

## FAITH AND HOLINESS

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The people of God are commanded to be holy. Leviticus 19:1-2 says: “The Lord said to Moses, ‘Speak to the entire assembly of Israel and say to them: “Be holy because I, the Lord your God, am holy.”’” And in Leviticus 20:7-8 the injunction is given again, “‘Consecrate yourselves and be holy because I am the Lord you God. Keep my decrees and follow them. I am the Lord, who makes you holy.’” The command is repeated by Peter in 1 Peter 1:13-16: “Therefore, prepare your minds for action; be self-controlled; set your hope fully on the grace to be given you when Jesus Christ is revealed. As obedient children, do not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance. But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do, for it is written: ‘Be holy, because I am holy.’”<sup>1</sup> And Hebrews 12:14 summarizes these commands by saying: “Make every effort to live in peace with all men and to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord.”

These commands from both the Old Testament and the New Testament indicate that the harmonious relationship between God and humankind must be on the basis of holiness, righteousness, and purity. This is the relationship that existed from the initial creation of the world. Genesis chapter one says after each unit of creation God declared that what had been created was good. Humankind (both male and female) were created in the image of God and God pronounced that the creation was “very good.” Runyon describes the original creation as a harmony of ecological balance. All parts of the universe were in orderly connection with each other, constituting one system where each had sufficiency of food for its inhabitants so that none had any need of temptation to prey upon the other.<sup>2</sup> Genesis three then gives the account of the human fall into sin and the separation from God that this fall caused. From that time on not only humankind but even the earth itself has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the

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<sup>1</sup>All scriptures are quoted from *The Holy Bible, New International Version*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1984).

<sup>2</sup>Theodore Runyon, *The New Creation: John Wesley's Theology Today* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1998), 210.

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present time, seeking to be liberated from its bondage to decay (Romans 8:21-22). John Wesley says that “By turning from God to seek happiness independent of God, . . . he threw not only himself but likewise the whole creation, which was intimately connected with him, into disorder, misery, death.”<sup>3</sup>

The whole of the scriptures is the story of this dilemma and the solution to the problem of sin and separation from God. From Genesis onward the stage was being set for the coming of the Messiah who would bring peace and reconciliation with God. Jesus told his disciples in John 16:33, “I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.” And Peter picked up the same thread of thought when he spoke to Cornelius’s household in Acts 10:36: “You know the message God sent to the people of Israel, telling the good news of peace through Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all.” Verse 43 continues, “All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.”

In this theme of reconciliation, redemption, justification, atonement, and grace, something is needed to be the spark that brings it all together. I would postulate that faith is that element which is needed to bring to fruition this reconciliation between God and humanity. A song by Samuel T. Scott popularized several decades ago expresses that idea poetically:

Prayer is the key to heaven,  
but faith unlocks the door;  
Words are so easily spoken, a prayer  
without faith, is like a boat without an oar.  
Have faith, when you speak to the Master,  
that’s all he asks you for,

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<sup>3</sup> Wesley’s Sermon 56, “God’s Approbation of his Works,”” quoted in Runyon, *The New Creation*, 19.

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Yes, prayer is the key to heaven,  
but faith unlocks the door.<sup>4</sup>

While it could be argued that the song is trite and does not plumb the depths of the relationship between God and mankind, it does prick the surface of the topic I wish to pursue in this paper: namely, that without faith, the grace of God provided through the work of the trinity cannot be appropriated. Thus was the revelation to Martin Luther in his struggle to come to terms with his experience and the teaching of the church of his day that “the just shall live by faith” and “Justification by faith” became through him, a distinctive principle of Protestantism.”<sup>5</sup>

Before considering the connection between faith and holiness, both terms need to be examined and defined.

### What is Holiness?

To answer this fundamental question, several angles will be discussed. They fall into two major categories. The holiness that is God’s holiness and that is given to the believer as an inward working of God’s grace is the first of these categories. The second category is the outward appearance of Christlikeness that follows the inward working of God’s grace and is the outward manifestation of God’s holiness within.

