



This material has been provided by Asbury Theological Seminary in good faith of following ethical procedures in its production and end use.

The Copyright law of the United States (title 17, United States code) governs the making of photocopies or other reproductions of copyright material. Under certain conditions specified in the law, libraries and archives are authorized to finish a photocopy or other reproduction. One of these specific conditions is that the photocopy or reproduction is not to be *“used for any purpose other than private study, scholarship, or research.”* If a user makes a request for, or later uses, a photocopy or reproduction for purposes in excess of “fair use,” that user may be liable for copyright infringement. This institution reserves the right to refuse to accept a copying order if, in its judgment, fulfillment of the order would involve violation of copyright law.

**By using this material, you are consenting to abide by this copyright policy. Any duplication, reproduction, or modification of this material without express written consent from Asbury Theological Seminary and/or the original publisher is prohibited.**

### **Contact**

B.L. Fisher Library  
Asbury Theological Seminary  
204 N. Lexington Ave.  
Wilmore, KY 40390

**B.L. Fisher Library’s Digital Content**  
[place.asburyseminary.edu](http://place.asburyseminary.edu)



**Asbury Theological Seminary**  
205 North Lexington Avenue  
Wilmore, Kentucky 40390

800.2ASBURY  
[asburyseminary.edu](http://asburyseminary.edu)

UNITY AND THE HOLINESS CHURCHES  
A STUDY OF MOVES TOWARD UNITY AMONG SELECTED AMERICAN  
PROTESTANT DENOMINATIONS AFFILIATED WITH THE  
NATIONAL HOLINESS ASSOCIATION

---

A Thesis  
Presented to  
the Faculty of the Division of History  
Asbury Theological Seminary

---

In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Bachelor of Divinity

---

by  
Howard Albert Snyder

May 1966

UNITY AND THE HOLINESS CHURCHES  
A STUDY OF MOVES TOWARD UNITY AMONG SELECTED AMERICAN  
PROTESTANT DENOMINATIONS AFFILIATED WITH THE  
NATIONAL HOLINESS ASSOCIATION

---

A Thesis  
Presented to  
the Faculty of the Division of History  
Asbury Theological Seminary

---

In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Bachelor of Divinity

APPROVED:

First Reader

Second Reader

*Maurice E. Cullen*  
*Delbert R. Rose*

---

by

Howard Albert Snyder

May 1966

A fisherman on an island off the coast of Maine confronted with the proposal that his church join its neighbor over the way said, "Wa-a-ll, I don't know whether we kin do thet or not. They sing three hymns, and we sing only two!" —Willard L. Sperry

I take it that no one branch of the church can say to any other, "I have no need of thee." —Joseph H. Smith, addressing the holiness movement in 1916.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. INTRODUCTION. . . . .	1
Definition of the Problem . . . . .	1
Approach to the Problem. . . . .	3
Purposes of This Study . . . . .	4
The Scope of This study . . . . .	5
The Procedure Followed in This Study . . . . .	5
The Distinctiveness of This Study . . . . .	7
Definition of Terms . . . . .	8
Sect . . . . .	8
Church . . . . .	8
Denomination . . . . .	9
Holiness, Holiness Church . . . . .	9
Abbreviations and Shortened Forms . . . . .	9
II. HISTORY OF THE HOLINESS MOVEMENT . . . . .	11
Church, Sect, and Association . . . . .	12
Church and Sect . . . . .	12
Church and Sect in America . . . . .	14
Church, Sect, and the Holiness Movement . . . . .	16
The Holiness Association . . . . .	18

CHAPTER	PAGE
Methodist Schisms, 1830-1860 . . . . .	19
The Wesleyan Methodist Church . . . . .	20
The Free Methodist Church . . . . .	27
Holiness Revivalism, 1840-1910 . . . . .	32
Holiness Associations and the Rise of the Holiness	
Sects, 1867-1930 . . . . .	36
United Missionary Church . . . . .	44
Pilgrim Holiness Church . . . . .	47
The Holiness Movement, 1930-1966 . . . . .	51
Holiness Sects in Transition . . . . .	51
Evangelical Methodist Church . . . . .	54
Re-alignment of Holiness People? . . . . .	56
The NHA in Transition . . . . .	59
The Winds of Ecumenicity . . . . .	62
Summary . . . . .	65
III. SURVEY OF PAST AND PRESENT MOVES TOWARD UNITY . .	68
Merger Attempts . . . . .	68
Past Mergers . . . . .	68
Unsuccessful Merger Attempts . . . . .	71
Merger Negotiations Now in Progress . . . . .	74
Summary of Merger Attempts . . . . .	75
Interdenominational Cooperation . . . . .	75

CHAPTER	PAGE
Cooperative Associations . . . . .	76
Publications . . . . .	76
Missions . . . . .	78
Education . . . . .	79
Other Areas of Cooperation . . . . .	81
The New Federation Proposal . . . . .	81
Summary . . . . .	84
 <b>IV. FREE METHODIST - WESLEYAN METHODIST</b>	
NEGOTIATIONS, 1943-1955 . . . . .	86
Earlier History . . . . .	86
Beginnings of the 1943-55 Attempt . . . . .	92
Developments, 1943-47 . . . . .	94
First Joint Commission Meeting . . . . .	94
Second Joint Commission Meeting . . . . .	99
Third Joint Commission Meeting . . . . .	101
Fourth Joint Commission Meeting . . . . .	104
Fifth Joint Commission Meeting . . . . .	105
The General Conferences of 1947 . . . . .	106
Summary . . . . .	109
Developments, 1947-51 . . . . .	110
Sixth Joint Commission Meeting . . . . .	111
Seventh Joint Commission Meeting . . . . .	116

CHAPTER	PAGE
Eighth Joint Commission Meeting . . . . .	118
Ninth Joint Commission Meeting . . . . .	119
Tenth Joint Commission Meeting . . . . .	122
Eleventh Joint Commission Meeting . . . . .	123
The General Conferences of 1951 . . . . .	123
Developments, 1951-55 . . . . .	125
Twelfth Joint Commission Meeting . . . . .	126
Seventeenth Joint Commission Meeting . . . . .	127
Completion of Proposed Discipline . . . . .	127
The Question in 1955 . . . . .	128
The Free Methodist General Conference of 1955 . . . . .	130
The Wesleyan Methodist General Conference of 1955 . . . . .	131
The Closing of Negotiations . . . . .	133
Major Obstacles of Merger . . . . .	134
Mutual Ignorance . . . . .	135
Matters of Polity . . . . .	137
Summary . . . . .	143
Basic Features of the Union Proposal . . . . .	144
Doctrine . . . . .	144
Standards of Conduct . . . . .	145
General Government . . . . .	146
Annual Conference . . . . .	147



CHAPTER	PAGE
Ritual . . . . .	148
Transitional Provisions . . . . .	149
Summary of Basic Features . . . . .	150
General Evaluation . . . . .	151
The Merger Debate . . . . .	152
The Arguments For Merger . . . . .	154
The Arguments Against Merger . . . . .	159
Evaluation of the Merger Debate . . . . .	173
Why the Attempt Failed . . . . .	175
Immediate Factors . . . . .	175
Underlying Factors. . . . .	181
Summary . . . . .	187
Prospects . . . . .	188
 V. UNITED MISSIONARY - EVANGELICAL METHODIST	
NEGOTIATIONS, 1961-1965 . . . . .	190
The Opening of Negotiations . . . . .	191
History of the Negotiations . . . . .	194
Joint Ministerial Convention . . . . .	197
Fraternal Committee Meeting, December, 1964. . . . .	198
Meeting of Evangelical Methodist Executive Council, February, 1965 . . . . .	199

CHAPTER	PAGE
United Missionary General Conference of 1965 . . . .	200
Evangelical Methodist Annual Conferences of 1965. . .	202
Recent Developments . . . . .	205
Major Obstacles to Merger . . . . .	206
Differences in Doctrine, Standards, and Polity . . . .	207
Differing Views Toward Merger Generally . . . . .	209
Basic Features of the Union Proposal . . . . .	212
Name . . . . .	212
Central Organization . . . . .	212
Districts . . . . .	213
Educational Philosophy . . . . .	213
Ministerial Orders . . . . .	213
Pastoral Placement . . . . .	215
Church Property . . . . .	214
Baptism and Child Dedication . . . . .	214
Standards of Membership . . . . .	215
New Discipline . . . . .	216
Summary . . . . .	216
Why the Attempt Failed . . . . .	217
Differences in Sectness . . . . .	218
Prospects . . . . .	218

CHAPTER	PAGE
<b>VI. WESLEYAN METHODIST - PILGRIM HOLINESS</b>	
<b>NEGOTIATIONS, 1955-1966 . . . . .</b>	<b>220</b>
Earlier History . . . . .	220
Beginnings of the 1955-66 Attempt . . . . .	223
<b>Developments, 1955-59 . . . . .</b>	<b>226</b>
First Joint Commission Meeting . . . . .	226
Second Joint Commission Meeting . . . . .	228
Summary of 1957-58 Negotiations . . . . .	231
Pilgrim Holiness General Conference of 1958 . . . . .	231
Wesleyan Methodist General Conference of 1959 . . . . .	231
<b>Developments, 1959-66 . . . . .</b>	<b>235</b>
Pilgrim Holiness General Conference of 1962 . . . . .	235
Wesleyan Methodist Board of Administration . . . . .	
Action, 1962 . . . . .	236
Wesleyan Methodist General Conference of 1963 . . . . .	237
First Joint Commission Meeting . . . . .	239
Second and Third Joint Commission Meetings . . . . .	239
Fourth Joint Commission Meeting . . . . .	240
Fifth Joint Commission Meeting . . . . .	241
<b>Wesleyan Methodist - Reformed Baptist</b>	
Considerations . . . . .	243
<b>Wesleyan Methodist Conference Problems . . . . .</b>	<b>243</b>

CHAPTER	PAGE
Summary . . . . .	246
Basic Features of the Union Proposal . . . . .	246
Name . . . . .	246
Constitution . . . . .	247
Constitutional Amendment . . . . .	247
Articles of Religion . . . . .	247
Ministerial and Lay Representation . . . . .	248
Pastoral Call . . . . .	248
General Conference Composition . . . . .	249
General Superintendency . . . . .	249
Control of Schools . . . . .	250
Standards of the Christian Life . . . . .	251
Conference Boundaries . . . . .	252
College Area Boundaries . . . . .	252
Evaluation . . . . .	252
The Merger Debate . . . . .	253
The Arguments For Merger . . . . .	254
The Arguments Against Merger . . . . .	263
Evaluation of the Merger Debate . . . . .	268
Major Obstacles to Merger . . . . .	270
Mutual Ignorance . . . . .	272
Fear of Centralization of Power . . . . .	272

CHAPTER	PAGE
Fear of Schism . . . . .	274
Ecclesiocentrism . . . . .	275
Prospects . . . . .	276
 <b>VII. UNITY AND THE HOLINESS CHURCHES: BASIC</b>	
PROBLEMS . . . . .	278
Doctrines . . . . .	279
Prudentials . . . . .	280
Polity . . . . .	283
Institutionalism . . . . .	284
Institutionalism and Tradition . . . . .	286
Institutionalism and Denominational Differences . . . . .	288
Vested Interests . . . . .	289
Excess Personnel . . . . .	290
Problem of Established Programs . . . . .	290
Institutionalism and Over-All Purpose . . . . .	291
Institutionalism and the Transition Period . . . . .	292
Ecclesiocentrism . . . . .	292
Socio-Economic Differences . . . . .	297
Mutual Ignorance and Prejudice . . . . .	299
Comparative Size . . . . .	302
Danger of Schism . . . . .	304
Summary . . . . .	306

CHAPTER	PAGE
VIII. THE HOLINESS CHURCHES AND THE LARGER	
ECUMENICAL PERSPECTIVE . . . . .	307
Attitudes Toward Ecumenism . . . . .	308
Evaluation . . . . .	316
Unity Moves as an Expression of Ecumenism . . . . .	329
Attitudes Toward Merger . . . . .	329
"Holiness Ecumenicity". . . . .	331
The Churches and the Holiness Witness . . . . .	336
Future Role of NHA . . . . .	337
Limits of Holiness Ecumenicity . . . . .	339
Ecumenism and the Evangelical-Fundamentalist	
Tension . . . . .	341
Ecumenical Questions Facing the Holiness Churches . . . . .	346
Basic Attitude Toward the Ecumenical Movement . . . . .	346
Ecumenical Cooperation . . . . .	348
Basic Attitude Toward Christian Unity . . . . .	349
Extent of Unity . . . . .	351
Prospects . . . . .	353
IX. MAJOR CONCLUSIONS OF THIS STUDY . . . . .	355
History of the Holiness Movement . . . . .	355
Past and Present Moves Toward Unity . . . . .	357
Merger Negotiations . . . . .	358

CHAPTER	PAGE
Free Methodist – Wesleyan Methodist Negotiations . . .	358
United Missionary – Evangelical Methodist	
Negotiations . . . . .	359
Wesleyan Methodist – Pilgrim Holiness	
Negotiations . . . . .	360
General Conclusions Concerning Merger . . . . .	361
Basic Problems . . . . .	363
The Larger Ecumenical Perspective . . . . .	364
<b>X. SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY . . . . .</b>	<b>367</b>
History of the Holiness Movement . . . . .	367
Sect and Church . . . . .	367
Rise of the Holiness Sects . . . . .	368
Role of NHA . . . . .	369
Past and Present Moves Toward Unity . . . . .	369
Free Methodist – Wesleyan Methodist Negotiations . . . . .	369
United Missionary – Evangelical Methodist	
Negotiations . . . . .	369
Wesleyan Methodist – Pilgrim Holiness Negotiations . . . . .	370
Basic Problems . . . . .	370
Doctrine . . . . .	370
Prudentials . . . . .	370
Polity . . . . .	370

CHAPTER	PAGE
Institutionalism . . . . .	371
Ecclesiocentrism . . . . .	371
Socio-Economic Differences . . . . .	372
Mutual Ignorance and Prejudice . . . . .	372
Comparative Size . . . . .	373
Danger of Schism . . . . .	373
Additional Studies of Basic Problems . . . . .	373
The Larger Ecumenical Perspective . . . . .	374
BIBLIOGRAPHY . . . . .	376
APPENDIX A: PRELIMINARY QUESTIONNAIRE . . . . .	396
APPENDIX B: CURRENT MEMBERSHIP OF NHA-AFFILIATED DENOMINATIONS . . . . .	398
APPENDIX C: RATE OF GROWTH IN MEMBERSHIP OF THE FREE METHODIST, WESLEYAN METHODIST AND PILGRIM HOLINESS CHURCHES . . . . .	399
APPENDIX D: BASIS FOR MERGER AND PROPOSED CON- STITUTION FOR THE WESLEYAN CHURCH . . . . .	400
APPENDIX E: MANIFESTO AND CONSTITUTION OF THE SOCIETY FOR THE PRESERVATION OF PRIMITIVE WESLEYAN METHODIST . . . . .	408
APPENDIX F: "ONE IN CHRIST," PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS TO THE NATIONAL HOLINESS ASSOCIATION, 1966 . . . . .	410



## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

The waves of influence issuing from the life of John Wesley have radiated out to touch many aspects of world history in the past two hundred years.

One of these influences has been the wave of holiness teaching in America which has rolled down the years of the past century and today finds its main vitality in nearly a dozen small denominations which officially adhere to and teach the doctrine of entire sanctification as taught by Wesley.

The fact that the Wesleyan holiness witness is thus fragmented in America today is, essentially, the problem with which this thesis deals. The general title of this thesis, "Unity and the Holiness Churches," suggests the broadest reaches of this study. More specifically, however, this thesis purports to be "A Study of Moves Toward Unity among Selected American Protestant Denominations Affiliated with the National Holiness Association."

#### I. DEFINITION OF THE PROBLEM

It is the intention of this study to deal with denominations which are committed to and which promote the doctrine of entire sanctification as taught by John Wesley--in other words, denominations which rather closely adhere to what is commonly called Wesleyan-Arminian theology. In view of the rather large group of denominations which consider themselves in some sense holiness or Wesleyan groups, for this study some limiting factor was required. Affiliation with the Na-

tional Holiness Association was chosen as this limiting factor for the following reasons:

1. Affiliation with NHA is on the basis of a commitment to the Wesleyan interpretation of entire sanctification and further assumes an active promotion of the doctrine;

2. There is therefore a significant doctrinal agreement among these denominations;

3. In recent years the NHA has been serving as an agent to promote unity among the affiliated denominations.

Denominations now affiliate members of the National Holiness Association are:

Brethren in Christ  
 Churches of Christ in Christian Union  
 Evangelical Methodist Church  
 Free Methodist Church  
 Holiness Christian Church  
 Ohio Yearly Meeting of Friends  
 Pilgrim Holiness Church  
 Rocky Mountain Yearly Meeting of Friends  
 Salvation Army  
 Wesleyan Methodist Church  
 United Missionary Church  
 Pacific Northwest Conference of the Evangelical United Brethren Church<sup>1</sup>

Several Holiness denominations are not members of the National Holiness Association, most notably the Church of the Nazarene.

This study is thus concerned with the holiness churches, and especially

---

<sup>1</sup>National Holiness Association, "Officers, National Holiness Association, 1965-66," Marion, Indiana, n. d. (mimeographed).

with those denominations affiliated with the National Holiness Association. Further, from the NHA denominations five have been selected to receive especial study: the Free Methodist, Wesleyan Methodist, Pilgrim Holiness, Evangelical Methodist, and United Missionary churches. These have been selected because they have fairly recently been engaged in merger negotiations.

This study, then, attempts to investigate moves toward unity (1) among the holiness churches of America generally, (2) but primarily among the denominations affiliated with the NHA, and especially (3) involving five denominations which have attempted merger in comparatively recent years.

## II. APPROACH TO THE PROBLEM

Three possible approaches to the problem of unity and the holiness churches were considered by the writer. One possibility would have been to make an exclusively historical study. Another would have been to make a concentrated study of one or two specific merger attempts. A third approach would have been to study the similarities and differences of the holiness churches, making an attempt to find common ground for greater unity.

The last approach was eventually ruled out because, in the opinion of this writer, such a study would be superficial without a prior thorough investigation of the larger issues involved in this matter. The strictly historical approach was ruled out because of the writer's desire to deal with the problem from a contemporary perspective. The second approach, that of limiting the study to specific merger attempts, was not considered wholly satisfactory because without historical per-

spective it would be shallow; also because of the writer's desire to set this whole matter in the largest possible perspective.

The approach decided upon was one which would study three specific merger attempts, but would set these in the perspective of the history of the holiness movement and in the perspective of the larger question of church unity today.

In the opinion of the writer, this approach is justified because (1) no previous studies have been done which treat unity and the holiness churches in such broad perspective, and (2) such a broad study is needed as a foundation for further studies, such as studies of specific problems involved in merging holiness churches.

### III. PURPOSES OF THIS STUDY

In harmony with the approach outlined above, the purposes of this study are:

1. To survey past and present moves toward unity within the holiness churches (Chapters II and III);
2. To investigate and analyze specific merger negotiations between certain holiness denominations (Chapters IV, V, and VI);
3. To identify and analyze those factors which work against unity among the holiness churches (primarily Chapter VII);
4. To set the problem of unity and the holiness churches in the larger church unity perspective (Chapter VIII);
5. To draw some conclusions concerning the foregoing matters (Chapter IX);
6. To identify areas where further study is needed (Chapter X).

#### IV. THE SCOPE OF THIS STUDY

A glance at the table of contents reveals this study is rather broad in scope. This breadth has been deliberate. Since this is in a sense a pioneer study, it was considered more profitable to view the question at hand broadly, at whatever necessary sacrifice to depth. Therefore the following observations concerning the scope of this study are pertinent:

1. The historical survey presented in Chapter II is not intended to be exhaustive. This is an attempt to see the history of the holiness movement from the perspective of this study, not to fully document the history of the holiness churches.

2. The studies of merger attempts included herein are not complete. As will be noted in the text, there are aspects of these merger attempts which could well be studied at much greater length.

3. The writer considers the conclusions arrived at in this study as tentative. It is not supposed that the conclusions suggested have been "proved." Rather these are, in the writer's evaluation, the conclusions to which such evidence as is presented herein seems to be pointing. Each conclusion should in itself be considered an invitation to further investigation.

#### V. THE PROCEDURE FOLLOWED IN THIS STUDY

The investigation for this study has been carried out according to the following procedure:

1. A questionnaire was prepared and sent to two officials of each of the

denominations affiliated with the NHA. In cases where these were not returned a questionnaire was later sent to a third official. In this way questionnaire responses were received from all but one of the NHA denominations. Through this questionnaire the present extent of unity and cooperation among the holiness churches was ascertained. It was on the basis of these questionnaire responses that the merger negotiations to be studied in detail were selected. A sample of this questionnaire is included as Appendix A.

2. The official organs of the denominations which had participated in the mergers studied herein were reviewed for the years in which merger was under consideration. This involved reviewing the following publications for the years indicated:

The Free Methodist - 1943-56

The Wesleyan Methodist - 1943-66

Pilgrim Holiness Advocate - 1955-66

Voice of Evangelical Methodism - 1960-66

Gospel Banner - 1960-66

This review provided a large amount of the material concerning merger negotiations presented in Chapters IV, V, and VI, as well as some of the material for Chapter VIII, "The Holiness Churches and the Larger Ecumenical Perspective."

3. Primarily through a number of personal letters an attempt was made to locate unpublished materials relating to merger negotiations. This attempt was not entirely successful, but considerable material, especially concerning the Free Methodist - Wesleyan Methodist negotiations, was located. Denominational officials

were understandably reluctant to allow access to materials concerning merger negotiations which are still pending.

4. Answers to a number of questions which came to light in the study of merger negotiations were requested and received from several denominational officials and former officials, and these proved very helpful.

5. Available denominational materials, particularly official histories, disciplines, and manuals, were utilized and contributed significantly to various parts of this study.

6. Several publications relating to the history of the holiness movement, in addition to denominational histories, were reviewed for their contribution to Chapter II.

7. For perspective, general reading on the ecumenical movement and on denominationalism was carried on during the course of the other aspects of this investigation. This was especially helpful in writing Chapters II and VIII.

8. Various other miscellaneous materials, some sought and some unsought, have come to the attention of the writer during the course of his investigation and have been utilized where appropriate.

## VI. THE DISTINCTIVENESS OF THIS STUDY

So far as the present writer has been able to determine, no study such as this has ever been attempted. The only remotely similar study is a master's thesis done at Butler University in 1960 by Chester Wilkins entitled, "A Review of the Recently Proposed Union of the Wesleyan Methodist Church and the Pilgrim Holi-

ness Church."<sup>2</sup> While Wilkins gives a good review and analysis of the basic issues in the Wesleyan-Pilgrim merger negotiations, his scope is more limited than that of the present study. Also his consideration of some of the issues involved in this merger attempt is more detailed than is presented here (Chapter VI). There is, however, no significant overlapping of the two studies.

## VII. DEFINITION OF TERMS

Definitions of several terms frequently used herein and the use of certain abbreviations and shortened forms need to be given.

### Sect

The term "sect" is used to refer to any religious organization which arose as a result of a schism within a larger body and which, in reaction to circumstances within the parent group, emphasized, at least at first, certain characteristics more or less peculiar to itself.

In this sense all the present-day holiness denominations may be described as sects, or at least as having been sects when they were first organized. It should be clearly understood that the term is never used in this study in a necessarily derogatory or critical sense, nor is the term synonymous with the term "cult."

### Church

This term is not used in any specialized sense herein except when con-

---

<sup>2</sup>Chester Wilkins, "A Review of the Recently Proposed Union of the Wes-



trusted with "sect," in which case it indicates a type of religious organization at the opposite extreme from the sect-type. Ordinarily the term is used in its usual range of senses, as determined by context, and frequently is used synonymously with the word "denomination." The word is capitalized only when it is part of a denominational name or when it refers to the one true Church, the Body of Christ.

### Denomination

A "denomination" is not considered in this study to be a type of religious organization distinct from a "sect" or a "church." Any established, organized, independent religious society maintaining its own ministry and its own local churches is considered to be a denomination.

### Holiness, Holiness Church

Although the terms in other contexts may have different meanings or connotations, in this study "holiness" has reference to the doctrine of entire sanctification as taught by John Wesley, and a "holiness church" is one which adheres to and promotes this doctrine.

### Abbreviations and Shortened Forms

To conserve space and make the text more readable, the names of the holiness denominations and of the National Holiness Association will be abbreviated occasionally in this study by using initials--as, for example, NHA, WM, UM for

---

leyan Methodist Church and the Pilgrim Holiness Church" (unpublished master's thesis; Butler University, Indianapolis, Indiana, 1960).

National Holiness Association, Wesleyan Methodist, United Missionary. These are used sparingly and only in contexts where there is little danger of confusion. Such a practice is especially helpful in referring to merger negotiations and finds a precedent in the case studies included in Ehrenstrom and Muelder, Institutionalism and Church Unity.<sup>3</sup>

Also for ease in reading, certain cumbersome phrases are shortened to more readable forms when they are repeatedly used. In particular, the phrase "NHA denomination" is frequently used to refer to denominations affiliated with the National Holiness Association, and in referring to merger negotiations shortened forms of the denominational names are often used, as, for example, "Wesleyan-Pilgrim" for "Wesleyan Methodist - Pilgrim Holiness."

---

<sup>3</sup>Nils Ehrenstrom and Walter G. Muelder (eds.), Institutionalism and Church Unity (New York: Association Press, 1963), 378 pp.

## CHAPTER II

### HISTORY OF THE HOLINESS MOVEMENT

The history of the holiness movement in the United States--and particularly of the present day denominations which are an outgrowth of the movement--is a fascinating study, and as complicated as it is fascinating. Unraveling the intertwining strands of denominational histories reveals that no denomination was born in a vacuum, and to some extent the history of any one of these denominations is the history of the others.

It is not possible, nor the intention, to give here a full account of the history of the holiness movement. On the other hand, the story of unity among holiness churches inevitably runs back into the history of the movement. Thus it was felt to be essential to trace the history of the movement with particular reference to the matter of cooperation and unity.

This, then, is a brief history of the holiness movement from the perspective of this paper. Since five specific holiness denominations are given particular attention in this paper by virtue of merger negotiations in which they have participated, the origins of these churches will especially be noted here.

Inasmuch as the historical rootage of holiness denominations is inseparably related to the questions of sectarianism, denominationalism, and related problems of ecclesiology, some consideration is given here to the church-sect distinction as set forth by Ernst Troeltsch and elaborated with reference to the American scene by Liston Pope and H. Richard Niebuhr. This emphasis is the more essential because church

and sect, schism and union, are in essence parts of the same whole. Schisms are often the precursors of union, as will be seen, and what to one man is a move toward unity may to another seem divisive.

While specific periods of years have been suggested in the subheading of this chapter, these are not intended as rigid or mutually exclusive. Indeed, some overlapping will be seen in the use of the dates. The dates serve only to indicate, in a general sort of way, temporal periods into which the material in each section falls.

## I. CHURCH, SECT, AND ASSOCIATION

Institutionally, the history of the holiness movement involves established and recognized churches, newly arising sects, and, in some sense mediating between these two, independent holiness associations.

### Church and Sect

Ernst Troeltsch, in his monumental Social Teachings of the Christian Churches, makes a distinction between Christian religious bodies, using the terms "church-type" and "sect-type."<sup>1</sup> While the distinction was originally made with reference to medieval Roman Catholicism, it is useful also to American Protestant religious history.

According to Troeltsch the church, as contrasted with the sect, is charac-

---

<sup>1</sup>Ernst Troeltsch, The Social Teachings of the Christian Churches, trans. Olive Wyon (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1949), I, 331-343.

terized by inclusiveness, social conservatism, and identification with the established order. The sect, on the other hand, tends to be exclusive, opposed to and set apart from the existing order, and highly individualistic. Says Troeltsch:

The essence of the Church is its objective institutional character. The individual is born into it, and through infant baptism he comes under its miraculous influence. . . . The one vitally important thing is that every individual should come within the range of the influence of these saving energies of grace, . . . on the other hand, her stability is entirely unaffected by the fact of the extent to which her influence over all individuals is actually attained.<sup>2</sup>

But the sect is different from this. Individuals are not born into the sect, but join of their own free will. Each individual has his place of importance and responsibility. There is an intense and exclusive inter-personal fellowship which is basic. Its only universal emphasis is eschatological; in this life it maintains an exclusiveness which demands exacting personal loyalty and effort and frowns upon extra-sect forms of fellowship and association. Thus the sect "gathers a select group of the elect, and places it in sharp opposition to the world."<sup>3</sup>

Troeltsch described the sect as maintaining an asceticism which

. . . is expressed in the refusal to use the law, to swear in a court of justice, to own property, to exercise dominion over others, or to take part in war. . . . In all things the ideal of the sects is essentially . . . a union of love which is not affected by the social inequalities and struggles of the world.<sup>4</sup>

The sect aspires after personal inward perfection and strong group cohesiveness. In the nature of the case, therefore, sects tend to be small. It follows

---

<sup>2</sup>ibid., pp. 338-339.

<sup>3</sup>ibid., pp. 339-340.

<sup>4</sup>ibid., pp. 332-333.

also that, in contrast to the church, the sects "are connected with the lower classes, or at least with those elements in Society which are opposed to the State and to Society; they work upwards from below, and not downwards from above."<sup>5</sup>

It should be observed that Troeltsch used neither the term "church" nor the term "sect" in a necessarily derogatory sense. Indeed, while the customary church (and thus majority) view regards the sects as "inferior side-issues, one-sided phenomena, exaggerations or abbreviations of ecclesiastical Christianity," yet generally the sects are called into existence by the shortcoming of the established churches. Thus, "very often in the so-called 'sects' it is precisely the essential elements of the Gospel which are fully expressed;..."<sup>6</sup> On the other hand, the "passionate party polemics of the sects" fail to take into account legitimate reasons for the churches' lack of enthusiasm toward the sects.<sup>7</sup> Says Troeltsch,

The all important point is this that both types are a logical result of the Gospel, and only conjointly do they exhaust the whole range of its sociological influence, and thus also indirectly of its social results, which are always connected with the religious organizations.<sup>8</sup>

### Church and Sect in America

In tracing the rise of denominations in America, H. Richard Niebuhr made use of Troeltsch's church-sect classification in his Social Sources of Denominationalism.<sup>9</sup> Niebuhr, the soundness of whose book "in theory and application

---

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 331.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., pp. 333-334.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 334.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., pp. 340-341.

<sup>9</sup>H. Richard Niebuhr, The Social Sources of Denominationalism (Cleveland: The World Publishing Company, 1964 [Copyright 1929]).

has been widely upheld,"<sup>10</sup> held that sects arise among the lower classes and then tend to rise to respectability, in the process taking on the characteristics of churches. Niebuhr explains,

Were spiritual energies to develop unchecked they would scarcely issue in the formation of such denominations as now compose Christianity. Religious energies are dammed up, confined to narrow channels, split into parallel streams, by the non-religious distinctions and classifications of Christians. The source of a religious movement, therefore, need not be economic for its results to take on a definitely economic character. On the other hand, economic conditions may supply the occasion for the rise of a new religious movement without determining its religious value.<sup>11</sup>

The three most basic of these "non-religious distinctions and classifications" on the American scene, Niebuhr holds, have been sectionalism, the heterogeneity of an immigrant population, and the existence of two separate races.<sup>12</sup>

Niebuhr documents the socio-economic rise of various American denominations, showing that

...one phase of the history of denominationalism reveals itself as the story of the religiously neglected poor, who fashion a new type of Christianity which corresponds to their distinctive needs, who rise in the economic scale under the influence of religious discipline, and who, in the midst of a freshly acquired cultural respectability, neglect the new poor succeeding them on the lower plane. This pattern recurs with remarkable regularity in the history of Christianity. Anabaptists, Quakers, Methodists, Salvation Army, and more recent sects of like type illustrate this rise and progress of the churches of the disinherited.<sup>13</sup>

---

<sup>10</sup>Robert Lee, The Social Sources of Church Unity (New York: Abingdon Press, 1960), p. 17.

<sup>11</sup>Niebuhr, op.cit., pp. 27-28.

<sup>12</sup>ibid., p. 135.

<sup>13</sup>ibid., p. 28.

One should not generalize that all sects necessarily fit this exact pattern. That it holds fairly regularly among sects which arise among the poor, however, Niebuhr has well documented.

In his study of Gaston County, North Carolina, Liston Pope has underscored the way sects in time tend to become churches.<sup>14</sup> Pope shows that

...the relation between the Church type and the sect type is to be interpreted, broadly, in dynamic terms. Though many other factors underlie its emergence, the sect arises as a schism from a parent ecclesiastical body, either a Church or a previous sect. It then becomes a distinct and independent type of religious organization but moves, if it survives, increasingly toward the Church type.<sup>15</sup>

The sect, if and as it is successful in its evangelism, begins to strive for greater effectiveness and influence. In the process it gradually accommodates to the prevailing culture, making itself attractive to a greater number of people but estranging itself from the group which it initially served.

Though at any given moment of transition the rising sect is associated especially with one economic group, it does not necessarily carry that group as it moves on. There is no indication that classes rise as classes but there is proof that denominations do.<sup>16</sup>

### Church, Sect, and the Holiness Movement

A review of the history of the holiness movement in America suggests that the behavior of the holiness sects has been essentially in line with sect characteristics and development as set forth by Troeltsch, Niebuhr, and Pope. As will be seen

---

<sup>14</sup>Liston Pope, Millhands and Preachers, A Study of Gastonia (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1942), pp. 117-140.

<sup>15</sup>ibid., p. 118.

<sup>16</sup>ibid., p. 119.



in the succeeding sections of this chapter, the behavioral pattern of the holiness groups has been as follows:

Usually a new holiness sect comes into existence in reaction to some set of circumstances in the parent church--doctrinal issues, social issues (for example, slavery), oppressive church government, religious practices. In most cases the preaching and practice of the doctrine of entire sanctification is an issue, but it is not always the decisive one. Influencing these factors may be socio-economic factors--for example, sects may arise in rural areas, which are generally more conservative.

The new holiness sect, in reaction, tends toward opposite extremes on the issues involved in its origin. If standards of personal conduct were neglected, the sect will emphasize these; if episcopal oppression was an issue, the sect will adopt a congregational polity. And it will emphasize holiness to the extent that doctrine was an issue in its origin.

How great an extreme a new sect goes to depends, chiefly, on the seriousness of the original conflict, the saneness and balance of the sect's leadership, the cultural and educational level of the group, and probably other factors. In time, however, the new sect begins a process of accommodation to the prevailing culture, moving away from the original extreme to a more central position and toward a more established ecclesiastical structure.

The extent to which the above factors can vary from situation to situation should caution one, however, from generalizing that all holiness sects are always alike. The holiness sects vary, chiefly in the following ways:

1. Doctrinally they are orthodox (in contrast to those sects which should more properly be called cults), but they may vary in their doctrinal emphasis, reflecting the issues prominent at the time of origin.

2. Holiness sects vary in their non-doctrinal distinctives (the points at which they react), again reflecting the issues involved in their origin.

3. Holiness sects vary in the extent of reaction, depending, as was noted above, on the original conflict, leadership, cultural level, and other factors. Thus two sects may emphasize the same matters, but to differing degrees.

4. Holiness sects vary in the rate of accommodation to the prevailing culture.

These differences suggest part of the reason why holiness sects have not united more frequently than they have. There are, of course, other differences between the holiness groups, but the ones cited above appear most significant from the standpoint of holiness denominations viewed as sects.

### The Holiness Association

One final point should be noted in regard to the application of the church-sect classifications to the holiness denominations. This has to do with the unique role of the independent holiness association.

In contrast to the origin of most non-holiness sects, and largely as a result of a continuing holiness emphasis within the Methodist Church, with the holiness sects there was often a preliminary associational stage before the formation of the sect. The controversy within the parent church was often not so great but that those

who professed holiness were hesitant to withdraw and form a new group. Often, therefore independent, interdenominational holiness associations, local or regional, were formed. These, at first, consisted largely of members of the established churches, especially the Methodist Church. Frequently, however, the independent association became the basis for a new holiness sect, even against the wishes of some of the leadership. This pattern will be noted in more detail in a later section of this chapter.<sup>17</sup>

## II. METHODIST SCHISMS, 1830-1860

The holiness revival within American Methodism, which flourished especially between 1850 and 1900, provided the vitality that eventually resulted in most of the present-day holiness denominations. A not unrelated development, however, was the rash of schisms which took place within the Methodist Episcopal Church between 1830 and 1860. There were four such schisms, not counting the division of the Methodist Protestant Church into northern and southern branches at the time of the Civil War. These were:<sup>18</sup>

1830 - Formation of the Methodist Protestant Church

1843 - Formation of the Wesleyan Methodist Church

---

<sup>17</sup>Infra, pp. 36-44.

<sup>18</sup>Joseph L. Allen, "The Methodist Union in the United States," Institutionalism and Church Unity, Nils Ehrenstrom and Walter G. Muelder, editors (New York: Association Press, 1963), p. 278; Ira Ford McLeister and Roy S. Nicholson, History of the Wesleyan Methodist Church of America (revised edition; Syracuse, New York: The Wesley Press, 1951), pp. 27-29; Leslie R. Marston, From Age to Age A Living Witness (Winona Lake, Indiana: Light and Life Press, 1960), p. 249 ff.

1844 - Division of the Methodist Episcopal Church into northern and southern branches

1860 - Formation of the Free Methodist Church

Joseph L. Allen gives the following account of the formation of the Methodist Protestant Church. It is cited here because of the similarity of the issues to those in later schisms.

In late 1827 a convention of reformers drew up an appeal to the next General Conference. Their main request was for lay representation in the church government. Moreover, they defended a member's right to trial by jury within the church and his right to criticize freely the church's practices. The 1828 General Conference only offered them assurance against further expulsions and granted the dubious right to those already expelled to return upon admission of their errors. Dissatisfied with the result, the reformers made plans to withdraw from the denomination, and in 1830 there convened the first General Conference of the Methodist Protestant Church. The new denomination adopted a Presbyterian polity with a president instead of bishops and established equal representation for laymen and clergy in church government.<sup>19</sup>

The nature of the issues in this dispute, plus the fact that the same issues were to arise later, indicate the dissatisfaction that must have existed in the Methodist Episcopal Church, particularly among the reforming element, with the episcopal form of government as then operating.

### The Wesleyan Methodist Church

The Wesleyan Methodist Church was formed in 1843, primarily from ministers and laymen who had left the Methodist Episcopal Church over reasons similar to those involved in the Methodist Protestant secession.

---

<sup>19</sup>Allen, *op. cit.*, p. 279.

The principal difference with the Wesleyan Methodists was the primacy of the slavery issue. From about 1835 until 1843, and especially during the late 1830's, a battle raged in the Methodist conferences of New England and upper New York, "testing whether the bishops could restrain the moral sentiment of their church,..."<sup>20</sup> Principals in the battle were the Reverend Orange Scott, an abolitionist reformer-evangelist, and Bishop Elijah Hedding.<sup>21</sup>

Scott, while serving as a presiding elder, had been active in stirring up antislavery sentiment in the New England area. Apparently in retaliation, Bishop Hedding transferred Scott from the Springfield to the Providence district, and eventually removed him from the presiding eldership altogether.

Scott accepted appointment as pastor at Lowell, Massachusetts, where he set about "to secure the outpouring of the Holy Spirit among the people" and so "to bring all over to the cause of Christ, and the bleeding slave."<sup>22</sup>

This campaign was highly successful and, perhaps as a result, Scott the next year became a full-time agent of the American Antislavery Society, still maintaining his Methodist membership. Scott's practice of arranging antislavery lectures at the seat of Methodist conferences further antagonized Bishop Hedding, who was nevertheless overwhelmingly defeated when he brought charges against Scott in the 1838 conference. When the bishops were able to tighten control over the situation,

---

<sup>20</sup>Timothy L. Smith, Revivalism and Social Reform in Mid-Nineteenth Century America (New York: Abingdon Press, 1957), p. 184.

<sup>21</sup>ibid.

<sup>22</sup>ibid.

Scott withdrew from the church.<sup>23</sup>

Scott's secession came in late 1842. Four other ministers withdrew about the same time. Scott began publication of The True Wesleyan in which he printed the following call:

A Wesleyan Anti-Slavery Convention will be held in the Methodist Church in Andover, Massachusetts, on Wednesday, the first day of February, 1843, to commence at ten o'clock, A. M. The principal object of the Convention is to discuss principles, pass resolutions, and prepare for a grand rally in the Spring.

All, both ministers and laymen, who are in favor of the ultimate formation of a Wesleyan Methodist Church, free from Episcopacy and Slavery, are invited to attend and become members of the Convention.<sup>24</sup>

This convention met as scheduled and in addition to passing twenty-one antislavery resolutions called for the organization of a new branch of Methodism. Forty-three laymen and nine ministers attended.<sup>25</sup>

In response to this call for a new denomination, thirty-five ministers and one hundred seventeen laymen met in late May and early June, 1843,

To form a Wesleyan Methodist Church...free from episcopacy and slavery, and embracing a system of itineracy under proper limitations and restrictions, with such disciplinary regulations as are necessary to preserve and promote experimental and practical godliness.<sup>26</sup>

The new denomination was accordingly formed, and the first general conference was held the following year.

The specific antislavery pronouncement and the abandonment of episcopacy

---

<sup>23</sup>Ibid., pp. 184-185.

<sup>24</sup>McLeister and Nicholson, op. cit., p. 28.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid., pp. 28-29

<sup>26</sup>Ibid., p. 31.

were in keeping with the sectarian tendency to react at the points where there had been controversy. The mention of "experimental and practical godliness" indicates the doctrinally conservative nature of the founding group, but the omission of any reference to entire sanctification suggests this doctrine was not an issue and was doubtless taken for granted. The 1844 general conference added an article on entire sanctification, later ratified by the church, which "establishes the fact that from its origin the Wesleyan Methodist Connection was a holiness Church," though not particularly self-consciously so at first.<sup>27</sup>

This new sect was more congregational, as implied in the call to the founding convention, than its parent body. This was reflected in the name chosen, "The Wesleyan Methodist Connection." The Reverend Luther Lee, one of the founders, commented on the name as follows:

All these Christian congregations, collectively, are not a Church. All the Wesleyan Methodist churches in America are not a Church, but being connected by a central organization they are a connection of churches, ....<sup>28</sup>

McLeister and Nicholson, the denominational historians, comment on this aspect of the new sect:

Viewed after the lapse of these many years, it seems to us the keen mind of Luther Lee stumbled on this fundamental feature, and the denomination was started on its way with a lack of cohesion and effective organization for leadership that has been gradually but partially overcome.<sup>29</sup>

This lack of sufficient central authority has plagued the denomination to

---

<sup>27</sup>Ibid., p. 34.

<sup>28</sup>Ibid., p. 38.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid.

the present time and has become especially acute in recent years. Even so, the denomination has survived with as great a measure of success as many another small sect.

The non-episcopal, semi-congregational polity of the Wesleyan Methodists played no small part in the attempts of this group to merge, as will be noted in succeeding chapters.

But was, in fact, the Wesleyan Methodist Connection a sect in those early years--using "sect" in the sense in which Troeltsch, Niebuhr, and Pope used it? Certainly it had many of the sect-type characteristics in its reaction, emphasis on individualism, opposition to slavery, and apparent emphasis on personal conversion. In his study of Gaston County, North Carolina, in 1938-39, Liston Pope found the Wesleyan Methodists there belonged "definitely in the sect classification," although there had been some movement in the direction of the church type.<sup>30</sup> To what extent the early Wesleyan Methodist Connection was originally a sect in the classic sense, however, is a question deserving further study. It seems clear it was not a sect in the most extreme Troeltschian sense; yet its reaction at the point of polity was fairly complete. It seems safe to classify the group as a sect, though not in as extreme a sense as might be true with some other holiness sects.

