repent and believe in Him are born again of the Holy Spirit, receive the gift of eternal life, and become the children of God.
7. It is the will of God that each believer should be filled with the Holy Spirit and be sanctified wholly, being separated from sin and the world and fully dedicated to the will of God, thereby receiving power for holy living and effective service. This is both a crisis and a progressive experience wrought in the life of the believer subsequent to conversion.
8. Provision is made in the redemptive work of the Lord Jesus Christ for the healing of the mortal body. Prayer for the sick and anointing with oil are taught in the Scriptures and are privileges for the Church in this present age.
9. The Church consists of all those who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, are redeemed through His blood, and are born again of the Holy Spirit. Christ is the Head of the Body, the Church, which has been commissioned by Him to go into all the world as a witness, preaching the Gospel to all nations. The local church is a body of believers in Christ who are joined together for the worship of God, for edification through the Word of God, for prayer, fellowship, the proclamation of the Gospel, and observance of the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's supper.
10. There shall be a bodily resurrection of the just and the unjust; for the former, a resurrection unto life; for the latter, a resurrection unto judgment.
11. The second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ is imminent and will be personal, visible, and premillennial. This is the believer's blessed hope and is a vital truth which is an incentive to holy living and faithful service.

Reading 15.6

## **The Christian and Missionary Alliance in Canada Statement of Faith (2000)**

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. There is one God, who is infinitely perfect, existing eternally in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.</li><li>2. Jesus Christ is true God and true man. He was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. He died upon the cross, the Just for the unjust, as a substitutionary sacrifice, and all who believe in Him are justified on the ground of His shed blood. He arose from the dead according to the Scriptures. He is now at the right hand of the Majesty on high as our great High Priest. He will come again to establish His kingdom of righteousness and peace.</li><li>3. The Holy Spirit is a divine Person, sent to indwell, guide, teach, and empower the believer, and to convince the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgement.</li><li>4. The Old and New Testaments, inerrant as originally given, were verbally inspired by God and are a complete revelation of His will for the salvation of people. They constitute the divine and only rule of Christian faith and practice.</li><li>5. Humankind, originally created in the image and likeness of God, fell through disobedience, incurring thereby both physical and spiritual death. All people are born with a sinful nature, are separated from the life of God, and can be saved only through the atoning work of the Lord Jesus Christ. The destiny of the impenitent and unbelieving is existence forever in conscious torment, but that of the believer is everlasting joy and bliss.</li><li>6. Salvation has been provided only through Jesus Christ. Those who repent and believe in Him are united with Christ through the Holy Spirit and are thereby regenerated (born again), justified, sanctified and granted the gift of eternal life as adopted children of God.</li></ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>7. It is the will of God that in union with Christ each believer should be sanctified thoroughly thereby being separated from sin and the world and fully dedicated to God, receiving power for holy living and effective service toward the completion of Christ's commission. This is accomplished through being filled with the Holy Spirit which is both a distinct event and progressive experience in the life of the believer</li><li>8. Provision is made in the redemptive work of the Lord Jesus Christ for the healing of the mortal body. Prayer for the sick and anointing with oil as taught in the Scriptures are privileges for the Church in this present age.</li><li>9. The universal Church, of which Christ is the Head, consists of all those who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, are redeemed through His blood, regenerated by the Holy Spirit, and commissioned by Christ to go into all the world as a witness, preaching the Gospel to all nations. The local church, the visible expression of the universal Church, is a body of believers in Christ who are joined together to worship God, to observe the ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, to pray, to be edified through the Word of God, to fellowship, and to testify in word and deed to the good news of salvation both locally and globally. The local church enters into relationships with other like-minded churches for accountability, encouragement, and mission.</li><li>10. There shall be a bodily resurrection of the just and of the unjust; for the former, a resurrection unto life, for the latter, a resurrection unto judgement.</li><li>11. The second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ is imminent and will be personal and visible. As the believer's blessed hope, this vital truth is an incentive for holy living and sacrificial service toward the completion of Christ's commission.</li></ol> |
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