Dr. Greathouse explains the concepts of holiness through the use of the Greek terms used in scripture. The first term he explains is *hagios* which is the term for “holy.” It carries two meanings, namely, “separation” and “the Holy One.” He says that this word signifies the holiness which cannot be separated from God. It is used when Isaiah announced, “the Holy God shows himself holy in righteousness” (5:16).<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>“Prayer Is the Key to Heaven,” ed. Samuel T. Scott, <http://www.usc.salvationarmy.org/prayer.nsf/9c1bbf1e422b692d86256b3c0076222d/ef560db97e3590386256b430064c327?OpenDocument> [accessed November 5, 2006].

<sup>5</sup>Kenneth S. Latourette, *A History of Christianity*, Prince Press Edition ed., Two vols., vol. Two (Peabody, MA: Prince Press, 1975), 706.

<sup>6</sup>William M. Greathouse, *Wholeness in Christ: Toward a Biblical Theology of Holiness* (Kansas City: Beachon Hill Press, 1998), 201.

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The essential nature of God is holiness. As noted above from Leviticus to Peter, we read that God is holy so his people are commanded to be holy. Throughout scripture God is referenced as Holy. Exodus 15:11 asks, “Who among the gods is like you, O LORD? Who is like you—majestic in holiness, awesome in glory, working wonders?” I Samuel 6:20 asks, “Who can stand in the presence of the LORD, this holy God?” Typical of references in the Psalms is the one in Psalm 99:9: “Exalt the LORD our God and worship at his holy mountain, for the LORD our God is holy.” Perhaps most notable of the references in Isaiah is the one in chapter 6: “And they were calling to one another: ‘Holy, holy, holy is the LORD Almighty; the whole earth is full of his glory.’” The theme is repeated in Revelation 15:4: “Who will not fear you, O Lord, and bring glory to your name? For you alone are holy. All nations will come and worship before you, for your righteous acts have been revealed.” The overriding characteristic of God is that of holiness.

That which separates humankind from this holy God is sin which came into the world by human choice. As preparations were being made for the voice of God to be heard in the giving of the Law, limits were set around Mount Sinai to set it apart as holy so the people would not cross the limits; for if they did, God would break out against them, Exodus 20. The central story of holy scripture is the means by which humankind can be reconciled to the Holy God. “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.” John 3:16 encapsulates this central theme.

The second concept of holiness that Dr. Greathouse emphasizes is the Greek root word *hagios*. Its cognates are used in the Epistles to describe the moral purity and godlikeness characteristic of saints.<sup>7</sup> 2 Corinthians 7:1 indicates that degrees of holiness exist for the believer: “since we have these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and of spirit, making holiness perfect in the fear of God.” Greathouse goes on to explain that only God is holy in himself; all holiness in humans is derivative. We are holy only as we become partakers of his holiness.<sup>8</sup> He explains that the Torah defines

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<sup>7</sup>Greathouse, 202.

<sup>8</sup>Greathouse, 203.

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holiness as life lived in relationship to God in praise and in grateful, obedient love. The very heart of the Law is love—divine love finding a responsive human love.<sup>9</sup>

### What is Faith?

The first definition that is generally cited when the question of the concept of faith is mentioned comes from Hebrews 11:1 and 6: “Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see . . . And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.”

Several words in the English language are nearly synonymous with the word faith. We commonly use the words *trust* and *believe* in a verb form when we talk about faith. Both of these words are generally verbs but do have a noun form and usage; believe can be rendered belief when we talk about the substance of what one believes; trust takes on a noun usage when it relates to legal and monetary matters being held in benefit of another. The word *confide* implies that more than one is involved in the transaction and seems to relate to equals. It also has a noun form, confidence, which indicates a character trait of assurance and readiness to move ahead. But in the case of the word “faith,” it does not have a common verb form or usage. It is always used as a noun. While these words seem to be focusing on a similar concept, they are not precisely the same concept.

Within Christendom several concepts use the word “faith” for their expression. One of these concepts is the set of beliefs held by a Christian community. Within the Church of the Nazarene, we have sixteen articles of faith that are the heart of who we declare ourselves to be. Staples says that what is decisive in history for faith is the appearance of Jesus Christ in the midst of history as the One who incarnates and reveals God. Christianity is a historical faith.<sup>10</sup> Thus we have a

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<sup>9</sup>Greathouse, 57.