An abortive attempt, largely unofficial, was made between 1865 and 1867 to unite the Wesleyan Methodists and the Methodist Protestants. A convention was held in Cleveland in June, 1865, called apparently without official sanction by any

---

<sup>30</sup>Pope, op. cit., p. 127.



denomination. According to McLeister and Nicholson, this gathering was attended by fifty-six Methodist Protestants, sixty-three Wesleyan Methodist, two Free Methodists, and three representing independent churches. At this convention groundwork was laid for a convention later held in Cincinnati in 1866 and attended primarily by Methodist Protestants. Apparently a new denomination was eventually formed as a result of these conventions, but there was never any serious official intention on the part of the Wesleyans to unite with the Methodist Protestant Church.<sup>31</sup>

When it became obvious that the Wesleyan Methodists would not merge, most of the Wesleyans who had worked on the proposal individually joined the new group. Strangely enough two of the original founders of the Wesleyan Methodist Connection who had favored the union proposal, Luther Lee and L. C. Matlack, returned to the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1866. Another who returned to the M. E. Church was Cyrus Prindle, who as Connectional Agent for the Wesleyan Methodist Connection was one of the two chief denominational officers. Apparently several local churches withdrew at this time, most joining other denominations rather than the new one formed from the 1865-66 conventions.<sup>32</sup>

Undoubtedly these problems help to explain why the Wesleyan Methodists numbered only 16,100 in 1896, compared to 16,466 in 1848.<sup>33</sup>

---

<sup>31</sup>McLeister and Nicholson, *op. cit.*, pp. 81-83, The Methodist Protestant Church had divided into northern and southern branches by this time; it was representatives from the northern branch who participated in these conventions.

<sup>32</sup>*ibid.*, pp. 82-86.

<sup>33</sup>*ibid.*, pp. 57, 124.

Even though the Wesleyan Methodist Connection (now Church) has moved in the direction of the church type, as noted by Pope,<sup>34</sup> yet this movement has been remarkably slow. Probably Paul Kindschi is right in saying "the church has never taken up a new emphasis that was not present in at least a minor way in its earliest period, and, in shifting emphases, it has never abandoned its commitment to its historic convictions."<sup>35</sup>

This slowness to travel from sect to church is probably not unrelated to the slow growth (and, indeed, early decline) in membership. Pope notes that success in gaining adherents is a factor which pushes toward accommodation.<sup>36</sup> A group which does not grow has little impulse to change--which is both good and bad.

Another factor accounting for the relative consistency of the Wesleyans may be that they never set themselves as radically in opposition to the world as have some sects. Seemingly, the greater a sect reacts, the quicker it is to feel self-conscious about its reaction and move back towards center.<sup>37</sup>

This slowness to change, however, especially in polity, complicates the present day unity problem.

---

<sup>34</sup>Pope, op. cit., pp. 126-127.

<sup>35</sup>Paul L. Kindschi, "The Organization Called Wesleyan Methodist," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXVIII (March 22, 1961), p. 11.

<sup>36</sup>Pope, op. cit., p. 119.

<sup>37</sup>Cf. Lee, The Social Sources of Church Unity, pp. 196-199, where the author discusses the Church of God; Anderson, Indiana. (The word "center," as used above, is intended to convey no idea that "center" is necessarily "right" or "good.")

## The Free Methodist Church

The Free Methodist Church came into being at Pekin, New York, in 1860 by action of a convention of forty-five laymen and fifteen preachers. The call for the convention read as follows:

A convention will be held at Pekin, for the purpose of adopting a Discipline for the Free Methodist Church, to commence at the close of the camp meeting, August 23rd. All societies and bands that find it necessary, in order to promote the prosperity and permanency of the work of holiness, to organize a Free Church on the following basis, are invited to send delegates:

1. Doctrines and usages of primitive Methodism, such as the Witness of the Spirit, Entire Sanctification as a state of grace distinct from justification, attainable instantaneously by faith. Free seats, and congregational singing, without instrumental music in all cases; plainness of dress.

2. An equal representation of ministers and members in all the councils of the Church.

3. No slaveholding, and no connection with secret and oath bound societies.

Each society or band will be entitled to send one delegate at least; and an additional one for every forty members.<sup>38</sup>

This call suggests some of the issues prominent in the action leading up to the founding convention, and something of the early character of the sect.

The man most prominent in the events leading to the formation of the Free Methodist Church was Benjamin Titus Roberts, a young Methodist minister who had had considerable success in pastoring several churches in the Genesee Conference. A division in the conference had developed, going back to the early 1850's, between the group of ministers pastoring the larger city churches, particularly in the

---

<sup>38</sup>Marston, op. cit., p. 253. This call was published in The Earnest Christian, I (August, 1860), p. 259--a paper edited by B. T. Roberts.

Buffalo area, and a group of conservative ministers pastoring small town and rural churches. The division involved, among other things, a debate over the doctrine of entire sanctification. In an 1857 article in The Buffalo Advocate, the conference paper which had come to be controlled by the more liberal group of ministers, entitled "Christianity a Religion of Beneficence Rather than of Devotion," justification and entire sanctification were held to be the same. Other articles of a similar nature appeared, demonstrating that this particular group of ministers had departed far from Wesleyan doctrine.<sup>39</sup>

In response to these articles, B. T. Roberts published an article entitled "New School Methodism" in The Northern Independent, a religious news journal devoted chiefly to slavery reform. This broadside at the controlling liberal group in the conference was aimed chiefly at doctrine, experience, shallow worship, lack of stewardship, and lack of plainness in dress. It was the occasion for Roberts' being brought to church trial in 1857, convicted of "immoral and un-Christian conduct," sent to a small rural church, and retried and expelled from the church in 1858 on the charge of republishing his "New School Methodism" in pamphlet form-- which, in fact, he did not do.<sup>40</sup> At his expulsion in 1858 he was 35 years of age.<sup>41</sup>

---

<sup>39</sup>Ibid., pp. 189-196, 573-578.

<sup>40</sup>Ibid., pp. 184-205.

<sup>41</sup>Clarence Howard Zahniser, Earnest Christian, Life and Work of Benjamin Titus Roberts (Circleville, Ohio: Advocate Publishing House, 1957), p. 11.

Roberts, and other ministers with him who were active in evangelism and holiness promotion, had a considerable lay following in the conference. These laymen persisted in attending independent holiness camp meetings and laymen's conventions, and for this reason many were read out of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Out of these developments came the founding convention of 1860.<sup>42</sup>

It would be inaccurate to conclude that this schism occurred solely, or probably even chiefly, over doctrinal issues. It appears that a schism was inevitable, regardless of the issues. The division between the urban-liberal and rural-conservative ministers was so deep that it could scarcely have been healed. On the one hand, the liberal group felt threatened because of the increasing effectiveness and popularity of Roberts and others; on the other hand, the closely-knit liberal group, bound together by widespread membership in the Masons, was increasingly violating what Roberts and his followers felt to be essential standards of Christian and church life. Marston observes,

That Roberts' "New School Methodism" was not the primary issue, but only the convenient occasion against him as a leader of the reform party, seems clear from the fact that there were at this period other criticisms of contemporary Methodism's worldly and unscriptural state as severe as was Roberts' article.<sup>43</sup>

It is doubtless true that conditions were not as degenerate in Methodism generally at this time as they were in the Genesee Conference. This is probably the reason some observers have felt Roberts' criticism of the church was too severe.<sup>44</sup>

---

<sup>42</sup>Marston, op. cit., pp. 207-218.

<sup>43</sup>Ibid., p. 194.

<sup>44</sup>Cf. Smith, Revivalism and Social Reform, p. 131.

In contrast to the origin of the Wesleyan Methodist Connection, the question of episcopacy was not an issue in the formation of the Free Methodist Church--as the name "Church," rather than "Connection," suggests. Roberts felt he and others were treated unfairly, but the source of this injustice was the annual conference, not the bishop. Thus the reforms in the area of church government in the new sect provided for equal lay representation in the annual conference, and careful regulations governing church trials were included. But the new sect was essentially episcopal, even though the title "general superintendent" rather than "bishop" was employed.

There was at the beginning a rather strong element of radical separation from the world which has persisted in the Free Methodist Church since her origin. Rather specific standards concerning dress and entertainment have only in recent decades received less emphasis, and prohibitions on instrumental music and the wedding ring persisted well into the twentieth century.

The gradual passing of these distinctives suggests both that the Free Methodist Church fits the sect-type and that it has been moving toward the church-type. Probably it has moved farther along this continuum than has the Wesleyan Methodist Church. But, the Free Methodists having started from perhaps a more extreme position (except in polity), there is not a great deal of difference in this respect between the two groups at present.

Marston discusses this question, pointing out that

Free Methodism, as practically every religious movement, was more concerned with its differences from other groups in its earlier than in its later history. Accordingly it partook more of the nature of the sect-type

then than it does now when the church seeks a basis of agreement with other groups within the evangelical family. But even in the beginning it was not fully the sect-type. This is suggested by its early deep concern for social, economic, and political issues.<sup>45</sup>

Marston's suggestion that the Free Methodist Church may have been only a modified sect-type from the beginning is bolstered, he feels, by the fact that at its origin the church

did not revolutionize the order of denominational existence its founding leaders had known in the larger group, but only modified Methodist Episcopal government and drew more firmly certain of its principles that it might more effectively continue that way of life which they had always known, but which recent innovators had distorted. The reformers neither claimed new revelations of truth nor sought to restore some ancient form of allegedly "pure" Christianity. These considerations, we suggest, tended to make a nonsectarian spirit compatible with sect-type firmness in doctrinal beliefs and standards of daily living.<sup>46</sup>

In other words, Free Methodism from its origin has been a sect, but its sectarian character has been only partial, found chiefly at the points where controversy centered at the time of origin.

As with the Wesleyan Methodists, rate of church growth may have been a factor in the rather slow sect-to-church movement of the Free Methodist Church. Free Methodist growth, though comparatively steady, has not been phenomenal; at no time has there been a dramatic influx of new members which might have threatened the original character of the sect. During the first forty years (though not particularly since then), Free Methodist growth was more rapid than that of the Wesleyans. This may explain, in part, a slightly more rapid sect-to-church move-

---

<sup>45</sup>Marston, op. cit., p. 566.

<sup>46</sup>Ibid., p. 567.

ment by the Free Methodists than by the Wesleyans.<sup>47</sup>

The Free Methodists have never been party to a major denominational merger. A resolution was passed at the 1862 General Conference calling for merger negotiations with Bible Christians of the United States, but apparently nothing came of this.<sup>48</sup>

The schisms in the Methodist Episcopal Church between 1830 and 1860, then, produced two of the present-day holiness denominations, two sects very similar in many ways though somewhat different in polity. They were, in their later history, to engage in sustained attempts to unite as one body. These attempts are the subject of Chapter IV.

### III. HOLINESS REVIVALISM, 1840-1910

In his insightful book Revivalism and Social Reform in Mid-Nineteenth-Century America Timothy L. Smith, a Nazarene writer, observes that

...revival measures and perfectionist aspiration flourished increasingly between 1840 and 1865 in all the major denominations--particularly in the cities. And they drew together a constellation of ideas and customs which ever since have lighted the diverging paths of American Protestantism.... Far from disdaining earthly affairs, the evangelists played a key role in the widespread attack upon slavery, poverty, and greed. They thus helped prepare the way both in theory and in practice for what later became known as the social gospel.<sup>49</sup>

---

<sup>47</sup>See chart of denominational growth, Appendix C.

<sup>48</sup>Wilson T. Hogue, History of the Free Methodist Church of North America (Chicago: The Free Methodist Publishing House, 1915), I, 173.

<sup>49</sup>Smith, op. cit., p. 8.



This revival impulse, which in Methodist circles, especially, was a revival of the doctrine and experience of entire sanctification, was broader than any particular theological slant. Smith notes that after 1839 Charles G. Finney preached entire sanctification, although he was "never as clear or consistent" in his teaching "as Methodist theologians wanted" him to be.<sup>50</sup> Likewise, in 1858 the Baptist evangelist A. B. Earle professed sanctification and thereafter emphasized the doctrine, which he called "the rest of faith," in his preaching.<sup>51</sup>

The revival of holiness within Methodism may, for convenience, be identified with the beginning of the "Tuesday Meetings for the Promotion of Holiness" which began in the home of Mrs. Sarah Lankford of New York City in 1835, and which exerted considerable influence within Methodism from 1840 onward for over thirty years.<sup>52</sup>

Mrs. Lankford's sister was Mrs. Phoebe Palmer, who soon became the recognized leader of the Tuesday Meetings. From 1840, Mrs. Palmer took full responsibility of the gatherings which met in her New York City home and opened its fellowship to men as well as women.<sup>53</sup>

Smith notes the remarkable influence of these meetings:

---

<sup>50</sup>Timothy L. Smith, Called Unto Holiness (Kansas City, Missouri: Nazarene Publishing House, 1962), p. 11.

<sup>51</sup>Ibid., pp. 11-12.

<sup>52</sup>Delbert R. Rose, A Theology of Christian Experience (Minneapolis: Bethany Fellowship, 1965), pp. 32-34; Smith, Called Unto Holiness, p. 12.

<sup>53</sup>Rose, op. cit., p. 34.

Hundreds of Methodist preachers, including at least two bishops and three who were later to hold that office, were sanctified.... The Guide to Holiness, printed in Boston, publicized her work and served as well to unite and inspire the clergymen great and small who shared her concern.<sup>54</sup>

As a result, says Smith, "...the Palmers and other holiness evangelists were never in such demand at camp meetings and revivals as in the years just prior to the Civil War."<sup>55</sup>

By 1858 the holiness emphasis in the churches reached flood proportions, and a great revival broke out. Spontaneous prayer meetings, special church services, and mass conversions numbering half a million marked that great year.<sup>56</sup>

Then came the war. At its close, the newly revived emphasis on holiness persisted within Methodism, but the revival tide had subsided. The ideal of perfection had been stamped deep on Methodism by the revival, however, and was to continue to have its influence for half a century.

A basic factor in the continuing influence of the holiness doctrine in Methodism was the support of a number of Methodist bishops. Bishop E. S. Janes was a supporter of Mrs. Palmer, and four of the eight new bishops elected at the 1872 general conference were holiness advocates.<sup>57</sup>

This holiness impulse and the subsiding of the revival tide led to the formation of the National Camp-meeting Association for the Promotion of Christian Holiness in 1867.<sup>58</sup> Holiness revivalism continued within the major Methodist

---

<sup>54</sup>Smith, Called Unto Holiness, loc cit.

<sup>55</sup>ibid.

<sup>56</sup>ibid., p. 11.

<sup>57</sup>ibid., p. 19.

<sup>58</sup>Rose, op. cit., p. 52.

churches up through the first decade of the twentieth century, primarily through the agency of the national and newer regional and local holiness associations. While this organized revivalism bore significant fruit, from the Civil War on true spiritual revivals of holiness within Methodism apparently were confined to brief periods of time in rather limited geographical areas.

In 1886 Bishop Willard Mallalieu claimed that then, more than at any time in the history of the church, Methodists were seeking entire sanctification.<sup>59</sup>

But a full-scale debate over the doctrine was brewing, and in the late 1880's, for the first time, opponents of the doctrine openly admitted their departure from Wesley in arguing against entire sanctification. The attack on the doctrine by Methodist writers such as J. M. Boland (The Problem of Methodism, 1888), and the resultant full-fledged debate, worked for the decline of the spontaneous holiness emphasis within Methodism.<sup>60</sup>

Looking back on the holiness movement, Joseph H. Smith, in 1916, noted some of the fruits of the movement up to that time. Specifically he mentioned the many holiness papers, of which he felt it was "...easily safe to estimate that every week one hundred thousand...are now circulated," and the many new holiness colleges, "...of which there are now probably a dozen in the land. To this we would add several training schools for Christian workers..."<sup>61</sup>

---

<sup>59</sup>Smith, Called Unto Holiness, p. 20.

<sup>60</sup>Ibid., pp. 21, 42-47.

<sup>61</sup>Joseph H. Smith, Things Behind and Things Before in the Holiness Movement (Chicago: Evangelistic Institute Press, 1916), pp. 8, 10.

Mention of these things indicates that by the early twentieth century the holiness movement had become largely institutionalized--in schools, publications, holiness associations, and new denominations. Indeed, the question might be raised whether it is strictly accurate to call the holiness influence a "movement" after 1900. At least by this time it had for the most part become a movement that flowed through tangible institutional structures, largely, no doubt, in response to the attack leveled on holiness from within Methodism itself.<sup>62</sup>

(Interestingly, Joseph Smith chided the holiness movement in 1916 for neglecting the Negroes in its ministry.<sup>63</sup>)

Holiness revivalism, then, spread as a spontaneous expression of spiritual vitality from about 1840 to 1865, after which it continued, in a more deliberate, more orthodox manner, to influence the Methodist and other churches up into the early years of the twentieth century, gradually finding more permanent, institutional modes of expression.

#### IV. HOLINESS ASSOCIATIONS AND THE RISE OF THE HOLINESS SECTS, 1867-1930

As the initial tide of holiness revival began to subside in the 1860's, friends of holiness sought new ways of furthering the holiness witness. Most important of these new ways was probably the formation of what is today the National

---

<sup>62</sup>Cf. Timothy Smith, Called Unto Holiness, pp. 46-47.

<sup>63</sup>Joseph Smith, op. cit., pp. 17-18.

### Holiness Association.

The NHA had its beginning impulse with Rev. John A. Wood, a Methodist minister in New York State who became alarmed at the opposition to "the doctrine and distinctive experience of entire sanctification" evident at some Methodist camp meetings.<sup>64</sup> At the suggestion of Wood, John S. Inskip, and others, a camp meeting for promoting holiness was held July 17-26, 1867, at Vine-land, New Jersey. The sponsors of the camp, both ministers and laymen, instituted "The National Camp-meeting Association for the Promotion of Christian Holiness."<sup>65</sup> Most of the present-day holiness denominations had not yet been formed; those attending the camp were, primarily, ministers and laymen of established Protestant denominations. It is known, however, that B. T. Roberts, at this time General Superintendent of the Free Methodist Church, attended this camp.<sup>66</sup>

At this first camp meeting steps were taken to continue the work. A twenty-one member committee was selected and officers were chosen for the National Camp-meeting Association.<sup>67</sup>

The following year the second holiness camp meeting sponsored by the National Camp-meeting Association was held in Manheim, Pennsylvania.<sup>68</sup> Some-

---

<sup>64</sup>Rose, op. cit., p. 50.

<sup>65</sup>ibid., p. 52, citing W. McDonald and John E. Searles, The Life of Rev. John S. Inskip (Chicago: The Christian Witness Company, 1885), p. 194.

<sup>66</sup>B. T. Roberts, "Religious Meetings," The Earnest Christian, X (August, 1867), p. 66.

<sup>67</sup>Rose, op. cit., p. 53.

<sup>68</sup>ibid., p. 60.

thing of the character of this gathering may be seen from the following comment of one attending this camp:

Representative men and women were there from nearly every state in the Union.... The Sabbath was a great day. Not less than twenty-five thousand persons were on the ground, including three hundred ministers.<sup>69</sup>

Another observer reported that Methodists, Baptists, Presbyterians, Dutch Reformed, Congregationalists, and Quakers attended this camp.<sup>70</sup>

Similar interdenominational holiness camp meetings followed, and in the sixteen years following the first camp meeting in 1867, fifty-two national holiness camps were held.<sup>71</sup> By 1869, the national camp meeting had become a major attraction to Methodists, especially. According to Timothy L. Smith, twenty thousand persons were present the first Sunday of the 1869 camp, at Round Lake, New York, and that afternoon Bishop Simpson conducted a mammoth Communion service.<sup>72</sup>

The work of the National Camp-Meeting Association led to the rapid formation of regional and state holiness associations. The Texas Holiness Association was formed in 1878, the Iowa Holiness Association in 1879, and the Southern California and Arizona Holiness Association in 1880.<sup>73</sup> An Editorial in The

---

<sup>69</sup>ibid., citing Adam Wallace, A Modern Pentecost: Embracing A Record of the Sixteenth National Camp-meeting for Promotion of Holiness, held at Landisville, Pa., July 23rd to August 1st, 1873 (Philadelphia: Methodist Home Journal Publishing House, 1873), p. 199.

<sup>70</sup>ibid.

<sup>71</sup>Rose, op. cit., p. 61.

<sup>72</sup>Timothy L. Smith, Called Unto Holiness, p. 16.

<sup>73</sup>Rose, op. cit., pp. 72, 74; Josephine M. Washburn, History and

Pentecostal Advocate for November 19, 1908, reports that a number of other holiness associations were the offspring of the Texas association. Reporting the eighth annual session of the Texas association, the editorial notes:

The influence of this Association has gone far beyond the state line, and from its offspring, the Associations of Oklahoma, Missouri, Arkansas, and New Mexico, representatives were present to enjoy the annual "old home" thanksgiving feast. Escambia County Association, from far-away Florida, came seeking recognition, and by next year the Florida State Holiness Association will be enrolled as one of our children.<sup>74</sup>

Early holiness work was hindered in the South because of the Civil War and Reconstruction, but in 1904 the Holiness Union of the South was organized in Memphis, Tennessee.<sup>75</sup>

The debate over entire sanctification within Methodism which began in the late 1800's made holiness doctrine a battleground and tended to harden both the opposition and the promotion of holiness. The attack on holiness which seems to some extent to have been sparked by the early formation of some holiness associations, gave impetus to the associational tendency, which in turn sparked new periodicals and schools of a very definite holiness stamp. According to Timothy L. Smith, in the period between 1895 and 1905,

...Asbury, Texas Holiness University, and Meridian College in the

---

Reminiscences of the Holiness Church Work in Southern California and Arizona (South Pasadena, California: Record Press, n. d.), p. 10.

<sup>74</sup>"Associational Holiness," The Pentecostal Advocate, XI (November 19, 1908), p. 8.

<sup>75</sup>Rose, op. cit., p. 61.

South and God's Bible School, Taylor University, Chicago Evangelistic Institute, Cleveland Bible Institute, and Central Holiness University appeared in the Midwest. All these were either Methodist or interdenominational. Literally scores of smaller schools, serving one or the other of the holiness sects, came into existence about the same time.<sup>76</sup>

Inevitably, this hardening of the lines between holiness and anti-holiness, with the formation of independent, interdenominational associations, schools, camp meetings, and periodicals, brought to the fore "the church question"--should holiness people remain in the mother church, or should a new, distinctively holiness sect be formed?<sup>77</sup>

Smith gives this account of the origin of this debate within the holiness movement:

By 1885, the sweep of the awakening into the Midwest and South was producing two more or less distinct groups. One, largely rural, was more emotionally demonstrative, emphasized rigid standards of dress and behavior, and often scorned ecclesiastical discipline. The other was urban, intellectual, and somewhat less zealous about outward standards of holiness. Its leaders were eager for alignment with all in the older churches who would share their central claims.<sup>78</sup>

Smith notes that the earliest secessions came from the first group, while members of the second group, in general, withdrew only under extreme provocation, and many of the leaders of this group--such as Daniel Steele, C. J. Fowler, and Henry Clay Morrison--never withdrew from the mother church.<sup>79</sup>

---

<sup>76</sup>Timothy L. Smith, Called Unto Holiness, op. cit., pp. 46-47. Actually the span of years would have to be widened to include the founding of all these schools.

<sup>77</sup>Ibid.; Cf. "The Church Question, 1880-1900," pp. 27-53.

<sup>78</sup>Ibid., p. 27.

<sup>79</sup>Ibid.



There are many factors which led to the formation of new sects from the holiness associations, and it would be misleading to make any one factor central. Smith notes the following four factors: (1) persistent opposition of church leaders to independent holiness associations and publishing agencies; (2) recurrent outbursts of fanaticism by some groups of holiness people outside the churches; (3) the attack on the doctrine of holiness from within Methodism; and (4) the effectiveness of many holiness preachers in urban mission and social work.<sup>80</sup> To these might be added an institutional factor: independent holiness associations themselves provided a convenient structure for the formation of a new sect. The metamorphosis from association to sect was a fairly easy transition, and the pattern was repeated many times across the nation.

A rash of premature secessions around 1880 increased opposition to the holiness associations and touched off a strenuous debate within the holiness movement itself.<sup>81</sup>

From the middle of the 1880's onward, . . . a lengthy argument raged between those who believed that separate holiness denominations were necessary and those who relied upon associations to carry on the work. The argument was complicated at every stage by the easily revived memory of the excesses of the "come-outers" and by the fact that radical leaders were usually in the vanguard for secession.

No large group ever pulled out at one time. The great majority professing sanctification clung to the older churches and, hence, to the association idea.<sup>82</sup>

---

<sup>80</sup>ibid.

<sup>81</sup>ibid., p. 28. The Church of God (Anderson, Indiana) schism was one of these.

<sup>82</sup>ibid., p. 35.

An example of this debate is seen in the President's Report, by C. J.

Fowler, to the 1908 session of the National Camp-meeting Association:

There is a danger and a great danger that attention will be given to one's local, sectional, divisional, and denominational interests, and be betrayed [sic] to lose sight of what is really the work of holiness itself....

There are genuinely holy people in all Christian denominations, in local independent communions, in new ecclesiastical enterprises, and a great danger is...that real holiness will be wasted or weakened in losing sight of a genuine catholicity, in one's zeal for some local or denominational interest.<sup>83</sup>

And Dr. Rose comments:

While many left Methodism to form the "independent" instead of "interdenominational" holiness associations--some of which were later merged into the Church of the Nazarene and the Pilgrim Holiness Church--the majority of the older leading evangelists, teachers, and pastors associated with the National Association continued to speak out against "come-out-ism" and encouraged the people won to the holiness profession to remain and become a "leavening" influence within their respective denominations.<sup>84</sup>

A dozen or more independent holiness sects originated in the late 1800's and early 1900's, primarily as outgrowths of state and regional holiness associations. Some of these were centered in urban areas, such as the Association of Pentecostal Churches of America in Brooklyn, the Pentecostal Mission in Nashville, and the Metropolitan Church Association in Chicago. More "rural and radical" groups included the New Testament Church of Christ, the Independent Holiness Church, and the Apostolic Holiness Church. In addition, such groups as the Ohio

---

<sup>83</sup>Rose, *op. cit.*, p. 75., citing C. J. Fowler, "President's Report...", *The Christian Witness* (June 11, 1908), p. 8.

<sup>84</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 76.

Yearly Meeting of Friends and the Mennonite Brethren in Christ were formed as a result of holiness influence on the Quakers and the Mennonites.<sup>85</sup>

The formation of the earlier of the new groups underlined the growing urban-rural division in the holiness movement. Nevertheless,

from our vantage point seventy years later, the rural leaders seem to have differed only in the degree of their adherence to puritan standards. And they spelled out the reasons for their attitude with surprising good sense. All holiness preachers made a strong issue of worldliness in dress and behavior in the nineteenth century. In this they were out of harmony neither with evangelical tradition nor with its objectives current at the time....

The growth of wealth, the rise of cities, and the decline of the ideals of industry and abstinence were a challenge to the old faith. The new sects, however radical, did not create new doctrines or standards, as some of our sociologists have recently said. They simply re-emphasized the old ones when the drift of society was in the opposite direction.<sup>86</sup>

As has been noted, the factors giving rise to the new holiness sects were sufficiently complex to rule out the possibility of assigning them to one primary factor. Certainly there were unwarranted secessions, and there were probably instances where personal ambition consciously or unconsciously was a factor.

Nevertheless, the opposition to the holiness emphasis in some sections of Methodism was sufficiently severe so as to make continuation in the Methodist Church all but impossible. Joseph H. Smith noted in 1916, "...I have known of no single instance of considerable come-out-ism or of schism from our church on these lines but what has been preceded by an oppression or a mistreatment of holiness

---

<sup>85</sup>Timothy L. Smith, Called Unto Holiness, p. 36.

<sup>86</sup>ibid., pp. 37-38.

people as well as holiness truth on the part of our church powers in that section."<sup>87</sup>

There was, as Dr. Rose observes, a serious decline in holiness emphasis in certain sections of American Methodism about the turn of the century, and this has been reflected in the rise of the holiness sects. In some geographical areas there was a "crush out" attitude toward the holiness emphasis in American Methodism, and the sects tended to rise especially in those areas where opposition to holiness was strongest.<sup>88</sup>

One of the earliest moves toward unity among the holiness churches was the consolidation of the small, geographically limited sects into larger, more national denominations. Because of the emphases of the following chapters, some attention is given now to the origin of two of these groups.

### United Missionary Church

Several mergers of Mennonite groups which had been touched by the holiness revival resulted, in 1883, in the formation of the Mennonite Brethren in Christ. At the time of union in 1883, the new sect had thirty-seven churches and a membership of 2,076.<sup>89</sup> In the denominational history Everek R. Storms notes,

Although officially recognized as being one of the Mennonite groups, the Mennonite Brethren in Christ were so drastically different from the other branches of the Church that in many respects they could scarcely

---

<sup>87</sup>Joseph H. Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 59.

<sup>88</sup>Delbert R. Rose, personal interview, held at Wilmore, Kentucky, March 9, 1966.

<sup>89</sup>Everek Richard Storms, History of the United Missionary Church (Elkhart, Indiana: Bethel Publishing Company, 1958), p. 60.

be considered as Mennonites. This was especially true in the matter of doctrine, the denomination, from the very beginning, being highly evangelistic and strongly Wesleyan, laying a deep emphasis on the experience of entire sanctification.<sup>90</sup>

These differences between this new group and other Mennonite groups, coupled with the new sect's insistence on genuine personal conversion, led to serious consideration of dropping the name "Mennonite" in 1883. Because in Canada certain exemptions from military service were granted Mennonites, however, the name was retained.<sup>91</sup>

But as time went on the name became increasingly intolerable to a group trying to make an evangelistic dent in new communities. Confusion in the mind of the general public persisted with the result that it was virtually impossible for the Mennonite Brethren in Christ to open up new churches in some areas. Finally in 1947, the name "United Missionary Church" was adopted.<sup>92</sup>

From 1883 to 1908, the period of the greatest activity of the holiness associations, the Mennonite Brethren in Christ experienced considerable expansion. The founders of the sect, Daniel Brenneman and Solomon Eby, exerted a strong evangelistic influence. The sect has continued to the present, enjoying modest growth.<sup>93</sup> In 1952 the Pennsylvania District, which had refused to drop the name "Mennonite" in 1947, withdrew from the denomination over the issues of polity and doctrine, a Calvinistic influence persisting in this group. By this withdrawal the membership of the United Missionary Church was depleted by 4,489, but Storms

---

<sup>90</sup>ibid., p. 68.

<sup>91</sup>ibid., p. 68.

<sup>92</sup>ibid., p. 69-70.

<sup>93</sup>ibid., p. 60.

feels the ultimate effect was to strengthen the church because of the greater unity which resulted.<sup>94</sup>

In 1955 the United Missionary Church adopted a more centralized, Methodist form of government, creating three new denominational boards, more than doubling the size of the general conference, and, for the first time, electing a general superintendent.<sup>95</sup>

This group is today one of the most active supporters of the NHA and its efforts to bring the holiness churches into greater unity.

The United Missionary Church arose from among sect-type groups--the Mennonites--and it is clear that, especially in the beginning, it was essentially a sect. The Mennonites began as one of the most completely sect-type religious groups. On their transfer to America they were, of course, largely an ethnic church, and the process of assimilation and accommodation to American culture has proceeded unevenly, causing many divisions.

It appears that the holiness revival in a very real sense gave rise to the Mennonite Brethren in Christ, and in so doing moved the group actually away from the more extreme sect-type to a sectarian character roughly corresponding to that of the other holiness groups of the early 1900's. To be sure, the Mennonite Brethren in Christ retained some ethnic characteristics, as indicated by the persistence of the name "Mennonite" and of certain patterns of worship.<sup>96</sup>

---

<sup>94</sup>ibid., pp. 74-75.

<sup>95</sup>ibid., p. 78.

<sup>96</sup>Whether or not the Mennonites were essentially sectarian in character in the late 1800's depends, however, on what indices of classification are used. In the

Through the decades of this century this sect, now the United Missionary Church, has continued the slow transition from sect-type to church-type, as have all the holiness groups. The withdrawal of the Pennsylvania group in 1952 probably indicates an uneven rate of movement toward the church-type within the denomination. The Pennsylvania group was unable to move as rapidly as the majority group; tension resulted; a split came. This is not, of course, to deny the reality of the specific issues involved in the withdrawal, but only to point to some of the factors underlying those issues.

Strong leadership in the United Missionary Church seems to have accounted, more than any other factor, for the rather rapid development of this denomination in recent years.

### Pilgrim Holiness Church

The Pilgrim Holiness Church, probably more than any other holiness sect with the exception of the Church of the Nazarene, is an outgrowth of the holiness association movement in Methodism between 1890 and 1910.

The two men most prominent in the origin of the Pilgrim Holiness Church were Seth C. Rees, father of Dr. Paul Rees, and Martin Wells Knapp.

Seth C. Rees came of a family of Quakers, and his ministry had be-

---

areas of social customs, group solidarity, and general attitude toward the world they were extremely sectarian, and the Mennonite Brethren in Christ moved away from these emphases. On the other hand, in the areas of doctrine and personal religious experience the Mennonites had by the 1890's seemingly become less like sects and more like churches. In these respects the Mennonite Brethren in Christ, with the Methodist groups, became more authentically sectarian than the main branches of Mennonites.

gun among them. Martin Wells Knapp came from a staunch Methodist home, and in time he had become an ordained Methodist minister and a regularly established pastor. But the baptism of the Holy Ghost in each of their hearts had pushed them out beyond the channels in which many of the church leaders lived, and their evangelism had burned like flames of fire here and there across the country.<sup>97</sup>

Rees became well known among holiness groups across the nation, particularly through his work in city missions. Rees and Knapp, founder of God's Bible School in Cincinnati, formed the International Holiness Union and Prayer League in 1897. The Pilgrim Holiness Church dates its beginning from the founding of this holiness association.<sup>98</sup>

After serving as president of the International Holiness Union and Prayer League for five years, Rees moved on to new independent works, served for a time in the Nazarene Church, and eventually became the leader of the Pentecostal Pilgrim Church in California.<sup>99</sup>

Meanwhile, the International Holiness Union and Prayer League gradually evolved into a denomination, changing its name in 1900, 1905, and finally, in 1913, to the International Apostolic Holiness Church. Between 1919 and 1925 the Holiness Christian Church, the Pentecostal Rescue Mission of the New York area,

---

<sup>97</sup>Paul W. Thomas, "The Days of Our Pilgrimage," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXXIII (February 16, 1966), p. 5.

<sup>98</sup>Timothy L. Smith, Called Unto Holiness, pp. 273-274; Paul W. Thomas and Melvin H. Snyder, "What About the Pilgrim Holiness Church?" The Wesleyan Methodist, CXXIII (February 16, 1966), p. 8.

<sup>99</sup>Timothy L. Smith, Called Unto Holiness, loc. cit.; Thomas, "The Days of Our Pilgrimage," loc. cit.



Rees' Pentecostal Pilgrim Church, and the People's Mission Church of Colorado all joined with this group. Since 1922 the name has been Pilgrim Holiness Church.<sup>100</sup>

In 1946 the Holiness Churches of California, which grew from the Southern California and Arizona Holiness Association of the early 1900's, merged with the Pilgrims.<sup>101</sup> From a membership of about 8,000 in 1922, the church has grown to about 34,000 present U. S. membership. Two of the mergers, of course, have occurred during this period.<sup>102</sup>

Generally speaking, the Pilgrim Holiness Church seems to have been, and to be yet today, somewhat more thoroughly sect-type than, for instance, the Wesleyan Methodists, Free Methodists, and United Missionary Church--although probably not as completely fitting the sect classification as, perhaps, some of the smaller NHA churches such as the Churches of Christ in Christian Union. Pilgrim Holiness restrictions on individual behavior are somewhat more explicit and conservative than those in the Free Methodist Church, and the restrictions seem to be observed somewhat more strictly among the Pilgrims.<sup>103</sup> Casual observation does suggest, however, some movement toward the church-type, especially in recent years.

---

<sup>100</sup>Thomas, "The Days of Our Pilgrimage," loc. cit.; Manual of the Pilgrim Holiness Church (second edition; Indianapolis: The Pilgrim Publishing House, 1962), Sec. 2.

<sup>101</sup>Ibid.; cf. Josephine M. Washburn, History and Reminiscences of the Holiness Church Work in Southern California and Arizona (South Pasadena, California: Record Press, n. d.), p. 132 ff.

<sup>102</sup>Thomas and Snyder, "What About the Pilgrim Holiness Church?" loc. cit.; Thomas, "The Days of Our Pilgrimage," loc. cit.

<sup>103</sup>See the Manual of the Pilgrim Holiness Church, Sec. 30.

One interesting thing about the Pilgrim Holiness Church is that, though primarily a sect-type, the denomination has found itself able to merge with other groups. It should be borne in mind, however, that the church was born of merger; that these mergers were of virtually identical groups; and that the Pilgrims do not have a century of history and tradition behind them. The groups that merged into the Pilgrim Holiness Church were formed for the same reasons. Polity seems not to have been an overriding issue with any of the original groups. And the very fact that most of these groups arose as independent associations suggests common structure, methodology, and viewpoint.

Looking back on the period 1867-1930, it can be seen that the rise of the National Camp-meeting Association for the Promotion of Holiness and of the many regional and state holiness associations came as an attempt to preserve and continue the holiness emphasis within, particularly, Methodism. As opposition to holiness teaching and associations mounted within Methodism, holiness associations tended to become more and more independent, many of these becoming small regional holiness sects. Some of these continue today; many others were absorbed into the Pilgrim Holiness Church and the Church of the Nazarene. Holiness revivalism during this period also affected many of the non-Methodistic denominations, giving rise to holiness sects not specifically related to Methodism--as, for example, the United Missionary Church.

The National Camp-meeting Association, now the National Holiness Association, resisted pressures to become a denomination itself, however, and continued into the second third of the twentieth century as an independent, interdenom-

inational holiness association.

## V. THE HOLINESS MOVEMENT, 1930-1966

The period from about 1930, by which time most of the existing holiness sects were pretty well established or consolidated, to the present time has been a significant one, both for the holiness denominations and for the National Holiness Association.

### Holiness Sects in Transition

For the holiness denominations, this has been a period of gradual movement from sect-type toward (although not to) the church-type; a period of erosion of differences between holiness churches toward a sameness of emphasis, standards, and even organizational structure. All differences are, of course, far from being gone at present, but developments in the holiness movement in the last decade indicate a commonality that has never before existed.

This transition has been due both to the tendency of sects to move along the sect-church continuum toward the church type, and to the melting of sectional, ethnic, and, to a less extent, class differences into what is rapidly becoming one homogeneous mass culture.

Robert Lee notes in his Social Sources of Church Unity,

Increasingly, working-class women use the same kinds of dishwashers and washing machines, and even choose the same wallpaper as do the wives of executives. A best-selling book in New York also registers as a best seller in New Orleans. People in San Francisco search just as anxiously for coveted tickets to My Fair Lady as those in Boston. In short, styles of life are becoming more alike, more often copied, and

apply more equally to every sector of the nation, every class, race, and ethnic status. Growing common behavior and attitudes toward style of life comprise, at the very least, suggestive indicators of growing consensus in American society.<sup>104</sup>

People in the holiness denominations are not immune to these trends. The Wesleyan Methodist in North Carolina and the Pilgrim in Michigan may hear different preachers on Sunday morning, but they probably both watch Huntley-Brinkley on Monday evening. There is a good chance that the Free Methodist in Florida reads the same magazines as his United Missionary brother in Washington. And more and more children from holiness homes are taking the same tests, reading the same textbooks, wearing the same clothes, watching the same TV programs, thinking the same thoughts, and absorbing the same attitudes. These developments can only tend to add additional levels of sameness to a people that already have much in common.

Lee notes, in particular, the following social factors which have worked, and are working, to bring about a common organizational structure within American Protestant denominations.<sup>105</sup>

1. Democratic context. The influence of the many American democratic political institutions tends to make democratic procedures the norm. Regardless of how a denominational structure was originally set up, in present American culture it tends to function democratically.

---

<sup>104</sup>Robert Lee, The Social Sources of Church Unity, pp. 61-62.

<sup>105</sup>ibid., pp. 94-98.

2. Organizational revolution. Common basic patterns of organizational structure are now diffused throughout the culture. There is just "a certain way" organizations do things.

3. Common ethos. Common cultural values call forth from today's church such emphases as fellowship, friendship, social concern, pragmatic faith, activism and voluntarism, and lay responsibility. The church today, holiness or otherwise, that wants to be effective cannot ignore these.

Many years ago Walter Rauschenbusch was able to perceive this erosion of differences in denominational polity. Said Rauschenbusch,

The divergent types of church government which separated these bodies... have been worn down by generations of practical experience, and they have gravitated toward the same methods of work and life. The Presbyterian type has become more congregational, and the Congregational type has become more presbyterian.... The most decisive fact for the essential unity of these great bodies is that they have all thoroughly assimilated the principle of democracy....<sup>106</sup>

Perhaps it is some such process as this which helps explain the shift in polity in the Wesleyan Methodist Church noted by Dr. Kindschi: "While preserving its historic beliefs in democratic government, the church has moved to the somewhat more centralized pattern advocated from the very beginning by some of its leaders."<sup>107</sup>

The various factors cited above have tended to bring a greater homogeneity

---

<sup>106</sup>Quoted by Archer Bass, Protestantism in the United States (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1929), p. 276, Cited by Lee, Ibid., pp. 93-94.

<sup>107</sup>Paul L. Kindschi, "The Organization Called Wesleyan Methodist," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXVIII (March 22, 1961), p. 11.

to the holiness movement, both as denominations and as individuals, since about 1930. These developments are obviously closely related to the rise of the ecumenical movement, as will be noted presently.

### Evangelical Methodist Church

The youngest of the present holiness denominations, the Evangelical Methodist Church, has come into being in this most recent period in the history of the holiness movement.

The Discipline of the Evangelical Methodist Church, 1958, gives the following account of the origin of this group:

On May 9, 1946, in the city of Memphis, Tennessee, a small group of preachers and laymen met together for consultation and prayer, endeavoring to cope with the growing apostasy in the church. After long hours of waiting before God in prayer, they felt definitely led of God to organize the Evangelical Methodist Church.

Dr. J. H. Hamblen, of Abilene, Texas, was elected chairman of the group meeting in Memphis, and was elected the first General Superintendent of the Evangelical Methodist Church the following November at the first Annual Conference at Kansas City, Missouri.<sup>108</sup>

This small group, numbering now about 8,000,<sup>109</sup> arose in reaction to modernism in the Methodist Church, the parent body, and in opposition to what it felt to be autocratic and undemocratic church government.<sup>110</sup> The denomination was launched "with a firm conviction that the gulf that separates conservative and

---

<sup>108</sup>Discipline of the Evangelical Methodist Church, 1958 (n.p.: Evangelical Methodist Church, 1960), p. 6.

<sup>109</sup>Benson Y. Landis, (ed.), Yearbook of American Churches, 1966 (New York: National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U. S. A. 1966) p. 66.

<sup>110</sup>Frank S. Mead, Handbook of Denominations in the United States (fourth edition; New York: Abingdon Press, 1965), p. 154.

liberal thought in the church is an ever-widening chasm which can never be healed,..."<sup>111</sup>

The Evangelical Methodist Church thus adopted a basically congregational polity and maintains a strong doctrinally conservative position. Frank Mead, in his Handbook of Denominations in the United States, notes that "there is great emphasis placed upon the protest against modernism."<sup>112</sup>

The emphasis on polity, with the adoption of congregationalism, and the adherence to conservative Wesleyan theology makes the origin of the Evangelical Methodist Church somewhat parallel to that of the Wesleyan Methodist Connection, almost exactly one hundred years earlier. But the Evangelical Methodists are probably more self-conscious about doctrine than the early Wesleyan Methodists were. Although slavery was not an issue with the Evangelical Methodists, there is a possible parallel in the area of social views in that both groups reacted against the viewpoint which seemed to dominate the parent body at the time of origin.

The Evangelical Methodist Church insofar as its attitude of protest against "modernism" and its emphasis on personal conversion is concerned, definitely fits the sect-type classification. Its specific espousal of pre-millennialism<sup>113</sup> further fits the pattern. It seems safe to classify the denomination as basically sect-type in the same sense, and more or less to the same degree, as most of the holiness church-

---

<sup>111</sup>Discipline, loc. cit.

<sup>112</sup>Mead, loc. cit.

<sup>113</sup>Discipline, p. 22.

es were at their origin. It has had only twenty years, however, to begin its movement away from reaction toward "common-core Protestantism," and hence seems to be very conscious of the issues in its origin, as was true of the other holiness sects in their early years. This self-consciousness was evident in the recent Evangelical Methodist - United Missionary merger attempt, which is the subject of Chapter V.