<sup>10</sup>Rob L. Staples, *Outward Sign and Inward Grace: The Place of Sacraments in Wesleyan Spirituality* (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press, 1991), 115.

profession of faith or a confession of faith and a community of faith, but neither of these is the actual heart of faith.

While belief is an act, as Tillich indicates, “of something more or less probable or improbable being affirmed in spite of the insufficiency of its theoretical substantiation, faith is more than trust in even the most sacred authority. It is participation in the subject of one’s ultimate concern with one’s whole being.”<sup>11</sup> Luther’s concept of the faith which he found to be the absolute essential for Christianity is an actual communion with the living God.<sup>12</sup> According to Jacques Ellul, belief talks and acts; in contrast, faith waits and listens until the silence is filled up with the indisputable word of God.<sup>13</sup> Therefore, faith is not something that can exist on its own. Rather it is always bound to that with which it is ultimately concerned, to use Tillich’s terminology. Evidence of faith is peace with God, but peace is not equivalent to faith. Man as man in relationship with God as God is the essence of peace. Man’s waiting upon God alone. The object of this waiting is the essential point of what constitutes faith.<sup>14</sup> Barth declares that:

Faith assumes with implicit confidence, that the invisible existence of men in God has veritable and concrete reality. Faith is the incomparable and irrevocable step over the frontier separating the old from the new. . . Faith presents itself in a series of paradoxes: human vacuum—divine fullness; human speechlessness, ignorance, and expectation—divine words, knowledge, and action; the end of all things human—the beginning of divine possibility. Faith is the divine revolution and upheaval by which the

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<sup>11</sup>Paul Tillich, *Dynamics of Faith*, ed. Niels et al Bohr, board of editors, World Perspectives, vol. Ten (New York: Harper & Brothers 1957), 31.

<sup>12</sup>Wilhelm Herrmann, *The Communion of the Christian with God*, ed. Leander general editor Keck, Lives of Jesus Series (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1971), 209.

<sup>13</sup>Jacques Ellul, *Living Faith: Belief and Doubt in a Perilous World*, trans. Peter Heinegg (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1983), 103.

<sup>14</sup>Karl Barth, *The Epistle to the Romans*, trans. Edwyn C. Hoskyns, Sixth ed. (London: Oxford University Press, 1933), 151.

well-known equilibrium between ‘Yes’ and ‘No,’ grace and sin, good and evil, is disturbed and overthrown.<sup>15</sup>

The emphasis of faith is not faith itself, but in the object of that faith. Wesley stated that this faith in something does not necessarily involve any change in action, but rather involves a relationship. Faith does not save, but faith in Christ does because Christ becomes the central object of one’s love and obedience.<sup>16</sup> Luther indicates that love does not exactly result from faith, but it is the chief element in faith itself.<sup>17</sup> Wynkoop asserts that the antithesis to saving faith is not “no faith,” but rather active rejection.<sup>18</sup>

### The Gift of Faith

Having presented an overview of the definitions of holiness and of faith with implication of the importance of both of these concepts in Christianity, subsequent questions then arise. First, How does one come into the possession of this faith? And secondly, What part does faith have in holiness as it is lived out in the life of the Christian?

The first consideration is the attainment of a faith whereby belief and trust are exercised in obedience and love. In Romans 7:18 Paul states, “I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature.” Furthermore in Romans 3 Paul has declared that all alike are under sin, both Jew and Gentile. He then proceeds to quote from the Psalms: “There is no one righteous, not even one; there is no one who understands, no one who seeks God. All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one.” Although humankind were created in the image of God, they fell into sin and became separated from God. Runyon points out that it is

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<sup>15</sup>Barth, 201.

<sup>16</sup>Mildred Bangs Wynkoop, *Foundations of Wesleyan-Arminian Theology* (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press, 1967).

<sup>17</sup>Hermann, 277.

<sup>18</sup>Mildred Bangs Wynkoop, *A Theology of Love: The Dynamic of Wesleyanism* (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press, 1972).

important to avoid the common misunderstanding arising from the Protestant emphasis on faith, that it is human belief that makes one acceptable to God; that personal faith is the agent of justification. To say this turns faith in to a work and distorts the doctrine.<sup>19</sup>

Tillich also comments on this idea saying that human calculation of something more or less probable or improbable being affirmed in spite of insufficient evidence is often misnamed faith.<sup>20</sup> Jesus remarked to his disciples in the incident of the storm on the sea, “Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?” They were terrified and asked each other, “Who is this? Even the wind and the waves obey him!” (Mark 4:40-41). This would affirm that in and of oneself, faith is not produced since Jesus questioned that they still had no faith. Nor was having encountered Jesus sufficient for them to have faith. Something more was needed.

Whence then is the source of faith? It is the grace of God that brings faith. It is a gift given in the whole package of grace. Romans 10:17 affirms, “Consequently, faith comes through hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ.” Ephesians 2:8-9 puts it this way: “For it is by grace you have been saved through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works so that no one can boast.” John Wesley stated that reason cannot produce faith. Although faith is consistent with reason, yet reason alone cannot produce faith in the scriptural sense of the word. “Faith, according to Scripture, is ‘an evidence,’ or conviction, ‘of things not seen.’ It is a divine evidence, bringing a full conviction of an invisible eternal world.”<sup>21</sup> Wynkoop says that “faith is a most vital aspect of human life in its relation to God.” She further comments that it was at the point where faith in God broke down that sin began.<sup>22</sup> Therefore, it is at the point where faith enters that eternal life begins. She affirms that faith is the most vital aspect of human life in its relation to God. She, like Wesley,

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<sup>19</sup>Runyon, 56.

<sup>20</sup>Tillich, 31.

<sup>21</sup> “Sermon #70: The Case of Reason Impartially Considered,” from *The Works of John Wesley* Volume VIII, (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press, 1979).

<sup>22</sup>Wynkoop, *Foundations of Wesleyan-Arminian Theology*.

puts it together with reason saying that “it is a rational like between the tangible and intangible, between the divine and the human, between the objective and subject aspects of atonement as well as between all events and meaning, fact and interpretation, in all of rational life.”<sup>23</sup>

That faith is given as a gift is further affirmed by Paul’s words to Timothy when he said, “The grace of our Lord was poured out on me abundantly, along with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus” (1 Timothy 1:14). Runyon says that the trusting which is inherent in the response in faith is created in the heart by the prior action of God—so that one senses the love for God because a prior sense of God’s love has been received.<sup>24</sup>

The giving and receiving of the gift of faith involves both the giver and the receiver. Wesley admonished his hearers to “lift up your hearts to him who giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not. He alone can give that faith, which is he evidence and conviction of things not seen. . . . He alone can shed his love abroad in your heart by the Holy Ghost given unto you. Ask, therefore, and it shall be given to you!”<sup>25</sup> From another source, Ebeling asserts that faith comes into being as the consequence of the witness of faith.<sup>26</sup> One that has faith gives witness so that faith and another then receiving that witness of Jesus Christ being preached so that faith may be imparted. It is the attestation of an event of faith. Hebrews 12:2 says that Jesus is the author and perfecter of faith. While faith is given or formed anew in each receiver, it also is historical and comes from the preaching and witness of those who already know and have confidence (faith) in the ultimate concern, to use Tillich’s expression—from those who already knows that God is the Father and so is filled with fear and even dread.<sup>27</sup>

The gift of faith is given, but it is not given indiscriminately

<sup>23</sup>Wynkoop, *A Theology of Love*, 227-8.

<sup>24</sup>Runyon, 55.

<sup>25</sup>*The Works of John Wesley Volume Viii.*

<sup>26</sup>Gerhard Ebeling, *The Nature of Faith* (London: Wm.Collins Sons & Co., Ltd., 1961), 25.

<sup>27</sup>Ellul, 112.