### Re-alignment of Holiness People?

In very recent years developments within several of the holiness churches suggest there may be a future re-alignment of people now in these churches. For the past several years there has been developing within some of these churches small minorities which feel their church is becoming "liberal" and "apostate"-- primarily, it seems, because of a gradual de-emphasis on earlier sectarian characteristics such as external standards of behavior. These minorities seem to be concentrated among the more rural areas of the denominational constituencies, suggesting they represent an element of American culture which has not kept pace with cultural transition in America generally.

Evidence of such a development as suggested above can be seen in (1) increasingly crucial conference-church problems in the Wesleyan Methodist Church,<sup>114</sup> (2) recent minor schisms in the Free Methodist Church,<sup>115</sup> and (3) the work of the

---

<sup>114</sup>Virgil A. Mitchell, "Allegheny Conference Report," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXXI (July 15, 1964), p. 13; "Executive Board Hears Report," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXXI (September 30, 1964), p. 15; B. H. Phaup, "Allegheny Conference Report," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXII (August 4, 1965), p. 14.

<sup>115</sup>Untitled printed pamphlet issued in December, 1965, by a group of ministers of the North Michigan Conference of the Free Methodist Church, ex-



Inter-Church Holiness Convention.<sup>116</sup>

There will be occasion to examine Wesleyan Methodist conference problems in a later chapter of this thesis;<sup>117</sup> it is sufficient here to note that these problems threaten to bring about schisms within Wesleyan Methodism.

In December, 1965, a small group of ministers and their wives withdrew from the largely rural North Michigan Conference of the Free Methodist Church. Their statement of withdrawal charged the Free Methodist Church was largely apostate and claimed God was raising up a new group, namely themselves, to safeguard and promote "sweet radical holiness."<sup>118</sup>

This group has now organized the United Holiness Church and has begun churches in several of the towns where the ministers had been serving Free Methodist churches. As of March, 1966, the United Holiness Church had a membership in the neighborhood of two hundred, made up largely of former Free Methodists.<sup>119</sup>

The Inter-Church Holiness Convention is coming to be the organized expression of those within the holiness churches who are generally agreed in their in-

---

pressing their intention to withdraw from the church.

<sup>116</sup>Cf. various issues of the I. H. Convention Herald, organ of the Inter-Church Holiness Convention.

<sup>117</sup>Supra, pp. 180-181.

<sup>118</sup>Untitled pamphlet, loc. cit.

<sup>119</sup>David W. Parks, personal conversations with the writer, held at Wilmore, Kentucky, April 22 and 23, 1966. Mr. Parks is now a minister in the United Holiness Church.

terpretation of "sweet radical holiness." Actively cooperating in the IHC are the leaders of the new United Holiness Church, leaders of the dissident Allegheny and Tennessee conferences of the Wesleyan Methodist Church, some members and former members of the Pilgrim Holiness Church, and others. These groups and individuals come together each year for a national convention at God's Bible School in Cincinnati, and various regional holiness conventions are held.<sup>120</sup>

The development which especially suggests the possibility of a re-alignment of holiness people is that leaders of the groups now participating in the IHC, both inside and outside the NHA churches, have recently been considering the possibility of some kind of federation of the "sweet radical holiness" groups. Such a development may be an indication not only of a uniting of the now-existing more radical holiness groups but also that new schisms may be in the offing, particularly in the Wesleyan Methodist Church.<sup>121</sup>

Thus there may come a re-alignment of holiness people whereby, in the midst of a developing similarity of the NHA churches, the dissident minorities in these churches withdraw to preserve the more radical, legalistic interpretation of holiness. The mere existence today of both the National Holiness Association and the Inter-Church Holiness Convention, with the differing emphases and constituencies of these two associations, may be the first indication of such a re-alignment.

This growing tension between the main body of the holiness movement and

---

<sup>120</sup>ibid.; cf. various issues of the I.H. Convention Herald.

<sup>121</sup>ibid.

the dissident minority within it is strikingly parallel to, and perhaps actually a part of, the evangelical-fundamentalist tension that runs throughout conservative Protestantism today. This relationship will be investigated as part of Chapter VIII.<sup>122</sup>

### The NHA in Transition

The years 1930-1966 have been years of transition for the National Holiness Association, as well as for the holiness denominations. This fact has significance for the whole question of unity and the holiness churches.

Dr. Rose notes that until 1942, the presidency of the National Holiness Association had always been held by Methodists.<sup>123</sup> Doubtless this was one of the reasons the Association was able to resist pressures to take on an independent denominational form. The National Association arose primarily as a movement within Methodism and remained more or less under the dominance of Methodist ministers until the 1940's.

These national Methodist holiness leaders were often outspoken against anything that tended toward new denominations. Their philosophy was to maintain a holiness witness within Methodism.

New denominations were formed, however, and the men in these denomi-

---

<sup>122</sup>Supra, pp. 341-346.

<sup>123</sup>Rose, A Theology of Christian Experience, p. 76. Rose notes that A. L. Whitcomb, a Free Methodist, was elected to the Presidency in 1928 but refused to serve.

nations often maintained their affiliation with the National Association. Thus, in time, the place of leadership within the NHA was to pass into non-Methodist hands.

Dr. Rose notes that

Under the presidency of C. W. Butler, . . . the National Association entered a new era. Through his leadership a closer cooperation between the educational institutions was established, and greater friendliness between the holiness denominations and the National Association developed. Under the leadership of C. I. Armstrong and H. M. Couchenour, the constitution and by-laws of the National Association have been changed so as to admit whole denominations and individual churches as auxiliaries of the national organization.<sup>124</sup>

This latter change was especially significant. As participation in the NHA has come more and more from outside the Methodist Church, and as the holiness denominations have, as denominations, affiliated with the NHA, the Association has ceased to be an instrument of holiness revival within Methodism and has come to be increasingly an association of holiness denominations.

As has been suggested, this change has been reflected in the leadership of the NHA--so much so that for the past several years the presidency has been held by non-Methodists, and the denominational composition of the executive committee (1965-66) is as follows: President, Wesleyan Methodist; First Vice-President, Free Methodist, Second Vice-President, United Missionary; Third Vice-President, Salvation Army; Secretary, Brethren in Christ; Treasurer, Pilgrim Holiness.<sup>125</sup>

---

<sup>124</sup>ibid., p. 77.

<sup>125</sup>"Minutes, Executive Committee, National Holiness Association, Marion, Indiana, November 9, 1965" (mimeographed), p. 1.

With this change in support and leadership in the NHA it is to be expected that there would come a corresponding change in emphasis. The philosophy now, not surprisingly, seems to be one of ministering to the constituent denominations, not ministering to individuals within the Methodist Church. The concern now is, how can the NHA assist and strengthen the holiness denominations? To the leadership of the NHA, the answer has been: work for greater cooperation, unity, and eventual union of the holiness denominations.

This was spelled out by Dr. Paul L. Kindschi, a Wesleyan Methodist, in 1956 in an article printed in The Wesleyan Methodist and also circulated in pamphlet form. Noting that the holiness sects have grown up pretty largely independent and ignorant of each other, Kindschi said,

More and more people are expressing the need and urgency of having a closer fellowship with all holiness peoples. The need of forming a coordinating agency with [in] the holiness movement, one that would truly "give scriptural holiness a united voice," has been suggested.

The leadership of the N. H. A. is willing to launch heavily into this program if it will be accepted and promoted by those wanting to see the work of God the Holy Spirit carried to this generation more than anything else.<sup>126</sup>

Some within the NHA, especially those who are Methodists, feel the National Association is no longer fulfilling the ministry to Methodism that she should. Some would like to see a return to former emphases and methods, hoping that thus the NHA could spark a new holiness impulse in the Methodist Church.<sup>127</sup>

---

<sup>126</sup>Paul L. Kindschi, An Analysis of the National Holiness Association (Pamphlet; Minneapolis: National Holiness Association, n. d.); cf. the same material under the same title in The Wesleyan Methodist CXIII (February 8, 1956), pp. 3-4.

<sup>127</sup>Rose, personal interview, loc. cit.

In essence, this question goes back to "the church question" of 1880-1900--where can the holiness witness best be maintained, within major Protestantism or through specifically holiness denominations? Presently the NHA is adopting the latter answer, reflecting what is now her major constituency.

More recent developments in the NHA's drive to increase cooperation among the holiness churches is noted in the next chapter. The fundamental question of the most effective sphere for the holiness witness, including the question of the future of the NHA, must come up for further investigation in Chapter VIII, "The Holiness Churches and the Larger Ecumenical Perspective."

## VI. THE WINDS OF ECUMENICITY

"Church unity is on the offensive! In the alternation between schism and unity, dominance has swung toward the latter pole." So writes Robert Lee in his study of current ecumenical trends.<sup>128</sup>

In the previous discussion of the growing similarity among the holiness churches, some of the socio-cultural aspects of this trend were noted. These and other developments, theological, ecclesiastical, and to a great extent social, have in the twentieth century given rise to the ecumenical movement.

In documenting recent ecumenical trends, Lee notes that in 1956 there was one religious group for every 400,000 adults in America, as compared with one for every 170,500 adults in 1906-- indicating that the tendency toward fragmenta-

---

<sup>128</sup>Robert Lee, The Social Sources of Church Unity, p. 188.

tion and proliferation within American Protestantism has largely ceased. Further, he notes that in America today seventy-five percent of the non-Roman Catholic Christians are identified with five major denominational families.<sup>129</sup> The Yearbook of American Churches for 1926 reported 263 religious groups, compared to only 250 in the 1966 Yearbook.<sup>130</sup>

Another indication of the rise of the ecumenical movement has been the amazing growth of local and state councils of churches. In 1927 there were only four fully organized state councils of churches and very few local councils.<sup>131</sup> As of August, 1965, there were fifty state councils of churches and 837 area, city, and metropolitan councils, 226 of these with a paid staff.<sup>132</sup>

These signs are in addition to the more obvious and recognized ecumenical significance of the National Council of Churches, the World Council of Churches, and the Roman Catholic Vatican Council II.

The development of mass culture, noted previously, has certainly been one of the factors giving rise to the ecumenical movement, as Lee shows. Mass communication, a twentieth century novelty; the erosion of sectional differences; the slow-down in immigration; the rise of national organizations; the development of big business, big labor, big government--all these have had their place in creating a climate favorable to ecumenical dialog and activity.<sup>133</sup> J. Milton Yinger notes,

---

<sup>129</sup>Ibid., p. 75.

<sup>130</sup>Ibid.; Landis, op. cit., p. 196.

<sup>131</sup>Lee, op. cit., p. 133.

<sup>132</sup>Landis, op. cit., p. 108.

<sup>133</sup>Lee, op. cit., pp. 21-74.

In a day when poultrymen, engineers, and physicians have joined together in their various organizations for a more effective pursuit of their interests, it is not surprising to find religious groups following the same pattern.<sup>134</sup>

The winds of ecumenicity have already significantly affected conservative-evangelical Christianity, of which the holiness movement is a part. This is seen particularly in the "nucleation"- "counter-nucleation" process which has occurred in American Protestantism in the past twenty-five years. As Lee notes,

Co-ordination and centralization lead to concentration of power and elaboration of complicated machinery for administrative purposes. As power centralizes in one institutional sphere, it calls forth "counter-vailing powers" in other areas. Such nucleation and "counter-nucleation" seems to be the order of the day for business, government, labor, farming, and churches as well.<sup>135</sup>

Ecumenical pressures have given rise to the National Council of Churches. Conservative-evangelical Christianity has viewed the nucleation of major American Protestantism in the "liberal" NCC as a threat, and there has come a counter-nucleation of conservatives in the National Association of Evangelicals. Perhaps something of the counter-nucleation impulse has played a part in the drive for unity among the holiness churches; certainly the argument of defense against ecumenical pressures has on occasion been put forward as a reason for denominational merger within the holiness ranks.<sup>136</sup>

---

<sup>134</sup>J. Milton Yinger, Religion, Society and the Individual, An Introduction to the Sociology of Religion (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1957), p. 293.

<sup>135</sup>Lee, op. cit., pp. 66-67.

<sup>136</sup>The attitude of the holiness churches toward the ecumenical movement is taken up in Chapter VIII.



The ecumenical winds are touching the holiness churches, and the following evaluation by Lee is probably correct for the holiness denomination:

The greater the degree of the sect's assimilation of its surrounding culture the less resistance it bears against the church unity movement. When social differences in class status, educational level, income, geographical isolation, and ethnic status are reduced, then the sect is prepared to engage in ecumenical activities.<sup>137</sup>

### SUMMARY

The history of the holiness movement has been largely the history of the dynamic of the Wesleyan doctrine of entire sanctification as it has sought to find expression within American Methodism.

The period in American Methodism leading up to the Civil War was a time of pressures and turmoils, as it was for the nation. Slavery and antislavery sentiment raged; bishops used their full power to try to hold the church together. The Wesleyan flame of holiness died low on the hearths of American Methodism.

The conflicting pressures within the church produced a rash of schisms between 1830 and 1860, bringing into being two of the present day holiness churches: the Wesleyan Methodist and the Free Methodist.

In the 1700's God had two brothers who rekindled the holiness flame; in the 1800's he had two sisters. These began their own "holy club," which became Mrs. Phoebe Palmer's Tuesday Meeting and helped spark the revival of 1858.

From initial general acceptance of the spontaneous holiness witness in the

---

<sup>137</sup>ibid., pp. 194-195.

mid-1800's, American Methodism moved gradually to toleration, and finally, in many instances, active opposition to holiness teaching. This opposition was in part the result, in part the cause, of the rise of the holiness associations, in particular of the National Holiness Association which traces its existence back to 1867.

Many of the regional holiness associations, for a wide range of reasons, in time evolved into many small independent sects, a number of which coalesced into such groups as the Pilgrim Holiness Church and the Church of the Nazarene. Holiness revivalism as spread through the associations also reached beyond Methodism, providing the vital spark for such groups as the Mennonite Brethren in Christ (United Missionary Church).

Following the consolidation of the new holiness sects in the early 1900's, a period of more or less stability began, extending to the present. During this time the holiness sects have grown more alike and, with all churches, have been influenced by the modern winds of ecumenicity. Gradual changes have taken place within the NHA also, the Association becoming more and more a fraternity of holiness denominations, and less a movement of holiness witness to American Methodism,

This period also has seen the origin of the Evangelical Methodist Church.

The many holiness bodies brought into being during this century-long movement, it has been noted, have tended in their characteristics and development to correspond to the sect-type of religious group, as set forth by Troeltsch and others; none of these groups, however, in their origin was a sect of the most radical kind.

The holiness movement persisted through the most revolutionary period in

American history, finding varying modes of expression. It continues today primarily through established channels, and in this sense is less a genuine "movement" today than it was in its earlier history.

## CHAPTER III

### SURVEY OF PAST AND PRESENT MOVES TOWARD UNITY

As has been shown in the previous chapter, it would be a misreading of the history of the holiness movement in the United States to characterize it as an exclusively separatist or "come-out-ist" movement. From the beginning of the movement there have been moves in the direction of unity, and such moves have become more common in recent years.

In this chapter unitive moves of three types are noted: specific mergers or attempts at merger, interdenominational cooperation of various kinds, and the very recent NHA-backed movement for a federation of holiness churches.

#### I. MERGER ATTEMPTS

Several of the eleven denominations affiliated with the National Holiness Association are the result of merger with other groups, and of these denominations several have been or are now involved in merger conversations. Results from a questionnaire sent to denominational executives and other research reveal the following:<sup>1</sup>

##### Past Mergers

At least four of the denominations within the NHA were formed through

---

<sup>1</sup>Questionnaires were not returned by the Salvation Army.

merger or have merged with other groups in the United States during their history.<sup>2</sup> These are the Churches of Christ in Christian Union, Evangelical Methodist Church, Pilgrim Holiness Church, and United Missionary Church.<sup>3</sup>

Churches of Christ in Christian Union--This group, which withdrew from the Christian Union Churches in 1909 over the doctrine of entire sanctification, merged with The Reformed Methodist Church in New York in 1952. The latter is now the North Eastern District of the Churches of Christ in Christian Union.<sup>4</sup>

Evangelical Methodist Church--United with the Evangel Churches of California in 1960 and with the People's Methodist Church of Virginia and North Carolina in 1962. The name "Evangelical Methodist" was retained in both mergers.<sup>5</sup>

---

<sup>2</sup>At least one of the NHA-affiliated denominations has united with a church outside the U. S.: The Holiness Movement Church of Canada joined the Free Methodist Church of North America in 1960 (Questionnaire responses from Bishop Myron F. Boyd of the Free Methodist Church and C. T. Denbo, Executive Secretary of the Free Methodist Church). A rather full account of the steps leading to this union is given in the minutes of the Board of Administration of the Free Methodist Church.

<sup>3</sup>In addition, the Wesleyan Methodist Church has assimilated the Hephzibah Faith Movement and the Missionary Bands of the World--though, according to Dr. B. H. Phaup, "hardly in the usual sense of merger." Questionnaire response from Dr. B. H. Phaup, General Superintendent of the Wesleyan Methodist Church. Cf. Frank S. Mead, Handbook of Denominations in the United States (fourth edition; New York: Abingdon Press, 1965) p. 236.

<sup>4</sup>Frank S. Mead, Handbook of Denominations in the United States (fourth edition; New York: Abingdon Press, 1965), pp. 89-90, and Benson Y. Landis (ed.), Yearbook of American Churches (New York: National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U. S. A., 1966), p. 38.

<sup>5</sup>Questionnaire response from Rev. Ralph A. Vanderwood, General Superintendent of the Evangelical Methodist Church; "Evangel Churches Unite with E. M. C.," Voice of Evangelical Methodism, VIII (June, 1960), p. 1; "Highlights of the Conference," Voice of Evangelical Methodism, X (August, 1962), p. 4.

Pilgrim Holiness Church--the result of the following mergers:<sup>6</sup>

- 1919 - International Apostolic Holiness Church united with Holiness Christian Church, forming the International Holiness Church.
- 1922 - The Pentecostal Rescue Mission united with the International Holiness Church, the name International Holiness Church being retained and the Pentecostal Rescue Mission becoming the New York District of the International Holiness Church.
- 1922 - The Pilgrim Church united with the International Holiness Church, forming the Pilgrim Holiness Church.
- 1924 - The Pentecostal Brethren in Christ united with the Ohio District of the Pilgrim Holiness Church.
- 1925 - The People's Mission Church united with the Colorado District of the Pilgrim Holiness Church.
- 1946 - The Holiness Church united with the Pilgrim Holiness Church, the name Pilgrim Holiness Church being retained.

United Missionary Church--the result of the following mergers:<sup>7</sup>

- 1875 - New Mennonites united with the Reformed Mennonites, forming the United Mennonites.

---

<sup>6</sup>Questionnaire response from Rev. J. D. Abbott, General Secretary-Treasurer of the Pilgrim Holiness Church, and Manual of the Pilgrim Holiness Church (Indianapolis: The Pilgrim Publishing House, 1962), Sec. 2.

<sup>7</sup>Questionnaire response from Dr. Kenneth Geiger, General Superintendent of the United Missionary Church; The Constitution and Manual of the United Missionary Church (Elkhart, Indiana: Bethel Publishing Company, 1958), pp. 53-59, 68-75.

1879 - Evangelical Mennonites united with the United Mennonites, forming the Evangelical United Mennonites.

1883 - Brethren in Christ united with the Evangelical United Mennonites, forming the Mennonite Brethren in Christ. In 1947 the name was changed to the United Missionary Church. (When this name change was made the Pennsylvania Conference elected to continue to use the name "Mennonite Brethren in Christ." In 1952 this conference withdrew from the church.)<sup>8</sup>

#### Unsuccessful Merger Attempts

There have been at least six cases in which NHA-affiliated denominations have actually conducted merger negotiations, but in which the negotiations broke down when one of the parties decided to discontinue them.

Free Methodist - Wesleyan Methodist. Twice in this century these two denominations have tried to unite, from 1903 to 1919<sup>9</sup> and from 1943 to 1955.<sup>10</sup> The

---

<sup>8</sup>The Constitution and Manual of the United Missionary Church, *op. cit.*, p. 9; Everek R. Storms, History of the United Missionary Church (Elkhart, Indiana: Bethel Publishing Company, 1958), pp. 70-75.

<sup>9</sup>"Journal of the General Conference of the Free Methodist Church" (unpublished) from 1907 to 1919; The Tentative Report of the Joint Commission of the Wesleyan Methodist Church of America and the Free Methodist Church of North America on Church Union (Syracuse, New York: The Wesley Press, 1951), p. 3. There may have been earlier informal conversations between these two bodies, but, so far as the present writer knows, this was the earliest instance of formal negotiations.

<sup>10</sup>Proposed Discipline for the United Wesleyan Methodist Church (n. p., n. d.), "Foreword," pp. 2-3; and numerous other sources (see Chapter IV of this paper).

latter negotiations broke off when the 1955 General Conference of the Wesleyan Methodist Church voted 62-96 to discontinue the Wesleyan Methodist delegation to the Joint Commission.<sup>11</sup>

Holiness Christian Church — Indiana Miami Reserve Christian Conference.

These negotiations, conducted "about twelve years ago," failed to result in union.<sup>12</sup>

Holiness Christian Church - Kentucky Christian Church (Christian Holiness). No permanent union resulted from these conversations, held about the same time as those above with the Indiana Miami Reserve Christian Conference.<sup>13</sup>

United Missionary Church— Missionary Church Association. A fraction of a vote kept this merger from consummation. In 1959 the vote at the United Missionary Church's General Conference was less than one short of the required two-thirds majority, the actual vote being 59-31. An attempt was made after the 1959 General Conference to reopen negotiations with the MCA, but the latter requested no further negotiations be held pending the outcome of negotiations instigated between the MCA and the Christian and Missionary Alliance (a merger attempt which, incidentally, failed in 1963 when the MCA membership voted 65.86% in favor, 66.67% (two thirds) being required.<sup>14</sup>

---

<sup>11</sup>Minutes of the Twenty-ninth Quadrennial Session of the General Conference of the Wesleyan Methodist Church, 1955 (Syracuse, New York: The Wesley Press, 1955), p. 27; Questionnaire response from Rev. Garl Beaver, Secretary of the Wesleyan Methodist Church.

<sup>12</sup>Questionnaire response from Rev. Ira W. Bechtel of the Holiness Christian Church.

<sup>13</sup>ibid.

<sup>14</sup>Questionnaire response from Geiger, loc. cit., and from Rev. Tillman



Evangelical Methodists—Churches of Christ in Christian Union. These two NHA denominations conducted merger negotiations in the 1950's, but these broke down in 1959.<sup>15</sup>

Evangelical Methodists—United Missionary Church. While the original plan was to have the final decision made by the Evangelical Methodist General Conference in 1966, the two EMC annual conferences have petitioned the General Conference to terminate negotiations.<sup>16</sup> According to the Reverend Ralph A. Vanderwood, EMC General Superintendent, the matter is still pending and a vote will be taken in 1966, but no Fraternal Committee meetings have been held since last summer. Dr. Geiger, UMC General Superintendent, has described the UMC-EMC merger attempt as "a dead issue."<sup>17</sup>

Thus there have been six attempted mergers, involving six NHA churches<sup>18</sup> and three non-NHA churches.

---

Habegger, President of the Missionary Church Association; Proceedings of the General Conference of the United Missionary Church, February 25 - March 2, 1959, p. 59 (cf. p. 57); Proceedings of the Nineteenth General Conference, United Missionary Church, February 27 - March 5, 1962, pp. 17, 38; "Merger Lost by 1%," Gospel Banner, LXXXVI (February 14, 1963), p. 4.

<sup>15</sup>Questionnaire response from Vanderwood, loc. cit., and from Rev. Melvin Maxwell, Assistant General Superintendent, Churches of Christ in Christian Union.

<sup>16</sup>Questionnaire responses from Geiger, loc. cit., and Vanderwood, loc. cit.

<sup>17</sup>Ralph A. Vanderwood, personal letter to the writer, dated March 14, 1966.

<sup>18</sup>Some of these six may not have been affiliated with the NHA at the time the negotiations were in progress; all six are so affiliated at present.

Merger Negotiations Now In Progress

As of April, 1966, there were four attempts at merger in progress involving five denominations affiliated with the NHA and four not so affiliated.

Brethren in Christ—United Zion Church. The United Zion Church, not affiliated with NHA, is a group which broke from the Brethren in Christ in the 1850's.<sup>19</sup>

Ohio, Kansas, Oregon, and Rocky Mountain Yearly Meetings of Friends. This is to be an alliance of four of the more conservative Friends groups.<sup>20</sup> The Ohio and Rocky Mountain groups are members of NHA.

Pilgrim Holiness Church—Wesleyan Methodists. The General Conferences of these two bodies, scheduled for June, 1966, are to vote on merger.<sup>21</sup>

Wesleyan Methodists—Reformed Baptist Alliance. The Wesleyans have been officially discussing merger with this small holiness group since 1964. The Reformed Baptists are located in New England and Canada.<sup>22</sup>

---

<sup>19</sup>Questionnaire responses from Dr. Owen Alderfer, Secretary, and Bishop Henry Ginder, both of the Brethren in Christ Church.

<sup>20</sup>Questionnaire responses from Rev. Lee, Clerk of the Rocky Mountain Yearly Meeting of Friends, and Rev. Harold B. Winn, Clerk of the Ohio Yearly Meeting of Friends.

<sup>21</sup>Questionnaire responses from Beaver, *loc. cit.*, and Dr. B. H. Phaup, General Superintendent of the Wesleyan Methodist Church; questionnaire response and accompanying personal letter from Rev. Paul W. Thomas, General Superintendent of the Pilgrim Holiness Church.

<sup>22</sup>Questionnaire response from Phaup, *loc. cit.*; B. H. Phaup, "Report on Merger," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXXIII (March 4, 1964), p. 14.

### Summary of Merger Attempts.

This survey reveals a total of 22 mergers either consummated, attempted without success, or still pending. The breakdown is as follows:

Mergers consummated--12

Unsuccessful Merger Attempts--6

Mergers pending--4

This survey is limited to merger negotiations involving NHA churches and does not include the series of mergers which created such non-NHA holiness churches as the Church of the Nazarene.

In the merger negotiations cited above, it appears that in each case, without exception, both parties had a virtually complete agreement on doctrine, all of them adhering to what is commonly called Wesleyan-Arminian theology. This was probably the most basic common denominator, although nearly all these churches were rather strongly influenced by Methodist (or Methodistic) revivalism in the late nineteenth or early twentieth centuries. Today, most of these churches are more or less Methodistic in polity.

## II. INTERDENOMINATIONAL COOPERATION

It was noted in the historical sketch in Chapter II that although there has been interdenominational cooperation in the various holiness camp meetings, yet the holiness denominations have grown up pretty much independent of each other and without much close contact. In recent years, however, significant new cooperative ventures have developed involving most of the NHA denominations.

### Cooperative Associations

In addition to holding membership in the National Holiness Association, it is not unusual to find the NHA denominations participating in other interdenominational cooperative associations. At least nine of these denominations are members of the National Association of Evangelicals.<sup>23</sup> Some were charter members, and some holiness leaders have served as president of NAE. Most of these churches cooperate with NAE's Evangelical Foreign Missions Association.<sup>24</sup> With the exception of the Salvation Army, there is almost no cooperation, however, with the National or World Council of Churches.

### Publications

Probably the most significant cooperation in recent years has been in the area of publishing. Dr. Lloyd H. Knox of Light and Life Press feels the increased cooperation among holiness publishers in the last decade has been remarkable.<sup>25</sup>

Several of the NHA denominations are members of the Holiness Denominational Publications Association. But the biggest step so far has been a cooperative publishing program sponsored by six of the holiness denominations under a committee called the Joint Editorial Advisory Council. Denominations cooperating in

---

<sup>23</sup>National Association of Evangelicals, The Story of Evangelical Cooperation (Pamphlet; Wheaton, Illinois: National Association of Evangelicals, n. d.).

<sup>24</sup>"Quality Missions," United Evangelical Action, XXV (March, 1966), p. 4.

<sup>25</sup>Lloyd H. Knox, personal interview, held at Wilmore, Kentucky, January 26, 1966.

this venture are the United Missionary Church, Evangelical Methodists, Wesleyan Methodists, Free Methodists, Pilgrim Holiness Church, and the Nazarenes. This group publishes, among other items, the Aldersgate Biblical Series (Sunday school manuals using the inductive approach), Aldersgate Teen Topics, and Aldersgate Bible school materials.<sup>26</sup>

These denominations are moving in the direction of greater cooperation in publishing with the possibility of formulating a united publishing program. Bishops, general superintendents, publishers, and editors of the denominations represented on the Joint Editorial Advisory Council met in December, 1964, to consider the possibility of a united program.<sup>27</sup> At that meeting a number of "preliminary proposals" for such a unified program were presented. Among other things, these proposals called for a common Sunday school curriculum, including take-home papers; a common youth curriculum; a quarterly devotional magazine; a common advertising agency; and united committees on music, book publishing, and promotion. Three alternative proposals were presented for cooperative production methods and procedures.<sup>28</sup>

---

<sup>26</sup>Questionnaire responses from Geiger, Beaver, Vanderwood, and Denbo, loc. cit.

<sup>27</sup>Personal letter from Lloyd H. Knox, Publisher for the Free Methodist Church, to writer, dated October 25, 1965; "Denominations Meet to Discuss Publishing Programs," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXXII February 3, 1965), p. 78.

<sup>28</sup>Lloyd H. Knox, "Preliminary Proposals to the Joint Denominational Exploratory Committee on a United Publishing Program," October, 1964 (Mimeographed), pp. 2-5.

The work of this meeting continues through a number of committees.<sup>29</sup> At this stage it does not seem likely, however, that the publishing interests of these churches will be amalgamated in the immediate future.<sup>30</sup>

Through the Holiness Denominational Publications Association there is a sharing of some Sunday school literature by most of the NHA churches.<sup>31</sup> The Wesleyan Methodist and Pilgrim Holiness churches have combined one of their take-home Sunday school papers.

Plans are now underway to set up a joint commission of the Pilgrim Holiness, Wesleyan Methodist, and Free Methodist churches to prepare and publish a joint hymnal.<sup>32</sup> The hymnal Hymns of the Living Faith is the work of a joint Wesleyan-Free Methodist commission and has been the official hymnal of these churches since 1951.

### Missions

Questionnaire responses reveal that at least five of the NHA churches cooperate with other denominations in some aspect of missions, and it is certain that the extent of missionary cooperation is greater than these reports would indicate.<sup>33</sup>

---

<sup>29</sup>Knox, personal letter, loc. cit.

<sup>30</sup>Knox, personal interview, loc. cit.

<sup>31</sup>Questionnaire responses from Maxwell, Vanderwood, Boyd, Denbo, Abbott, Geiger, Beaver, Phaup, Ginder, Winn, Thomas, and Lee, loc. cit.

<sup>32</sup>Knox, personal interview, loc. cit.

<sup>33</sup>Questionnaire responses from Alderfer, Ginder, Winn, Boyd, and Phaup, loc. cit.

Cooperation of evangelical groups on the mission field is, of course, very common, although such cooperation does not always represent a formal cooperative program on the part of the official organization as a whole.

Several of the NHA denominations are members of the Evangelical Foreign Missions Association, an association related to the NAE.<sup>34</sup>

### Education

Although there has been some cooperation in the publishing of educational materials, the NHA denominations have as yet had little cooperation at the level of higher education. Three interesting exceptions, however, can be noted:

Central Pilgrim College of Bartlesville, Oklahoma, a Pilgrim Holiness institution, is the result of institutional mergers related to the history of the Pilgrim Holiness Church. Three educational institutions, each founded by a different denomination, contributed to the making of this school.<sup>35</sup>

In 1947, the Holiness Evangelistic Institute of El Monte, California, a school of the Holiness Church, merged with Pilgrim Bible College, a Pilgrim Holiness school begun by the Pilgrim Church before its union with the PHC in 1922. This school merger took place the same year the Holiness Church and the Pilgrim Holiness Church united. In 1955 the name was changed to Western Pilgrim College.

---

<sup>34</sup>"Quality Missions," loc. cit.

<sup>35</sup>"An Historical Overview of Central Pilgrim College," 5 pp. (Typewritten), included as part of "Schedule A" in "Schedules, Accrediting Association of Bible Colleges" (unpublished) for Central Pilgrim College. Accrediting Association of Bible Colleges, Fort Wayne, Indiana (n. d.).

In 1959 Colorado Springs Bible College, a school started by the People's Mission Church before that group joined the Pilgrim Holiness Church, was moved to Bartlesville, Oklahoma, and the name was changed to Central Pilgrim College.

In 1960, Western Pilgrim College united with Central Pilgrim College on the Bartlesville campus, the name Central Pilgrim College being retained.

Azusa Pacific College, Azusa, California, is somewhat unique in that it is supported by six separate denominations and is the result of the recent merger of two schools.

Azusa College had for several years been supported by the Evangelical Methodists, Wesleyan Methodists, Salvation Army, Missionary Church Association, and United Missionary Church. In 1965 Los Angeles Pacific College, a regionally-accredited college affiliated with the Free Methodist Church, merged with Azusa to create Azusa Pacific College--thus creating an interdenominational school sponsored by six denominations, five of which are NHA-affiliates.<sup>36</sup> Although for LAPC this was a way out of financial difficulties, yet both schools brought to the merger certain strengths, making a stronger school than either was previously and tending to relieve the "over-schooling" problem among the holiness churches.

Wessington Springs Academy, a Free Methodist institution which recently discontinued its junior college program, has been considering a possible union with

---

<sup>36</sup>Questionnaire response from Vanderwood, *loc. cit.*; George Ford, "The Azusa-LAPC Merger Story," The Free Methodist, XCVIII (November 23, 1965) pp. 16-17; "Merger of Azusa College and Los Angeles Pacific College," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXXII (May 26, 1965) p. 13.



a Wesleyan Methodist and possibly another Free Methodist high school.<sup>37</sup>

### Other Areas of Cooperation

Some NHA churches cooperate in such areas as social concern, evangelism, and youth programs. The Wesleyan Methodists and, more recently, the Pilgrim Holiness Church,<sup>38</sup> have adopted the Christian Youth Crusaders program for intermediate youth begun by the Free Methodist Church.

There is very little genuine joint endeavor along any of these lines, however, at present.

### III. THE NEW FEDERATION PROPOSAL

At its annual convention in Detroit in the spring of 1965, the National Holiness Association passed a recommendation which read, in part:

Inasmuch as it is apparent that there is an evident desire among churchmen of the Wesleyan-Arminian persuasion to increase the tempo of cooperation in fellowship, formal denominational enterprises, and church federation consultation...we therefore recommend: that the leadership of the churches and interdenominational movements now in the NHA be invited as soon as circumstances warrant in a conference to explore the possibilities of church federation.<sup>39</sup>

---

<sup>37</sup>Robert F. Andrews, conversation with the writer held at Winona Lake, Indiana, February 21, 1966. Mr. Andrews was president of Wessington Springs before becoming Director and Speaker of the Light and Life Hour radio broadcast.

<sup>38</sup>"The General Board Meets," Pilgrim Holiness Advocate, XLV (June 12, 1965) p. 2; "Spotlight on CYC," Pilgrim Holiness Advocate, XLV (March 20, 1965) p. 13.

<sup>39</sup>"Proposed Federation of Holiness Churches," news release from the National Holiness Association, Marion, Indiana, n. d., p. 1.

Since then plans have gone forward for such a conference. A special committee appointed by the NHA met in Chicago on October 12 and 13, 1965, to plan for the conference. As a result of action by this committee and of further action taken at the 1966 NHA convention the following guidelines for the federation conference have been agreed upon:<sup>40</sup>

1. November 30-December 2, 1966, will be the dates of the conference and Chicago will be the place.

2. Possible federation in four areas will be explored: administration, Christian higher education, missions, and publications.

3. Delegates to the conference will be invited according to the following formula:

- a) General superintendents (or bishops), heads of departments or executive officers from each denominational board or major committee, and a representative from each such board or committee, of each denomination affiliated with NHA. Also invited to send delegates on the same basis are the following groups not affiliated with NHA: Church of the Nazarene, Congregational Methodist Church, Holiness Methodist Church, Missionary Church Association, Oregon Yearly Meeting of Friends, and Kansas Yearly Meeting of Friends.
- b) The president, academic dean, and one board member from each col-

---

<sup>40</sup>"Report of Church Federation Study Conference Planning Committee Meeting," Report to the Executive Committee of the National Holiness Association, November 9, 1965.

lege and seminary affiliated with an NHA denomination or independently associated with NHA.

- c) Three official representatives from the World Gospel Mission and the Oriental Missionary Society.

The following leadership for the conference on federation was named:<sup>41</sup>

Chairman--Bishop Myron F. Boyd

Missions--Dr. Arthur Climenhaga

Publications--Dr. Lloyd H. Knox

Education--Dr. Everett L. Cattell

Administration--Dr. Kenneth E. Geiger

The basic idea of a holiness federation is explained by Bishop Boyd:

The Federation of Holiness Churches is for fellowship, for united planning and operation where overhead can be cut down and where more effective service can be rendered in our various fields.... In the Federation, each denomination would maintain its own identity but would have a number of official delegates to a conference and official members on a board which would act for the Federation.<sup>42</sup>

Membership in the federation would be open to colleges and seminaries, and to independent missionary societies, in addition to denominations. Presumably it might be possible for local or district units of a denomination to identify with the federation, even if the denomination as a whole did not do so.<sup>43</sup>

---

<sup>41</sup>"Minutes, Executive Committee, National Holiness Association, Marion, Indiana, November 9, 1965," pp. 4-5; Myron F. Boyd, personal letter, dated March 3, 1966.

<sup>42</sup>Boyd, personal letter, loc. cit.

<sup>43</sup>Ibid.

It seems to be implicit in this venture that it is a step in the direction of the merger of a number of the NHA denominations. Bishop Boyd writes, "We do not know that the Federation would lead to merger, but there is a strong possibility that it could do so in a few years."<sup>44</sup>

Inasmuch as the National Holiness Association is sponsoring and promoting this federation proposal, the move raises questions concerning the whole role of the NHA, as well as the question as to what effect a holiness federation would have on the NHA. This matter will be discussed in some detail in a later chapter.<sup>45</sup>

#### SUMMARY

This survey indicates that there is a new impulse toward unity and union among the NHA churches. Following the flurry of mergers which took place as various independent and semi-independent groups coalesced after the holiness revivals in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, there were few if any mergers or merger attempts until the late 1940's. Of the twenty-two mergers and attempted mergers noted in this chapter, eight occurred before 1926. Of the remaining fourteen, thirteen have occurred since 1950. While only three of the twelve successful mergers have taken place in recent years, the present situation suggests the possibility of several mergers in the near future.

A new impulse toward unity seems to be borne out by the survey of various kinds of interdenominational cooperation within the holiness churches as well. The

---

<sup>44</sup>Ibid.

<sup>45</sup>See Chapter VIII, pp. 337-339.

National Association of Evangelicals and the Evangelical Foreign Missions Association are relatively recent developments. The present significant cooperation in publishing among holiness groups was virtually non-existent ten years ago. Cooperation in such areas as education and missions, even limited as it is today, seems to bear out the trend. Finally, the readiness of NHA bodies to launch into a study of federation possibilities indicates a changed situation today.

It may be instructive for an understanding of the whole question of unity among holiness churches to examine in some detail some of the merger negotiations noted in this chapter. The next three chapters deal with three of the more recent merger attempts involving NHA denominations.

## CHAPTER IV

### FREE METHODIST - WESLEYAN METHODIST NEGOTIATIONS, 1943-1955

Both the Wesleyan Methodist Church and the Free Methodist Church trace their origin back to the period 1830-1860. Both thoroughly Methodist in doctrine and in other respects, there have, nevertheless, been significant differences between the two groups from the very beginning.

In 1900 the Wesleyans numbered slightly over 17,000, as compared to 28,588 Free Methodists. Wesleyan Methodist total membership (U. S. and Canada) in 1964 was 48,417, as compared to Free Methodist total membership (U. S. and Canada) of 62,590.<sup>1</sup>

It is to be expected that, in the course of a century of history, these two similar groups of Methodists should attempt to unite. This chapter undertakes to study the most significant such attempt, which occurred between 1943 and 1955, but which was ultimately unsuccessful. It may be helpful first, however, to note something of the earlier history of Free Methodist - Wesleyan Methodist conversations.

#### I. EARLIER HISTORY

While there probably had been informal contacts on the subject of union

---

<sup>1</sup>Ira Ford McLeister and Roy S. Nicholson, History of the Wesleyan Methodist Church of America (revised edition; Syracuse, New York: The Wesley Press, 1951), p. 134; Minutes, 1900, of the Free Methodist Church; Editor's Statistical Report in The Wesleyan Methodist, CXXII (January 6, 1965), pp. 8-9; Yearbook 1964 of the Free Methodist Church (Winona Lake, Indiana: The Free Methodist

on earlier occasions, the first formal negotiations between the Free Methodists and the Wesleyan Methodists occurred between 1907 and 1915.

In 1903, Wilson T. Hogue, General Superintendent (later Bishop) of the Free Methodist Church, was present at the Wesleyan Methodist General Conference. In an address Hogue suggested, "wholly on my own responsibility," the possible union of the two churches.<sup>2</sup> In response, the Wesleyans passed a motion "that the Book Committee be authorized to appoint a committee of not less than five, whose duty it shall be to consider the relation that exists between us and the Free Methodist Church whenever their appointing body shall see fit to appoint a like committee."<sup>3</sup>

Since the 1903 quadrennial General Conference of the Free Methodist Church had already been held, this Wesleyan action did not officially come before the Free Methodist General Conference until 1907. However the 1907 General Conference, in response to the Wesleyan Methodist overture, passed the following resolution:

Whereas, The Wesleyan Methodist Connection of America have been accustomed to elect a delegate to quadrennially bear fraternal greetings to our general conferences; and

Whereas, Their last general conference authorized their book committee to choose a special committee to confer with a special committee

---

Publishing House, 1964). See the Chart of Church Growth, Appendix C of this paper,

<sup>2</sup>McLejster and Nicholson, op. cit., p. 138.

<sup>3</sup>The Tentative Report of the Joint Commission of the Wesleyan Methodist Church of America and the Free Methodist Church of North America on Church Union (Syracuse, New York: The Wesley Press, 1951), p. 3.

of the Free Methodist Church relative to the matter of bringing the two denominations into closer affiliation and cooperation in the spread of Bible holiness and the promotion of all worthy reforms, whenever our executive committee shall have appointed such a committee; therefore,

Resolved, (1) That we here elect a fraternal delegate to represent us at their general conference to be held next year.

Resolved, (2) That we also authorize and instruct our executive committee to appoint a committee of five to consider with a like committee from the Wesleyan body on the matter of a closer affiliation of the two denominations in their work.<sup>4</sup>

Following the Wesleyan Methodist General Conference of 1907, at which this action by the Free Methodists was noted, the Wesleyan Methodist Board appointed a committee to meet with the Free Methodists.<sup>5</sup>

These two committees met jointly during the quadrennium 1907-11. "The meetings were very fraternal, and in the most friendly way all questions were freely discussed bearing upon the subject of federation, and possible union in the more remote future," Hogue wrote later.<sup>6</sup>

The work of the joint committee was hampered during the quadrennium by illness and accident. Several study papers on various aspects of the union problem were written by individual committee members, but due to the absence of ill and injured committeemen these papers received no consideration by the joint committee.<sup>7</sup>

---

<sup>4</sup>"Journal of the General Conference of the Free Methodist Church" (unpublished) for 1907, pp. 286-287.

<sup>5</sup>The Tentative Report, loc. cit.

<sup>6</sup>Wilson T. Hogue, History of the Free Methodist Church of North America (Chicago: The Free Methodist Publishing House, 1915), II, 217.

<sup>7</sup>McLeister and Nicholson, op. cit., p. 155.



The two committees presented a report, however, to their respective general conferences in 1911. In their report they noted virtually no difference between the two groups in doctrine and approach to the Scriptures. Major differences noted were: (1) the Free Methodists had a general superintendency consisting of four bishops whereas the Wesleyans had no general superintendency; (2) the Free Methodists prohibited instrumental music in their services, the Wesleyans did not; (3) the two systems of pastoral placement were considerably different, the FM system being appointive compared to the "call" system among the Wesleyans; and (4) several differences regarding ministerial ordination, manner of church voting, and similar matters.<sup>8</sup>

Bishop Hogue presented this report<sup>9</sup> to the Free Methodist General Conference and it was referred to a special committee for study.<sup>10</sup> Something of the attitudes and viewpoints current at the time can be ascertained by the report which this committee brought back to the floor of the conference. The report read, in part:

There should, it seems to us, be a mutual consideration of the unavoidable issues involved in the contemplated union, for the purpose of ascertaining as speedily as possible the ultimatum of both parties respecting the terms of federation.

If concessions requisite are too great to be made or the terms proposed would be permanently embarrassing, it had best be known early that our

---

<sup>8</sup>The Tentative Report, loc. cit.

<sup>9</sup>Apparently it was essentially the same report that was given to both 1911 general conferences.

<sup>10</sup>"Journal of the General Conference of the Free Methodist Church" (unpublished) for 1911, p. 66.

attention be not diverted from our own important interests nor either party be kept on tension.

If, on the other hand, our interests can be blended so effectually as to secure perfect harmony in doctrine, church polity and the ethics of Christianity enabling us to join hands in precept and practise, it would seem that the subsidiary matter of adjusting our business interests might be arranged without great difficulty.

However, we conclude that this general conference should say whether, in view of the fact that so little progress has been made, the federation committee should be continued.

We would recommend that if appointed, the committee proceed definitely along specific lines and report results to the Executive Committee during the ensuing quadrennium.<sup>11</sup>

The two committees were continued by the general conferences of 1911, but no further progress was realized. Bishop Hogue, the Free Methodist committee chairman, contacted A. T. Jennings, chairman of the Wesleyan committee, after the general conferences and suggested to him that

...on account of some things that had been said by some of their [the Wesleyan Methodist committee] members in the former meeting of our two committees that it seemed to me and to us as a denomination that the initiative of a new meeting of the two committees should be taken by the Wesleyan Methodist Connection.<sup>12</sup>

Jennings agreed and promised to work for further negotiations, but his death in 1913, coupled with the continuing illness of Bishop Hogue and an apparent lack of real enthusiasm for union on the part of at least some of the Wesleyans, halted further progress. No joint committee meetings were held during the quadrennium: 1911-15.<sup>13</sup>

---

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., pp. 137-138.

<sup>12</sup>Report of Bishop W. T. Hogue as reported in "Journal of the General Conference of the Free Methodist Church" (unpublished) for 1915, pp. 213-214.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid.; Hogue, loc. cit.; McLeister and Nicholson, loc. cit.

The 1915 Free Methodist General Conference tried to revive the negotiations. A committee of three was appointed to negotiate with the Wesleyans with the intention that a basis for union would be drawn up and submitted to the 1919 general conferences for approval.<sup>14</sup> A statement (all one sentence) was drawn up for presentation to the Wesleyan Methodist General Conference which read, in part:

...considering the fact that the Wesleyan and Free Methodist denominations occupy the same ground respecting the great doctrine which Mr. Wesley declared Methodism was raised up to promote, it has seemed to us in these days of amalgamated associations, when the world and worldly religions have by federation augmented their strength and are becoming formidable barriers to the progress of the character of piety which we as sister denominations feel called of God to promote, and observing the need of unification against competitors who cheapen the glorious doctrine of entire holiness, it has seemed to us that...it would be desirable to unite the forces of these two Wesleyanic bodies, and recognizing that because of differences in polity and custom, some barriers to this desired end naturally present themselves we have deemed it both wise and courteous to continue consideration with you of the whole subject of the federation of these two bodies, and hereby send to you the most kindly fraternal greetings and propose to your honorable body the careful consideration of the matter by a joint committee of the two churches in the hope that there may at least be formulated some tentative plans as a possible basis of union between these two holiness organizations.<sup>15</sup>

Bishop William Pearce, chairman of the new FM committee, contacted representatives of the Wesleyan Methodist Connection following the 1915 General Conference in an attempt to arrange a joint meeting. The reply of the Wesleyans

---

<sup>14</sup>Hogue, *op. cit.*, pp. 234-235.

<sup>15</sup>"Journal of the General Conference of the Free Methodist Church" for 1915, pp. 226-227. The tone of this statement reveals the Free Methodist Church at this time was definitely more sect-type than church-type.

was, "Do you think that the present committees could succeed where the very able joint committee of the last quadrennium failed?"<sup>16</sup> Pearce reported to the 1919 FM General Conference, "The answer of your committee of course corresponded with the sentiment of the question thus given and the incident was amicably closed."<sup>17</sup>

Thus the situation was to remain until 1943.

## II. BEGINNINGS OF THE 1943-55 ATTEMPT

The general conferences of the Wesleyan Methodist and Free Methodist churches in this century were held the same years every fourth year through 1955. In 1943, the Free Methodists convened their General Conference early in June and the Wesleyan Methodists met a few weeks afterward.

At the FM General Conference a committee was set up to study the possibility of closer relationships with evangelical churches. The committee brought back the following report, reproduced here in part:

We further recommend that this General Conference extend to those denominations whose doctrines and ethics are in harmony with Wesley's "Plain Account of Christian Perfection" and by practice and conformity renounce the world for the way of the Cross, especially the Wesleyan Methodist Connection, the Pilgrim Holiness Church, the Church of the Nazarene, and any others who are Methodist in doctrine and practice . . . , a proposition for a closer federation of holiness churches which shall seek to avoid overlapping, promote a greater understanding, charity, and fellowship, thus cooperating to more fully spread the message

---

<sup>16</sup>Report of the Committee on Federation of the Wesleyan Methodist and Free Methodist Churches to the 1919 Free Methodist General Conference, as reported in the "Journal of the General Conference of the Free Methodist Church" (unpublished) for 1919, pp. 423-424.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid.

of full salvation throughout our land and the whole world.

And we further recommend, that the General Conference elect a committee of five, . . . who shall study the question and should any of these denominations respond favorably and set up like committees, plan a joint meeting and formulate plans and report to the Board of Administration for further action.<sup>18</sup>

This report was adopted, with the substitution of the word "fellowship" for "federation."<sup>19</sup> A committee of five was elected, and this committee was specifically instructed ". . . to investigate the possibility of a union of the Wesleyan Methodist Connection and the Free Methodist Church, and . . . authorized to work to bring about such a union."<sup>20</sup>

A similar committee of five to seek union with other bodies of similar faith was elected by the Wesleyan Methodists in their General Conference the same summer. These two committees functioned jointly as the Joint Commission of the Wesleyan Methodist and Free Methodist churches. The membership in 1943, and for most of the years during which negotiations were conducted, was as follows:

Free Methodist: Bishop Leslie R. Marston (Chairman of the FM committee and Chairman of the Joint Commission), Bishop Charles V. Fairbairn, C. L. Howland, A. W. Secord, and M. L. Barton.<sup>21</sup>

---

<sup>18</sup>"Journal of the General Conference of the Free Methodist Church" (unpublished) for 1943, p. 694.

<sup>19</sup>ibid.

<sup>20</sup>ibid., pp. 701-702; cf. Howard W. VanValin, "The Twenty-First Session of the General Conference of the Free Methodist Church of North America," The Free Methodist, LXXVI (June 25, 1943), p. 9.

<sup>21</sup>L. R. Marston, "Closer Relationships with the Wesleyan Methodist Church," The Free Methodist LXXX (July 11, 1947), p. 5.

Wesleyan Methodist: Roy S. Nicholson (Chairman of the WM committee), F. R. Eddy, W. F. McConn, John D. Williams, and Stephen W. Paine (secretary of the Joint Commission).<sup>22</sup>

The organizing meeting of the Joint Commission was held in the Roberts Park Methodist Church, Indianapolis, Indiana, on April 21, 1944.<sup>23</sup>

### III. DEVELOPMENTS, 1943-47

The first four years of Free Methodist - Wesleyan Methodist negotiations were largely ones of exploration and study. During these years there were five official meetings of the Joint Commission, plus numerous committee meetings. The chronicle of these five commission meetings pretty well covers the history of the progress in these first four years.

#### First Joint Commission Meeting

Several significant actions were taken at the first Joint Commission meeting in April, 1944. These reveal something of the basic presuppositions underlying the later work of the Commission.

Need for greater contact and understanding. From the first the Joint Commission recognized that there existed a great deal of ignorance on the part of each denomination toward the other, and that union could be realized only as this ig-

---

<sup>22</sup>"General Conference Legislation," The Wesleyan Methodist, C (July 14, 1943), p. 6.

<sup>23</sup>Proposed Discipline for the United Wesleyan Methodist Church (n. p.: n. p., n. d.) p. 2.

norance was dispelled and a solid foundation of mutual understanding and appreciation built up. At the first Joint Commission meeting this matter received considerable attention, and the Commission voted to try to promote steps that would lead to greater mutual understanding. Dr. Roy S. Nicholson, commenting on the first Commission meeting, wrote:

The rank and file of our people need to develop an appreciation for the distinctive features of our sister holiness groups, and rise into a perfect fellowship with them instead of "a lukewarm toleration of other's peculiarities." Let us beware of ungrounded prejudices and blind misconceptions.<sup>24</sup>

And the remark of F. R. Eddy, Wesleyan Methodist Connectional Agent, that the people in the two churches should "lay aside some of our preconceived notions, that are based on what we heard thirty years ago," seems to typify the attitude of the Joint Commission.<sup>25</sup> In the same article Eddy went on to observe,

There is no use talking about Union without a better and more understanding acquaintance. This is fundamental.... Let us not lean back and say we tried it and failed once, therefore we cannot do it now.<sup>26</sup>

And Eddy had observed in an earlier article,

There are some fundamental necessities that must be met if any practical benefit ever comes from this study.... First, we must become better acquainted with each other than we ever have been up to the present.... There must be a spirit of fraternity and cooperation if we ever hope to unite our general activities in the work of World Evangelism which both Churches so greatly desire to see advanced. This is the

---

<sup>24</sup>Roy S. Nicholson, "The Joint Commission Meeting," The Wesleyan Methodist, CI (May 17, 1944), p. 2.

<sup>25</sup>F. R. Eddy, "The Agent's Letter," The Wesleyan Methodist, CII (May 23, 1945), p. 16.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid.

first necessity that the Joint Commission sees and is urging.<sup>27</sup>

Specifically, the Joint Commission at its first meeting suggested the following ways in which a genuine bond of unity might be established between the two denominations: (1) exchange of speakers in revival meetings, conference and school gatherings, and youth rallies; (2) exchange of publicity through the denominational papers; (3) cooperation in the publishing programs of the two churches; (4) the exchange of fraternal delegates at the annual conference level; and (5) cooperation in the courses of study for ministers.<sup>28</sup>

In keeping with these suggestions, the Commission adopted the following resolution:

WHEREAS, after a frank consideration of the major involvements, the Joint Commission are encouraged to believe that there are no barriers to the ultimate organic union of the two churches which are necessarily unsurmountable, provided that the two constituencies become better acquainted with each other's fundamental principles; and,

WHEREAS, it is the consensus of the Joint Commission that in the meantime the work of God can be promoted more effectively by the closer co-ordination of the respective activities of each body; therefore,

Be It Resolved by the Joint Commission that we urge upon our administrative bodies that in all matters of common interest there be the closest collaboration; and that we urge upon our people everywhere an exchange of fellowship in local, district, and other devotional and evangelistic gatherings, which we urge all our people to attend.<sup>29</sup>

---

<sup>27</sup>F. R. Eddy, "A Statement on Church Union," The Wesleyan Methodist, CI (June 14, 1944) p. 2. (Words underscored were italicized in the original article.)

<sup>28</sup>Leslie R. Marston and Stephen W. Paine, "First Meeting of Joint Commission of Wesleyan and Free Methodist Churches," The Free Methodist, LXXVII (May 12, 1944), p. 5. The same report was carried under the title "First Meeting of Joint Commission's Official Acts" in The Wesleyan Methodist, CI (May 17, 1944), p. 2.

<sup>29</sup>ibid.



Later developments were to demonstrate how crucial the building of a grass-roots base for merger was. The Commission rightly evaluated the situation in emphasizing this matter. As will be noted, some progress was made along these lines as time went on, but it was a big undertaking and was only partially successful.

"Go Slow" attitude. From the very first meeting onward, there appears to have been a more or less conscious "go slow" attitude on the part of the Joint Commission. While this attitude was sparked partially out of concern for thoroughness, and partially out of a desire to see a greater unity of the two churches develop, there also was the fear that too much might be given up by one or the other of the groups if progress was too rapid. Dr. Nicholson, then editor of The Wesleyan Methodist, noted,

It is not expected that such a course as is proposed can be accomplished at once, since there are difficulties to be faced and costs to be counted. But such a proposed course merits a most careful study because it is freighted with great possibilities for each group. It calls for an appreciation of the best traditions of each group, and a willingness to put God's glory and the efficient promotion of His work above mere denominational traditions or personal preferences. . . .

. . . whatever the result of our efforts be, what is done must possess and express the essential characteristics of each body.<sup>30</sup>

Characteristically, the statement by the Wesleyan Connectional Agent on this subject, F. R. Eddy, was stronger and more blunt:

This sort of study cannot be rushed nor can the progress be very clearly described for some considerable time. . . .

. . . . .  
 . . . this work is a slow process and cannot be done in a hurry.

---

<sup>30</sup>Nicholson, op. cit., pp. 1-2.

No decisions can be arrived at before the next General Conference. If a way seems to be found that seems to avoid the yielding of any essential point or principle, then this plan will be presented and fully discussed.<sup>31</sup>

The above statements come from Wesleyan Methodist members of the Joint Commission, which may indicate this reticence and fear of yielding too much was somewhat stronger among the Wesleyans than among the Free Methodists, although it existed among both groups. Later developments would seem to substantiate this conclusion, as would the history of the earlier union attempt, chronicled above.<sup>32</sup>

This attitude would point toward the conclusion that both these denominations still were essentially sect-type in 1943, the Wesleyans being somewhat more sectarian than the Free Methodists. This conclusion is further indicated by the fact that such a self-conscious reticence has not generally been a characteristic of merger considerations among major Protestant (more fully church-type) denominations.<sup>33</sup>

Committee Assignments. The major action by the Joint Commission at this first meeting concerning the negotiations themselves, was the division of the task of exploring denominational differences and similarities under various headings and the assignment of these topics to small study committees composed of Commission members. The work of these committees was to provide the basis for the next meeting of the Joint Commission.

---

<sup>31</sup>Eddy, "A Statement on Church Union," loc. cit. (Words underscored were italicized in the original article.)

<sup>32</sup>Supra, pp. 86-92.

<sup>33</sup>See, e. g., the case studies in Nils Ehrenstrom and Walter G. Muelder (eds.), Institutionalism and Church Unity (New York: Association Press, 1963).

### Second Joint Commission Meeting

The Joint Commission met for the second time in the fall of 1944. The principal concern of the meeting was to hear the reports of the study committees and begin a study of the specific problems involved in merger.<sup>34</sup>

Dividing the problem areas into doctrine, conduct, and polity, the Commission found there was essential agreement in the first two areas but considerable divergence in the third area. From this point on, polity was the major concern of the Commission.<sup>35</sup>

In the area of polity, four problems appeared that were to remain central throughout the twelve-year history of the negotiations. These were: (1) ministerial placement, (2) conference boundaries and local church location, (3) control of denominational schools, and (4) general superintendency.<sup>36</sup>

One would expect the issues of general superintendency, ministerial placement, and the relation of the denomination to the conference and the local church, in particular, to be crucial matters with the Wesleyan Methodists because of the issues prominent in their origin, as noted in Chapter II. Particularly this would be expected regarding the general superintendency, considering Orange Scott's problems with Bishop Hedding (and vice versa) and original Wesleyan Methodism's sharp

---

<sup>34</sup>"The Second Meeting of Joint Commission," The Wesleyan Methodist, CI (December 6, 1944), p. 2.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid.

<sup>36</sup>Ibid.; Roy S. Nicholson, "The Joint Commission Meets Again," The Wesleyan Methodist, CI (November 22, 1944), p. 1.

break from episcopacy.<sup>37</sup>

That there remained, in 1944, considerable apprehension within Wesleyan Methodism toward a general superintendency, and that the Free Methodist general superintendency was only a limited episcopacy, may be seen by Dr. Nicholson's comment on the subject following the second Commission meeting:

Had it been possible for our people to have heard the leaders of the Free Methodist Church explain the limitations which surround the general superintendents of that Church, they would have understood that in the practical application of its work, those superintendents who are called "bishops" are not possessed of the powers that are commonly associated with that office in many minds. In fact their bishops have no more power in any instance than our Conference Presidents, and not as much as our Conference Presidents in some other cases.<sup>38</sup>

The net result of this second meeting was to clarify the problem areas and to boost the optimism of the Joint Commission that union was possible if there be a "will to union."<sup>39</sup>

Inter-church cooperation. It might be well to note here that about this time several cooperative Wesleyan-Free Methodist enterprises took place at the local and conference level. A joint WM-FM youth convention was held at Houghton, New York, in August, 1944, and again the following year. That the beginning of merger conversations provided the spark for these joint conventions is suggested by the 1944 invitation to the Free Methodist young people: "Come and let us get closer together in the Lord in anticipation of what we hope will be in the

---

<sup>37</sup>Supra, pp. 21-22.

<sup>38</sup>Nicholson, "The Joint Commission Meets Again," loc. cit.

<sup>39</sup>Ibid.

future."<sup>40</sup>

Similarly, a joint Wesleyan-Free Methodist youth camp was held August 27 through September 3, 1945, at Turner, Oregon.<sup>41</sup> Also about this time the Wesleyan and Free Methodist youth attending Asbury College and Asbury Theological Seminary in Wilmore, Kentucky, met together as a combined youth group.<sup>42</sup>

It is to be noted that these ventures were the exception, rather than the rule, and that they were sponsored by the youth of the two churches.

### Third Joint Commission Meeting

The third Joint Commission meeting occurred in October, 1945, one year after the second meeting. During the interim the study committees had been working, and their reports were reviewed and discussed.

Inter-Church Cooperation. The official report of this meeting notes that in view of the importance of our two peoples becoming better acquainted with each other through cooperative activities, the Commission devoted a period of time to examining the extent to which such cooperative efforts have been carried on during recent months.<sup>43</sup>

---

<sup>40</sup>George B. Hilson, "Wesleyan Young People's Society Invites Free Methodists to Join in Convention," The Free Methodist, LXXVII (July 21, 1944), p. 11; George B. Hilson, "Free and Wesleyan Methodist Youth of Houghton Area to Meet in Joint Convention," The Wesleyan Methodist, CIII (March 20, 1946), p. 8; Dorothy M. Pritchard, "Free Methodist Youth Join in Area Convention," The Wesleyan Methodist, CIII (October 9, 1946), p. 8.

<sup>41</sup>"Free and Wesleyan Methodist Youth Hold Joint Camp in Oregon," The Wesleyan Methodist, CII (October 10, 1945), p. 10.

<sup>42</sup>Maria (Mrs. H.) Livingston, "Wesleyan and Free Methodist Youth At Asbury Organize," The Wesleyan Methodist, CII (April 17, 1946), p. 9.

<sup>43</sup>L. R. Marston, F. R. Eddy, and Stephen W. Paine, "Activities of Third Joint Commission Meeting," The Wesleyan Methodist, CII (Nov. 28, 1945), p. 2.

Several joint camps and evangelistic meetings, in addition to those noted above, were brought to the attention of the Commission, including a joint meeting sponsored by the Oklahoma conferences of the two churches, a united evangelistic campaign in Syracuse, New York, and joint youth camps in Minnesota.<sup>44</sup>

Two items receiving attention at this Commission meeting were the matters of the denominational schools and the comparative geographical distribution of the two churches.

Denominational Schools. The study committee on church schools, composed of Bishop Marston and Dr. Stephen W. Paine, President of Houghton College, recommended four general principles that might govern church-school policy in the merged denomination: (1) that all schools be placed under a system of definite denominational control; (2) that no existing institutions be arbitrarily eliminated, although constituencies should be reapportioned; (3) that the merger of some of the existing schools be encouraged where such seems practical; and, (4) that, to reduce competition, existing schools might develop complementary specialized emphases.<sup>45</sup>

The first of these principles was a definite movement in the direction of the existing Wesleyan Methodist system. Free Methodist educational institutions have

---

<sup>44</sup>ibid.

<sup>45</sup>L. R. Marston and S. W. Paine, "Report of Committee on Church Schools" (mimeographed), dated October 26, 1945. Included in "Joint Commission on Merger, Wesleyan Methodist Connexion - Free Methodist Church, 'The United Wesleyan Methodist Church of America': Papers, Notes, and Minutes from May 10, 1950 and on---(With Review of All Work, 1944-1950)" (unpublished). Filed in the office of the Board of Bishops, Free Methodist World Headquarters, Winona Lake, Indiana.

always been basically independent from the church, receiving little financial support from the denomination as such and not being answerable to the general church in any real sense. Ownership and control has remained in the hands of a regional, semi-self-perpetuating board of trustees. In the Wesleyan Methodist system, however, the general church board is the board of trustees of all the denominational schools and must give approval to the decisions and policies of the local board of managers of each school.<sup>46</sup>

Comparative geographical distribution. The study committee on church location reported to the Joint Commission the results of its study of the comparative geographical distribution of the two denominations. In the main these were as follows: (1) neither church is strong in New England; (2) the greatest Free Methodist concentration is in the area east of the Mississippi and north of the Mason-Dixon Line, especially in the Great Lakes area, and some of the largest WM conferences are also in this area; (3) there is fairly strong WM concentration, but very little FM activity, in the middle and southern states; (4) there is somewhat more Free Methodist activity in the plains states but both have work in this area; (5) both churches are active on the West Coast, but the FM's are more established; and (6) there are three FM conferences in Canada, compared to one Wesleyan conference.<sup>47</sup>

---

<sup>46</sup>Discipline of the Wesleyan Methodist Church of America (Marion, Indiana: Wesleyan Methodist Publishing Association, 1964), Par. 382-395, pp. 147-153.

<sup>47</sup>Report of the study committee on church location to the Joint Commission (mimeographed), dated October 26, 1945. Included in "Joint Commission on Merger...", etc., op. cit.

#### Fourth Joint Commission Meeting

The Joint Commission met for the fourth time a year later, in October, 1946, and gave attention primarily to the task of consolidating the preliminary work of the previous years into a report to be submitted to the 1947 general conferences. A special committee composed of Bishop Marston, Bishop Fairbairn, Dr. Eddy, and Dr. Nicholson was appointed to pinpoint specifically the problems which would have to be solved before union could be achieved. Additional work continued through the study committees.<sup>48</sup>

Inter-church fellowship. Probably the greatest significance of the fourth Commission meeting lies in the inter-church fellowship conference which immediately preceded it.

As the outgrowth of an idea first projected by the chairmen of the two committees composing the Joint Commission, approximately one hundred Wesleyan Methodist and Free Methodist leaders met in Winona Lake, Indiana, October 22-24, 1946. Those invited to the conference included the general officers of the two churches, one representative from each annual conference, and the presidents of the church schools.<sup>49</sup>

---

<sup>48</sup>L. R. Marston, F. R. Eddy, and S. W. Paine, "Fourth Meeting of Joint Commission," The Free Methodist, LXXX (January 17, 1947), p. 5; L. R. Marston and F. R. Eddy, "The Joint Commission Reports its Fourth Meeting" (the same report), The Wesleyan Methodist, CIII (December 25, 1946), p. 14.

<sup>49</sup>Carl L. Howland, "Inter-church Fellowship," The Free Methodist, LXXIX (November 1, 1946), p. 4; Stephen W. Paine, "Free-Wesleyan Methodist Interchurch Fellowship," The Wesleyan Methodist, CIII (November 13, 1946), p. 6; "Report of Wesleyan-Free Methodist Inter-church Fellowship" (mimeographed), p. 6, included in "Joint Commission on Merger..." etc., op. cit. The latter source reports specifically that ninety-three attended, in contrast to Howland's higher estimate.



The group met for fellowship, not for merger study. However the group did formally recommend the following:

...the immediate creation of an affiliation or alliance by which we may give a united witness and more satisfactory co-operate in the direct promotion of holiness through our present denominations.

...that regional meetings be held throughout the borders of our respective denominations for the purpose of further fostering the spirit of fellowship and understanding...

...that another general gathering of this nature be held....<sup>50</sup>

Unfortunately for the future of this merger attempt, apparently none of these recommendations were carried out. This conference was held through the initiative of the Joint Commission, and no committee or official body was specifically charged with carrying out the recommendations once the fellowship conference ended.

#### Fifth Joint Commission Meeting

The Joint Commission met one final time before the 1947 general conferences. This fifth meeting, held April 24-25, 1947, put the finishing touches on the Joint Commission report to the general conferences and considered further some of the problems involved in merger.<sup>51</sup>

Denominational schools. At this meeting F. R. Eddy, the Wesleyan Methodist Connectional Agent, presented a report entitled "Statement of Wesleyan Methodist Standards" which is of interest for its statement regarding control of church

---

<sup>50</sup>"Report of Wesleyan-Free Methodist Inter-church Fellowship," op. cit., p. 6.

<sup>51</sup>"Joint Commission Meeting," The Wesleyan Methodist, CIV (May 7, 1942), p. 2; The Tentative Report, op. cit., p. 5.

schools. Said Eddy:

Since most great moves away from the fundamental faith in the Word of God had their beginnings in school systems, therefore, the control of all educational institutions of the Church should be vested in a Denominational Board of Control and all educational property should be owned and controlled by denominational trustees the same as church properties. Local boards of control should manage and administer local institutions subject to the oversight and veto power of the General Board of Education for the denomination. All local boards of control should be representative of the constituency allotted [sic] to the institution. They should be nominated by the conference interested, but elected to their office by the General Board of Education for the denomination.<sup>52</sup>

This, of course, was essentially a statement of the Wesleyan Methodist system of school control. Clearly, Eddy was meaning to insist that the merged church should follow the Wesleyan system.

#### The General Conferences of 1947

Both the Free Methodist and the Wesleyan Methodist general conferences convened in June, 1947, and both were presented with essentially the same report from the Joint Commission.

The 1947 Joint Commission Report. The report of the Joint Commission to the general conferences of 1947 was principally a statement of the similarities and differences of the two denominations, arranged under the heading of Doctrine, Conduct, Church Polity, Church Property, and Miscellaneous Policies. To this were appended a list of recommendations.<sup>53</sup> In brief, this report noted the following

---

<sup>52</sup>F. R. Eddy, "Statement of Wesleyan Methodist Standards" (mimeographed). Included in "Joint Commission on Merger...", etc., op. cit.

<sup>53</sup>The 1947 report of the Joint Commission was carried in The Free Methodist under the title "closer Relationships with the Wesleyan Methodist Church,"

similarities and differences in these various areas:

Doctrine. No essential difference, both firmly holding to Wesleyan-Aminianism, including entire sanctification.

Conduct. Perfect agreement in principles; minor differences in specifics.

Polity. The Wesleyans are somewhat congregational, the Free Methodists more traditionally Methodistic. The main differences concern ordination of women, the FM use of the title of "bishop," the membership status of ministers, and ministerial placement.

Property. Local church property is guaranteed to the denomination in both churches, but in different ways; FM school property is not in the hands of the church.

Miscellaneous. Control of educational institutions is different (as noted earlier in this chapter), and the FM's have restrictions on the use of instrumental music.<sup>54</sup>

The report included the following recommendations to the general conferences:

The advancement of Inter-Church Fellowship has been commendable and the alliance of church interest is advancing well and should be pursued to a fuller cooperation as fast as possible.

Following long study and conference on the question of church union it is our consensus that merging of the two denominations is possible if there be the will to union among our respective groups.

We recommend a continuation of the Joint Commission on Church

---

The Free Methodist, LXXX (July 11, 1947), pp. 5, 13. It was also reprinted in 1951 in The Tentative Report of the Joint Commission of the Wesleyan Methodist Church of America and the Free Methodist Church of North America on Church Union, pp. 4-6.

<sup>54</sup>Free Methodist limitations on instrumental music were considerably relaxed at the 1943 General Conference, were further moderated in 1947, and were still further relaxed by the 1955 conference to the point that the issue is now left up to the local church to decide. (See Leslie R. Marston, From Age to Age A Living Witness (Winona Lake, Indiana: Light and Life Press, 1960), pp. 341-345.)

Union, seeking to secure an alliance of church operations pending such time as organic union may appear feasible.

We recommend that the Joint Commission appoint a Committee on Church Comity to which shall be referred all questions of inter-church relations in extension and location.

We further recommend that this General Conference instruct the Joint Commission, if continued by mutual agreement of the two Quadrennial Bodies, to present for the 1951 General Conferences a definite plan of reorganizing as one the two denominations, without commitment to approval of union.<sup>55</sup>

The Free Methodist General Conference. At the sitting of the Free Methodist General Conference on June 23, 1947, Bishop L. R. Marston presented the report of the Joint Commission. The report was adopted as presented, apparently without opposition.<sup>56</sup> Thus the way was cleared, from the Free Methodist side, for the continuation of merger talks.

The Wesleyan Methodist General Conference. The same report, in essence, was presented to the Wesleyan Methodist General Conference and was adopted. With the earlier approval of the Free Methodists, this action had the effect of continuing the Joint Commission for another quadrennium with the specific task, as worded in the recommendations of the Commission, to prepare "for the 1951 General Conferences a definite plan of reorganizing as one the two denominations."<sup>57</sup>

---

<sup>55</sup>The Tentative Report, op. cit., p. 6.

<sup>56</sup>"Journal of the General Conference of the Free Methodist Church" (unpublished) for 1947, pp. 804-807; Carson E. Reber, "The Twenty-Second Session of the General Conference of the Free Methodist Church of North America," The Free Methodist, LXXX (July 4, 1947), p. 10. The General Conference Journal gives in full the Joint Commission Report.

<sup>57</sup>McLeister and Nicholson, History of the Wesleyan Methodist Church, p. 249.

This General Conference was significant for the merger negotiations from another standpoint. A number of changes in the polity of the church were ordered, the most significant ones for merger being: (1) the transformation of the office of President of the General Conference to a full-time, year-round job, with increased powers and duties; (2) the transformation of the Book Committee into the Board of Administration, with an enlarged membership; and, (3) the changing of the name from "Wesleyan Methodist Connection (or Church) of America" to "The Wesleyan Methodist Church of America."<sup>58</sup> Nicholson comments, in his revision of the denominational history,

Thus after more than a century of steps by which it had moved from a Connection of societies that leaned toward independence, the Denomination had become a Church whose societies were interdependent, and whose local and general programs were to be given general supervision.<sup>59</sup>

Nicholson thus documents a movement away from the original extreme toward a more central position--a movement, in other words, away from a sectarian distinctive in the direction of the church-type.

This General Conference elected Roy S. Nicholson to the new position of President.<sup>60</sup>

### Summary

The quadrennium 1943-47, then, was one of exploration and evaluation of

---

<sup>58</sup>ibid., pp. 238-239.

<sup>59</sup>ibid., p. 238.

<sup>60</sup>ibid., p. 239.

the problems involved in possible union. The work of the Joint Commission sparked a guarded optimism that union was, in time, possible.

#### IV. DEVELOPMENTS, 1947-51

Six more meetings of the Joint Commission were held during the quadrennium 1947-51. In contrast to the work of the previous quadrennium, which had been largely exploratory, the Commission sought during these years to find tentative solutions for the problems by this time identified. Looking back on the quadrennium in 1951, the Commission gave this account of its approach in 1947:

It was realized by...the Joint Commission that the important questions which were...being discovered and formulated were all a part of the one large question which would inevitably be raised by the official bodies of the two churches, namely, "What will be the cost and what the probable advantages of a union of these two holiness churches?"

As these questions were brought into focus one after another, they were assigned to sub-committees for more intensive study. As a result of the work of these sub-committees there began to emerge first a general agreement as to the probable best line for seeking solutions in each problem area. As the work of the Joint Commission through these subcommittees went forward still further, there began to be elaborated increasingly exact and detailed statements of suggested solutions.

In other words, the Joint Commission began its work with an intensive approach. Rather than taking a broad over-view of the entire field, it naturally addressed itself first to specific questions. This was an inductive method of proceeding toward a whole solution.<sup>61</sup>

The basic approach in attempting to arrive at a consensus, in other words, was pragmatic--that is, it sought to find workable compromises in specific areas of difficulty. It was assumed, at least implicitly, that the basic principles and pre-

---

<sup>61</sup>The Tentative Report, op. cit., p. 8.

suppositions underlying the two forms of polity were essentially compatible, and that there was therefore no need first to formulate a consistent over-all philosophy, above and apart from either denominational system, to which the polity of the united church would be conformed. This suggests, again, the concern to disturb existing ways of doing things as little as possible.

#### Sixth Joint Commission Meeting

The Joint Commission met officially for the sixth time on October 28, 1948, at the Free Methodist headquarters in Winona Lake, Indiana. This was to be a particularly interesting session, because previous to this meeting the Wesleyan Methodist contingent met separately for about a day and a half at Marion College, Marion, Indiana, and drew up a list of fourteen points to which the Wesleyans felt the Free Methodists would have to agree. The Commission met Thursday evening, October 28, and the Wesleyans presented their report, requesting the Free Methodist committee to study the fourteen points and bring back its position in regard to them, along with any demands of its own.<sup>62</sup>

The Wesleyans' Fourteen Points. The fourteen points presented by the Wesleyans, which dealt almost exclusively with polity, concerned (1) name,

---

<sup>62</sup>L. R. Marston, Roy S. Nicholson, and Stephen W. Paine, "The Sixth Meeting of the Joint Commission," The Free Methodist, LXXXII (January 18, 1949), p. 6; same, in The Wesleyan Methodist, CVI (January 19, 1949), p. 12; Stephen W. Paine, "Excerpts from Actions of the Wesleyan Methodist Committee on Church Union" (mimeographed), dated October 27-28, 1948, included in "Joint Commission on Merger..." etc., op. cit. Cf. "Commission on Church Union Recently Met at Marion," The Wesleyan Methodist, CV (November 24, 1948), p. 12.

(2) ordination of women, (3) pastoral call, (4) ministerial membership in the local church, (5) the quarterly meeting, (6) equal lay and ministerial representation in the annual and general conferences, (7) presiding officer of the annual conference, (8) policy toward musical instruments, (9) central board of control, (10) title to church property, (11) control of colleges, (12) distinction between constitutional and statutory law, (13) central authority during the period of transition from two organizations to one, and (14) conference boundaries.<sup>63</sup>

The Free Methodist committee spent most of Friday morning, October 29, studying the fourteen points. It found that disagreement between the two churches existed only in regard to pastoral call, local membership of ministers, instrumental music, and college control.<sup>64</sup>

Pastoral Call. The Wesleyan position on this issue as given in the fourteen points was that, in the opinion of the WM committee,

...the Wesleyan Methodist Church would not be willing to abandon the principles of the right of the individual church to participate in the call and stationing of its pastors recognizing, however, the final authority of the annual conference to make all ministerial appointments.<sup>65</sup>

The Free Methodists noted that both churches agreed final authority rested

---

<sup>63</sup>Paine, "Excerpts from Actions of the Wesleyan Methodist Committee on Church Union," loc. cit.

<sup>64</sup>Philip Ashton, "Excerpts from Actions of the Free Methodist Committee on Church Union" (mimeographed), dated October 29, 1948. Included in "Joint Commission on Merger..." etc., op. cit.

<sup>65</sup>Paine, "Excerpts," loc. cit.



with the annual conference. The basic difference was in the matter of the initiation of the pastoral call. The Wesleyans wished to continue, in essence, their system rather than adopting the traditional Methodist system used by the Free Methodists in which pastors are appointed each year by the annual conference, the local church having no real authority in the matter. The Free Methodist committee expressed faith the problem could be resolved.<sup>66</sup>

Local membership of ministers. In the Wesleyan Methodist Church ministers are members of the local congregations where they serve. The Wesleyans felt the FM system, whereby ministers hold supra-congregational membership in the annual conference, implied an unjustifiable distinction between the clergy and the laity.<sup>67</sup> The Free Methodists expressed reluctance to give up conference membership, but felt the church would probably agree to do so if agreement were reached at other levels.<sup>68</sup>

Instrumental music. Because of specific FM prohibitions in this area, the Free Methodist committee reported that this area would require further detailed study.<sup>69</sup> The Free Methodist Church was obviously moving in the direction of relaxing its regulations on music, however.<sup>70</sup>

---

<sup>66</sup>Ashton, loc. cit.

<sup>67</sup>Paine, "Excerpts," loc. cit.

<sup>68</sup>Ashton, loc. cit.

<sup>69</sup>Ibid.

<sup>70</sup>See supra, p. 107, footnote 54.

Control of schools. The Wesleyans insisted on continuing their system of denominational control of schools, noted earlier,<sup>71</sup> in the united church.<sup>72</sup> Although this would represent a considerable change in FM policy, the Free Methodist committee felt agreement along the general lines laid down by the Wesleyans could probably be reached.<sup>73</sup>

The Joint Commission at this meeting reached agreements regarding the problem of conference boundaries and regarding a name for the united church which should be noted at this point.

Name. R. S. Nicholson and C. V. Fairbairn, the study committee on the matter of name, recommended for the united church the name "The United Wesleyan Methodist Church of America." The reasons given for this choice were that (1) both churches historically and doctrinally are Methodist; (2) both are truly churches; (3) both are truly Wesleyan in doctrine and emphasis, which is not true of all Methodist groups; (4) the union of these two "Wesleyan" Methodist churches would be a "United" Wesleyan Methodist church; and (5) the designation "of America" is more appropriate than "of North America," considering the scope of church operations, and is needed to distinguish the church from other Wesleyan churches.<sup>74</sup>

---

<sup>71</sup>Supra, pp. 102-103.

<sup>72</sup>Paine, "Excerpts," loc. cit.

<sup>73</sup>Ashton, loc. cit.

<sup>74</sup>Roy S. Nicholson and C. V. Fairbairn, reports to the Joint Commission (mimeographed) dated October 28, 1948. Included in "Joint Commission on Merger....," etc., op. cit.

The WM committee, in its fourteen points, held that "to present to our constituency a plan of union involving a change in name... would be to introduce a serious impediment to the possibility of securing denominational approval for the plan of union."<sup>75</sup> Apparently what was meant was that while it would be acceptable to add the word "united," the name "Wesleyan Methodist" should be retained. There seems to have been no serious opposition among the Free Methodists to dropping the word "Free"; in this day, with the passing of the issues prominent in the origin of the church, the word confuses as much as it clarifies.

Conference boundaries. The Joint Commission at this meeting came to an agreement "that overlapping conferences be permitted, in the reorganization, to continue their separate identities with the expectation that in time it will be possible to establish the fixing of permanent conference boundaries."<sup>76</sup>

A similar agreement was reached relative to the consolidation of local churches in the same local areas; there would be no mandatory merging of local congregations.<sup>77</sup>

In retrospect, the significant work done by the Joint Commission at this meeting is seen as indicating the lines along which a union proposal would be developed.

Specifically regarding the Wesleyan fourteen points, it is evident that at

---

<sup>75</sup>Paine, "Excerpts," loc. cit.

<sup>76</sup>Marston, Nicholson, and Paine, "The Sixth Meeting of the Joint Commission," loc. cit.

<sup>77</sup>Ibid.

those points where disagreement existed the resulting compromise moved more in the direction of the Wesleyan Methodist Church. The Agreements reached in the areas of pastoral call and college control, especially, were moves by the Free Methodists toward the Wesleyan position. The Free Methodist response on the points of local ministerial membership indicates a readiness to adopt the Wesleyan system, if necessary for union, also. Considering these facts, and considering that the Free Methodist committee laid no corresponding demands before the Wesleyans, it would seem that at this stage the Free Methodists were more anxious for union and were willing to concede more to achieve that goal.

It is interesting that the issue of the general superintendency was not brought up by the Wesleyans at this time. There seems to have been a recognition by the Wesleyans that the Free Methodists were not ready to drop the title "bishop," and apparently the Wesleyans did not feel they should press the matter at this time.

#### Seventh Joint Commission Meeting

The seventh meeting of the Joint Commission, held in the fall of 1949, reviewed the progress that had been made to that point and assigned to committees the writing of the various sections of a proposed constitution for a united church.<sup>78</sup>

Consideration was given at this meeting to the development of an official statement setting forth the advantages of merger. This statement, "The Case for

---

<sup>78</sup>"Joint Commission," The Wesleyan Methodist, CVI (November 16, 1949), p. 12.

Merger," was subsequently printed in The Wesleyan Methodist and The Free Methodist.<sup>79</sup>

"The Case for Merger." Noting John Wesley's warning against division and appealing to John 17, this statement suggested seven general reasons for a Free Methodist and Wesleyan Methodist union. These were: (1) it may be the will of God; (2) it would provide a united front; (3) the united church would be stronger than either uniting church; (4) it would give Wesleyanism a more united voice with which other smaller groups might wish to join; (5) it would mean more efficient use of resources; (6) it would strengthen the education programs of the constituent churches, providing greater unity among the schools; and (7) the new church would be able to publish a greater volume of Wesleyan literature.<sup>80</sup>

Under the first point the statement gave this analysis of the history of the two denominations:

Over a period of years, both churches have undergone considerable modification in polity. The Wesleyans have moved from being a loosely-associated connection toward a more centralized form of government. The Free Methodist Church has been undergoing change from a limited episcopacy to a larger recognition of the place of the layman in the church. Coming from opposite directions in basic polity--the one from a loose congregationalism toward a more stable form of government, the other modifying its episcopacy in favor of greater recognition of the rights and privileges of the congregation--it stands to reason that somewhere

---

<sup>79</sup>The Joint Commission of the Wesleyan Methodist and Free Methodist Churches, "The Case for Merger," The Free Methodist, LXXXIII (January 10, 1950), pp. 6, 12; Roy S. Nicholson, Stephen W. Paine, Leslie R. Marston, and Charles V. Fairbairn, "The Case of [sic] merger," The Wesleyan Methodist, CVII (January 11, 1950), pp. 3-4, 6.

<sup>80</sup>Ibid.

these two must meet on the highway; and should it be the will of a Divine Providence that, at such a meeting point, two peoples of like precious faith should unite their resources in common cause, we pray the Great Shepherd of our souls that we neither miss nor by-pass each other in this His day of opportunity for us.<sup>81</sup>

This and other subsequent writings by members of the Joint Commission reveal that the majority of the Commission members were solidly committed to the union of the two churches.

#### Eighth Joint Commission Meeting

May 9-11, 1950, the Joint Commission met for the eighth official time, on this occasion on the campus of the Wesleyan Methodist college in Marion, Indiana. The official published report of the meeting summarizes its work as follows:

This meeting...was principally concerned with reports submitted by the Committees on Articles of Religion and Ritual, Principles of Christian Life, with attention to the General Rules and the Special Rules..., and articles of Government, ranging from the local church and the Official Board to the Quarterly and the Annual Conference, as well as the General Conference. These reports were received and adopted as the bases for further study and recommendations, which are to be presented to the next meeting of the Joint Commission....<sup>82</sup>

These reports would later serve as the basis for a proposed new constitution.

The Commission identified the areas where additional work was required before the Commission could prepare "a definite plan for reorganizing as one the two denominations,..." This additional work was referred to the various commit-

---

<sup>81</sup>ibid.

<sup>82</sup>Roy S. Nicholson, Leslie R. Marston, and Stephen W. Paine, "Eighth Meeting of the Joint Commission," The Free Methodist, LXXXIII (June 20, 1950), p. 5; cf. the same report, The Wesleyan Methodist, CVII (June 21, 1950), p. 8.

tees.<sup>83</sup>

### Ninth Joint Commission Meeting

The ninth meeting of the Joint Commission, held at Winona Lake in late September, 1950, was a significant one. The Commission at this meeting came to tentative agreement on articles of religion, principles of the Christian life, pastoral call, organization of the local church and of the general conference, control of educational institutions, and coordination of the pension plan and of publishing enterprises. While agreement in principle had previously been reached in several of these areas, at this meeting specific plans and formulations giving substance to these agreements in principle were adopted.<sup>84</sup>

Some of these agreements should be noted at this point:

Pastoral call. A plan was adopted which provided "...for a voice by the local church--the initiatory prerogative in calling the pastor--while safeguarding to the annual conference the power of final appointment."<sup>85</sup> This seems to have been a genuine compromise of the two systems.