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without the receiver being aware of the gift and wanting to receive it. Wesley said that “we receive it by simple faith: But God does not, will not, give that faith, unless we seek it with all diligence, in the way he hath ordained.”<sup>28</sup>

We turn now to the second of our questions: namely, What part does faith have in holiness as it is lived out in the life of Christians? Faith does not operate in a vacuum. One does not have faith in faith. Faith is always associated with its object, or as Tillich calls it, one’s ultimate concern. Christian faith is faith in Jesus Christ. Ebeling states that the double name by which we refer to him, Jesus the Christ, is the most succinct form of Christian confession of faith for the name Jesus refers to the man who lived in Palestine two thousand year ago, and Christ is the title of honor by which faith confesses him as present Lord and Saviour—Christ the awaited messiah.<sup>29</sup> Ebeling also points out that it is only faith that can recognize Jesus as the Christ.

Hebrews 11:6 again states that anyone who comes to him (God) must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him. The rewards of seeking God are many. Faith is the connection that brings one into a reconciled relationship with God. Romans 4 discusses Abraham whose faith was credited as righteousness. The promises that Abraham received were through the righteousness that comes by faith (vs. 13). Greathouse discusses the whole of our salvation that comes through faith. It is through faith in him that we are restored to a right relationship with God. This is our justification or righteousness.<sup>30</sup> John Wesley in his sermon on the First Fruits of the Spirit declared, “It is God who hat wrought thee to this selfsame thing. But, doest thou now believe? Hath he again enabled thee to say, ‘I know that my redeemer liveth;’ ‘and the life which I now live, I live by faith in the Son of God?’ Then that faith again cancels all that is past, and there is no condemnation to thee.”<sup>31</sup> Wynkoop reaffirms this concept by reminding

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<sup>28</sup>*The Works of John Wesley Third Edition Complete and Unabridged*, 14 vols., vol. Volume XI Thoughts, Addresses, Prayers, Letters (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press, 1979).

<sup>29</sup>Ebeling, 45.

<sup>30</sup>Greathouse, 78.

<sup>31</sup>*The Works of John Wesley*, 14 vols., vol. III (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press, 1979).

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us that faith is not the cause of salvation but rather the condition of receiving it. She says that faith is not what saves us but we are saved only by Christ in whom we have faith.<sup>32</sup>

Beyond justification which is accomplished by Christ Jesus through faith in Him, is the cleansing and sanctification through the baptism of the Holy Spirit whereby the holiness of God resides in us. Our bodies are the temple of the Holy Spirit whom we have received from God (I Corinthians 6:19). We have this treasure in “jars of clay.” The treasure that Paul is speaking about in 2 Corinthians 4 is the light of the glory of God that he has made to shine in our hearts. This glory of God is his holiness that resides within us by faith and cleanses and transforms. Greathouse expounds upon this concept from Romans when he says that “Christ Jesus is our sanctification or holiness. By faith we die and rise with Christ and receive the Spirit, who makes us truly holy in this present age.”<sup>33</sup> Like the glory of God, his very presence, filled the temple in Solomon’s day, so the glory of God fills his temple today as by faith people receive his holy presence into the jars of clay which are our bodies. This is the first concept of holiness as defined by Greathouse above.

The second concept of holiness in our previous definitions involves the idea of “Christlikeness,” or taking on the character of Christ. This is the outworking of the inner presence of God’s holiness within. This is also accomplished by faith as the gift of faith is nurtured. As with the receiving of any gift, one chooses what to do with that gift. Having received the gift, a relationship with the giver is established. The gift itself is not the essence of the relationship; rather, it is the symbol of that relationship. Jesus said in John 15: “I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.” The gift of faith is nurtured through remaining in the vine which is Jesus himself. Paul continues the metaphor of the branches and the life-giving tree in Romans 11 when he talks about the grafting in of branches so they could share in the nourishing sap from the olive root. “You do not support the root, but the root supports you” (Romans 11:18).

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<sup>32</sup>*Foundations of Wesleyan-Arminian Theology*, 104.

<sup>33</sup>Greathouse, 78.

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The nurture of one's faith is accomplished by various means. Psalm 46:10 seems an appropriate place to begin for it says "Be still and know that I am God." One does not learn to know God primarily by increased activity and a flurry of service. Rather, knowing God comes first of all by waiting upon Him. Isaiah 40:29 to 31 tells us that God gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak. The weak are not only the infirmed or the very young or the very old, but also youths will grow wear and stumble and fall if they do not increase their strength. This increase of strength comes by waiting upon God—hoping in the Lord. Isaiah 41:1 admonishes those who would know God to be silent before Him. Isaiah 26:3 affirms that the one who trusts in God with a steadfast mind will be kept in perfect peace. And again in Isaiah 30:15 the prophet reminds his hearers that "In repentance and rest is your salvation; in quietness and trust is your strength."

This waiting on God is not accomplished in a vacuum. Wesley in his discussion on Christian perfection said that our waiting on the transforming work of God is not to be accomplished in "careless indifference nor indolent inactivity," but rather in a rigorous discipline that would include keeping of the commandments, denying oneself and taking up one's cross, and in earnest prayer and fasting.<sup>34</sup> Paul's admonition to the Colossians was, "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly." Faith came by hearing the word of God (Romans 10), and it is also nourished by the word of God. The Psalmist emphasized the importance of God's word—God's laws, his precepts, his commands, his statutes, his decrees—and knowing and obeying it especially in Psalm 119. Verse 9 asks the question, "How can a young man keep his way pure?" and then answers that question by replying, "By living according to your word." The knowledge of God's word provides input for the quiet meditation which will serve as a guard against sinning against God. Wesley summarizes the need for nurture by saying, "Indeed it has been my opinion . . . that one great cause why men make so little improvement in the divine life is their own coldness, negligence, and unbelief."<sup>35</sup> Wynkoop quotes Wesley in her discussion of faith and sanctification by saying, "It is both the condition and the instrument of (sanctification).

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<sup>34</sup>Wesley, Perfection, 27.

<sup>35</sup>Wesley, Perfection, 31.

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When we begin to believe, then sanctification begins. And as faith increases, holiness increases, till we are created anew.”<sup>36</sup>

In Luke 17 the disciples asked Jesus to increase their faith, giving the indication that faith is not something static, but rather dynamic with the possibility for nurture and development. Jesus’ response to them was to compare faith metaphorically with a mustard seed. In Matthew 13 Jesus had given the full parable about the growth of the mustard seed into a plant large enough to support the perching of birds in its branches. The Luke passage indicates that such faith is capable of overwhelming exploits. In the verses following (7 through 10), it seems that Jesus is giving the real answer to the disciples question of how their faith can be increased. It is the parable of the servant master relationship whereby faith seems to be increased through individuals taking on the role of servant/slave and pouring out their lives with no expectation of recompense or reward or even a simple “thank you.” Rather, it is becoming more and more like Christ who “being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant. . .” (Philippines 2:6-7). In becoming such servants individuals actively participate in the outworking of the Christlikeness of holiness in their lives.

The disciplines of nurturing one’s faith are not all personal. Of the personal dialogue with God, Ellul observed that “faith isolates;” and it is belief that gathers together. “The church is the gathering in and through love of those who have been called individually, have been separated, set apart as individuals to fulfill the function assigned them by God . . . and the only gathering place is love.”<sup>37</sup> So it is that the nurturing of faith is also dynamically carried out in the context of a faith community. Wesley often asserted that there is no holiness but social holiness. He was convinced that Christian faith is nurtured in a social context. For that reason he organized bands and classes whereby those who had experienced the new birth might be nurtured by others.<sup>38</sup> The writer of the book of Hebrews admonished believers to consider “how we may spur one another on towards love and good deeds . . . and not to

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<sup>36</sup>Wynkoop, *Theology of Love*, 225.

<sup>37</sup>Ellul, 108.

<sup>38</sup>Runyon, 114-15.

give up meeting together . . . but to encourage one another—and so much the more as you see the Day approaching” (Hebrews 10:24-25). When Paul wrote to the Romans, he said that he longed to see them “so that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to make you strong—that is, that you and I may be mutually encouraged by each other’s faith” (Romans 1:11-12).

Means of grace such as baptism and holy communion are practiced only in community. It is in the faith community that individuals affirm faith and declare their affinity with the body of believers. The love of God that has been shed abroad in the hearts of believers is not only vertical between the individual and God, but it is also horizontal encompassing the community of faith and beyond. Thus Paul wrote to the Thessalonians, “We ought always to thank God for you, brothers, and rightly so, because your faith is growing more and more, and the love everyone of you has for each other is increasing” (2 Thessalonians 1:3).