Denominational schools. The plan presented was basically the existing Wesleyan Methodist system with some modifications in the direction of strengthening

---

<sup>83</sup>ibid.

<sup>84</sup>L. R. Marston, Roy S. Nicholson, and Stephen W. Paine, "Ninth Meeting of the Joint Commission of the Wesleyan and Free Methodist Churches," The Free Methodist, LXXXIV (January 9, 1951), pp. 5, 13; the same report appears in The Wesleyan Methodist, CVIII (January 10, 1951), p. 29.

<sup>85</sup>ibid.

the local board of trustees of each school. Final denominational control was to be maintained.<sup>86</sup> Exactly what such a system would mean for the Free Methodist schools was spelled out in the following committee report to the Joint Commission presented at this meeting:

It is our recommendation...that the Board of Administration is [that is, should be] the legal Board of Trustees of each and every educational institution which is sponsored, recognized or supported by the church.

The Wesleyan Methodist institutions will be answerable to such a provision ipso facto by virtue of their present relation to the Wesleyan Methodist Church.

In the case of the Free Methodist institutions, it will be necessary for the reconstituted church to seek legal advice as to the exact manner in which these institutions may be turned over to the trusteeship of the Board of Administration by their respective Board of Trustees. It would then be necessary to negotiate with the said respective Boards of Trustees to ascertain their willingness to be thus included in the educational pattern of the reconstituted church and to secure from them the proper action to bring this about.<sup>87</sup>

Principles of the Christian Life. Though little difference in principle between the two churches was found at this point, such differences as there were, coupled with the fact of a gradual de-emphasizing of specific regulations concerning behavior in both churches,<sup>88</sup> resulted in a proposed plan that differed considerably from the handling of these matters by either of the two churches.

---

<sup>86</sup>Ibid.

<sup>87</sup>"Report of the Committee on Educational Institutions and Ministerial Training (Prepared for the Joint Commission on Merger for the Free and Wesleyan Methodist Churches)" (1 p., typewritten), included in "Joint Commission on Merger, Wesleyan Connexion - Free Methodist Church...", etc., op. cit.

<sup>88</sup>In keeping with the gradual movement of both groups along the sect-church continuum.



Marston and Eddy, in their report to the Joint Commission at this meeting, explained the thinking which led to this change:

...there are limits to the control of conduct a church may wisely impose.... In the judgment of your committee, both churches now seeking to unite have tended by their too exclusive emphasis on specific items to divert attention and concern from basic principles. Restrictions on dress are the simplest illustration of this point. Some items not specifically forbidden by Discipline have come into general acceptability, although inherently these may be as objectionable as others which have become vexing issues of law. Confusion and inconsistency result. Your committee does not believe that permanent solution of this problem will come to the reconstituted church by reducing or by increasing the number of items of ornamentation to be prohibited....to guard against worldiness and immodesty in dress, the church must maintain a spiritual atmosphere and place first emphasis upon the general principles having a broad base in Scripture. These principles must be applied in life and conduct through consciences quickened by the Holy Spirit, nurtured by earnestness and devotion, and directed by a minimum of specific restrictions.<sup>89</sup>

Specifically, the plan presented divided matters of Christian life and behavior into three areas: basic standards, special rules, and admonitory advices. The first group consisted of standards of Christian living "...which are specifically stated, clearly taught or convincingly implied in the Scriptures." These would be part of the constitutional law of the church. The special rules would constitute conditions of membership and would be "...for the purpose of maintaining a clear witness and providing a fellowship conducive to godliness." The admonitory advices would be enacted from time to time to meet changing social conditions and would not be mandatory.<sup>90</sup>

---

<sup>89</sup>F. R. Eddy and L. R. Marston, "A Report of the Subcommittee on Principles of Christian Life" (2 pp., mimeographed), dated September 28, 1950. Included in "Joint Commission on Merger...", etc., op. cit.

<sup>90</sup>Marston, Nicholson, and Paine, "Ninth Meeting...", loc. cit.

That this handling of the matter of principles of the Christian life constituted a weakening of the position of the two churches was later charged by some.<sup>91</sup>

The Joint Commission at this meeting also gave consideration to the kind of report it should present to the 1951 general conferences. Basically it decided not to recommend voting on the question of merger itself, but to present an outline of the proposed resolution of identified problems and to recommend the continuation of the Joint Commission for another quadrennium, during which an actual proposed book of discipline would be formulated.

The report of this meeting noted that it was characterized by "...a wonderful degree of unanimity between the members,..."<sup>92</sup>

#### Tenth Joint Commission Meeting

The tenth session of the Joint Commission for the quadrennium 1947-51 was held in March, 1951, at Winona Lake. "The intended purpose...was to work on the formulation of a report of the activities and the findings of the Joint Commission with a view to presenting same to the coming General Conference...."<sup>93</sup>

The Commission decided to prepare a report which would include a proposed constitution, an outline showing how the two books of discipline might be combined

---

<sup>91</sup>See infra, p. 165.

<sup>92</sup>Marston, Nicholson, and Paine, "Ninth Meeting...", loc. cit.

<sup>93</sup>Leslie R. Marston, Roy S. Nicholson, and Stephen W. Paine, "Tenth Meeting of Joint Commission of the Wesleyan and Free Methodist Churches," The Wesleyan Methodist, CVIII (May 9, 1951), p. 11; same, The Free Methodist, LXXXIV (May 8, 1951), p. 5.

into one, and a series of questions and answers explaining how major issues would be resolved. It was agreed also that this report would include a history of the negotiations to the present, "The Case for Merger," and recommendations for the future.<sup>94</sup>

The Commission noted that considerable progress had been made by the committees in drawing up major portions of the quadrennial report. Additional committee assignments were made in preparation for the final formulation of the quadrennial report, and a final meeting before the 1951 general conferences was agreed upon.<sup>95</sup>

#### Eleventh Joint Commission Meeting

This final Commission meeting of the quadrennium was held in May, 1951. The finishing touches were put on the quadrennial report which was titled, The Tentative Report of the Joint Commission of the Wesleyan Methodist Church of America and the Free Methodist Church of North America on Church Union.<sup>96</sup>

#### The General Conferences of 1951

The General Conference of the Free Methodist Church and the General Conference of the Wesleyan Methodist Church both met in June, 1951. They reviewed the report of the Joint Commission and both voted to continue the Commis-

---

<sup>94</sup>ibid.

<sup>95</sup>ibid.

<sup>96</sup>ibid.; The Tentative Report, p. 1.

sion for another quadrennium as recommended by the Commission.<sup>97</sup>

The 1951 Joint Commission report. The forty-six page Tentative Report of the Joint Commission was, basically, a proposed basis for the union of the Wesleyan and Free Methodist churches, but not a complete book of discipline. Probably its most important section was the "Constitution of the United Wesleyan Methodist Church of America."<sup>98</sup>

Inasmuch as the proposed basis for union was essentially the same as that presented in a more fully elaborated form four years later, when the crucial vote was taken, detailed consideration of this basis for union will be reserved for Section VII of this chapter, "Basic Features of the Union Proposal."<sup>99</sup> Three features of this 1951 report should be noted here, however:

1. In presenting an actual constitution for the united church, the Joint Commission followed the Free Methodist handling of constitutional and statutory law. At this time the Wesleyan Methodists had no actual constitution although, as the Commission report noted, the Wesleyan Methodists had

...apparently carried down through the years a rather clear and well defined and deeply rooted feeling that certain divisions of the law of the church should be regarded as constitutional and...should require concurrent ratification by the General Conference, the annual conferences, and the membership of the local churches. But...the actual items of

---

<sup>97</sup>L. R. Marston, Roy S. Nicholson, and Stephen W. Paine, "Twelfth Meeting, Joint Commission, Wesleyan and Free Methodist Churches," The Free Methodist, LXXXV (February 19, 1952), p. 5; "Journal of the General Conference of the Free Methodist Church" (unpublished) for 1951, p. 836.

<sup>98</sup>The Tentative Report, op. cit., pp. 23-35.

<sup>99</sup>Infra, pp. 144-152.

constitutional law are scattered in various parts of the book of discipline.<sup>100</sup>

Since the Free Methodists had an actual constitution, which made a more orderly arrangement, the Joint Commission followed the Free Methodist procedure.<sup>101</sup>

2. Regarding the general superintendency, the Commission report provided for the election of "...one or more traveling elders to the office of (bishop) (general superintendent),..."<sup>102</sup> Thus the issue of which term to use was left unresolved in 1951, and remained so in 1955.

3. The recommendations contained in this report, which were passed by both general conferences, provided: (1) that the Tentative Report be received as a basis for further study; (2) that the Joint Commission be continued; (3) that the Joint Commission be instructed to prepare a complete discipline for the united church, to be submitted to the Board of Administration of each church by May 1, 1954; and, (4) that the Joint Commission be authorized to publish its findings.<sup>103</sup>

## V. DEVELOPMENTS, 1951-55

Some sixteen meetings of the Joint Commission were held during the quadrennium: 1951-55. While this was thus the period of the Commission's greatest activity, this activity was devoted almost exclusively to the rather arduous task of

---

<sup>100</sup>The Tentative Report, op. cit., p. 10.

<sup>101</sup>Ibid. <sup>102</sup>Ibid., p. 33.

<sup>103</sup>The Tentative Report, op. cit., p. 46.

writing a complete book of discipline for a United Wesleyan Methodist Church.<sup>104</sup>

The essential basis for union had already been agreed to, and few new decisions were reached during the quadrennium.

There is little to be gained, therefore, in an accounting of each of these meetings. Only the most significant developments of the quadrennium will be noted on the following pages, culminating with the action of the general conferences of 1955.<sup>105</sup>

The membership of the Joint Commission during this third quadrennium of negotiations was essentially the same as in 1943. There were no changes in the Wesleyan Methodist contingent, and the only Free Methodist change was that Hugh A. White was appointed to the Commission in 1955, replacing Philip Ashton who had earlier replaced M. L. Barton,<sup>106</sup>

#### Twelfth Joint Commission Meeting

The twelfth meeting of the Joint Commission, the first of the new quadren-

---

<sup>104</sup>Proposed Discipline for the United Wesleyan Methodist Church (n.p.; n. n., n. d.), p. 2. The Foreword to this Proposed Discipline states that the total number of Joint Commission meetings was twenty-six. If it is true, as it also states, that sixteen meetings were held during the quadrennium 1951-55, the total number of meetings must have been twenty-seven, not twenty-six, however, since it is certain that eleven meetings were held during the quadrenniums 1943-51.

<sup>105</sup>Minutes of the fourteenth through the twenty-second meetings of the Joint Commission are filed in the office of the Board of Bishops, Free Methodist World Headquarters, Winona Lake, Indiana. These contain little information of permanent significance, other than recording the progress in the writing of the book of discipline.

<sup>106</sup>Marston, Nicholson, and Paine, "Twelfth Meeting...", loc. cit.

nium, convened at Winona Lake, Indiana, on January 2, 1952.<sup>107</sup> The negotiations between the Wesleyan Methodists and the Free Methodists were now in their tenth year.

The Commission organized for the task of writing the proposed book of discipline by assigning the various portions of the book to committees. For the most part these were two-man committees representing both denominations.<sup>108</sup>

#### Seventeenth Joint Commission Meeting

The seventeenth meeting was held September 25 and 26, 1953, at Winona Lake. A number of sections of the proposed book of discipline, submitted by the various committees, were accepted on a "further study" basis, and additional committee assignments were made.<sup>109</sup>

#### Completion of Proposed Discipline

The diligence of the Joint Commission resulted in the essential completion of the proposed book of discipline in time to be reviewed by the Board of Administration of the two denominations in the early summer of 1954. After review by these boards, the proposed discipline was sent to conference leaders in both denomina-

---

<sup>107</sup>Ibid. This same report was printed under the same title in The Wesleyan Methodist, CIX (February 20, 1952), p. 15.

<sup>108</sup>Ibid.

<sup>109</sup>Leslie R. Marston, Roy S. Nicholson, and Stephen W. Paine, "Seventeenth Meeting, Joint Commission, Free Methodist and Wesleyan Methodist Churches," The Free Methodist, LXXXVI (November 10, 1953), p. 4.

tions. In the remaining months prior to the 1955 general conferences the Joint Commission continued to refine the discipline, also adding some sections that had not been written.<sup>110</sup> In the final printed 122-page Proposed Discipline of the United Wesleyan Methodist Church presented to the general conferences, the Joint Commission noted,

There are still some portions which will need to be written. In general these are the portions which refer to present projects of only one of the two denominations, where there could be in the event of union, a continuance of presently outlined policies pending final decision as to the place of the specific enterprises in the life of the united church.<sup>111</sup>

Between October, 1954, and February, 1955, the proposed book of discipline was printed in installments in The Wesleyan Methodist.<sup>112</sup>

#### The Question in 1955

The wording of the Foreword in the Proposed Discipline of the United Wesleyan Methodist Church suggests that the Joint Commission viewed this report as the completion of its primary task, and that it was intended the two churches would vote in 1955 on the actual question of merger on the basis of this Discipline.<sup>113</sup>

---

<sup>110</sup>Proposed Discipline, op. cit., pp. 2-3.

<sup>111</sup>Ibid., p. 3.

<sup>112</sup>"Tentative Draft for a Church Discipline for the United Wesleyan Methodist Church of America," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXI (October 20, 1954, p. 7; October 27, 1954, pp. 4-6; November 3, 1954, pp. 13-14; November 10, 1954, pp. 4-5; November 17, 1954, pp. 7, 11; November 24, 1954, pp. 6-7; December 1, 1954, pp. 6-7; December 8, 1954, p. 7; December 15, 1954, pp. 7, 14; December 22, 1954, p. 12; December 29, 1954, pp. 10, 12); CXII (January 5, 1955, pp. 7, 12; January 12, 1955, pp. 12-13; January 19, 1955, p. 11; January 26, 1955, pp. 10, 13; February 2, 1955, pp. 7, 11; February 9, 1955, pp. 12, 14).

<sup>113</sup>See the Proposed Discipline, loc. cit.



As will be noted in detail presently, however, a debate raged through the pages of The Wesleyan Methodist, and on the conference level in the Wesleyan Methodist Church leading up to the 1955 General Conference, which made favorable treatment of the proposal at the General Conference appear questionable. The Free Methodist committee on union, apparently as a result of this debate and not wanting to jeopardize the proposal's chances of passing at the Wesleyan Conference, decided not to push for actual approval of merger at the FM General Conference. Carl Howland, Editor of The Free Methodist and a Commission member, noted in August, 1955:

...there developed some opposition to the merger within the Wesleyan Church, expressed especially by articles in the Wesleyan Methodist paper. Therefore the Free Methodist General Conference of June 1955 adopted a resolution merely calling for continuance of the negotiations.<sup>114</sup>

Apparently a similar tack was taken by the Wesleyan Methodist committee; the vote taken at the 1955 WM General Conference was not on whether to merge or not to merge, but whether to continue the Joint Commission (and thus the negotiations) for another quadrennium.<sup>115</sup>

For both general conferences, then, the question in 1955 was not the question of merger but the question of continued negotiations.

---

<sup>114</sup>C. L. Howland, "The Wesleyan-Free Methodist Merger--History and Prospect," The Free Methodist, LXXXVIII (August 2, 1955), p. 4.

<sup>115</sup>Minutes of the Twenty-ninth Quadrennial Session of the General Conference of the Wesleyan Methodist Church, 1955 (Syracuse, New York: The Wesley Press, 1955), p. 27; Roy S. Nicholson, personal letter to the writer dated March 3, 1966.

The Free Methodist General Conference of 1955

Bishop C. V. Fairbairn reported to the Free Methodist General Conference, meeting in Winona Lake, Indiana, in June, 1955, for the FM Committee on merger. The report of the committee contained the following recommendations:

I. We recommend: (a) That this General Conference authorize the continuance of the Standing Committee on Merger; (b) That the Board of Administration name and appoint the personnel of the continued Committee on Merger; (c) and that the Committee report to the Board of Administration as and when necessary.

II. We recommend that if the Wesleyan Methodist General Conference makes similar provision to continue the negotiations, this General Conference authorize our Free Methodist Committee to continue negotiations with the Wesleyans, and when such seem to have reached a satisfactory climax and conclusion to submit the completed plan for Merger to the Board of Administration.

III. We further recommend that when the Board of Administration shall have received the completed plan for Merger, the said Board be authorized as of now by this General Conference, in anticipation of such event, to submit the completed plan for Merger to the several annual conferences (according to our Constitution) in our next session of General Conference.

IV. And we recommend, lastly, that provided both of the denominations in their respective General Conferences, this 1955, take similar action, as indicated heretofore, THE DISCIPLINE, now in your hands, be accepted as a basis for further study.<sup>116</sup>

This report was a disappointment to the Free Methodist delegates, many of whom "...had expected and hoped for definite steps toward merging."<sup>117</sup> The recommendations were adopted<sup>118</sup>--according to Bishop Marston, "...without even a

---

<sup>116</sup>"Journal of the General Conference of the Free Methodist Church" (unpublished) for 1955, pp. 934-935.

<sup>117</sup>Lawrence W. Worboys, "The 24th Session of the General Conference of the Free Methodist Church of North America," The Free Methodist, LXXXVIII (June 21, 1955), p. 16.

<sup>118</sup>"Journal of the General Conference" for 1955, p. 935.

discussion of negative points of view, . . . ."119

By This action the Free Methodists came as close as constitutionally possible to a full commitment to merge without actually making such a commitment. The vote delegated increased authority to the Board of Administration in the matter and directed that the final proposal be submitted to the annual conferences for their approval during the quadrennium, which would clear the way for final approval by vote of the 1959 General Conference. Had General Conference approval of merger been sought in 1955, it might well have been granted. 120

#### The Wesleyan Methodist General Conference of 1955

Shortly after the Free Methodist General Conference the Wesleyans convened their 1955 General Conference at Fairmount, Indiana.

The Wesleyan Methodist committee on merger presented its report which recommended the continuation of negotiations along the lines approved by the FM General Conference. A motion was made that the report be adopted. 121

While this motion to adopt was pending, a motion was passed that voting on the motion to adopt be by ballot. A second motion was made that a two-thirds majority be required to adopt the report. This motion was defeated, 57 to 90. 122 A prolonged debate then developed as to whether negotiations should be

---

119Leslie R. Marston, personal letter to the writer, dated March 4, 1966.

120Leslie R. Marston, personal letter to the writer, dated May 21, 1966.

121Minutes, loc. cit.

122ibid.

continued, and on the whole question of merger with the Free Methodists generally. Opponents argued that merger would mean abandoning a non-episcopal form of government, and that continuing negotiations would open the way for an episcopal form of government to be forced on the church; much emphasis was put on the words "bishops" and "episcopacy." Further it was argued that the merger question was creating a division in the church, thus hindering revival, and that discontinuing merger talks would produce a climate favorable to revival. The main overt issues in the debate, therefore, seem to have been concerned with (1) fear of episcopacy, and (2) desire to be rid of the divisiveness of the issue.<sup>123</sup>

Finally debate was voted closed and the delegates voted by ballot after a period of silent prayer. The motion to adopt the report was defeated, 62 to 96. The Joint Commission was thus dissolved and further negotiations discontinued.<sup>124</sup>

Later the following communication to the Free Methodist Church was adopted:

To the Free Methodist Church of North America. The General Conference of the Wesleyan Methodist Church of America in session at Fairmount, Indiana on June 23, 1955, voted to discontinue the Committee on Church Merger for the coming quadrennium. While this action eliminates further movement toward merger at this time, it is not meant to terminate the fellowship and co-operation which these two bodies have enjoyed. It is the desire of the Wesleyan Methodist Church of America that there shall be closer fellowship and cooperation with the Free Methodist Church in the areas wherein such may be observed.<sup>125</sup>

---

<sup>123</sup>Ibid.; Nicholson, personal letter, loc. cit.

<sup>124</sup>Minutes, loc. cit.; "General Conference News," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXII (July 6, 1955), p. 14.

<sup>125</sup>Minutes, op. cit., p. 28.

Two other actions relating to the merger question were taken later in this session. On June 24, a resolution was passed authorizing a Committee on Fraternal Relations and Co-operation with the Free Methodist Church. This committee was to work with a similar Free Methodist committee to promote cooperation in publishing, evangelism, seminary education, and other areas.<sup>126</sup> A potentially more significant resolution was passed by a vote of 79 to 58 on June 28. The conference voted "...that the Board of Administration be empowered to elect a committee to study merger with the Pilgrim Holiness Church and to continue the study of merger with the Free Methodist Church."<sup>127</sup>

Technically, this latter action reopened the negotiations voted closed on June 23. As Carl L. Howland noted, this action "...does not clearly reveal what the Boards of Administration of the two churches will do in this matter during the ensuing quadrennium."<sup>128</sup> The reopening of the door on June 28, however, never cancelled the effect of the slamming of it on June 23.

#### The Closing of Negotiations

The Board of Administration of the Free Methodist Church met on October 20, 1955, and voted to discontinue the FM committee on merger in the light of the action of the Wesleyan General Conference--thus discontinuing the efforts toward

---

<sup>126</sup>Ibid., p. 29.

<sup>127</sup>Ibid., pp. 37-38; Oliver G. Wilson, "Looking Back at General Conference," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXII (July 20, 1955), p. 2.

<sup>128</sup>Howland, loc. cit.

merger. A Committee on Fraternal Relations and Cooperation, corresponding to that authorized by the Wesleyan Methodist General Conference, was authorized by the Board the same day and was appointed by Bishop Marston. The two committees seem never to have met together, however.<sup>129</sup>

Negotiations were fully and finally closed when the Wesleyans sought to implement the General Conference action calling for negotiations with the Pilgrim Holiness Church and with the Free Methodists. The Free Methodist Church was contacted as to its position on reopening negotiations and expressed no desire to do so. In the words of the report of the Committee on Church Union to the 1959 WM General Conference, "Upon contact with the Free Methodist Board of Administration it was ascertained that they did not think it wise to continue talks on union."<sup>130</sup>

Thus ended twelve years of merger negotiations between the Free Methodist Church and the Wesleyan Methodist Church.

## VI. MAJOR OBSTACLES TO MERGER

The foregoing account of the history of Free Methodist - Wesleyan Methodist merger talks suggests that there were a number of major obstacles to the merger of these two churches. In any such negotiations as these there are, of course, a whole range of factors involved, operating at several different levels. Such sub-

---

<sup>129</sup>"Minutes of the Board of Administration of the Free Methodist Church of North America" (unpublished) for October 20, 1955.

<sup>130</sup>Minutes of the Thirtieth General Conference of the Wesleyan Methodist Church of America, 1959 (Syracuse, New York: The Wesley Press, 1959), p. 63.

jective things as attitudes and prejudices, more objective factors such as problems of polity, such external influences as social conditions and dominant pressures of the culture, and many seemingly chance factors, all play their part in influencing the outcome of merger negotiations.

The focus here, however, is on those more overt, tangible obstacles encountered by the Joint Commission in its work. Additional factors which may have influenced the final outcome of the merger attempt will be noted later in this chapter.<sup>131</sup>

These major obstacles encountered by the Commission concerned two basic factors: lack of a real acquaintance between the two denominations, and matters of polity. As the Joint Commission noted early in its work, agreement in the areas of doctrine and standards of conduct was so complete between the two churches that these never were obstacles to the negotiations themselves--although there was, later, some debate on the matter of standards of conduct.

#### Mutual Ignorance

At the local and conference levels, in particular, the Free Methodists and the Wesleyan Methodists were not well acquainted. There was generally a mutual ignorance of each other, and much of what was known was of a superficial nature, thus often hindering rather than helping the move toward unity.

As has been noted, the Joint Commission recognized this problem at the

---

<sup>131</sup>Infra, pp. 175-188.

outset and tried to do something about it. The Commission report for 1951 noted,

It was recognized that a better understanding of each other was a necessity if anything of value was to be accomplished. The Joint Commission at once [in 1944] sought to foster relationships of fraternization that would let the members of each denomination learn the true character and the worship methods and beliefs of the other denomination.<sup>132</sup>

The report noted further that "...each of the church bodies must come to know the other one better than they have ever done before, or a merger would be both impossible and undesirable."<sup>133</sup>

These efforts of the Joint Commission seemed to bear more fruit during the first quadrennium of negotiations, 1943-47, than they did later. Most of the joint youth camps and joint evangelistic meetings reported were held during these years, and the Inter-Church Fellowship was in 1946. There seems to have been, in short, an initial burst of enthusiasm for merger touched off by the opening of negotiations. The Joint Commission noted in 1947 that "...the alliance of church interests is advancing well and should be pursued to a fuller co-operation as fast as possible."<sup>134</sup>

Little seems to have been done by the Joint Commission after 1947 in promoting further cooperation and fellowship, however. The Commission quickly became involved in the heavy work of preparing a basis for union and the breaking down of mutual ignorance was neglected.

When the general conferences of 1947 demonstrated that no actual decision

---

<sup>132</sup>The Tentative Report, op. cit., pp. 3-4.

<sup>133</sup>ibid., p. 7.

<sup>134</sup>The Tentative Report, op. cit., p. 6.



to merge was to be forthcoming for several years yet, initial enthusiasm waned. It appears that in 1955 the two churches were little, if any, better acquainted at the grass roots level than they were in 1943. Throughout the negotiations this mutual ignorance and lack of grass roots enthusiasm remained a major obstacle to merger and probably underlay much of the 1955 opposition to merger. Dr. Nicholson has noted that among the Wesleyan Methodists in 1955 there was definite ignorance as to the real nature of the government of the Free Methodist Church, an ignorance which was played upon by opponents of merger to create fear of union.<sup>135</sup>

The evaluation of the Joint Commission in 1951 that merger would be impossible until the churches became better acquainted seems to have been accurate in the light of the developments of 1955.<sup>136</sup>

Mutual ignorance, then, was a major obstacle to merger that was not overcome in the twelve years of negotiations.

### Matters of Polity

More explicit and tangible obstacles to merger were those occasioned by differences in polity between the two churches. The most crucial of these were general superintendency, pastoral placement, and control of denominational schools.<sup>137</sup>

---

<sup>135</sup>Nicholson, personal letter, loc. cit.

<sup>136</sup>The Tentative Report, op. cit., p. 7.

<sup>137</sup>Some of the agreements reached by the Joint Commission in other areas later became issues in the debate prior to the 1955 general conferences--e.g., representation of executive officers on church boards and the matter of the presiding officer on the annual conference. These were not, however, obstacles of major proportions in the work of the Joint Commission itself.

General superintendency. The basic points involved in this issue have already been noted. 138

The Wesleyans agreed, apparently early in the negotiations, that the united church would have general superintendents though the exact number and the title by which they would be known were not immediately decided upon. This was a concession on the part of the Wesleyans to the Free Methodist system although a limited one since the Wesleyans themselves moved in this direction in 1947 by making the General Conference presidency a full-time job. 139

F. R. Eddy, Wesleyan Methodist Connectional Agent, presented to the third meeting of the Joint Commission in October, 1945, a proposal which would allow general superintendents or bishops, but under certain limitations. This proposal read, in part:

General superintendents or bishops may be elected by the General Conference for the supervision of the denomination in general, provided that they shall have no appointive power inherent in their office.

Terms of office for general superintendents or bishops shall be for the quadrennium only.

The work and duties of these men shall be determined by the General Conference provided that it [sic] shall not include appointment to office or pastorate of any person except as approved by regularly elected boards or committees. 140

These recommended limitations were virtually identical to those already

---

<sup>138</sup>Supra, pp. 99-100, 116.

<sup>139</sup>Supra, p. 109.

<sup>140</sup>F. R. Eddy, "Placement of Pastors," a report to the Joint Commission, dated October 27, 1945 (mimeographed), included in "Joint Commission on Union. . .," etc., op. cit.

placed upon the bishops in the Free Methodist system. Eddy also recommended, however, that the bishop/general superintendent should not be the presiding officer of the annual conference, except by invitation of the conference leadership. This was different from Free Methodist practice.<sup>141</sup>

The Wesleyan fear of granting too much power to bishops was understandable, considering the issues which led to the formation of the Wesleyan Methodist Church. The WM members did not at first realize, however--and many Wesleyans at the grass roots never realized--the rather limited nature of the Free Methodist episcopacy. C. L. Howland, editor of The Free Methodist, pointed out the limited nature of the FM bishopric in a letter to F. R. Eddy, dated October 16, 1945, which read in part:

You surely are afraid of bishops. Having lived around them as much as I have during these fifty years, or sixty, they do not seem so dangerous to me.

If you should be a bishop some day, which thing is entirely within the range of possibility, you know, you would not have as much authority and power as is now in your hands [as Connectional Agent]. The fact that you would be called by another name would not make a great deal of difference.<sup>142</sup>

As to the number of bishops or general superintendents, the thinking of the Joint Commission in 1951 was that at first there would be seven, four chosen by Free Methodist delegates and three by the Wesleyan delegates.<sup>143</sup> The number seven

---

<sup>141</sup>Ibid.

<sup>142</sup>Carl L. Howland, mimeographed copy of personal letter to F. R. Eddy, dated October 16, 1945; included in "Joint Commission on Union..." etc., op. cit.

<sup>143</sup>The Tentative Report, op. cit., p. 40.

was apparently decided upon to avoid lessening the number of FM bishops; the Wesleyans were to elect only three of the seven because of their somewhat smaller size. By 1955 the Commission had lowered the number to five, however, providing in the Proposed Discipline for the following transitional procedures:

At the Uniting General Conference, . . . the Free Methodist delegates shall elect three (General Superintendents) (Bishops) and the Wesleyan Methodist delegates shall elect two (General Superintendents) (Bishops); and at the united General Conference next following the total delegates shall elect three superintendents who were Free Methodists previous to union and two superintendents who were Wesleyan Methodists previous to union. The General Conference of the United Wesleyan Methodist Church thereafter, shall have power to decrease or increase the total number of (General Superintendents) (Bishops) and shall be free to elect from the elders of the church without respect to previous affiliation.<sup>144</sup>

As finally proposed, the bishops or general superintendents of the United Wesleyan Methodist Church would have been subject to virtually all the limitations originally suggested by F. R. Eddy. The only exception would have been regarding the presidency of the annual conference. It would have been the duty of a bishop or general superintendent to preside at the annual conference, but by vote of the annual conference the conference superintendent could be authorized to preside instead. This was a compromise between the Free Methodist system (where the bishop or his appointee always presides) and the Wesleyan Methodist system (where the general denominational representative never presides unless asked to do so by the conference).<sup>145</sup> This was a particularly sensitive issue at the conference level.

---

<sup>144</sup>Proposed Discipline, op. cit., p. 26.

<sup>145</sup>ibid., p. 63.

Taking the term "bishop" according to its usual meaning in major American Protestantism, one could argue that "general superintendent" would be a more appropriate term for the chief officers in the Free Methodist Church. This term was, in fact, used by the Free Methodists for nearly half a century; it was not until 1907 that the General Conference changed the title to "bishop."<sup>146</sup>

The actual title, of course, makes little differences in the function. But the use of the title "bishop" plus the Wesleyan fear of episcopacy made an explosive combination that worked against the successful consummation of the merger.

The issue of "bishops" versus "general superintendents" was an obstacle to merger in the work of the Joint Commission, and the Commission's failure to resolve the issue made it a major obstacle to merger in 1955.

Pastoral placement. Here the basic issue was conference appointment of pastors (the FM system) versus call by the local church (the WM system). The final resolution of this issue was along the lines noted earlier.<sup>147</sup> The local church was to initiate, directly with the minister, the call to the church; however final authority was to remain with the annual conference which could cancel pastoral arrangements if necessary and which would be responsible for appointing ministers to any churches without pastors at the time of the annual conference. It seems likely that, in practice, the previously Free Methodist conferences would have relied more on

---

<sup>146</sup>"Journal of the General Conference of the Free Methodist Church" (unpublished) for 1907, pp. 214, 239.

<sup>147</sup>Supra, p. 119.

annual conference appointment and the previously Wesleyan conference more on local call, with some exceptions and with compromises as conferences might merge.

While this loomed as one of the major obstacles to merger in 1943, it was one of the most successfully resolved issues. The arrangement seems to have been generally acceptable and was not a major issue in the merger debate.

Denominational schools. While this issue was resolved in the Proposed Discipline by following, with some modifications, the Wesleyan Methodist system of strict denominational control of schools,<sup>148</sup> the Free Methodists agreed to it reluctantly as the price of union. Bishop Marston notes that the Free Methodist Commission members "...could not go the full distance to the WM position, and the Wesleyan system was moderated in the final plan."<sup>149</sup> That the adoption of this system would have entailed a considerable readjustment by the Free Methodist schools has already been noted.

The plan as presented in the Proposed Discipline was not a wholly satisfactory solution to this problem. While it met Wesleyan demands, it created the risk of losing some of the Free Methodist institutions and could have erupted as a hot issue at the FM General Conference in 1959.

There appeared to be no other way, however, in which this issue could be resolved. The Wesleyans made it clear that they would not agree to local or regional control of the schools in the united church. This was spelled out by Roy S.

---

<sup>148</sup>See supra, pp. 119-120.

<sup>149</sup>Leslie R. Marston, personal letter to the writer, dated March 4, 1966.

Nicholson, President of the Wesleyan Methodist General Conference, in a letter to Bishop C. V. Fairbairn, dated December 1, 1953. Referring to the provision that all actions by the local Board of Trustees be subject to review by the denominational board Nicholson wrote:

Proper arrangements can be made by which emergency matters could be handled without hurt to any institution.... If there was unwillingness to submit its proposals to a representative board for scrutiny, with the assurance that those proposals would be considered without prejudice, such reluctance would indicate to me a greater need for such supervision. I do not wish to be dogmatic, but I think that the principle of ultimate control by a central Board of Trustees, however it may be expressed and administered, is one which our people would require as a condition for merger,....<sup>150</sup>

This major obstacle to merger was resolved sufficiently, then, that it presented no problem to the Wesleyan Methodists; potentially it could have still been a major obstacle to merger from the Free Methodist point of view.

### Summary

Of the major obstacles to merger considered in this section, certainly the two most crucial ones in 1955 were mutual ignorance and the general superintendency. Many other obstacles appeared during the twelve years of negotiations, particularly the issues of pastoral call and control of denominational schools, but in each of these cases a satisfactory solution, at least for 1955, was reached. The problem of mutual ignorance and the issues involved with the general superintendency worked together and in connection with other factors to create an atmosphere

---

<sup>150</sup>Roy S. Nicholson, personal letter to C. V. Fairbairn (2 pp. typewritten), dated December 1, 1953. Included in "Joint Commission on Merger....," etc., op. cit.

unfavorable to merger considerations at the 1955 Wesleyan Methodist General Conference.

## VII. BASIC FEATURES OF THE UNION PROPOSAL

The Proposed Discipline of the United Wesleyan Methodist Church was an almost complete statement of what would have been the doctrine, standards, polity, and ritual of the united church. The basic features of this union proposal, as set forth in the Proposed Discipline, are noted on the following pages.

### Doctrine

The doctrine of the united church, as set forth in twenty-four articles of religion, was Wesleyan, based on the Methodist Articles of Religion as formulated by John Wesley. Inasmuch as both the Wesleyan and the Free Methodist articles of religion were very similar, often even to identical wording, the doctrine proposed for the united church represented little change for either church. The following points should be noted, however:

Inspiration of Scripture. The article on the Holy Scriptures committed the united church to the doctrine of the inerrancy of the original manuscripts of the Bible. The Free Methodists had no explicit commitment to this doctrine; the Wesleyans did. Although this was certainly the prevailing FM view, specific commitment to the doctrine would probably have been the most significant doctrinal addition for the Free Methodists. <sup>151</sup>

---

<sup>151</sup>Proposed Discipline, p. 7. (Cf. the Wesleyan Methodist and Free Methodist Disciplines under the article on "Sufficiency of the Holy Scriptures." "The



Christian Baptism. The FM and WM Disciplines contained identical statements; however the Joint Commission rewrote and elaborated this article, clarifying the question of infant baptism. 152

Second Coming of Christ. This was a new statement (though not a new doctrine) for the Free Methodists. It did not commit the united church to any particular millennial view, however. 153

Duty of Christians to Civil Authority. A new article for both churches. 154

Miscellaneous. Free Methodist articles on the use of the vernacular tongue in worship, "Christian Men's Goods," and "A Christian Man's Oath" were added. A Free Methodist article on "Works of Supererogation" and a Wesleyan Methodist article on "Relative Duties" were omitted. Several other articles were combined or rewritten. 155

### Standards of Conduct

John Wesley's "General Rules" were set forth as the basis of Christian conduct, as had been the case in both the FM and WM Disciplines. A list of "Special Rules" and a section on "Christian Life" were included. In general the Special Rules followed those in the FM Discipline and were thus fewer and somewhat less explicit than the Wesleyan Special Rules. 156

---

Reaffirmation of the Doctrines of Our Faith," adopted by the 1923 WM General Conference and containing the reference to inerrancy, is found in the 1951 Wesleyan Methodist Discipline pp. 21-23 but not in the 1963 Discipline.)

<sup>152</sup>ibid., p. 10.

<sup>153</sup>ibid., p. 11.

<sup>154</sup>ibid., p. 10.

<sup>155</sup>ibid., pp. 6-11.

<sup>156</sup>ibid., pp. 11-14, 19-22.

## General Government

### General Conference.

1. General officers were not to be voting members of the General Conference by virtue of their office, as had been the case in the WM system.<sup>157</sup>

2. The General Conference was forbidden to make any rule that would "...deny to the annual conference the final disposition of all pastoral arrangements, or that shall deny to preachers and churches initial negotiations concerning the same."<sup>158</sup> This was to safeguard the compromise reached regarding pastoral placement.

3. The General Conference was forbidden to make any rule that would "...interfere with the supervision of the annual conference over the ministers and churches within its bounds,..." with the exception of general officers--thus continuing the more autonomous nature of the annual conference characteristic of the WM system.<sup>159</sup>

### Board of Administration.

1. Except for the bishops/general superintendents, no general officers were to be members. In the WM system general officers were ex officio members.<sup>160</sup>

2. The Board of Administration was to be sub-organized into five commissions, following the FM practice and departing significantly from the WM system of boards of control.<sup>161</sup>

---

<sup>157</sup>ibid., p. 25.

<sup>158</sup>ibid., p. 16.

<sup>159</sup>ibid., p. 17.

<sup>160</sup>ibid., p. 27.

<sup>161</sup>ibid., p. 28.

General superintendency.

The election of one or more (bishops) (general superintendents) was provided for, the term of office to be four years coinciding with the General Conference quadrennium. <sup>162</sup>

Educational policy.

1. Each educational institution was to have a Board of Trustees of from twelve to eighteen members which would be charged with the general management of the school. <sup>163</sup>

2. Final control of each school was to be retained by the denomination through the Board of Administration, including ultimate right to all property. <sup>164</sup>

3. Interscholastic athletics were to be prohibited, except as sponsored by Christian organizations; football was specifically forbidden. <sup>165</sup>

4. All faculty members were to be in harmony with the doctrine of the church, and three-fourths of the full-time faculty were to be members of the church. <sup>166</sup>

Annual Conference

Presiding officer. The bishop/general superintendent (or his appointee) was to preside over the annual conference sessions unless previously voted otherwise by the annual conference. <sup>167</sup>

Conference superintendency. Each annual conference was to elect a

---

<sup>162</sup>ibid., pp. 26-27, 87-88.

<sup>163</sup>ibid., pp. 53-54.

<sup>164</sup>ibid.

<sup>165</sup>ibid., p. 54.

<sup>166</sup>ibid.

<sup>167</sup>ibid., p. 63.

conference superintendent (not, as per WM practice, a conference "president").<sup>168</sup>

Pastoral placement.

1. Within each conference, each local charge was to have authority to "...make a new pastoral arrangement with any preacher who is a member of a conference,..."<sup>169</sup>

2. All such arrangements were to be subject to approval or cancellation by a conference committee.<sup>170</sup>

3. "Pastoral changes other than at the time of the annual conference shall be permitted only in cases of emergency."<sup>171</sup>

4. Appointment of a pastor by conference committee was to be made in the case of any church that did not negotiate a pastoral arrangement.<sup>172</sup>

Ministerial membership. Ministers were to hold membership in the annual conference, following FM practice, rather than in the local church, as per WM practice.<sup>173</sup>

Ritual

Dedication of infants. In addition to the baptism ritual, a ritual for the dedication of infants was included. The FM Discipline, in contrast to that of the Wesleyan Methodist Church, made no provision for dedication.<sup>174</sup>

---

<sup>168</sup>ibid.

<sup>169</sup>ibid., p. 65.

<sup>170</sup>ibid.

<sup>171</sup>ibid.

<sup>172</sup>ibid.

<sup>173</sup>ibid., pp. 82-84.

<sup>174</sup>ibid., pp. 103-104.

Other Ritual. Other forms of ritual were essentially simply the harmonization of the ritual of the two churches.<sup>175</sup>

### Transitional Provisions

In order to make the transition from two denominations to one as smooth as possible, the following transitional provisions were included in the Proposed Discipline:

General superintendency. At the uniting general conference, FM delegates would elect three, WM delegates two, general superintendents or bishops. The next general conference would elect three former Free Methodists and two former Wesleyan Methodists to the general superintendency. Succeeding general conferences of the united church would elect as many or as few general superintendents/bishops as desired, these to be elected without regard to former denominational affiliation.<sup>176</sup>

Administrative re-alignment. At the uniting general conference, those elected to the general superintendency were to draw up a plan for the election of other general officers during the same general conference. Some of these officers were to be former Free Methodists and some former Wesleyans; the superintendents/bishops were to decide which offices should be filled by former Free Methodists, which by former Wesleyans, attempting to realize an "equitable distribution" of these offices among men from the two merging groups. FM delegates would then

---

<sup>175</sup>ibid., pp. 100-122.

<sup>176</sup>ibid., p. 26.

elect those officers designated to be former Free Methodists, and likewise the WM delegates would elect the officers to be former Wesleyans. At succeeding general conferences all delegates would vote on all offices without regard to past denominational affiliation.<sup>177</sup>

Board of Administration. Free Methodist delegates to the uniting conference were to elect twenty-four members to the Board of Administration and Wesleyan delegates were to elect twenty-one. This abnormally large Board would serve only for the first quadrennium; following that normal procedures would be followed.<sup>178</sup>

Conference boundaries. Conferences existing in the two churches at the time of union were to be allowed to continue their independent existence, thus occasioning considerable overlapping--but with the expectation that overlapping conferences would in time either merge or re-align their boundaries so as to eliminate overlapping. There was to be no arbitrary merging of conferences without the consent of the conferences involved; self-determination was to be followed. Established churches of one conference which after the merger might find themselves in or near the territory of another conference would be permitted to transfer to the other conference if such a transfer were approved by a comity council of the united church.<sup>179</sup>

### Summary of Basic Features

The union proposal seems to represent more or less even compromises between the two churches in the areas of doctrine, standards of conduct, and ritual--

---

<sup>177</sup> ibid., pp. 26-27.

<sup>178</sup> ibid., p. 27.

<sup>179</sup> ibid., p. 62.

areas in which little compromise was required, however, since there was little difference in these matters to begin with.

Greater compromises were necessitated, and realized, in polity. In general, these may be classified as follows:

Equal compromise--general conference, annual conference administration, and pastoral placement.

Greater FM compromise--educational polity

Greater WM compromise--Board of Administration, general superintendency, and ministerial placement.

Regarding transitional provisions, the procedures to be followed in electing general superintendents/bishops and the first joint Board of Administration were obviously designed to reflect the larger membership of the Free Methodist Church.<sup>180</sup>

### General Evaluation

Viewing the union proposal as a whole, it is obvious that the Free Methodists made a significant compromise in agreeing to denominational control of the schools. To a lesser extent they compromised also in agreeing to provisions which tended to strengthen the powers of the annual conference as opposed to the General Conference.

When one realizes, however, that the Wesleyans agreed to a limited general superintendency, even with the possibility of the use of the title "bishop";

---

<sup>180</sup>Bishop Marston notes that the proposed 3 to 2 ratio in the denominational background of the first general superintendents/bishops was based on "the disparity in membership of the two denominations." Marston, personal letter, loc. cit.

agreed to less general executive representation on official church boards; agreed to ministerial membership in the annual conference (contrary to one of their earlier fourteen points); and, finally, agreed to smaller representation on the transitional board of general superintendents/bishops and Board of Administration--all significant concessions--the conclusion seems inescapable that the Wesleyan Methodists conceded more than did the Free Methodists in the final union proposal.