On more than one occasion Paul used the human body as an analogy of the spiritual body—indicating that one part does not act or live in isolation from the whole. Ephesians 4 is typical of this concept where Paul states that each one should “speak the truth in love so we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ. ;from him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work” (Ephesians 4:15-16).

Faith is not an end in itself. Faith must act. This is what Jesus told his disciples when they asked about increasing their faith. “If you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mulberry tree, ‘be uprooted and planted in the sea,’ and it will obey you” (Luke 17:6). In John 14 Jesus said, “I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father. And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father. You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it” (12-14).

James addressed the issue of whether faith can exist in and of itself when he said, “faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead” (3:17). He then proceeded to give the examples of Abraham offering Isaac his son and of Rahab giving lodging to the spies in Jericho.

Wynkoop reiterates this same idea of faith not being an end in itself but rather a means to an end in referring to faith as a living, dynamic exercise serving the ongoing function in the Christian life—being a servant.<sup>39</sup>

Luther's transforming revelation that the "just shall live by faith," is the welding together of faith and actions. Barth's comment on this matter is that "where the faithfulness of God encounters the fidelity of men, there is manifested his righteousness."<sup>40</sup> "Justification is by faith; . . . the heart is purified by faith; sanctification is by faith in Jesus; by faith we stand; we walk by faith; we receive the promise of the Spirit by faith; we are children of God by faith in Christ Jesus; Christ dwells in the heart by faith; and faith shields us from the fiery darts of the enemy."<sup>41</sup> Wiley also discusses the necessity for faith to act, to be exercised. He says that "[faith] refers to the power in man by which he is enabled to see the invisible, and therefore differs from mere sense perception."<sup>42</sup>

Hebrews 11 is filled with accounts and references to those who acted on the certainty of their faith. Wiley points out that two ideas of the power of faith are operative—the "faith of achievement and the faith of endurance."<sup>43</sup> Morrison asserts that "none of God's power is released except over someone's faith . . . that all God's power is released over human faith."<sup>44</sup> Tillich speaks of the "courage of faith," he says that a tension exists between participation and separation where there is faith. This is a tension between the faithful one and his ultimate concern. Participation acts on certainty while separation faces the idea of doubt. It is courage that meets doubt with confidence in the "ultimate concern."<sup>45</sup> Picton-Turberville echoes this necessity of courage in stating that the world wants a faith that is a reality and not just a concept talked about. It is that faith that comes when in a critical moment one dares to act. "Faith rises in its most dynamic form when at some inmost vision souls

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<sup>39</sup>Wynkoop, *A Theology of Love*, 236.

<sup>40</sup>Barth.

<sup>41</sup>Wynkoop, *A Theology of Love*, 236.

<sup>42</sup>H. Orton Wiley, *The Epistle to the Hebrews* (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press, 1959), 358.

<sup>43</sup>Wiley, *Hebrews*, 334-35.

<sup>44</sup>Morrison, "Achieving Faith," 69.

<sup>45</sup>Tillich.

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dare to take what appears a fatal leap . . . that lands them into a kingdom of new power.<sup>246</sup>

In summary, a vital connection exists between faith and holiness. In this paper both concepts have been defined: Holiness as being both the holiness of God that indwells the believer and as being the holiness of Christlikeness worked out in the life of the believer; faith defined as being that gift of God that allows one to make dynamic connection with the Almighty and be filled with God himself, transformed, and given power to live out the holy life that indwells the “jars of clay” that are humanity. Faith grows and develops and is nurtured not only in personal discipline, but also in community. The courage of faith unleashes the mighty power of God for re-creation holiness as the person of faith acts. Thus it is, that faith not only unlocks the “door to heaven” but also releases the power of God to act on behalf of those who courageously act in confidence upon the ultimate concern—the Triune God himself.

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<sup>46</sup>Edith Picton-Turberville, *Should Women Be Priests & Ministers* (London: The Society for the Equal Ministry of Men and Women, 1953), 51-2.

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