This fact should not be allowed, however, to obscure the more basic fact that the union proposal in no sense represented a radical departure for the Wesleyans from their existing polity. The two churches simply were not very far apart to begin with, even in polity.

Yet they were divergent enough so that these compromises, with other factors, provided sufficient fuel for strong opposition to merger.

## VIII. THE MERGER DEBATE

In 1955, during the months leading up to the general conferences, the pages of The Free Methodist and The Wesleyan Methodist were opened to the denominational constituency for a discussion of the merger question. Additional discussion, of course, took place at other levels, particularly in the annual conferences.

At the recommendation of the Joint Commission, the boards of administration of the two churches adopted the following policy regarding discussions in the denominational organs:

The Boards of Administration request the editors of "The Wesleyan



Methodist" and "The Free Methodist" to open the columns of these official organs to discussion of the proposed merger of the Wesleyan Methodist and Free Methodist Churches under the following provisions:

1. These discussions shall appear within the period from January 1 to May 1, 1955.
2. The space allowed should usually be limited to two pages in any issue of the papers with preference given to the briefer articles and with condensations of contributions as necessary.
3. The editor of each paper is requested to be fair in the allotment of space to the varying views of the proposed merger but shall eliminate matter which for any reason he considers objectionable.<sup>181</sup>

This notice did not get into the pages of the denominational papers until February in the one case and March in the other. A considerable debate soon developed, however, in The Wesleyan Methodist. The merger seemingly sparked much less discussion among the Free Methodists, for in 1955 only two articles on the subject appeared--and both favored the merger.<sup>182</sup>

In contrast, some eighteen articles on the merger question appeared in The Wesleyan Methodist during March, April, and May, 1955. Of these, nine favored merger, eight opposed it, and one, while ostensibly for merger, had a rather strong anti-merger tone. Further, of the eight articles opposing merger, three were written by general officers of the Wesleyan Methodist Church, including one who was also a member of the Joint Commission.

---

<sup>181</sup>"Board of Administration on Merger," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXII (March 2, 1955), p. 3; cf. "Discussion on Church Merger," The Free Methodist, LXXXVIII (February 22, 1955), p. 5.

<sup>182</sup>John G. Hessler, "Is Church Merger Possible?" The Free Methodist, LXXXVIII (April 12, 1955), p. 6; E. R. Iliff, "On Church Merger," The Free Methodist, LXXXVIII (April 26, 1955), p. 6.

The following pages give a survey and analysis of the issues raised by these articles, as well as other articles that appeared earlier in the two papers. The object is to get some understanding of the way in which the merger question was viewed and understood, and to see what issues loomed as particularly significant in the merger debate.

### THE ARGUMENTS FOR MERGER

The arguments advanced in favor of the merger can be grouped under four main propositions: (1) continued separation is unjustifiable, (2) the united church would be stronger than either of the merging churches, (3) merger would spark enthusiasm and new life, and (4) merger might stimulate further unions.

#### A. Continued Separation is Unjustifiable.

##### 1. Existing differences between the two churches are negligible. Dr.

R. S. Nicholson noted that

...there are no doctrinal or moral differences, and no conflict of moral ideals, and...merging will not require the surrender of any principle essential to the promotion of scriptural holiness,...  
Factually, there are fewer essential differences than many suppose there to be between these two holiness bodies.<sup>183</sup>

Another writer noted, "We are divided by matters of insignificance. We are one in everything that is essential, practical, spiritual and scriptural."<sup>184</sup>

---

<sup>183</sup>Roy S. Nicholson, "Why I Favor Church Merger," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXII (March 2, 1955), p. 4.

<sup>184</sup>Alton J. Shea, "Principles That Point Toward Merger," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXII (April 20, 1955), p. 7.

A layman pointed out, "Our manner of living is similar. Our aims are identical. We work among the same classes of people and with much the same methods."<sup>185</sup>

2. Merger would end this needless separation. "One has to explain constantly the separation of two churches which are so identical."<sup>186</sup>

3. Merger would be the Christian thing to do. "I believe that all Christian people should be one...", said one writer; "...it displeases the Lord to have so many duplications."<sup>187</sup> Another said merger "seems like the Christian thing to do. It concerns me as to what the man on the street will think if two bodies, who profess such a high state of grace and who admittedly are alike in doctrine, cannot unite."<sup>188</sup> Yet another argued that merger is in harmony with Jesus' prayer in John 17.<sup>189</sup>

B. The united church would be stronger than either of the merging churches.

1. Merger would mean greater spiritual strength. As one stated it, "...these two Churches would gain much in strengthening and encouraging each

---

<sup>185</sup>Isabelle F. Riggs, "A Layman Favors It," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXII (May 4, 1955), p. 10.

<sup>186</sup>Nicholson, "Why I Favor Church Merger," loc. cit.

<sup>187</sup>Arthur O. Northrup, "Why I Believe In It," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXII (May 11, 1955), p. 7.

<sup>188</sup>Royal S. Woodhead, "Why I Favor Merger," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXII (May 11, 1955), p. 7.

<sup>189</sup>John G. Hessler, "Is Church Merger Possible?" The Free Methodist, LXXXVIII (April 12, 1955), p. 6.

other by merging"; the united church would be a "larger, stronger body."<sup>190</sup>

2. Merger would solve problems now confronting the two churches. "A score of major problems that confront Wesleyan Methodists at this stage of growth could find happier solution in a pooling of resources."<sup>191</sup> Nicholson noted,

There may come a time in the future, earlier than some dare suspect, when the smaller bodies will be compelled to take steps affiliating with other groups which would not afford time for the study and deliberation which has been afforded in this instance.... It is becoming more difficult, costly and complicated to maintain a missionary program, and the governments of the world are frowning upon separate and small groups which they consider to be "competing" with each other. Our missionary program would be enhanced by merger, I feel.<sup>192</sup>

On this same point, another writer recalled how Wesleyan Methodist mission endeavors had been hampered because of the small size of the church.<sup>193</sup> This writer also contended that

...our very smallness tends to keep us small.... Our limited number of churches is a constant cause of membership loss. I live in a city where through the years I have seen Wesleyans lost to the church when they moved here from other communities. This is no isolated case. If another family were to move from your church tomorrow, how great are the chances that they would move into a community where there is a Wesleyan Methodist Church?<sup>194</sup>

3. Merger would open new doors for greater advance.

---

<sup>190</sup>David H. Scott, "I Believe In It," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXII (April 20, 1955), p. 6.

<sup>191</sup>Shea, loc. cit.

<sup>192</sup>Nicholson, "Why I favor Church Merger," loc. cit.

<sup>193</sup>Riggs, loc. cit.

<sup>194</sup>Ibid.

I believe that our evangelistic program would be greatly strengthened by the merger, which would introduce new evangelists with their emphases to those who are desirous of such without going outside their own group.<sup>195</sup>

Through the uniting of local churches the united church could make "a strong appeal to the world in city-wide evangelistic efforts. God also is pleased to see His followers united for the salvation of others."<sup>196</sup>

Merger also would permit the expansion of the publishing ministry in the united church. "It would permit the publication of some definitely Wesleyan and Arminian literature which is sorely needed at this time, and which neither of our groups is able to publish apart from the help of the other."<sup>197</sup> Merger

...will give us a larger constituency for Sunday school, Youth, and Missionary publications, as well as the regular periodicals. More and better materials for Sunday school teachers, youth leaders, and missionary promotion could be edited and printed. This is seriously needed. No matter how much leaders wish to produce these materials now, their hands are tied with a small outlet. Many of our people are securing suitable material elsewhere.<sup>198</sup>

Further, it was argued that merger might permit the establishment of a seminary program. This was a concern of many in the church. "Neither of us alone can operate such a seminary, and it would be a struggle to do it if merged; but we could do better than we can alone."<sup>199</sup>

---

<sup>195</sup>Nicholson, "Why I Favor Church Merger," loc. cit.

<sup>196</sup>Hessler, loc. cit.

<sup>197</sup>Nicholson, "Why I Favor Church Merger," loc. cit.

<sup>198</sup>Martin W. Cox, "Will the Vision Fail?" The Wesleyan Methodist, CXII (May 11, 1955), p. 10.

<sup>199</sup>Nicholson, "Why I Favor Church Merger," loc. cit. Cf. Edward D.

4. Merger would mean more effective church government. It would make administration of the church more effective by dividing the administrative load between several commissions.<sup>200</sup>

Isabelle F. Riggs, in one of the most perceptive of all the articles on merger, countered the charge made by some<sup>201</sup> that a more centralized form of government would be a hindrance to evangelistic effectiveness. She pointed out,

...if we are to prove the superiority of our form of church government, we shall have to use something other than statistics. What are we going to do with the cold fact that, in the matter of the salvation of souls and the building of the Church other holiness bodies have been more successful than we? Their stronger central government has not proved to be a handicap.<sup>202</sup>

And to those who were satisfied with the existing polity of their church Royal S. Woodhead commented, "I have yet to see a person who has built a house who could not see improvements which he could make in it."<sup>203</sup>

It was also held that the government of the united church would be more efficient. "The spending of funds that would be saved to advance the cause would certainly honor God."<sup>204</sup>

C. Merger would spark new enthusiasm and life.

Dr. Nicholson contended that merger "would introduce a new spirit and

---

Angell, "A Concern for Future Ministers," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXII (May 4, 1955), pp. 10-11.

<sup>200</sup>Nicholson, "Why I Favor Church Merger," loc. cit.

<sup>201</sup>Infra, p. 168.

<sup>202</sup>Riggs, loc. cit.

<sup>203</sup>Woodhead, loc. cit.

<sup>204</sup>Northrup, loc. cit.

challenge into our respective organizations."<sup>205</sup>

D. Merger might stimulate further unions.

"Merger would enable us to provide a more united front as a part of the great Holiness Movement of our day,"<sup>206</sup> and other holiness groups might feel like uniting with the new church. Dr. Stephen W. Paine, President of Houghton College, said,

I believe that God is pleased when instead of backing into ourselves, we go out to others in love and co-operation.... this type of spirit amounts to a winsomeness and aggressiveness which will attract outsiders, and it may well attract also other of the small holiness churches to a desire to make common cause with us.<sup>207</sup>

Summary

The present writer does not suggest, of course, that these were the only arguments for merger, nor that they were the best arguments. But these were the main arguments to which the Wesleyan Methodist constituency, particularly, were exposed from the general church level. Basically, these articles favoring merger argued that the objectives to which both churches were committed could better be accomplished together than separately.

THE ARGUMENTS AGAINST MERGER

The arguments put forward against the Wesleyan-Free Methodist merger

---

<sup>205</sup>Nicholson, "Why I Favor Church Merger," loc. cit.

<sup>206</sup>ibid.

<sup>207</sup>Stephen W. Paine, "Comfort or Conquest?" The Wesleyan Methodist, CXII (May 11, 1955), p. 10.

were more numerous and more involved than those favoring merger. For convenience they can be classified under eight main propositions: (1) the two churches are not ready for merger, (2) the merger as proposed would mean compromising too much, (3) some aspects of the proposal are unsatisfactory, (4) merger would not bring spiritual renewal, (5) merger offers no particular advantages, (6) merger would result in divisions and possibly schisms, (7) merger is inherently unhealthy, and (8) this is the wrong merger at the wrong time.

A. The two churches are not ready for merger.

1. They are not sufficiently acquainted at the local level. It was argued

that

...local churches in the same county are apt not to know [of] each other's existence, unless they are in the same town, and even then they are not too well acquainted with each other.... Merging of the two Churches before local churches and annual conferences became acquainted would be as unwise, as the marriage of a couple before any time for courtship.<sup>208</sup>

F. R. Eddy made a similar point, expressing the belief that "there must be a far greater degree of fellowship and co-mingling of the two churches before any merger can possibly succeed."<sup>209</sup>

2. There is little grass roots support for merger. Dr. Charles W. Carter

---

<sup>208</sup>Thomas D. Hersey, "Local Acquaintance Before Merger," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXII (March 23, 1955), p. 4.

<sup>209</sup>F. R. Eddy, "On Church Merger, Why I Cannot Support It," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXII (March 9, 1955), p. 4.



wrote, "...while merger ideals appear to be shared on the leadership level..., there is little evidence that such ideals are proportionately shared on the lay membership level of either denomination."<sup>210</sup>

3. Opinion is too divided to make merger wise at this time. Dr. Rufus Reisdorph, at the time Wesleyan Methodist General Sunday School Secretary, wrote,

Thousands of godly men and women are to me [sic; "be"] found on either side of the merger proposition;.... This condition reveals that the leading of the Holy Spirit is not yet clearly discerned in this matter. A definite action of such magnitude should be supported by a general conviction that it is God's plan.<sup>211</sup>

B. Merger as proposed would mean compromising too much.

Union should not be consummated until it can be done without compromise. H. L. Crockett suggested the proposition, "Let each wait until the other is willing to come up to their [sic] higher standards before consenting to unite."<sup>212</sup>

1. Merger as proposed would mean too great a compromise in polity.

"Because of the difference in church polity, each church would have to give up so [that is, too] many of their [sic] fundamental principles..."<sup>213</sup> Dr. Reisdorph

---

<sup>210</sup>Charles W. Carter, "Is It Practicable?" The Wesleyan Methodist, CXII (April 27, 1955), p. 6.

<sup>211</sup>Rufus Reisdorph, "Why I Do Not Favor the Merger as Now Proposed," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXII (March 30, 1955), p. 6.

<sup>212</sup>H. L. Crockett, "Denominational Coalescence," The Wesleyan Methodist, CIV (August 20, 1947), p. 8.

<sup>213</sup>Guy E. Terpe and M. Spikes, "Massillon, Ohio, on Merger," The

argued similarly,

The proposed Discipline requires the Wesleyan Methodists move a long way toward central control in church polity. In the judgment of this writer, this type of government is expensive, impractical, inefficient, and contrary to some clear suggestions in the Scriptures.<sup>214</sup>

He noted in particular that

Within the last six years, Departmental Councils have been made a part of the Wesleyan Methodist form of government. . . . These benefits and other advanced steps taken in recent years would be jeopardized by the proposed form of government.<sup>215</sup>

2. Merger as proposed would mean a return to episcopacy. As noted previously, this was an emotion-laden issue for the Wesleyans, and this fact is reflected in the arguments printed in The Wesleyan Methodist. One writer's argument ran:

The proposed plan is that we retain the name "Wesleyan" in the merger and then put on the harness of episcopal government. Can we, as a free church, afford to do this. I ask the question in all kindness to the movement [sic]. Will our individual conferences submit to the surrender of their rights of self-government and come under the rule and dictate of an outside man? It may be said that it is only a superintendent, but history in American Methodism proves that it is only one step from superintendent to bishop and presiding elder. Are we willing, as a Church, to be placed under a board of five men to be the head and governing body of the entire organization?<sup>216</sup>

(It is obvious, of course, that the last statement represents a considerable misunder-

---

Wesleyan Methodist, CXII (May 18, 1955), p. 6.

<sup>214</sup>Reisdorph, loc. cit.

<sup>215</sup>Ibid.

<sup>216</sup>R. C. Crossman, "What Shall Be Gained," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXII (April 20, 1955), p. 6.

standing of the powers and duties of the general superintendency as given in the Proposed Discipline.)

Dr. C. W. Carter also argued against the merger at length on the issue of episcopacy. His argument ran, in part:

Certainly the first and foremost disadvantage of merger would involve a likely serious compromise in the cherished Wesleyan form of government.... there is no assurance given as to the final name or nature of the governing officials of the united church.... The initial election of those leaders at the uniting general conference specifically provides for three "bishops" to be elected from the Free Methodist delegates and two "bishops" to be elected from the Wesleyan Methodist delegates [sic ; actually "(General Superintendents) (Bishops)" in the Proposed Discipline]. Thus it appears evident,... that the new united church is to have the bishopric.

It must be frankly faced that it was opposition to the abuses inherent in episcopacy [sic], as exercised by the Methodist bishops, that gave rise to the Wesleyan Church, and not primarily the anti-slavery issue. Slavery was indeed the issue, but anti-episcopacy was the real cause of the withdrawal from Methodism by the Wesleyan founders.

No degree of modification of the bishopric would meet the approval of the majority of the Wesleyan people, whose form of government is patterned after and commensurate with the American democratic way of life.

...the argument that a more centralized [sic] form of government, such as characterizes the Free Methodist Church, would make for greater growth and development hardly stands the test of logic, when it is considered that the Free Methodist Church is almost as old as the Wesleyan Methodist and there is little if any evidence that her form of government has done anything for her that the Wesleyan form has not done for the Wesleyan Church.<sup>217</sup>

3. The proposed manner of pastoral placement sacrifices the rights of the local church. J. L. Landrey argued,

What a fine place the laymen occupies [sic] in the discharge of the

---

<sup>217</sup>Carter, loc. cit.

business of the local church. Their voice is heard every year in the selection of the pastor.... Merger would take away this privilege and carry on this work quite differently. A committee selected from outside your church, headed by a person from outside the conference, would doubtless take over.<sup>218</sup>

(This, of course, was inaccurate.)

4. The proposal concerning the presiding officer of the annual conference gives up a democratic principle. It was argued,

...our annual conference is presided over by men who work inside the conference.... This is a very fine and practical method. If these fine features of our democratic government are signed away many of our people will not appreciate it.<sup>219</sup>

5. Merger would mean giving up the identity of the merging churches.

Our identity today as a holiness church is quite clear and should be carefully preserved. God who laid the foundations for the Jewish nation also laid the foundations for the Early Church. We are the torch-bearers of that previous faith for the same God laid the foundations of our beloved Church by the hand of our early Pioneers.<sup>220</sup>

This same article, which used the words "might," "may," or "sometimes" at least eleven times, expressed fears also for the smaller group:

In some instances the identity of the smaller group is completely lost. It may be better to just read about the experience of Jonah and profit by his mistake. God's second best sometimes is not very pleasant to endure.<sup>221</sup>

---

<sup>218</sup>J. L. Landrey, "A Wesleyan Methodist Speaks About Church Merger," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXII (March 30, 1955), p. 7.

<sup>219</sup>ibid.

<sup>220</sup>ibid.

<sup>221</sup>ibid.

6. Merger as proposed would mean a compromise on standards of conduct.

J. R. Swauger, Wesleyan Methodist Home Missions Secretary at the time, criticized the section entitled "Special Rules":

It consists of four brief paragraphs, . . . and contains references to only three Scripture verses; it does not once mention "superfluous ornaments," "wearing of gold or pearls," nor does it mention the Scripture referring to these items, much less quote them as does the Wesleyan Discipline.<sup>222</sup>

(While Swauger was technically correct on this point, he neglected to mention that the proposed membership covenant included the question, "Will you refrain from the use of superfluous ornaments and adorn yourself in plain and modest apparel, not with gold, nor pearls, . . . .")<sup>223</sup>

Swauger also lamented that in the Proposed Discipline "the whole Dress Question under the so-called Special Rules is to be dismissed with only twenty-two words!"<sup>224</sup>

C. Some aspects of the proposal are unsatisfactory.

1. The proposed manner of pastoral placement would be irritating. According to Dr. Eddy,

The basic manner of the ministry of the Free Methodist Church is appointive even though it is by committee rather than by a bishop . . . . The new form had to be set up with the word "may" used with

---

<sup>222</sup>J. R. Swauger, "Why I Am Opposed to It," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXII (April 6, 1955), p. 11.

<sup>223</sup>Proposed Discipline, op. cit., p. 21.

<sup>224</sup>Swauger, loc. cit. (Emphasis his.)

regard to the compromise.... this would...be irritating. It would result in long debates as to the best way. That would be a hindrance.<sup>225</sup>

Apparently Eddy was referring to the statement in the Proposed Discipline which read, "Each pastoral charge may vote upon the return of a pastor and may make a new pastoral arrangement with any preacher who is a member of a conference...."<sup>226</sup>

2. The proposal concerning the presiding officer of the annual conference is a poor one. Dr. Eddy argued,

The method of supervision in the Free Methodist Church is that all conferences are presided over by a man from outside the body who acts as a Referee in the transaction of business. I do not believe that this is commendable for my experience leads me to feel that only a man truly acquainted with the people and work can well administer the work. An outsider may be impartial, but I do not like to say that our own men living with the work are not. An outside man cannot be a leader. A man who is a member of the body can and should be a leader and advisor in the same manner as a pastor is to a local church.<sup>227</sup>

3. The solution to the school problem is inadequate. It was Dr. Eddy, again, who raised this objection:

The matters of School management are so different in the two churches and the work of education in the two churches so far overlaps that it is my sincere feeling that it is too big a hurdle and cannot be merged [sic] without friction and irritating debates.<sup>228</sup>

---

<sup>225</sup>Eddy, "On Church Merger," loc. cit.

<sup>226</sup>Proposed Discipline, op. cit., p. 65.

<sup>227</sup>Eddy, "On Church Merger," loc. cit.

<sup>228</sup>Ibid.

4. The proposed handling of the pension plan is unsatisfactory. A minister wrote an article questioning the wisdom of merger since it would affect the Wesleyan Methodist pension plan.<sup>229</sup>

D. Merger would not bring spiritual renewal.

1. Merger would not deepen spiritual life. "We have never known," said the Massillon, Ohio, Wesleyan Methodist Church, "of two churches...that have united and have grown that have reported that the spiritual life of the group has been deepened through this union."<sup>230</sup> And Dr. Reisdorph argued,

The merger question is most important as it relates to the spiritual life of the Church. But it has not been suggested as a means to revival. It rather points to a path that has robbed others of the revival spirit. We must look in another direction if we would have revival in our day. Pentecost did not bring union; it brought unity and growth. Let us turn to the methods and movement of a Pentecost.<sup>231</sup>

2. Merger is not the proper way to achieve church growth. "We believe that the scriptural method of growth is not through union of different sects or churches but through 'inward growth' by the salvation of souls."<sup>232</sup>

3. Merger would bring centralized government, which is a hindrance to

---

<sup>229</sup>William Millard, "Pension or Social Security," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXII (March 30, 1955), p. 6.

<sup>230</sup>Terpe and Spikes, loc. cit.

<sup>231</sup>Reisdorph, loc. cit.

<sup>232</sup>Terpe and Spikes, loc. cit.

evangelism. According to Dr. Reisdorph,

A Denomination's form of government has definite bearing upon the evangelistic emphasis of the Church; among the churches that have become formal in service and liberal in theology are found many with highly-centralized government. On the other hand, many of the evangelical churches and other organizations promoting revival are democratic in their form of government. No definite rule is followed, but trends are obvious.<sup>233</sup>

E. Merger offers no particular advantages.

1. Merger would not mean more efficiency. Dr. Eddy denied greater efficiency would be achieved:

It has been argued that merger would lower the cost of supervision. I disagree with that. There would be just as many people as there are with the two. With very few exceptions there would be the same number of churches. In both denominations at the present the Supervision is overloaded. Merger could not relieve this.<sup>234</sup>

Regarding predicted savings in the publishing field, Landrey argued, . . .merger might disappoint us in regards to a publishing center. The cost of enlargement might not be too much different than promoting a new layout as the need is now. Staff capacities would be quite the same under both arrangements. . . . We who are the cause of the enlargement might be expected to bear the lions [sic] share of the cost of expansion. Our best observation is that we stand to be disappointed with the benefits derived from merger in the publishing field.<sup>235</sup>

Thomas Hersey pointed out that the key factor in efficiency may be the attitudes at the local level. He wrote, in part,

---

<sup>233</sup>Reisdorph, loc. cit.

<sup>234</sup>Eddy, "On Church Merger," loc. cit.

<sup>235</sup>Landrey, loc. cit.



...the economic factor in a church merger is not in the efficiency of the machinery but in the local churches whose vision and faith and support have been the basis of the whole economic program of the church. A church merger would strengthen the foreign mission program, if the local churches didn't drop their support because of incompatibility with the merger program.<sup>236</sup>

2. The results of merger would be disappointing. In virtually every area of church function, merger would turn out to be a disadvantage--according to Landrey.

What about our fine periodicals, some changes would no doubt be made.... Even minor changes in this field might be undesirable and unnecessary....

In the department of Missions, both home and foreign, very careful and practical thinking should be done.... They could not be merged to any degree more than at present....

In the department of Evangelism plans for merger might not turn out so successfully as planned.<sup>237</sup>

The writer ventured to suggest that perhaps, after all, God had made us of different likes and desires and therefore we should not merge.<sup>238</sup>

F. Merger would result in divisions and possibly schisms.

1. Merger could not be consummated without considerable controversy.

This was Dr. Eddy's main argument in his rather strong article against merger. Eddy expressed fear of controversy and debate; he suggested existing differences between the two churches meant they should not merge, for merger could not be effected without debate. In one case, an issue "would result in long debates as to the best

---

<sup>236</sup>Hersey, loc. cit.

<sup>237</sup>Landrey, loc. cit.

<sup>238</sup>ibid.

way. That would be a hindrance." Again, another issue cannot be resolved "without friction and irritating debates." Again, there is danger we may "become debaters rather than evangelists," implicitly suggesting that a person could not be both.<sup>239</sup> Eddy summarized,

...the general constituencies are not ready to lay down all their former manners of doing things and take a common ground without great and prolonged argument. That would distract the interest and attention of both peoples from spirituality and evangelism until it would retard the work of the two churches for a long while. Neither church is yet far enough away from strong prejudices on various subjects to yield willingly what would be required.<sup>240</sup>

2. Schism would probably result from merger. The Massillon, Ohio, church resolution noted,

Where two or more denominations have united, we have noted that with few exceptions, it has caused division where a number of the members from both denominations have refused to go along with the merger; and we feel that this will be true in the case of the Wesleyan Methodist and Free Methodist Churches.<sup>241</sup>

Dr. Reisdorph raised the same point:

To merge would throw thousands of good Christian people in each of the Churches into a position where they would have to accept something in church polity or practice that they do not favor or appreciate, or separate from former co-workers.... It is possible to destroy unity by forcing union.<sup>242</sup>

---

<sup>239</sup>Eddy, "On Church Merger," loc. cit.

<sup>240</sup>Ibid.

<sup>241</sup>Terpe and Spikes, loc. cit.

<sup>242</sup>Reisdorph, loc. cit.

And Dr. Carter wrote,

It is practically certain that should merger be legislated a large segment would refuse to go into the merger and would continue the present name, organization, and spiritual function of the Wesleyan Methodist Church of America.

...in many instances individuals and local churches would elect to either retain their Wesleyan identity, or cast their lot with more progressive holiness groups, with the result that broken fellowships and lawsuits over church property rights and other conflicts would follow.<sup>243</sup>

G. Merger is inherently unhealthy.

1. Merger negotiations divert from more important tasks:

If the time and prayer that has been given to working on the merger from both churches and the amount that will be necessary to make it workable, if there is a merger, was [sic] used in prayer and evangelistic effort we feel that more souls would be won to God and both churches strengthened.<sup>244</sup>

2. Merger is an admission of defeat. Wrote Dr. Carter,

...the merger movement savors too much of an admission of defeatism sic ,...to warrant optimism about its outcome.

...Why assume a defeatist attitude at this juncture and make a move that would preclude the realization of the greatest possible period of victory and progress the Church has yet known [?] <sup>245</sup>

3. Merger comes from the influence of the ecumenical movement. According to Dr. Carter, the merger attempt "savors too much of...the influence of the

---

<sup>243</sup>Carter, loc. cit.

<sup>244</sup>Terpe and Spikes, loc. cit.

<sup>245</sup>Carter, loc. cit.

modern liberal ecumenical trends,...."246

4. The increased size resulting from a merger is a detriment. "Large churches are too prone to lean on bigness rather than upon God. Numbers are not as important as [is ] aggressive evangelism."247

5. Merger involves compromise, which is bad. It was argued that "to consolidate...necessitates some compromising and a compromise never fully satisfies either party."248

H. This is the wrong merger at the wrong time.

If, in fact, it were wise for the Free Methodists or the Wesleyans to merge, perhaps it should not be with each other--so suggested Dr. Carter. "Were merger of the Wesleyan Methodist or Free Methodists advisable, it is easy to think of several holiness denominations with which either church might unite in expectation of greater spiritual life...."249

### Summary

Of these arguments advanced against merger, the two most central ideas

---

<sup>246</sup>Ibid.

<sup>247</sup>Eddy, "On Church Merger," loc. cit.

<sup>248</sup>B. W. Densmore, "Church Union Does Not Exist," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXII (April 20, 1955), p. 6.

<sup>249</sup>Carter, loc. cit.

seem to be that merger, under the conditions proposed, would represent too great a departure from current (Wesleyan Methodist) practice, and that in any case merger should not be pushed until there is more popular demand for it within the churches. Of the arguments relating to polity, those relating to "episcopacy" appear to be most crucial.

### Evaluation of the Merger Debate

The arguments advanced for merger, largely in the pages of The Wesleyan Methodist, tended to be more general than specific (dealing more with the principle of merger than with the various details of the union proposal) and more of a confirmatory than a polemical nature. This was in contrast with the opposing arguments. Virtually all the arguments favoring merger could be applied in any merger attempt.

The negative arguments tended to be much more polemical and propagandistic than the favoring arguments. In reviewing the opposing arguments one is struck by the use of ill-defined but emotion-laden catchwords, such as "episcopacy," "centralization," "compromise." There is also considerable misinterpretation of the union proposal and a great deal of over-generalization concerning some of its features. Some of the arguments sound a bit contrived, and some are irrelevant--such as, "merger will not bring revival" (neither will no merger) and "my church would lose its identity" (so would the other church). Many of the generalizations would need considerable evidence to be convincing, such as that "centralized government" is incompatible with evangelism.

These criticisms do not apply to all the negative arguments advanced, nor would it be safe to conclude that there were no valid arguments against the merger in 1955. Probably the most telling argument was that the churches were not ready for merger in 1955.

In retrospect, it seems likely that many of the opposing arguments advanced had considerable influence--particularly those relating to "episcopacy" and "centralization of power," for these appealed to existing fears and prejudices. Also some of these very arguments were advanced by highly respected and influential men--indicating, certainly, no intention to deceive, but only that prejudices, fears, and misunderstanding existed at all levels.

It is not surprising that this debate developed. Whether or not the proposed basis for union actually meant for the Wesleyans the betrayal of their historic principles and the adoption of a centralized episcopal government, certain of the features of the proposal fostered this impression--for example, the use of the title "bishop," to cite probably the most important example. It would have been understandably difficult to convince a layman the government of the united church would not actually be episcopal when he knew the general overseers of the church might be called bishops.

It appears safe to conclude that insofar as Wesleyan opposition was due to specific issues, fear of episcopacy and of centralized authority sparked this opposition. To what extent opposition may have been due to covert factors such as general attitudes, and how such factors varied between the two groups, is problematical and cannot be readily evaluated. Such strong opposition among the Free Methodists

could scarcely have arisen over the same issues, and the proposed basis for union contained no other issues which could have triggered violent opposition among the Free Methodists. The one exception where real opposition might later have developed was at the point of the greatest Free Methodist compromise--the schools issue.

## IX. WHY THE ATTEMPT FAILED

The account given on the preceding pages of the Free Methodist - Wesleyan Methodist merger attempt of 1943-55 suggests some of the possible reasons why the attempt failed. An attempt will now be made to systematize and summarize those factors which led to the discontinuation of negotiations in 1955. It is not presumed that these were the only factors, but it appears evident that these factors were sufficiently crucial in themselves that, had they not operated as they did, negotiations would at least have been continued until 1959 and would likely have resulted in the ultimate union of the two denominations.

These factors are of two types: the immediate factors--that is, the more obvious, explicit, and generally recognized factors--and those underlying factors, implied by the immediate factors, which operated to bring the immediate factors to the fore.

### Immediate Factors

In essence, the factors which brought about the breakdown of negotiations in 1955 were two: fear of episcopacy and fear of schism.

Fear of episcopacy. The Wesleyan Methodists feared that uniting with the

Free Methodists on the basis proposed would mean the adoption of a centralized, authoritarian, episcopal form of church government.<sup>250</sup>

It is clear from a study of the Proposed Discipline that the government of the united church was to be largely republican in form and democratic in procedure with final authority guaranteed to the membership of the church and with equal lay representation throughout the church structure. It would have been episcopal in name only, and that only in the case the title of "bishop" had been retained. Even granting that the Wesleyan Methodists may have compromised more in the formulation of the basis of union, it yet remains that, taken as an over-all system of government, the Proposed Discipline constituted no radical departure from the existing Wesleyan system. Some of the changes were in fact moves away from centralization and concentration of power.<sup>251</sup>

This does not change the fact, however, that the merger proposal created the impression of episcopacy and centralization of power. This impression was given principally in the following ways:

1. Five general superintendents, rather than one president, were to be elected.
2. That these men were to bear the title of "bishop" was left as a possible

---

<sup>250</sup>It is not meant that all Wesleyan Methodists had this fear, nor that all those who opposed merger did so exclusively or primarily for this reason.

<sup>251</sup>E. g., in the united church the church schools had a degree more autonomy, and the removal of the elected general officers from automatic voting membership in the General Conference tended to weaken their powers.



option.

3. The Board of Administration was to be sub-organized into commissions, these to be presided over by the general superintendents. While this adoption of the FM system actually was no move toward greater centralization, it probably was viewed with suspicion by wary Wesleyans and increased the fear of centralization.

4. The general superintendents were to preside over the annual conferences as a matter of policy--creating the impression of the omnipresence of the "bishop."

In addition, it seems highly likely that there was a secondary, psychological factor at work to create the impression of centralization. To the Wesleyans, the Free Methodist system was an episcopacy. The ideas of "Free Methodist" and "episcopacy" were tied together. Thus, any new provision coming from the Free Methodists, regardless of its real significance, tended to give the impression of centralization. Further, any provision giving greater representation to Free Methodists would give the impression of greater centralization. Thus the provision for three FM and two WM superintendents tended to give the impression that the united church would partake more of the nature of the Free Methodist Church, that is, of a centralized system. So also with representation on the first united Board of Administration.

Also along this line, since the term "bishop" (and even "superintendent") was an alien one to the Wesleyans, the tendency would be for the Wesleyans to picture a stranger, some person they did not know, presiding over their annual con-

ference<sup>252</sup>--while in fact two of the general superintendents would have come from WM ranks and these would presumably have presided over most of the WM conferences at first.

The general equation of Free Methodism with episcopacy and centralization of power, then, tended to make every change from WM polity look like centralization of power and a return to episcopacy.<sup>253</sup>

That episcopacy represented more an attitude of fear than a rational deduction may be inferred from the general condemnation of episcopacy (but lack of explanation as to how the various features of the union proposal actually constituted episcopacy) in the merger debate.

This discussion suggests some possible steps that could have been taken to prevent the charge of episcopacy from becoming so powerful:

1. General men would have been needed for the supervision of the united church; it hardly could have been expected that the church would not have a general superintendency. But it seems likely that providing for four superintendents, rather than five, would have created a more favorable impression among the Wesleyans, especially if two were elected by each merging group. The three-to-two ratio was fair from the standpoint of comparative membership, but the two churches were sufficiently comparable in this regard that to treat the merger as the union of

---

<sup>252</sup>Observe the comment of J. L. Landrey, p. 164 that in the placement of pastors a committee "headed by a person from outside the conference would doubtless take over."

<sup>253</sup>See supra, p. 162.

two equals would have been more acceptable and, in reality, no less equitable.<sup>254</sup>

2. To have proposed the title "general superintendent," dropping "bishop" altogether, might have considerably altered the outcome of the negotiations. Much of the debate over merger at the 1955 Wesleyan Methodist General Conference focused on the word "bishop." W. C. Mavis, a Free Methodist alternate to the Joint Commission, reports that Roy S. Nicholson, who presided at the 1955 WM General Conference, commented later that if the Joint Commission, early in its deliberations, had agreed on the title of "general superintendent," not "bishop," the outcome of the 1955 vote would have been different.<sup>255</sup> As it developed, the word "bishop" became the rallying cry for the many who opposed merger for a number of other, less articulate reasons.<sup>256</sup>

3. The same principle may be applied to the composition of the first united Board of Administration. An equal representation from each denomination, it seems in retrospect, would have been wiser.

Fear of episcopacy, then, was one of the two crucial immediate factors affecting the 1955 Wesleyan vote.

---

<sup>254</sup>The Free Methodists had a total membership (U. S. and Canada) of 56,993 in 1955, compared with a total Wesleyan Methodist membership (U. S. and Canada) of 39,855 for the same year. Thus in the united church the Wesleyans would have constituted just under 43% so far as "home" membership is concerned. The Free Methodists, however, had a considerably larger foreign missions work than did the Wesleyans. Conference Minutes, 1955, of the Free Methodist Church (Winoona Lake, Indiana: Free Methodist Publishing House, 1955), p. 428; "The Editor's Annual Report of Statistics," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXIII (January 25, 1956) p. 8.

<sup>255</sup>W. Curry Mavis, personal interview with the writer. Conducted at Asbury Theological Seminary, Wilmore, Kentucky, March 2, 1966.

<sup>256</sup>Ibid.

Fear of schism. The Wesleyan Methodists feared that uniting with the Free Methodists on the basis proposed would mean the withdrawal of individuals and possibly even whole conferences from the Wesleyan Methodist Church.

The threat of losing a portion of the Wesleyan constituency has been a continuing problem. Related to the problem of authority in the church, it has naturally also been related to the matter of merger. It involves the question of annual conference - general church relations, which is as yet unresolved for the Wesleyans.<sup>257</sup>

Those conferences at odds with the general church made the merger question an issue in conference-general church relations, thus in turn making the schism question an issue in the merger debate.

In the period leading up to the 1955 General Conference, the schism question became acute. Two or three conferences were particularly opposed to the merger "and either implicitly or implicitly threatened withdrawal."<sup>258</sup> Dr. Wilber T. Dayton notes that, as a result of this problem, "there have been those who have

---

<sup>257</sup>George E. Failing, personal interview with the writer, held at Wesleyan World Headquarters, Marion, Indiana, February 23, 1966. Cf. B. H. Phaup, Harold K. Sheets, and Virgil A. Mitchell, "Report of the General Superintendents to the Board of Administration," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXXI (April 15, 1964), p. 4; Virgil A. Mitchell, "Allegheny Conference Report," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXXI (July 15, 1964), p. 13; "Executive Board Hears Reports," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXXI (September 30, 1964), p. 15; B. H. Phaup, "Allegheny Conference Report," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXXII (August 4, 1965), p. 14.

<sup>258</sup>Mavis, loc. cit. Wilber T. Dayton made the same point in an interview with the writer at Asbury Theological Seminary, Wilmore, Kentucky, March 3, 1966.

changed their position on merger from favorable to unfavorable to avoid schism,"<sup>259</sup>

This threat of schism probably could not have been altogether avoided in the merger considerations; this would seem to be indicated by the fact that the threat continued even after merger negotiations were halted. It is possible it might have been a less vexing issue, however, could the episcopacy issue have been robbed of some of its force, and had the Joint Commission continued, in a more active way, to work toward breaking down the walls of mutual ignorance at the local and conference level. However it is possible that efforts to bring greater cooperation between Free Methodists and Wesleyans in some areas might have served only to aggravate conference-church problems.

The most potent immediate factors in the breakdown of negotiations, then, seem to have been the twin fears of episcopacy and of schism--problems which might have been prevented from playing such a crucial role.

### Underlying Factors

These immediate factors, however, imply some underlying conditions involved in the relations between the Free Methodists and the Wesleyan Methodists. The following, especially, stand out:

Differences in polity. The merger negotiations, as reported earlier, clearly reveal that there were several differences in polity between the two churches, while there were no essential differences in doctrine or practice.

---

<sup>259</sup>Ibid.

The extent to which there were differences in polity, as noted, was due primarily to the reaction against episcopacy in the formation of the Wesleyan Methodist Connection. While the Free Methodist Church also reacted against the Methodist church in its origin, its reaction at the point of polity was not nearly as severe or complete as was true of the Wesleyans. Thus fear of episcopacy or a too-centralized form of government has never been widespread among the Free Methodists.

Through the years the Wesleyans moved gradually toward a more centrally organized denominational polity.<sup>260</sup> By 1955 there were only a few major points where the two denominations differed, and these were the points where the negotiations tended to focus most attention, general superintendency, control of schools, conference superintendency, and placement of pastors being most central.

The interesting thing is that by 1955 the Wesleyan Methodists were still congregational only in a few regards; in others they were actually quite centralized. The two principal areas where the Wesleyans remained more congregational--and these had become more or less sacred to Wesleyans--were pastoral placement and the conference-church relationship. As to pastoral placement, the right to make a pastoral arrangement remained with the local church. As to the relationship between the annual conference and the general church, the annual conference remained a largely autonomous unit. It had final authority over the preachers within its bounds; the president of the conference presided over all conference sittings; the denominational representative who visited the annual conference was primarily an observer and

---

<sup>260</sup>Supra, pp. 53, 109.

a reporter to the general church.

But the Wesleyans had become much more centralized than the Free Methodists in other respects. Control of schools is the most obvious example. Also, in the Wesleyan system elected denominational executives maintained a much tighter control over the general church machinery than was true in the FM system. Basically the difference between the two systems was this: the Free Methodist polity gave greater authority to the general church government, particularly the General Conference and the Board of Administration, over the whole church, including the annual conferences; yet this was a carefully limited authority and was at all points representative, with elected executives answerable to general boards over which they had little control. In contrast, the Wesleyan Methodist polity gave the general church government little control over the annual conferences, but such authority as it does have--over schools, publishing, and missions, for example--is more centralized than in the FM system.

Bishop L. R. Marston, Chairman of the Free Methodist - Wesleyan Methodist Joint Commission, noted this contrast in a letter to the present writer;

As we worked together as a Joint Commission, it was impressed upon the Free Methodist members thereof that although the Wesleyan Methodist Church had been organized as a congregational body, it had developed in its headquarters level to a stiffer centralization than obtained in the Free Methodist Church with its moderate episcopacy. Note, for example, its central control of educational institutions. At the same time it is true that at the local level the Wesleyan Methodist Church had continued at least a shade of congregationalism above that of the Free Methodist Church.<sup>261</sup>

---

<sup>261</sup>Marston, personal letter to the writer, dated March 4, 1966.

Thus there were differences in polity between the two churches, but these were not at all drastic. They were an underlying factor in the failure of the negotiations, however, because of the way these differences were viewed by the Wesleyans. And this suggests the second underlying factor.

Differences in denominational self-image. The Free Methodists, while having a modified episcopal polity, were never anti-congregational, simply because polity was never an important issue in the Free Methodist Church. In contrast, the Wesleyan Methodists viewed their church as in some sense a protest against episcopacy, and this anti-episcopal attitude continued as a strong force, seemingly unabated, clear down to the present.

In view of the fact that a certain centralization in polity had gradually developed within Wesleyan Methodism, a case could be made, therefore, that the Wesleyan denominational self-image in 1955 was not fully realistic. Wesleyans viewed themselves as non-episcopal and non-centralized, and strongly opposed merger when it appeared to mean a sacrifice of these values.

The situation in 1955, then, was that there was a considerably greater cleavage between the Free Methodist and Wesleyan Methodist denominational self-images at the point of polity than there was actual difference in polity. It was this which gave the episcopacy issue so much force, and it was this also that in some measure underlay the problem of possible schism.

Difference in size. In 1955 the total Wesleyan Methodist membership for the United States and Canada, as reported in The Wesleyan Methodist, was



39,855.<sup>262</sup> At the same time the Free Methodists had a corresponding membership of 56,993--a difference of a little over seventeen thousand. A comparatively larger foreign missions membership in the Free Methodist Church made the difference between the two denominations comparatively greater.

It is impossible to know, of course, just how important a factor this was in 1955. The subject was mentioned in the merger debate,<sup>263</sup> and it was the basis on which the Joint Commission decided on a three-two ratio of general superintendents and a twenty-four—twenty-one ratio of FM-WM representation on the first Board of Administration.<sup>264</sup>

It can fairly be assumed, in any case, that to the extent difference in size was an underlying factor, it was more potent among the Wesleyans, the smaller group.

Differences in sectness. The differences in polity between the two churches had their sectarian significance in that the differences were related to issues in the origin of the churches. The transitions in polity in the two churches were essentially movements away from the sect-type toward the church-type. This was particularly true in the Wesleyan Methodist Church, where the reaction in polity had been greater.

---

<sup>262</sup>"The Editor's Annual Report of Statistics," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXIII (January 25, 1956), p. 8.

<sup>263</sup>Supra, p. 164.

<sup>264</sup>Proposed Discipline, op. cit., pp. 26-27.

It would be difficult to determine definitely which of these two churches was more sect-type in 1955 because some of the sectarian characteristics of the two groups were different. The Free Methodists were more sectarian than the Wesleyans on the issues of instrumental music, certainly, and perhaps in other ways. The Wesleyans seem to have fit the sect-type to a slightly greater degree in standards of conduct, educational policy, and church polity.

It does not appear likely that the two churches were drastically different in sectness at this time. Both had become less sectarian and more churchlike, and in so doing had lost some of their more esoteric characteristics, which tended to make merger more feasible in 1955 than earlier, even though it was not effected.

Sectness, however, is not spread evenly over an entire denomination. Some local churches tend to be more sectarian than others of the same denomination. Liston Pope noted that of the Wesleyan Methodist Churches in Gaston County, North Carolina, in 1938-39, one had moved more rapidly toward the church-type than had the others.<sup>265</sup>

The significance of this unequal distribution of sect characteristics is that the distribution does not necessarily correspond in one denomination with the distribution in another. Thus the Free Methodist Church in one town may have testimony meetings every Sunday evening, while the Wesleyan Methodists in the same town only have testimonies during the midweek prayer meeting. Or, in another place, the

---

<sup>265</sup>Liston Pope, Millhands and Preachers, A Study of Gastonia (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1942), p. 127.

Wesleyans might have a beautiful new church on Main Street, have a church bowling league, and cooperate actively with Youth for Christ, while the dingy, one-room Free Methodist Church in a poorer section of town denounces the Wesleyans for their worldliness. These differences, all having sectarian significance,<sup>266</sup> have an obvious bearing on merger considerations. In the hypothetical example above, neither group would have been enthusiastic about the union of the two denominations, at least not at the local level.

Over-all differences in sectness, then, do not appear to have been drastic, but both groups still were predominantly sects, and their sect characteristics were not distributed evenly. This tended to work with other factors against the union of the two churches.<sup>267</sup>

### Summary

The attempt of 1943-55 to unite the Free Methodist and Wesleyan Methodist Churches failed for many reasons, but principally because of two immediate and four underlying factors. The immediate factors seem to have been (1) fear of episcopacy and (2) fear of schism, while the underlying factors of greatest significance were probably (1) differences in polity, (2) difference in denominational self-image, (3) differences in size, and (4) differences in sectness. It is assumed that

---

<sup>266</sup>Ibid., pp. 122-124.

<sup>267</sup>In the absence of studies in the relative sectarian nature of these two churches, these observations are, admittedly, hypothetical. In Chapter X possible further study along this line is suggested.

there were other factors involved, but that if the factors treated above had not operated in the way they did, merger would probably have been consummated.

## X. PROSPECTS

The attempted merger of the Free Methodists and Wesleyan Methodists of 1907-1915 scarcely made any progress. The 1943-55 attempt made more progress but was unsuccessful. What are the prospects for the future?

The factors operating both for and against merger in the past seem to suggest grounds for a guarded optimism about the success of unitive efforts involving these two churches in the future. While there are no merger negotiations now in progress, it can be expected that some form of attempt at union will eventually come. Already, of course, the National Holiness Association is working towards a federation of holiness churches, and both the Free Methodists and Wesleyan Methodists are cooperating in this.

The factors working for merger in the past--doctrinal unanimity and similarities in standards of conduct, essential polity, and basic methodology, are still operative. But some of the factors working against union have become less powerful. Particularly, in polity the Wesleyans have become much more like the Free Methodists, having adopted, in 1959, a constitution and a general superintendency of three men.<sup>268</sup> Further, it may be assumed that movement along the sect-church

---

<sup>268</sup>Roy S. Nicholson, "An Evaluation of the Recent General Conference," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXVI (July 29, 1959), p. 3.

continuum continues, bringing the two churches closer together. Social and cultural factors and the ecumenical impulse, all working toward greater unity, were noted in Chapter II.<sup>269</sup>

There is also the factor of the pending Wesleyan Methodist - Pilgrim Holiness merger.<sup>270</sup> Should this be consummated, a merger of the united group with the Free Methodists might be expected. The Pilgrims have evidenced an openness to merger, and the combined group would be larger than the Free Methodist Church, shifting the significance of the size factor.

In conclusion, it seems likely that the future will see the union of the Free Methodist Church and the Wesleyan Methodist Church--either a merger of the two churches, or their merging into a larger united denomination.

---

<sup>269</sup>Supra, pp. 51-54, 62-65.

<sup>270</sup>See Chapter VI.

## CHAPTER V

### UNITED MISSIONARY - EVANGELICAL METHODIST NEGOTIATIONS, 1961-1965

More than sixty years separate the origins of the Evangelical Methodist Church and the United Missionary Church. In this and in several other ways, these two holiness denominations are different.

The most obvious similarities are doctrine and size. Both doctrinally fit the mold of all NHA-affiliated denominations; both are of comparable size. The 1966 Yearbook of American Churches gives a total membership (1963) of 8,041 for the Evangelical Methodists, compared to a total United Missionary membership (1963) of 11,013. The United Missionary Church had 215 churches in 1963; the Evangelical Methodists had 139.<sup>1</sup>

These two churches have been conducting merger negotiations since 1961. However, according to Dr. Ralph A. Vanderwood, EM General Superintendent, the indications are that this merger, though officially still pending, will not be consummated.<sup>2</sup>

Not a great deal of information is available concerning this merger attempt. This is due primarily to the fact that negotiations have lasted only four years; the Fraternal Committee did not undertake to write a full proposed discipline; the denom-

---

<sup>1</sup>Benson Y. Landis (ed.), Yearbook of American Churches (New York: National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U. S. A., 1966), pp. 66, 97.

<sup>2</sup>Ralph A. Vanderwood, personal letter to the writer, dated March 14, 1966.

inational organs did not cover the negotiations in great detail; and the negotiations provoked no debate in the denominational papers.

It is possible, therefore, to do little more than chronicle the actual steps of the progress of negotiation in this chapter, adding some tentative evaluative comments. But even this much may be suggestive by way of comparison and contrast with the other negotiations dealt with more fully in this paper.

### I. THE OPENING OF NEGOTIATIONS

In 1959, merger negotiations between the United Missionary Church and the Missionary Church Association were broken off when the United Missionary General Conference failed by a narrow margin to approve the union.<sup>3</sup>

Following this action, six of the United Missionary district conferences spontaneously requested the General Board to reopen merger negotiations with the Missionary Church Association. In response, the General Board in September, 1959, elected a Fraternal Committee which was instructed to renew contact with the MCA and to explore the possibility of union with other similar groups.<sup>4</sup>

The Missionary Church Association, however, had already begun negotiations with the Christian and Missionary Alliance. It therefore requested that further UMC-MCA talks be postponed until the outcome of these new negotiations was de-

---

<sup>3</sup>Proceedings of the General Conference of the United Missionary Church, 1959, pp. 56-57.

<sup>4</sup>"Latest Merger Development," Gospel Banner, LXXXV (March 29, 1962), p. 2.

terminated.<sup>5</sup>

Interest in possible merger, however, had been expressed by the Evangelical Methodist Church. The door being closed to further negotiations with the MCA, talks began formally with the Evangelical Methodists in 1961 after the United Missionary Board instructed the UM Fraternal Committee to begin negotiating with the Evangelical Methodists.<sup>6</sup>

From the beginning of these negotiations, and even before, the United Missionary Church had officially gone on record as favoring union with some other group, or even with several groups. Dr. Kenneth Geiger, General Superintendent of the United Missionary Church, said in 1960, in his report to the General Board,

I am more convinced than ever that we must find help in cooperative effort with other groups of like precious faith. We are much too small to "go it alone" in these times. To this proposition I am dedicated with all my heart and soul.<sup>7</sup>

This outspoken pro-merger attitude on the part of the UM General Superintendent helps explain the openness of the United Missionary Church to merger generally.

The General Board of the church has officially taken action expressing the same attitude on various occasions. The instructions of the General Board to the

---

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid.; Proceedings of the Nineteenth General Conference, United Missionary Church, 1962, p. 18.

<sup>7</sup>Kenneth Geiger, "Report of the General Superintendent," Gospel Banner, LXXXIII (October 6, 1960), p. 13.



Fraternal Committee in 1959 were open-ended, encouraging negotiations with any similar group that might be interested. Similarly in 1961 the General Board, in addition to authorizing negotiations with the Evangelical Methodists, instructed Dr. Geiger to

informally contact by January 1, 1962, such denominations and bodies of like precious faith as would have interest in merger, and upon the outcome of these contacts invite those interested in a general exploratory meeting to a conference by February 15, 1962.<sup>8</sup>

Several groups responded that they would be interested in merger. Having formally begun negotiations with the Evangelical Methodists, however, the United Missionary Fraternal Committee did not consider it wise to carry on separate talks with other groups simultaneously.<sup>9</sup>

This openness to negotiation on a broad scale manifested by the United Missionary Church is in marked contrast to corresponding attitudes among the Evangelical Methodists. Young, and self-conscious of its distinctives,<sup>10</sup> the Evangelical Methodists have more guardedly entered into negotiations. While the Evangelical Methodists have united with other groups in the past, the name and essential features of the EMC were retained.<sup>11</sup> The Voice of Evangelical Methodism in re-

---

<sup>8</sup>Proceedings, 1962, loc. cit.

<sup>9</sup>"Latest Merger Developments," loc. cit.

<sup>10</sup>Supra, p. 55.

<sup>11</sup>"Highlights of the Conference," Voice of Evangelical Methodism, X (August, 1962), p. 4; "Evangel Churches Unite with E.M.C.," Voice of Evangelical Methodism, VIII (June, 1960), p. 1.

porting the Evangelical Methodist - People's Methodist Church merger in 1962 noted specifically that "the united church is to be called the Evangelical Methodist Church and is to retain our present Discipline...."<sup>12</sup>

There appears thus to have been a basic difference in attitude toward merger generally between the two groups at the outset of negotiations in 1961.

## II. HISTORY OF THE NEGOTIATIONS

An informal meeting of leaders of the Evangelical Methodist Church and the United Missionary Church took place in Chicago in March, 1961. The United Missionary General Board officially approved negotiating with the Evangelical Methodists in September of the same year, and in November Dr. Geiger met with members of the EM Fraternal Committee.<sup>13</sup>

The UM Fraternal Committee reported the developments noted above to the United Missionary General Conference of 1962 and recommended that

In view of the interest of our people in merger... this General Conference elect a Fraternal Committee to serve for the General Conference term and report regularly to the General Board.<sup>14</sup>

Such a committee was elected with Dr. Geiger as chairman.<sup>15</sup> The UM General Board in September of the same year approved "continued exploration with

---

<sup>12</sup>"Highlights of the Conference," loc. cit.

<sup>13</sup>"Latest Merger Developments," loc. cit.; Proceedings, 1962, loc. cit.

<sup>14</sup>"Latest Merger Developments," loc. cit.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid.; Proceedings, 1962, op. cit., pp. 38-39.

a view to merger between the Evangelical Methodist Church and the United Missionary Church."<sup>16</sup> It was in 1962 that negotiations between the two churches began in earnest.

An effort was made during the negotiations to acquaint the constituency of the two churches with each other. The first of these endeavors, a tri-district pastors' convention of the United Missionary Church, was attended by four ministers of the Evangelical Methodist Church.<sup>17</sup> Also in September, 1963, the UM General Board approved the sending of the Gospel Banner, official UM organ to Evangelical Methodist leaders and the holding of joint ministerial conventions in the fall of 1964.<sup>18</sup>

As negotiations continued into 1964, the United Missionary Fraternal Committee formulated a report to the UM district conferences, informing them of the nature of the Evangelical Methodist Church. Following this, at the annual sessions of the district conferences in 1964 delegates were polled concerning their attitude toward possible merger with the Evangelical Methodists. Apparently the Evangelical Methodists had requested that the name "Methodist" be incorporated into the name of the merged church, because reactions to the word "Methodist" were included in the poll.

---

<sup>16</sup>"Delegate Manual and Directory, Twentieth General Conference, United Missionary Church, March 15-21, 1965" (mimeographed), p. 66.

<sup>17</sup>"Evangelical Methodist Pastors Attend United Missionary Convention," Voice of Evangelical Methodism, XI (December, 1963), p. 7.

<sup>18</sup>"Delegate Manual," op. cit., p. 68.

The poll produced the following results: (1) On the question of doctrinal agreement, 366 felt there was general agreement compared to seven who felt there were basic differences and thirty-seven who were undecided. (2) On the question of continuing negotiations, 378 favored continuation with seventeen opposed. (3) On the question of the use of "Methodist" in the new name, 233 were favorable and 65 unfavorable. In all cases the majority was well over two-thirds.<sup>19</sup>

The Fraternal Committee had noted by this time certain differences between the two churches in standards of membership. Specifically, the United Missionary Church prohibited the use of tobacco and membership in lodges on the part of its members. The Evangelical Methodists had no such restrictions, although their ministers were instructed "to preach total abstinence from the use of beverage alcohol, tobacco, and drugs in a winsome manner in view of Christian stewardship of the human body."<sup>20</sup> Apparently the Fraternal Committee tentatively agreed to drop these prohibitions as conditions of membership in the merged church, and steps were taken to ascertain whether this would be acceptable to the UM constituency.<sup>21</sup>

The United Missionary General Board heard the report of the UM Fraternal Committee at its September 24, 1964, meeting, and voted

...that steps be taken to proceed with merger with the Evangelical Methodist Church and that the General Board ask the General Con-

---

<sup>19</sup>"United Missionary, Evangelical Methodist Ministers Meet," Voice of Evangelical Methodism, XII (November, 1964), p. 10.

<sup>20</sup>Discipline of the Evangelical Methodist Church, 1958 (n.p., n.n., 1960), p. 98, Par. 722.

<sup>21</sup>"Delegate Manual," op. cit., p. 69.

ference to approve in principle such a merger and authorize the calling of a merging conference if the Evangelical Methodist Church concurs.<sup>22</sup>

According to the Gospel Banner, official United Missionary organ, this action was taken on the basis of the results of the poll taken earlier of ministerial and lay delegates to the district conferences which revealed a strong desire for continued talks with the Evangelical Methodists.<sup>23</sup>

### Joint Ministerial Convention

In late September and early October, 1964, a joint ministerial convention was held at New Carlisle, Ohio. About two hundred ministers and ministers' wives from both churches, including about fifth Evangelical Methodists, attended. The conference considered the work of both denominations in the areas of foreign missions, church extension, Christian education, youth work, and the Sunday school. At one point during the convention the two groups of ministers met separately, and the Evangelical Methodist group expressed a desire for more information about the United Missionary Church to be distributed to the EM constituency. The EM ministers felt there was considerable ignorance in the Evangelical Methodist Church of the United Missionary Church.<sup>24</sup>

---

<sup>22</sup>ibid.; "General Board to Recommend Merger," Gospel Banner LXXXVII (November 5, 1964), p. 12.

<sup>23</sup>ibid.

<sup>24</sup>"United Missionary, Evangelical Methodist Ministers Meet," Voice of Evangelical Methodism, XII (November, 1964), p. 100.

Fraternal Committee Meeting, December, 1964

The joint UM-EM Fraternal Committee met at United Missionary Headquarters in Elkhart, Indiana, on December 10 and 11, 1964, for the purpose of resolving the differences between the two churches that stood in the way of merger. This meeting, attended by Dr. Ralph Vanderwood, EMC General Superintendent, Rev. J. Neal Anderson, and Rev. John Banks for the Evangelical Methodists and Dr. Kenneth Geiger, Rev. Quinton J. Everest, and Rev. Ward M. Shantz for the United Missionary Church, reviewed negotiations to that point and came to tentative agreement on the basic issues involved in the merger. These agreements formed the basis for union presented later to the United Missionary General Conference of 1965 and to the Evangelical Methodist Executive Council and 1965 district and annual conferences of the Evangelical Methodist Church.<sup>25</sup>

Agreements reached at this meeting concerned (1) name, (2) central organization, (3) number and general boundaries of districts, (4) educational philosophy, (5) ministerial orders and pastoral placement, (6) policy concerning church property, (7) baptism and child dedication, (8) tobacco and secret societies, (9) divorce, and (10) new discipline or constitution.<sup>26</sup> These will be discussed in detail in section IV of this chapter, "Basic Features of the Union Proposal."<sup>27</sup>

---

<sup>25</sup>"Report of Fraternal Committee, United Missionary Church," included in "Delegate Manual," *op. cit.*, pp. 124-125.

<sup>26</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 125-128.

<sup>27</sup>*Infra*, pp. 212-217.

At this meeting the joint Fraternal Committee agreed there were six primary advantages to the merger of these two churches. These were:<sup>28</sup>

1. Broader geographic distribution across the nation.
2. Strengthening of weaker areas, particularly along the West Coast.
3. Increased administrative efficiency.
4. A larger, broader general church program.
5. Greater morale in both ministers and laymen.
6. More prudent pastoral placement resulting from a greater number of churches and ministers--pastoral movement could be based more on needs and abilities.

This was probably the most significant single meeting of the joint Fraternal Committee in that it formulated a tentative basis for union which could be further elaborated into an actual proposed constitution.

#### Meeting of Evangelical Methodist Executive Council, February, 1965

The report of the joint Fraternal Committee meeting of December, 1964, including the proposed basis for union, was presented to the Executive Council of the Evangelical Methodist Church at its meeting February 24, and 25, 1965. The council approved the continuation of negotiations and voted to supply information about the United Missionary Church to the EM district conferences which would be meeting later in 1965.<sup>29</sup>

---

<sup>28</sup>"Report of Fraternal Committee," op. cit., p. 125.

<sup>29</sup>"Executive Council," Voice of Evangelical Methodism, XIII (April, 1965), p. 8.

### United Missionary General Conference of 1965

The 1965 triennial General Conference of the United Missionary Church convened at Elkhart, Indiana, in March, 1965. Consideration was given at this conference to the question of merger with the Evangelical Methodists.<sup>30</sup>

The UM Fraternal Committee presented its report, including the tentative basis for union arrived at during the December, 1964, committee meeting. An hour of debate followed this report, and the report was officially accepted--which did not, of course, commit the church to union with the Evangelical Methodists.<sup>31</sup>

Later in this General Conference a straw vote was taken on the following proposition:

Resolved, that steps be taken to proceed with merger with the Evangelical Methodist Church, and that the General Board ask the General Conference to approve in principle such a merger and authorize the calling of a merging conference if the Evangelical Methodist Church concurs.<sup>32</sup>

The results of this straw vote were: eighty-three in favor, twenty-two opposed--a greater than two-thirds majority in favor.<sup>33</sup>

The Gospel Banner reports that this conference

...eventually came to the conclusion that the Evangelical Methodist Church was "in accord with us doctrinally" and that adjustments could be made "in areas of minor differences."<sup>34</sup>

---

<sup>30</sup>Proceedings of the Twentieth General Conference, United Missionary Church, 1965, pp. 57-63, 71, 73.

<sup>31</sup>ibid., pp. 57-63.

<sup>32</sup>ibid., p. 71.

<sup>33</sup>ibid., p. 73.

<sup>34</sup>"Merger Favored with Evangelical Methodists," Gospel Banner, LXXXVIII (April 22, 1965), p. 8.



The most important action taken by this General Conference was the passing of the following resolution:<sup>35</sup>

WHEREAS there is a strong sentiment in favor of a proposed merger with the Evangelical Methodist Church,

AND WHEREAS this merger, while greatly advantaging some important areas of our church, would, nevertheless leave other major areas without the benefit we desire,

AND WHEREAS there are significant developments taking place in some of our sister denominations that could very well lead to what might be a desirable merger, therefore,  
BE IT RESOLVED:

1. That we continue negotiations with the Evangelical Methodist Church if and when they have taken a comparable favorable action in their denomination.

2. That we convey to the Evangelical Methodist Church our interest in a larger union of fellowship, and advise them of our desire to explore other possibilities of establishing fraternal relations as opportunities may present themselves.

3. That we elect a fraternal committee which shall be authorized to continue fraternal relations with the Evangelical Methodist Church, or establish other fraternal relations, with approval of the General Board; and if a favorable expression is received from the Evangelical Methodist Church, to develop a constitution as a basis of merger and recommend to the General Board the calling of a special General Conference for the purpose of considering the consummation of such a merger, which conference shall have the final authority to consummate the merger or discontinue negotiations.

In adopting this resolution the General Conference, then, (1) authorized continued negotiation with the Evangelical Methodists, (2) expressed a desire to consider merger with other groups and authorized such other negotiations, (3) directed the Fraternal Committee to draw up a proposed constitution as a basis for union with the Evangelical Methodists, and (4) authorized the calling of a special session of the

---

<sup>35</sup>ibid., pp. 8-9; Proceedings, 1965, loc. cit.; "Memorial Opposes Union," Voice of Evangelical Methodism, XIII (August, 1965), p. 2.

General Conference which would have final authority to consummate the merger of the Evangelical Methodists and the United Missionary Church. It did not, however, give final approval to merger.

It is obvious from the wording of this resolution that the United Missionary Church was looking beyond the pending merger to possible later mergers of the united church. While favoring merger with the Evangelical Methodists, the UMC felt the united church would still be too weak in some areas to render an effective ministry unless there could be further unions.

#### Evangelical Methodist Annual Conferences of 1965.

In June and July, 1965, the two annual conferences of the Evangelical Methodist Church held their sessions. The Western Annual Conference met at Azusa Pacific College, Azusa, California, June 16 through 21 and the Eastern Annual Conference met June 29 through July 4 at Wilmore, Kentucky.<sup>36</sup>

Both these conferences had received the report of the joint Fraternal Committee and both spent considerable time discussing the question of merger with the UMC. According to the Voice of Evangelical Methodism a majority of the delegates at the Western Conference favored continued study on the merger; in any case this conference officially expressed itself against the merger by adopting the following resolution:<sup>37</sup>

---

<sup>36</sup>ibid.

<sup>37</sup>ibid.

Whereas the General Conference of 1962 voted to continue Fraternal Relations with the United Missionary Church with a view to possible merger, and in view of the fact that a report of the Fraternal Committee with possible recommendations will be made to our General Conference of 1966,

Be it resolved:

1. That in view of the much broader amalgamation envisioned in the recent National Holiness Association recommendation,<sup>38</sup>
2. And in view of the resolution passed at the recent General Conference of the United Missionary Church, which seems to favor participation in a broader union, than anything thus far contemplated by the Evangelical Methodist Church,
3. And especially in view of the fact that the Evangelical Methodist Church is not prepared to lose its identity in such a multiple organization, therefore,

This Annual Conference goes on record that we memorialize the General Conference of the Evangelical Methodist Church as follows:

That while reaffirming our love and esteem for our brethren in the United Missionary Church, nevertheless in view of these more recent developments it does not seem to us that it is God's will to prolong our negotiations, and that it would be in the best interest of both denominations to terminate these negotiations.

The eastern annual conference, meeting shortly afterwards, passed an identical resolution.<sup>39</sup>

By this resolution the Evangelical Methodists said, in effect, that they feared a merger of the Evangelical Methodists and the United Missionary Church might lead to another merger or mergers in which the identity of the Evangelical Methodist Church might be lost. They were willing, presumably, to unite with the UMC provided the name "Evangelical Methodist" and the essential features of the

---

<sup>38</sup>Apparently referring to the resolution passed at the spring, 1965, NHA convention calling for a federation of holiness churches. (See supra, p. 81, where this resolution is reproduced in part.)

<sup>39</sup>"Memorial Opposes Union," loc. cit.

EMC were retained, but they were not willing to commit themselves further than they could see. The United Missionary Church was somewhat larger; presumably its views on union, therefore, would prevail. This was a risk the Evangelical Methodists were not prepared to take.

There seems also to have been the fear, in addition to the fear of losing identity, that further mergers envisioned by the United Missionary Church might lead to compromising the strictly Wesleyan doctrinal position of the Evangelical Methodists. Dr. Ralph Vanderwood, General Superintendent of the Evangelical Methodist Church, suggests this in the following commentary on the action of the 1965 EMC annual conferences:

The United Missionary Church at its General Conference last spring voted favorably for merger with the Evangelical Methodist Church. However, in passing the resolution which dealt with the merger, the UMC expressed a desire for other mergers. Following the UMC General Conference, the Canadian arm of the UMC pressed strongly for merger with the Christian and Missionary Alliance. Also Dr. Kenneth Geiger expressed a desire for the re-opening of negotiations with the Missionary Church Association. Most likely, problems existing within the EMC and the UMC in regard to the merger of these two denominations could have been solved. However, the broadening of the base of merger negotiations with the UMC at its last General Conference was the major reason for negative feelings on the part of many of our Annual Conference delegates concerning the UMC and EMC merger. It is the conviction of most of our EMC folk that the Christian and Missionary Alliance does not preach a clear doctrinal position.<sup>40</sup>

Thus Evangelical Methodist - United Missionary merger negotiations were given a setback by the action of the EM annual conferences. Merger negotiations are not officially closed, however, as of this writing. But "Dr. Vanderwood has in-

---

<sup>40</sup>Vanderwood, loc. cit.

licated...that it is quite certain their General Conference will accept these recommendations and vote to officially terminate negotiations...."<sup>41</sup> No further Fraternal Committee negotiations have been held since the action of the EMC annual conferences.<sup>42</sup>

### Recent Developments

Despite the action of the 1965 annual conferences of the Evangelical Methodist Church, considerable interest in merger persists among both denominations in the state of Washington. There both churches are numerically weak, each having only about a dozen churches, and Washington leaders in both groups feel union is a virtual necessity for an effective ministry in the state.<sup>43</sup>

An EMC and a UMC church near Seattle, Washington, have independently taken steps toward union at the local level. The United Missionary Church had no pastor and no building, while the Evangelical Methodist Church had both pastor and building but a small congregation. The two churches have decided to hold joint services under the EM pastor. Separate church rolls and budgets are being maintained, but the church board is jointly composed.<sup>44</sup>

It is not known what, if any, influence this and possibly other similar ac-

---

<sup>41</sup>Kenneth Geiger, "Report on Proposed Merger," Gospel Banner, LXXXVIII (August 26, 1965), p. 15.

<sup>42</sup>Vanderwood, loc. cit.

<sup>43</sup>"Merger in Washington" Gospel Banner, LXXXVIII (September, 9, 1965), p. 16.

<sup>44</sup>Ibid.

tions will have on the final disposition of the merger question. Although the prospects do not presently seem optimistic for merger, a final decision on the matter awaits the 1966 General Conference of the Evangelical Methodist Church. If the merger should receive favorable action, presumably the preparation of a proposed constitution and plans for the calling of a special United Missionary General Conference would follow.

### III. MAJOR OBSTACLES TO MERGER

Serious obstacles to merger were notably absent from the Evangelical Methodist - United Missionary merger negotiations. While there were points of difference which could have constituted obstacles, there seems to have been a willingness to make sufficient concessions to implement union.

There were obstacles to merger, however, as indicated by the 1965 action of the EM annual conferences. But these did not figure in the actual negotiations; rather they became obstacles primarily at the annual conference level. These were associated chiefly with the general attitude of the two denominations on the question of possible future mergers beyond the one under consideration.

For the sake of a more complete understanding of this merger attempt and the churches involved in it, the more significant differences between the two churches, which might have been expected to be major obstacles to union, are noted below. Following this the matter of differing views toward possible further mergers is noted briefly.

### Differences in Doctrine, Standards, and Polity

A review of the Discipline of the Evangelical Methodist Church and of the Constitution and Manual of the United Missionary Church<sup>45</sup> suggests that in doctrine and standards of membership these two churches are more different than were the Free Methodist and Wesleyan Methodist churches at the time of their negotiations, 1943-55. On the other hand, there seems to be considerable similarity in polity.

Doctrine. Agreement is general here and differences are minor; yet the differences are significant. Generally the Evangelical Methodist Articles of Religion follow rather closely, both in content and form, the traditional Methodist statement, in contrast to the United Missionary Articles of Faith and Practice which, however, are essentially strongly Wesleyan. These differences may be noted:

1. The EMC has a slightly more conservative statement regarding inspiration of the Scriptures ("plenary, unique inspiration"),<sup>46</sup> although both recognize the inspiration of the Scriptures.<sup>47</sup> Probably, in practice, there is little difference in views on inspiration, and there is no indication this matter figured prominently in the negotiations.

---

<sup>45</sup>The Constitution and Manual of the United Missionary Church (Elkhart, Indiana: Bethel Publishing Company, 1962).

<sup>46</sup>Discipline, op. cit., Par. 72, p. 22. This statement, however is found in the EM "Basic Denominational Principles," not in the Articles of Religion.

<sup>47</sup>Constitution and Manual, op. cit., p. 12.

2. The greatest differences concern baptism. The EMC retains the somewhat self-contradictory traditional Methodist statement that baptism is "a sign of profession" of faith and "a sign of regeneration," but that infants are to be baptized. No mode of baptism is prescribed.<sup>48</sup> By contrast the UMC forbids infant baptism and specifically requires baptism by immersion.<sup>49</sup>

But these differences apparently constituted no serious obstacles to merger.

It is noted that both churches are specifically committed to a pre-millennial view, the United Methodist position being somewhat more explicit.<sup>50</sup>

Standards of Membership. The United Methodist Church forbids its members to use tobacco or hold membership in secret societies.<sup>51</sup> The EMC has no such prohibitions, although it is outspoken against the use of tobacco in an admonitory sense.<sup>52</sup>

Polity. There is very little difference here, the Evangelical Methodist Church being perhaps slightly more congregational. Main differences concern the holding of church property, ministerial orders, and pastoral placement. In regards to the last item, both churches employ the call system, the UMC procedure being

<sup>48</sup>Discipline, op. cit., Par. 37, pp. 13-14.

<sup>49</sup>Constitution and Manual, op. cit., p. 19.

<sup>50</sup>ibid., pp. 17-18; Discipline, op. cit., Par. 71, p. 22.

<sup>51</sup>Constitution and Manual, op. cit., pp. 22-23.

<sup>52</sup>Discipline, op. cit., Par. 516, p. 72.



somewhat more regulated and controlled by the district conference.<sup>53</sup>

There are, then, differences between the two churches--principally regarding baptism and standards for membership--which could have been obstacles to merger. But the joint Fraternal Committee resolved these with seemingly little difficulty.

### Differing Views Toward Merger Generally

The most obvious apparent obstacle to the merger of the Evangelical Methodist Church and the United Missionary Church, which came to the surface at the 1965 EMC annual conferences, was that these two churches differ in their degree of openness on the subject of merger generally. This is seen perhaps most sharply by comparing a statement by General Superintendent Geiger of the UMC, noted earlier, with point three of the 1965 EMC annual conference resolution.

Dr. Geiger (1960): "I am more convinced than ever that we must find help in cooperative effort with other groups of like precious faith."<sup>54</sup>

EMC Resolution (1965): "...the Evangelical Methodist Church is not prepared to lose its identity in ...a multiple organization..."<sup>55</sup>

---

<sup>53</sup>Proceedings, 1965, op. cit., pp. 60-61.

<sup>54</sup>Geiger, "Report of the General Superintendent," loc. cit. That Geiger meant specifically that the UMC should seek mergers--or at least, that his opinion was that there should be mergers, whether or not he was specifically thinking of mergers in this instance--is made abundantly clear by later statements made by him and later actions taken by the General Board, as noted earlier in this chapter.

<sup>55</sup>"Memorial Opposes Union," loc. cit.

Specifically, the obstacle to this merger, as noted in the EM resolution, was the resolution of the UMC expressing interest in other mergers beyond that contemplated with the Evangelical Methodists; the NHA resolution calling for a federation of holiness churches was also noted. More basically, however, the resolutions passed by both churches reveal a difference in attitude on the part of each denomination toward itself. There exists, in other words, differing degrees of what might be termed "ecclesiocentrism,"<sup>56</sup> or denominational self-consciousness and self-centeredness. This is not to say that either church is ecclesiocentric in any extreme sense; it is to say, however, that the Evangelical Methodists seem to be characterized by a greater degree of ecclesiocentrism than does the United Missionary Church. The Evangelical Methodists, as they admitted with remarkable candor, are unwilling to give up their identity as a denomination; actions of the United Missionary Church suggest the UMC would be willing to give up its identity for the sake of the consummation of merger.<sup>57</sup>

It seems apparent, then, that the different attitudes of these two churches

---

<sup>56</sup>This term is suggested by the sociological term "ethnocentrism," defined by Broom and Selznick as "The intense identification with the familiar and the devaluation of the foreign.... It is the feeling that one's own culture is the best and that others are in varying degrees inferior.... Ethnocentrism often leads to a needless rejection of the richness and knowledge of other cultures. It impedes the sharing of ideas and skills which might bring a society closer to its own goals." (Leonard Broom and Philip Selznick, *Sociology* [Evanston, Illinois: Row Peterson and Company, 1955], pp. 61, 63). Thus "ecclesiocentrism" is "an intense identification with one's own church and the devaluation of other churches; the feeling that one's own church is the best and that all others are in varying degrees inferior."

<sup>57</sup>Indications of such an attitude on the part of the UMC are its general openness to merger and its willingness to accept the name "Methodist."

toward possible mergers beyond the one pending are expressions of differing degrees of ecclesiocentrism. The question remains to what extent this factor is related to degrees of sectness.

While this is a question deserving of separate detailed study,<sup>58</sup> the tentative conclusion may be advanced that high ecclesiocentrism is an expression of sectness. The more fully a denomination is a sect, the more ecclesiocentric one would expect it to be. This is to be inferred from the tendency of the sect to set itself in opposition to the world, to develop a high degree of group cohesiveness, and to view itself (sometimes rightly, sometimes wrongly) as a purification of, and thus spiritually superior to, the mother church.<sup>59</sup> Also, Pope notes that "suspicion of rival sects" is an indication of the sect-type church.<sup>60</sup>

Inasmuch as the Evangelical Methodist Church is relatively young, compared to the United Missionary Church, and has not had much time to move away from the sect-type towards the church-type,<sup>61</sup> it seems likely that the Evangelical Methodist Church is more fully sect-type than is the United Missionary Church, and that the greater degree of ecclesiocentrism in the Evangelical Methodist Church is an expression of the church's greater sectness. If this is a correct evaluation, then

---

<sup>58</sup>See Chapter X, pp. 371-372.

<sup>59</sup>Cf. the comments of Ernst Troeltsch, The Social Teaching of the Christian Churches, trans. Olive Wyon (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1949), I, 332-334.

<sup>60</sup>Liston Pope, Millhands and Preachers, a Study of Gastonia (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1942), p. 122. Pope suggests, however, that churches (as opposed to sects) tend to look down on or pity all sects.

<sup>61</sup>Supra, p. 56.

difference in degree of sectness was a major obstacle to merger in EMC-UMC negotiations.

#### IV. BASIC FEATURES OF THE UNION PROPOSAL

Should the 1966 General Conference of the Evangelical Methodist Church approve continued negotiations with the United Missionary Church, which, as has been noted, seems unlikely, then the two churches would probably proceed to prepare a tentative constitution which would be the basis for union. In the present absence of such a constitution, the agreements reached by the joint Fraternal Committee Meeting of December, 1964, constitute as comprehensive a basis for union as is available. The following pages outline the basic features of this statement of basic agreements.

##### Name

Discussion of a possible name for the united church produced a tentative preference for "Evangelical Methodist Church." Other suggestions were "The Evangelical Missionary Methodist Church" and "The Evangelical Church." No one name was endorsed.<sup>62</sup>

##### Central Organization

Presumably the two existing structures, with general conferences and administrative boards, would be continued on a merged basis. Neither church, however,

---

<sup>62</sup>Proceedings, 1965, op. cit., p. 60.

feels it has an adequate number of department heads. It was felt that the united church could add new departments, giving the church a broader program.<sup>63</sup>

Indianapolis, Cincinnati, and St. Louis were suggested as possible headquarters sites--or some other city in the general area of Indiana.<sup>64</sup>

### Districts

The eleven proposed districts of the merged church would be: South Eastern, Southern, Nebraska, Indiana, Texas, California, North West, Michigan, Ohio, Ontario, and Canadian North West.<sup>65</sup>

### Educational Philosophy

"It was concluded that our educational philosophy in the two denominations is identical and that our viewpoint as to standards of preparation for the ministry are in harmony."<sup>66</sup>

### Ministerial Orders

Although the EMC has two orders of ordained ministers, in contrast to the UMC, the committee felt one of these orders could be abandoned if the term "elder" were retained for ordained ministers.<sup>67</sup>

---

<sup>63</sup>ibid.

<sup>64</sup>ibid.

<sup>65</sup>ibid., pp. 60-61.

<sup>66</sup>ibid., p. 61.

<sup>67</sup>ibid.

### Pastoral Placement

The joint Fraternal Committee noted that "the E.M.C. now has a purely congregational method of pastoral placement. The U.M.C. plan... was favored and the E.M.C. delegation felt that this plan should be studied by their church."<sup>68</sup>

### Church Property

The compromise here simply involved recognizing four possible ways of holding property in the united church, ranging from local ownership to general church ownership. It was agreed "that there be no attempt to disturb the manner in which the title of existing property at the time of merger is held."<sup>69</sup>

### Baptism and Child Dedication

The solution to differences here was generally for each church to remove statements objectionable to the other. Specifically, the following proposed articles on baptism and infant dedication were suggested:

We believe that baptism by water is the symbol of one's union with Christ and constitutes the public confession to the world of his new life in Christ Jesus, and is the answer of a good conscience toward God. Baptism is therefore to be administered to those who have been saved by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and give evidence of the genuineness of their salvation.<sup>70</sup>

Believing that the scriptures do teach concern for the well-being of little children and their commitment to God, and recognizing in the scriptures a number of such instances, we heartily encourage the

---

<sup>68</sup>ibid. This may indicate a conscious or unconscious desire of the EMC leadership to move somewhat in the direction of a more centralized, more traditionally Methodistic polity.

<sup>69</sup>ibid.

<sup>70</sup>ibid.

formal and public dedication of little children in a public service of the church. Parents may request the dedication of their children and proper certificates shall be furnished them.<sup>71</sup>

The Fraternal Committee noted that the new constitution "would make no reference to child baptism, or the use of water in connection with dedication, nor the modes of baptism, this being left optional to the candidate."<sup>72</sup> In other words, the EMC agreed to drop the statement endorsing infant baptism and the UMC agreed to drop its prohibition of infant baptism and the restriction requiring baptism by immersion.

### Standards of Membership

The following agreements were reached:

Tobacco. Although the specific prohibition of the use of tobacco as a condition of membership contained in the UMC Constitution and Manual was to be dropped, this strong statement was recommended:

Realizing the injurious effects physically, morally, and spiritually of the use of tobacco, intoxicating beverages, narcotics, and other kindred indulgences which are for the gratification of depraved appetites, and recognizing that such practice[s] are unbecoming and inconsistent with our Christian profession, we look with disfavour upon the use of any of them and encourage our churches to exert their influence [sic] against these evils.<sup>73</sup>

Secret Societies. A similar solution was found regarding the UM restriction against membership in fraternal orders. An article discouraging (but not actually forbidding) "associations and fraternal relationships that dishonor Christ, bring reproach upon the church, and exert [sic] a harmful influence upon others" was suggested.<sup>74</sup>

---

<sup>71</sup>ibid., p. 62.

<sup>72</sup>ibid.

<sup>73</sup>ibid.

<sup>74</sup>ibid.

Divorce. The only significant difference at this point was that EMC ministers were allowed to perform the marriage of a divorced person if it was clearly established that person was the innocent party in a divorce involving adultery, while UMC ministers were forbidden to marry divorcees under any conditions. The United Missionary delegates favored adopting the Evangelical Methodist position.<sup>75</sup>

### New Discipline

An interesting agreement reached by the committee was that regarding a new discipline or manual for the united church,

...it would be necessary and desirable to re-write the whole in meaningful language for our day rather than to endeavor to amend either of the present statements by revisions, deletions, or additions. Such a re-writing...would give to the whole a continuity of style and form.<sup>76</sup>

This willingness to tamper with existing wording is more understandable when one remembers that the official manuals of both churches are less than twenty years old. The above statement implies, however, that the historic Articles of Religion of Methodism included in the EMC Discipline might be completely rewritten.<sup>77</sup>

### Summary

This tentative basis for the union of the United Missionary and Evangelical

---

<sup>75</sup>ibid., p. 63.

<sup>76</sup>ibid.

<sup>77</sup>The present writer would consider a decision to re-write the Articles commendable in the light of the attempted revision of the Articles of Religion (essentially the same articles as those presently in the EMC Discipline) during the Free Methodist - Wesleyan Methodist merger talks. In this instance the result was a patchwork of eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth century English which, in the opinion of this writer, needed to be rewritten for the sake of clarity and consistency of style.



Methodist churches shows a willingness to make reasonable compromises on the part of both churches. Since this is not a fully elaborated basis for union, however, it is impossible to determine definitely which church made, or would have made, the greater concessions. It is noted though that the name "Evangelical Methodist" probably would have been retained. Thus the Evangelical Methodist Church probably would not have lost its identity by this merger.

#### V. WHY THE ATTEMPT FAILED

Considering the general paucity of material on this merger attempt, and particularly the absence of a published debate on the subject, it would be unwarranted to attempt as full an analysis of the reasons for the failure of this merger attempt as was undertaken in the preceding chapter. Some suggestive comments as to possible factors may be set forth, however.

It is recognized that more factors were probably at work in this situation than have come to the surface. These it would be impossible to evaluate or even positively identify without further detailed study beyond the scope of this paper.

By way of contrast with the Free Methodist - Wesleyan Methodist merger attempt, the immediate factors of fear of episcopacy and fear of schism seem to have been absent from EMC-UMC negotiations. Of the underlying factors of differences in polity, differences in self-image, difference in size, and differences in sectness, only the last of these can be seen definitely to have been a factor in the EMC-UMC negotiations. It seems safe to say that polity played no significant role, considering the ease with which matters of polity were handled by the Fraternal Committee. It is

possible that differences in self-image may have been a factor, and it is likely the difference in size was a factor lying back of the fear of loss of identity, as noted earlier.<sup>78</sup>

#### Differences in Sectness

A possible difference in the degree to which these two denominations fit the sect-type, as opposed to the church-type, was noted in an earlier section of this paper.<sup>79</sup> It was noted that this alleged difference was implied by official statements indicating differing degrees of ecclesiocentrism in the two groups. While holding that other factors, some perhaps equally important as this one, may have worked for the defeat of this merger, the present writer concludes that differences in the sect-typeness of the two denominations, resulting in differing degrees of openness toward merger generally, constituted one of the major reasons this merger attempt failed to receive favorable action by the EM annual conferences in 1965.

### VI. PROSPECTS

Given the difference in ecclesiocentrism between the Evangelical Methodists and the United Missionary Church, it seems highly likely that the pending merger between these two churches will not be consummated, but that the United Missionary Church eventually will either unite with some other group, such as the Missionary Church Association, or be drawn into a multi-denominational merger as the

---

<sup>78</sup>Supra, p. 203.

<sup>79</sup>Supra, p. 211.

result of the influence of the National Holiness Association. Prospects for the immediate union of the Evangelical Methodists appear dim, but if it is true that the Evangelical Methodists are at present more sect-type than is the United Missionary Church, it may be hypothesized that time will bring a movement away from the sect-type which will facilitate eventual merger. This process may be hastened if the NHA-proposed federation becomes a reality and if the EMC sees fit to cooperate in it.

In short, the merger of the United Missionary Church with another church or churches in the not distant future seems virtually certain. No merger involving the Evangelical Methodist Church appears likely, however, until there has been a greater sect-to-church movement similar to that which has occurred in all the holiness churches.

## CHAPTER VI

### WESLEYAN METHODIST - PILGRIM HOLINESS NEGOTIATIONS, 1955-1966

The Pilgrim Holiness Church is fully the child of the holiness revivals and holiness associations of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In Chapter II it was noted that this church grew out of an amalgamation of several small regional holiness denominations which in turn had come into existence through the association-to-church metamorphosis.<sup>1</sup>

The Pilgrim Holiness Church thus presents a considerable contrast to the Wesleyan Methodist Church so far as origin is concerned. Other differences as well as a number of similarities of these two holiness groups, and their relevance to merger considerations, are noted in this chapter on Wesleyan Methodist - Pilgrim Holiness negotiations which have been in progress since 1955.

As with the Free Methodist - Wesleyan Methodist negotiations, however, there is in this case a brief earlier history which should be noted.

#### I. EARLIER HISTORY

At the 1923 General Conference of the Wesleyan Methodist Church fraternal delegates were present from the Nazarene, Free Methodist, Pilgrim Holiness, and Mennonite Brethren in Christ churches. The Rev. L. H. Coate of the Pilgrims and the Rev. J. A. Huffman of the Mennonite Brethren in Christ each proposed in

---

<sup>1</sup>Supra, pp. 47-50.

their fraternal addresses the possible union of their churches with the Wesleyan Methodists.<sup>2</sup>

As a result of these suggestions the Wesleyans elected a committee which consulted with Coate and Huffman, reporting back that no insurmountable barriers to a three-way merger were found and proposing a joint meeting with committees from the Pilgrim Holiness Church and the Mennonite Brethren in Christ (now the United Missionary Church). Apparently no such joint meeting ever occurred, however.<sup>3</sup>

More promising developments took place in 1943. That year the Wesleyan Methodist General Conference, in addition to authorizing negotiations with the Free Methodists, instructed its union committee to approach the Pilgrim Holiness Church on the subject of merger. Carrying out this instruction, the Wesleyan committee contacted Rev. W. L. Surbrook, General Superintendent of the Pilgrim Holiness Church, in the spring of 1944. This led to a visit by the chairman of the Wesleyan committee, Dr. F. R. Eddy, to the Pilgrim Holiness Board in May, 1944, at which time the possibility of merger, and merger negotiations, was freely discussed. Later the PH board elected a committee of five to confer with the Wesleyan committee.<sup>4</sup>

---

<sup>2</sup>Ira Ford McLeister and Roy S. Nicholson, History of the Wesleyan Methodist Church of America (revised edition; Syracuse, New York: The Wesley Press, 1951), p. 184.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>F. R. Eddy, "The Agent's Letter," The Wesleyan Methodist, CII (October 18, 1944), p. 8; "Pilgrim Holiness Church Selects a Committee on Church Union," The Wesleyan Methodist, CII (August 2, 1944), p. 2.

These two committees held their first joint meeting in Indianapolis, Indiana, on October 11, 1944, adopting the title of "Joint Commission on Church Union" of the two churches.<sup>5</sup>

The Joint Commission at this meeting made a survey of similarities and differences of the two churches. This survey produced the following conclusions:

1. There seems to be no appreciable difference in doctrinal position except in the phraseology of statement or emphasis.
2. There is a marked similarity in church organization, but there are certain areas in which differences in constitutional law and church polity will require further study.
3. There seems to be no competitive or overlapping endeavors in either the Foreign Missionary or Educational activities of the two groups.
4. ...so far as we have been able to analyze the problem, we have discovered no problems for which a solution cannot be found if God in His wisdom definitely leads both Church groups in the direction of organic union.<sup>6</sup>

This rather optimistic report seemed to imply the undertaking of full-scale negotiations leading to a possible merger. But such was not to be the case.

In early 1945, the Pilgrim Holiness Executive Council passed the following action which was subsequently reported to the Wesleyan Methodists:

It was moved and seconded the Executive Council request the General Secretary to communicate with Dr. F. R. Eddy of the Wesleyan Methodist Church and to express our appreciation for the courtesy and interest shown in the matter of the proposed church merger, and also inform Dr.

---

<sup>5</sup>F. R. Eddy and Harold D. Dieter, "The First Meeting Between the Wesleyans and the Pilgrims," The Wesleyan Methodist, CII (November 1, 1944) p. 2.

<sup>6</sup>ibid.

Eddy that the General Board of the Pilgrim Holiness Church does not favor any further steps in this matter of the Church merger at the present time. Carried.<sup>7</sup>

In reporting this action to Dr. Eddy the Pilgrim Holiness General Secretary noted, "It may be at a later date such action may be favored when all concerned have more time to consider the matter thoroughly from every angle."<sup>8</sup>

The matter was considered formally closed from this point on and no attempt was made to re-open negotiations until ten years later, after the breakdown of Free Methodist - Wesleyan Methodist negotiations.<sup>9</sup>

The present writer has made no attempt to investigate this earlier attempt further to ascertain what led to this rather abrupt action by the Pilgrims. It may be relevant to observe, however, that the Wesleyans were at this same time negotiating with the Free Methodists, and the union of the Pilgrims with the Holiness Church (1946) may have been under consideration at this time.<sup>10</sup>

## II. BEGINNINGS OF THE 1955-66 ATTEMPT

The current negotiations between the Wesleyan Methodists and the Pilgrim Holiness Church were begun as a result of action by the 1954 General Conference of the Pilgrim Holiness Church and the 1955 General Conference of the Wesleyan Methodist Church.

---

<sup>7</sup>F. R. Eddy, "A Report of the Committee on Church Union," The Wesleyan Methodist, CII (March 14, 1945), p. 2.

<sup>8</sup>ibid.

<sup>9</sup>ibid.

<sup>10</sup>Manual of the Pilgrim Holiness Church (Indianapolis: The Pilgrim Publish-

The Pilgrims in their General Conference of 1954 authorized the opening of negotiations with the Wesleyan Methodists. As a result of this action a committee on merger was later elected.<sup>11</sup>

The actions taken by the 1955 Wesleyan Methodist General Conference relative to union are noted in Chapter IV.<sup>12</sup> This conference empowered the Board of Administration to open negotiations with the Pilgrim Holiness Church and to continue negotiations with the Free Methodists. This action came on the heels of the rejection of further negotiations with the Free Methodists earlier in the conference and was the result of the passing of an amended motion which had originally not mentioned the Free Methodists. The motion as amended carried by the not overwhelming majority of seventy-nine to fifty-eight.<sup>13</sup> Apparently the immediate impulse for this action came, at least in part, from the fraternal address of the Reverend R. A. Beltz, General Secretary-Treasurer of the Pilgrim Holiness Church, in which Beltz expressed the interest of the Pilgrims in merger as indicated by their

---

ing Company, 1962), Sec. 2., Par. 29.

<sup>11</sup>Paul W. Thomas, "The 23rd General Conference of the Pilgrim Holiness Church," Pilgrim Holiness Advocate, XXXVIII (July 12, 1958), p. 2; Chester Wilkins, "A Review of the Recently Proposed Union of the Wesleyan Methodist Church and the Pilgrim Holiness Church" (unpublished Master's thesis, Butler University, Indianapolis, Indiana, 1960), p. 1. Wilkins cites the minutes of the 1954 Pilgrim Holiness General Conference.

<sup>12</sup>Supra, pp. 131-133.

<sup>13</sup>Minutes of the Twenty-ninth Quadrennial Session of the General Conference of the Wesleyan Methodist Church, 1955 (Syracuse, New York: The Wesley Press, 1955), pp. 35, 37-38. Cf. O. G. Wilson, "Looking Back to General Conference," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXIII (July 20, 1955), p. 2.



1954 General Conference action.<sup>14</sup>

The Wesleyan Methodist Board of Administration subsequently elected a committee on union composed of Roy S. Nicholson, Oliver G. Wilson, David A. Rees, Stephen W. Paine, and Hollis C. Stevenson.<sup>15</sup> On May 10, 1956, the General Board of the Pilgrim Holiness Church named a committee on union consisting of William H. Neff, Melvin H. Snyder, Russell D. Gunsalus, Paul F. Elliott, and Roy A. Beltz.<sup>16</sup>

The two denominational committees on union did not meet together until September 4 and 5, 1957, at which time they organized themselves as a Joint Commission, designating Dr. William H. Neff as chairman and Dr. Oliver G. Wilson as Secretary.<sup>17</sup> Previous to this meeting, however, Dr. Nicholson, President of the Wesleyan Methodist Church, and Dr. Neff, General Superintendent of the Pilgrim Holiness Church, met together to review the task ahead. An agenda was set up and study assignments were given to the various committee members.<sup>18</sup>

---

<sup>14</sup>Wilkins, *op. cit.*, pp. 1-2, citing Roy S. Nicholson, *et al.*, Uniting for World Evangelism, A Report Prepared by the Wesleyan Methodist Committee on Union (1959), p. 3; Minutes of the Thirtieth General Conference of the Wesleyan Methodist Church of America, 1959 (Marion, Indiana: The Wesley Press, 1959), p. 63.

<sup>15</sup>Minutes, 1959, loc. cit.

<sup>16</sup>"Minutes of the Twenty-third General Conference of the Pilgrim Holiness Church, June 10-16, 1958," p. 13. Cited by Wilkins, *loc. cit.*

<sup>17</sup>William H. Neff and Roy S. Nicholson, "The Pilgrims and the Wesleyans Meet," Pilgrim Holiness Advocate, XXXVII (October 12, 1957), p. 7; Roy S. Nicholson, *et al.*, "Report of the Committee on Merger to the Board of Administration 1958," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXVI (July 23, 1958), p. 13.

<sup>18</sup>"Minutes of the Twenty-third General Conference of the Pilgrim Holiness Church, June 10-16, 1958," p. 13. Cited by Wilkins, *loc. cit.*

### III. DEVELOPMENTS, 1955-59

The Joint Commission found it necessary to meet only twice during the quadrennium. The principal actions taken at these two meetings and the subsequent considerations of the general conferences of 1958 and 1959 are noted below.<sup>19</sup>

#### First Joint Commission Meeting

The first meeting of the Joint Commission of the Wesleyan Methodist and Pilgrim Holiness churches occurred in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, in early September, 1957. Previously assigned reports were presented which focused on the similarities and differences of the two denominations in six areas: (1) origins, (2) doctrine, (3) polity, (4) educational interests, (5) missionary interests, and (6) economic interests.<sup>20</sup>

The Committee sought to discover in this survey the points in which they were alike and the points in which they differ. Prayerful consideration was given to such questions as: "Are we serious about Union?", "Is Union right?", "Will it implement more effectively our desire of evangelism?", "Would there be an economic advantage?", and foremost in our thoughts was, "Would it be God's Will?"<sup>21</sup>

The most important consideration of the Joint Commission at this meeting

---

<sup>19</sup>The major portion of Wilkins' thesis is an analysis of the work performed and the agreements reached by the Joint Commission at these two meetings. (Cf. Wilkins, *op. cit.*, pp. 7-42). Rather than duplicating Wilkins' analysis, the present study gives a less detailed analysis, drawing somewhat on the conclusions and observations set forth by Wilkins.

<sup>20</sup>Nicholson, *et al.*, "Report of the Committee on Merger...", *loc. cit.*

<sup>21</sup>"Minutes of the Twenty-third General Conference of the Pilgrim Holiness Church, June 10-16, 1958," pp. 13-14. Cited by Wilkins, *op. cit.*, p. 7.

was the identification of differences and problem areas and the assignment of these to jointly-composed subcommittees.

Major Differences. The Joint Commission's survey of the similarities and differences of the two denominations revealed the greatest differences were to be found in polity. These were considered to be the greatest differences in this area:<sup>22</sup>

1. Differences between the presidency in the Wesleyan Methodist system and the general superintendency in the Pilgrim Holiness system.
2. The Pilgrims had a general church treasurer; the Wesleyans did not.
3. Differences in lay as compared to ministerial representation in the district and general conferences.
4. Difference in the authority of the general conference.
5. Difference in the method of holding property.
6. Differences regarding constitutional law.
7. Differences in local church organization.

The more important of these will be noted in more detail in Section V, "Major Obstacles to Merger."

Study of these and other differences was assigned to joint subcommittees under the headings of (1) doctrine, (2) Christian conduct and conditions of membership, (3) economic aspects of merger, (4) polity, and (5) missionary and educa-

---

<sup>22</sup>"Minutes of the Joint Commission on Merger of the Pilgrim Holiness Church and the Wesleyan Methodist Church, September 4, and 5, 1957, Pittsburgh, Pa." Cited by Wilkins, op. cit., pp. 12-13.

tional interests.<sup>23</sup>

### Second Joint Commission Meeting

On March 25 and 26, 1958, about six months after the first meeting, the Joint Commission met a second time. The reports of the study committees were heard and discussed and consideration was given

to a careful study of the need for, and contents of, a Constitution which would set forth the Name, Articles of Religion, General Rules, Elementary Principles, Conditions and Rights of Membership, Ministerial Rights and Duties, Rights and Basic Duties of Annual and General Conferences, Basic Judiciary and Amendments to the Constitution.<sup>24</sup>

Through the discussion of the proposed solutions to previously identified problems presented by the subcommittees, the Commission was able to arrive at basic agreements which were set forth as "Basic Understandings for Union." This discussion also convinced the Commission to recommend that the approaching general conferences vote to approve merger on the basis of these fundamental agreements.<sup>25</sup> The Commission unanimously voted the following action:<sup>26</sup>

The Joint Commission comprising the committees on Church union constituted respectively by the Pilgrim Holiness Church and the Wesleyan Methodist Church has explored to the best of its ability the differences presently existing between our two communions. The foregoing enumeration has set forth those questions which have been deemed sufficiently

---

<sup>23</sup>Nicholson, et al., "Report of the Committee on Merger...", op. cit., p. 14.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid.

<sup>26</sup>"Minutes of the Joint Commission on Merger of the Pilgrim Holiness and the Wesleyan Methodist Church, March 25-26, 1958." Cited by Wilkins, op. cit., p. 38.

crucial so that either or both of our people might feel that their approval should be withheld pending an acceptable solution, and in each case a solution had been found which the respective committees have felt might well enlist the favor of their constituencies.

As a result of its investigations and of the resolutions of these somewhat cardinal questions... , the Joint Commission feels that there remain no further divergencies which may not be resolved by our united attention and with full confidence in each other--none of which should hinder further a consummation of the union of our two peoples.

We therefore recommend that the respective General Conferences in such manner as is prescribed in their own rules, approve by vote the merger of the Pilgrim Holiness Church and the Wesleyan Methodist Church of America, subject to the conditions already presented,<sup>27</sup> and that the respective committees on church union be continued and charged with the task of presenting for action to the two administrative boards a suitable plan for uniting the General Conferences next ensuing, subject to the prior approval of this recommendation by both denominations, and also with the task of drawing up a proposed book of discipline for presentation to this united general conference.

The Joint Commission voted to adopt as expressive of its purpose in recommending union the slogan "Uniting for World Evangelism."

The recommended steps for consummating the union, then were: (1) approval of merger by the general conferences on the basis of the "Understanding for Union," (2) the formulation by the Joint Commission of a plan for holding a united General Conference, (3) approval by the two churches of this plan, (4) the writing of a book of discipline by the Joint Commission, (5) the holding of the united General Conference, which would consider and presumably adopt the proposed discipline. The constitutional aspects of this discipline would have to be ratified by votes of the Wesleyan Methodist annual conferences and general constituency.<sup>28</sup> Such

---

<sup>27</sup>I. e., the Basic Understandings for Union.

<sup>28</sup>Discipline of the Wesleyan Methodist Church (Syracuse, New York: The Wesley Press, 1951), p. 122, Par. 220.

votes would not have been necessary in the Pilgrim Holiness Church, as the PH General Conference has final authority to make changes in the church manual.<sup>29</sup> Thus, while the general conference votes of 1958 and 1959, if favorable, would have been a commitment to merge, the merger would not have been officially consummated until the proposed discipline had been adopted by both churches according to the procedures prescribed in their respective disciplines.<sup>30</sup>

Dr. Nicholson explained why the Joint Commission decided on the approach it did and how merger would be carried out in an article in 1959. Obviously referring to the earlier negotiations with the Free Methodists, he noted:

During an earlier study of merging our Church and a sister holiness Church, some felt that before a great amount of time and labor was invested in the extensive studies on a Discipline it ought to have been decided whether or not our people wished to merge with others of like precious faith. The present Committee on Merger felt that if certain essential principles could be approved as a basis upon which to proceed with further studies in working out the details--should the Wesleyan and Pilgrim General Conferences approve merger on those principles--such a step would be what the previous objectors to merger suggested on that point.

The preparation of a complete Discipline is a major undertaking which cannot be done quickly.... But prior agreement on the essential principles involved makes the task much easier....

Our Discipline...will be in effect (should the vote to merge be favorable) until the Discipline of the merged group is prepared and adopted in the manner prescribed in the Discipline of each group.<sup>31</sup>

---

<sup>29</sup>Manual of the Pilgrim Holiness Church, 1962, Sec. 107.

<sup>30</sup>Roy S. Nicholson, "The Question Box," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXVI (April 15, 1959), p. 4.

<sup>31</sup>Thomas, op. cit., p. 3.

### Summary of 1957-58 Negotiations

During these two years of negotiations the Joint Commission aimed to identify problem areas as quickly as possible and then come to understandings on how each problem would be resolved. The Commission apparently succeeded well in doing this and presented to the general conferences its statement of basic understandings with the recommendation that these understandings be accepted as the basis for union.

### Pilgrim Holiness General Conference of 1958

Two actions by the General Conference of the Pilgrim Holiness Church of 1958, one directly related to the merger question and one indirectly related, should be noted.

The Conference voted, as recommended by the Joint Commission, on whether to approve merger with the Wesleyans on the basis proposed. The vote was 321 in favor, 100 opposed. The resolution carried by well over a two-thirds majority.<sup>32</sup>

This General Conference also made changes in the polity of the church, providing for the election of three general superintendents instead of one general superintendent and an assistant.<sup>33</sup>

### Wesleyan Methodist General Conference of 1959

The Wesleyan Methodist General Conference of 1959 was one of the most

---

<sup>32</sup>Thomas, *op. cit.*, p. 3.

<sup>33</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 2.

dramatic and most significant Conferences ever held by the Wesleyans.

This Wesleyan General Conference was fully as significant as the previous Pilgrim General Conference so far as polity was concerned. Of primary importance was the change from one President to three General Superintendents.<sup>34</sup> The Wesleyan Methodist Church thus moved a significant step closer to the polity of the Pilgrim Holiness Church and the Free Methodist Church and away from its early congregationalism--and thus making an eventual merger of the Wesleyans at least potentially more easy.

The Wesleyan Committee on Church Merger presented to the General Conference its report, including the Basic Understandings for Union and the recommendation that

this General Conference approve and authorize, for its part, the union of the Wesleyan Methodist Church of America and the Pilgrim Holiness Church, subject to the conditions already presented, . . . . . that this resolution be passed on to the annual conferences and local churches for their ratification.<sup>35</sup>

This report came before the General Conference on the afternoon of June 24, 1959. Dr. Oliver G. Wilson, Editor of The Wesleyan Methodist and secretary of the Wesleyan Committee on Merger, read the report. A motion was made and seconded that the report be adopted, which would have meant the adoption of the recommendation above, and thus the approval of merger, subject to the ratification

---

<sup>34</sup>Roy S. Nicholson, "An Evaluation of the Recent General Conference," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXVI (July 29, 1959), p. 3.

<sup>35</sup>Minutes of the Thirtieth General Conference of the Wesleyan Methodist Church, 1959, p. 66.



of the annual conferences and local churches. Dr. Nicholson spoke in favor of merger and Dr. F. R. Eddy spoke against it. By vote it was agreed to divide the question into two parts, so that the vote at hand would be simply on the proposition, "Resolved, that this General Conference approve and authorize, for its part, the union of the Wesleyan Methodist Church of America and the Pilgrim Holiness Church, subject to the conditions already presented." The question was amended again to provide that in event of union there be no arbitrary elimination or merging of annual conferences and local churches except by voluntary consent.<sup>36</sup>

Debate was resumed, Dr. Paul L. Kindschi speaking in favor of merger and the Reverend Harold Schmul speaking against. Additional debate took place until 5:00 p.m. when the sitting adjourned.<sup>37</sup>

The next morning, June 25, 1959, debate on the merger question was continued. It was voted that debate be closed by 10:30 a.m. Debate was limited to fifteen minutes for each position, alternately. Debate continued with Dr. Stephen W. Paine, Dr. Oliver G. Wilson, and others favoring merger with opposition offered by other delegates. When the period for debate came to an end, and after silent prayer, the vote was taken. The result was 108 favoring merger and 55 opposing. A two-thirds majority would have been 109. The vote to merge was defeated.<sup>38</sup>

---

<sup>36</sup>ibid., p. 27.

<sup>37</sup>ibid., pp. 27-28.

<sup>38</sup>ibid., pp. 28-29. Cf. Paul W. Thomas, "The Pilgrim - Wesleyan Church Merger," Pilgrim Holiness Advocate, XXXIX (July 25, 1959), p. 2; Nicholson, "An Evaluation...", loc. cit.; George E. Failing, "Highlights of the General Conference," The Wesleyan Methodist CXVI (July 15, 1959), p. 3.

Dr. George E. Failing, Editor of The Wesleyan Methodist since 1959, noted that "main objections to the merger were differences in church government, and the question as to whether the doubled size of the group would necessarily result in church extension."<sup>39</sup> And Dr. Nicholson commented, in retrospect,

The idea of "merger" has been slow to receive approval by a body whose origin was due to a "secession." The sentiment expressed for merger and subsequent actions by the General Conference would seem to indicate that if the question of merging with those of "like precious faith" is revived, it might receive more serious and perhaps more favorable consideration than it did in 1955 and 1959.<sup>40</sup>

Some seemingly chance factors influenced the outcome of this vote. One delegate who intended to vote for merger was absent during the morning session, thinking the vote would not come until afternoon, and was rather chagrined when he discovered his error.<sup>41</sup> Also, some delegates who had been influenced to vote against merger by the leaders of their conference delegations were not aware that at the last moment some of these leaders decided to vote for merger.<sup>42</sup>

It is interesting and perhaps significant that much of the opposition to this merger in 1959 came from the same persons who opposed the Wesleyan - Free Methodist merger in 1955. Also, the opposition to merger in 1959 was more or less organ-

---

<sup>39</sup>Failing, loc. cit.

<sup>40</sup>Nicholson, "An Evaluation...", loc. cit.

<sup>41</sup>Had he been present and voted for the merger the motion still would have lost, however. Although a two-thirds majority of 163 (the number who voted) would have been 109 (as compared to 108 who voted for merger), a two-thirds majority of 164 would have been 110, whereas had the missing delegate voted the total in favor would have been only 109.

<sup>42</sup>Roy S. Nicholson, personal letter to the writer, dated March 3, 1966.

ized; those who opposed merger did so "with considerable obvious fellowship on the matter."<sup>43</sup>

Two days later in the morning sitting, the Reverend D. A. Manker, who had apparently voted against the merger, announced he intended to make a motion in the afternoon sitting to repeal the decision on merger. But when the afternoon sitting came he said he had changed his mind.<sup>44</sup>

Although the margin was much closer and the question somewhat more crucial, in essence this 1959 Wesleyan vote was remarkably similar to the 1955 vote regarding the Free Methodists. In both cases the Wesleyan Methodists failed to authorize further steps toward merger and the vote was interpreted as a formal closing of negotiations. The matter might well have ended there, but because of factors which will be noted presently, it did not.

#### IV. DEVELOPMENTS, 1959-66

Officially, the merger question was a dead issue from 1959 until 1962. Unofficially, however, it was very much alive; too many people were convinced of the need for merger to let the subject die altogether. The impulse for the resumption of negotiations arose both among the Wesleyans and the Pilgrims.

##### Pilgrim Holiness General Conference of 1962

The question of Pilgrim-Wesleyan merger considerations came before the

---

<sup>43</sup>Wilber T. Dayton, personal interview with the writer, held at Asbury Theological Seminary, Wilmore, Kentucky, March 3, 1966.

<sup>44</sup>Minutes of the Thirtieth General Conference of the Wesleyan Methodist Church, 1959, pp. 35, 37.

1962 quadrennial General Conference (known since 1962 as the International Conference) of the Pilgrim Holiness Church. By a "strong vote" the Pilgrims adopted the following resolution:

Whereas the 1958 General Conference by a vote of 321 for and 100 against approved a proposed merger with the Wesleyan Methodist Church, and  
Whereas the 1959 General Conference of the Wesleyan Methodist Church by a very narrow margin failed to get the necessary two-thirds majority needed for General Conference approval, and  
Whereas there is much interest in both groups to continue merger negotiations therefore be it  
Resolved that the 1962 General Conference go on record as favoring continued negotiations but that any changes in the original plan shall be submitted to a General Conference for approval.<sup>45</sup>

This action officially re-opened negotiations from the Pilgrim side.

#### Wesleyan Methodist Board of Administration Action, 1962

The Board of Administration of the Wesleyan Methodist Church, meeting in 1962, passed the following resolution, which is self-explanatory:

Whereas, some annual conferences have taken action as to their sentiments pertaining to merger, and  
 Whereas, there have been specific requests by other conferences as to the possibility of expressing their wishes relative to merger and  
 Whereas, it appears desirable at this time to give each conference an equal opportunity to express itself respecting merger,  
 Therefore, we recommend that the Board of Administration request each annual conference to take a ballot vote at the 1962 annual session and communicate the results of the vote to the Board of Administration...  
 on the following resolution:

Be it resolved that our Church continue to pursue the possibility

---

<sup>45</sup>"The Pilgrim Vote," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXIX (July 18, 1962), p. 13; Wilkins, op. cit., p. 78; P. W. Thomas and Phyllis Ihrkey, "The General Conference of the Pilgrim Holiness Church," Pilgrim Holiness Advocate, XLII (July 14, 1962), p. 5.

of union, on mutually acceptable terms, with the Pilgrim Holiness Church and other sister Holiness groups of like precious faith as doors may providentially open.<sup>46</sup>

Such an unofficial vote was subsequently taken and revealed 1,347 annual conference delegates favoring and 730 opposing further negotiations. Although the total in favor did not constitute a two-thirds majority, in twenty-one of the twenty-eight conferences the majority favoring negotiations was more than two-thirds, and the resolution received at least a majority vote in twenty-three conferences.<sup>47</sup>

This vote indicated a continuing interest in a Wesleyan-Pilgrim merger too great to ignore.

#### Wesleyan Methodist General Conference of 1963

The Committee on Church Union, although it had been inactive during the quadrennium as a result of the 1959 WM General Conference action, presented a report to the 1963 WM General Conference. The report, which was approved by a three-fourths majority vote,<sup>48</sup> read, in part:

WHEREAS, The General Conference of the Pilgrim Holiness Church in session in June of 1962 again renewed its approval of merger with

---

<sup>46</sup>"A Report and a Request," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXIX (July 4, 1962), p. 2. The proposed resolution further made reference to continued cooperation with holiness churches in publishing and to possible new cooperation in such areas as evangelism and education.

<sup>47</sup>"Report of the Committee on Church Union," Minutes of the Thirty-First General Conference of the Wesleyan Methodist Church of America, 1963 (Marion, Indiana: The Wesley Press, 1963), p. 145; Wilkins, loc. cit.

<sup>48</sup>George E. Failing, "Report on General Conference 1963," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXX (July 31, 1963), p. 2.

The Wesleyan Methodist Church, and

WHEREAS, an obligation is recognized to a substantial majority of our people and our conferences who have expressed themselves favorably in principle on the subject of merger, we therefore recommend the following:

1. That this General Conference express itself in favor of continuing to pursue the possibility of union on mutually acceptable terms with the Pilgrim Holiness Church and other sister Holiness Churches of like precious faith as doors may providentially open or as may come within the best prayerful judgment of her duly elected representatives.

2. That the General Conference authorize the Board of Administration to elect a committee on Church Union which shall be authorized to cultivate and negotiate, if possible, with a like committee of the Pilgrim Holiness Church, and, through the Board of Administration, be prepared to present to the next Session of the General Conference any action or recommendations arising out of these negotiations which may be deemed proper.<sup>49</sup>

Something of the mood of this General Conference may be inferred from the fact that in adopting this resolution the General Conference urged the Committee on Church Union to "undertake its assigned work without undue delay, to pursue the same with all diligence, and to keep the Church advised of its progress."<sup>50</sup> Thus the negotiations voted closed in 1959 were voted re-opened in 1963.

This General Conference authorized another step along the road of organizational development of the Wesleyan Methodist Church. For the first time an official constitution for the church was adopted. This action clearly demarked certain portions of the Discipline as constitutional rather than statutory--the Articles of Religion, the General Rules, Elementary Principles, Membership, Organization and Government, Supreme Judiciary, and others.<sup>51</sup>

---

<sup>49</sup>"Report of the Committee on Church Union," pp. 145-146.

<sup>50</sup>Failing, "Report on General Conference 1963," p. 14.

<sup>51</sup>Virgil A. Mitchell, "The Discipline, 1963 Edition," The Wesleyan Meth-

### First Joint Commission Meeting

It was a new Joint Commission that began functioning after 1963 and has continued to the present. The membership was enlarged to nine men from each denomination. Members elected to the Commission in 1963 were, for the Pilgrims, William H. Neff (Co-chairman), Melvin H. Snyder, Paul W. Thomas, Paul F. Elliott, J. R. Mitchell, J. D. Abbott, Melvin Dieter (Secretary), R. C. Hawkins, and Burdette Shattuck; Wesleyan members were B. H. Phaup (Co-chairman), Harold K. Sheets, Virgil A. Mitchell, Donald C. Fisher, Kenneth Dunn, C. Wesley Lovin, Stephen W. Paine, Roy S. Nicholson, and Hollis C. Stevenson.<sup>52</sup> The Commission thus included the three Wesleyan and the three Pilgrim general superintendents.

The Commission reported that no major obstacles of union were seen during this meeting. Five problem areas needing further study, however, were assigned to subcommittees. These were: (1) questions about the suggested name, (2) the process of constitutional legislation, (3) the prerogatives of the superintendency, (4) effect of merger on conference organization, and (5) coordination of the schools.<sup>53</sup>

### Second and Third Joint Commission Meetings

The Joint Commission met for the second time in the new quadrennium on

---

odist, CXXI (February 26, 1964), p. 2. Cf. Discipline of the Wesleyan Methodist Church of America (Marion, Indiana: Wesleyan Methodist Publishing Association, 1963), pp. 10-32.

<sup>52</sup>B. H. Phaup, "Report of the Commission on Church Union," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXXI (April 15, 1964), p. 13.

<sup>53</sup>Ibid.

May 11 and 12, 1964, at Pilgrim Headquarters in Indianapolis, and for the third time on December 7, 1964, at Wesleyan World Headquarters in Marion, Indiana. These meetings were devoted to hearing and discussing reports of the subcommittees in the five areas mentioned above. Also the Commission recommended the holding of a joint meeting of church leaders in 1965. A special committee was selected to plan such a meeting.<sup>54</sup>

#### Fourth Joint Commission Meeting

The Joint Commission, meeting in early 1965, arrived at several decisions relative to the merger proposal to be presented to the approaching general conferences. These agreements are noted here.

Name. The Commission agreed to recommend the name "United Wesleyan Church" instead of the name suggested in 1958-59, "The Wesleyan Methodist Pilgrim Church."<sup>55</sup> This recommendation calls to mind the proposed name for a united Free Methodist - Wesleyan Methodist Church in 1955, "The United Wesleyan Methodist Church."

Manual or Discipline. Agreed that the new manual or book of discipline would be divided into (1) The Constitution, and (2) The Statutory Laws.<sup>56</sup>

---

<sup>54</sup>J. D. Abbott, "Merger Progress Report," Pilgrim Holiness Advocate, XLV (March 13, 1965), p. 3; B. H. Phaup, "Report of the Joint Commission on Church Union," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXXII (February 24, 1965), p. 2.

<sup>55</sup>"General Board Makes Decision," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXXII (June 30, 1965), p. 6.

<sup>56</sup>ibid., p. 9.



General Conference composition. Equal lay and ministerial representation would be maintained in the General Conference, as well as in the annual conferences, as had been the case in the Wesleyan Methodist Church. General church officers and conference presidents would be members of the General Conference by virtue of their office, but their membership would be balanced by an equal number of lay delegates.<sup>57</sup>

General superintendency. Superintendents would be elected for four year terms, would preside over the annual conferences with the assistance and advice of the conference president, and "would be considered the spiritual and administrative leaders of the Church."<sup>58</sup>

Pastoral placement. "Pastors would be called by vote of the local church, subject to review by an appropriate conference committee and ratification by the annual conference."<sup>59</sup>

Implementation of union. The general boards of the two churches would serve as a "planning and polity committee" for the uniting general conference.<sup>60</sup>

#### Fifth Joint Commission Meeting

The Joint Commission met again on December 3, 1965, in Indianapolis. The work of subcommittees was reviewed and plans were laid for a meeting of an en-

---

<sup>57</sup>ibid.

<sup>58</sup>ibid.

<sup>59</sup>ibid.

<sup>60</sup>ibid.

larged committee on constitutional law and procedures. It was suggested that there should be meetings between the various departmental executives of the two denominations to determine how to implement union at these levels.<sup>61</sup>

Dr. B. H. Phaup, Wesleyan General Superintendent and Co-chairman of the Joint Commission, made the following observations concerning this meeting:

There are those of us who felt that the recent meeting demonstrated a frank and open discussion in certain areas of our studies in a way which perhaps had not been realized before. It should be understood that certain of the more crucial areas of our proposals are not yet open to negotiation. These were specifically pointed out in recent meetings, and are purposely kept to a degree of flexibility as these studies are pursued. The recognition of this necessity seems clearly understood by the brethren of both Denominations.<sup>62</sup>

No indication was given as to what these "more crucial" issues were.

The Joint Commission, at this writing, has completed the drafting of its report to the two general conferences. The regular quadrennial Pilgrim Holiness International (or General) Conference meets in June, 1966, and a special session of the Wesleyan Methodist General Conference has been called to meet the same week. The crucial vote on the merger proposal will be taken at these conferences, the vote of the Wesleyans to come first.<sup>63</sup>

There are two situations current within the Wesleyan Methodist Church

---

<sup>61</sup>B. H. Phaup, "Report on Merger," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXXIII (February 16, 1966), p. 3.

<sup>62</sup>ibid.

<sup>63</sup>William H. Neff, Melvin H. Snyder, and Paul W. Thomas, "Prayer for Merger Proposal," Pilgrim Holiness Advocate, XLVI (January 1, 1966), p. 3.

which are related to this merger proposal which should be noted here. The first concerns another merger consideration in which the Wesleyans are involved; the second concerns problems presently existing between the general church and some annual conferences.

#### Wesleyan Methodist - Reformed Baptist Considerations

For the past few years the Wesleyan Methodists have been holding merger talks with the Reformed Baptist Alliance, a small holiness group.<sup>64</sup> The Reformed Baptists are scheduled to vote on the proposal for union in 1966. It is expected the proposal will be presented to the Wesleyan Methodist Board of Administration this spring and will come before the 1966 General Conference for its approval.<sup>65</sup> There seems to be a general feeling among the Wesleyans that this union will be consummated with no difficulty. Noting the "feeling of enthusiasm and anticipation" which exists concerning this union, WM General Superintendent B. H. Phaup recently commented, "I have an idea that our people feel that less is involved in merger with a smaller group and that the cost is less in such a merger."<sup>66</sup>

#### Wesleyan Methodist Conference Problems

It was noted in Chapter IV that the governmental development of the Wes-

---

<sup>64</sup>Supra, p. 74.

<sup>65</sup>"As Our General Superintendents View the Church," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXXIII (March 2, 1966), p. 9; "Resolutions re Church Union," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXXII (August 18, 1965), p. 2; "Beulah Camp," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXXII (August 18, 1965), p. 12.

<sup>66</sup>"As Our General Superintendents View the Church," loc. cit.

leyan Methodist Church since its origin has produced a kind of centralization of power at the general church level, but that constitutional provisions prevent church officials from exercising sufficient authority over the annual conferences of the church.<sup>67</sup> There has developed a concentration of power both at the annual conference and general church level, making for conflicts. The annual conferences have a large degree of autonomy; exactly where their autonomy ends and the general organization's authority begins is a point of contention.

As noted earlier, the problem of maintaining a unified church under such a system has been a vexing one.<sup>68</sup> And the problem has become increasingly acute in recent years.

In the spring of 1964 the WM General Superintendents reported to the Board of Administration:

Those of us who have been charged with the responsibility of denominational leadership have been made increasingly aware of a vocal discontent on the part of some with the policies and program of the Denomination.... Your Superintendents have proceeded with caution, perhaps almost unduly so, in a sincere effort to exhaust every means of Christian labor and counsel....

However, the time comes when it seems impossible...to ignore the actions, attitudes, and statements which are so contrary to what we believe is proper for those who are a part of us. It is our belief that this Board has no other alternative than to deal forthrightly with these problems.<sup>69</sup>

---

<sup>67</sup>Supra. p. 182.

<sup>68</sup>Supra, p. 181.

<sup>69</sup>B. H. Phaup, Harold K. Sheets, and Virgil A. Mitchell, "Report of the General Superintendents to the Board of Administration," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXXI (April 15, 1964), p. 4.

In its 1964 session, the Allegheny Conference of the Wesleyan Methodist Church voted overwhelmingly to delete all references to the Wesleyan Methodist Church from its charter. The move was designed to clear the way for the conference to completely dissociate itself from the church, retaining ownership of all churches, by a simple vote should the conference decide at a later date to take such action. This action raises questions both of civil and ecclesiastical law and requires court approval. It has already been declared invalid by the WM Executive Board. The problem continues, however.<sup>70</sup>

A somewhat similar problem exists with the Tennessee Conference. This conference has refused to recognize the authority of general church boards in a matter involving a local church within the conference. The conference "has retained legal counsel for several years and has failed to recognize and follow the regular church channels in seeking to reach an agreement in the differences between the conference and the Denomination."<sup>71</sup> This problem remains unresolved also, but it is considered likely by some church officials that the 1966 General Conference will take action to settle these disputes.<sup>72</sup>

---

<sup>70</sup>Virgil A. Mitchell, "Allegheny Conference Report," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXXI (July 15, 1964), p. 13; "Executive Board Hears Reports," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXXI (September 30, 1964), p. 15; B. H. Phaup, "Allegheny Conference Report," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXXII (August 4, 1965), p. 14.

<sup>71</sup>"Reports from the Executive Board," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXXI (December 16, 1964), p. 13.

<sup>72</sup>Nicholson, personal letter, *loc. cit.*; George E. Failing, personal interview with the writer, held at Wesleyan World Headquarters, Marion, Indiana, February 23, 1966.

Such problems as these complicate merger considerations, of course, because of the fear of schism and the tendency of the general church to proceed slowly to avoid further antagonizing the dissident elements. Some of the strongest opposition to merger comes from areas in the church which are currently at odds with the leadership of the denomination.<sup>73</sup>

### Summary

The period 1962 to the present saw a rebirth of merger negotiations between the Wesleyans and the Pilgrims, despite the failure of the 1959 Wesleyan General Conference vote. Additional agreements have been reached by the Joint Commission and these have been incorporated into a basis for union and proposed constitution to be presented to the 1966 general conferences of the two churches.

## V. BASIC FEATURES OF THE UNION PROPOSAL

In April, 1966, the Joint Commission released a printed document including "The Basis for Merger" and "The Proposed Constitution" which constitutes the 1966 union proposal.<sup>74</sup> Basically this document is an elaboration of the Basic Understandings for Union of 1958-59. The following pages present the essential features of this union proposal.

### Name

Departing from the earlier not-too-successful attempt to find a euphonious

---

<sup>73</sup>Wilkins, op. cit., pp. 54-57.

<sup>74</sup>This document is included in this study as Appendix D.

combination of the names Pilgrim Holiness and Wesleyan Methodist, the Commission is recommending simply, "The Wesleyan Church."<sup>75</sup>

### Constitution

The proposed constitution includes the following elements: (1) Articles of Religion, (2) General Rules, (3) Elementary Principles, (4) Membership, (5) Organization and Government, (6) Powers and Restrictions of the General Conference, (7) The Supreme Judiciary, and (8) Amendments.<sup>76</sup>

The proposed constitution is very similar to the present WM Constitution which was adopted in 1959.

### Constitutional Amendment

In contrast to the WM system, which requires ratification of constitutional changes by annual conference and local church membership in addition to the vote of the General Conference, and in contrast to the PH system in which the General Conference has the final authority, the proposal here is that constitutional changes require General Conference and annual conference approval.<sup>77</sup>

### Articles of Religion

The Commission in 1958 noted the broad general agreement of the two

---

<sup>75</sup>"The Basis for Merger and The Proposed Constitution...", document released April 23, 1966, by the Joint Commission of the Pilgrim Holiness and Wesleyan Methodist churches, p. 2.

<sup>76</sup>ibid., pp. 2-8.

<sup>77</sup>ibid., p. 8.

churches at this point, the only real difference being the explicit avowal of pre-millennialism by the Pilgrims.<sup>78</sup> The 1966 union proposal contains twenty-four Articles of Religion which seem to be patterned largely after the WM Articles. No particular millennial view is endorsed.<sup>79</sup>

### Ministerial and Lay Representation

The WM system is designed to provide equal lay and ministerial representation; in the PH system ministerial representation tends to outweigh lay representation. For instance, all Pilgrim general church officers, district superintendents, college presidents, and General Board members--nearly all of whom are ministers--are members of the General Conference ex officio, but this ministerial concentration is not balanced by additional lay representation.<sup>80</sup> The basis for union proposes the adoption of the principle of equal lay and ministerial representation in both district and general conferences.<sup>81</sup>

### Pastoral Call

The proposed Constitution guarantees to the local church the right "to call

<sup>78</sup>William H. Neff and Roy S. Nicholson, "The Principal Bases for the Joint Commission's Recommendation for Union of the Pilgrim Holiness and the Wesleyan Methodist Churches," Pilgrim Holiness Advocate, XXXCIII (November 29, 1958), p. 5. Cf. Wilkins, op. cit., pp. 38-42.

<sup>79</sup>"Basis for Merger," pp. 2-4.

<sup>80</sup>Discipline of the Wesleyan Methodist Church, 1963, p. 27, Par. 61; Manual of the Pilgrim Holiness Church, 1962, Sec. 106. Cf. Wilkins, op. cit., pp. 20-24.

<sup>81</sup>"Basis for Merger," p. 1.



its own pastor, subject to confirmation by the district conference."<sup>82</sup> This is essentially the system presently followed by both churches.

### General Conference Composition

The basis for union provides that

The General Conference shall be composed of an equal number of elders and laymen elected by the several districts, and each district superintendent and a lay delegate elected on his behalf; and of such General Conference officials as the General Conference may establish by legislation, provided that it shall at the same time enact provisions to secure such further representation as shall be necessary to continue the principle of equal lay and ministerial membership.<sup>83</sup>

As the Joint Commission noted in 1958, this formula "would provide a larger ex officio membership of the general conference than the Wesleyans are accustomed to, a smaller ex officio membership than presently used by the Pilgrim Holiness Church."<sup>84</sup>

### General Superintendency

One or more general superintendents would be elected for the general oversight of the church and would "preside . . . over the annual conferences assigned to their supervision" with the district superintendent (conference president) advising and assisting in the chairmanship.<sup>85</sup> This would be essentially the adoption of the Pilgrim system at the point of the presiding officer of the district (annual) conference, a

---

<sup>82</sup>Ibid., p. 6.

<sup>83</sup>Ibid., p. 7.

<sup>84</sup>Neff and Nicholson, "The Principal Bases," loc. cit.

<sup>85</sup>"Basis for Merger," loc. cit.

greater concession than the Wesleyans agreed to make in their earlier negotiations with the Free Methodists.<sup>86</sup>

Wilkins in his thesis compared the powers of the general superintendency of the Pilgrims and the general presidency of the Wesleyans in 1959. Although the Wesleyans changed from one president to three general superintendents in 1959 the power of the superintendency was not greatly increased over that of the presidency, so Wilkins' evaluation is still valid. Noting the "great limitations" put on the Wesleyan presidency, Wilkins comments:

He is not chairman of many important boards nor of the District Conference, nor does he have the real oversight of all the phases and departments and institutions of the church. He is further limited as to his jurisdiction over the districts and the local church. On the other side, the General Superintendents of the Pilgrim Holiness Church can, if they so desire, use their administrative authority on both local and district [that is, annual conference] levels.<sup>87</sup>

Inasmuch as the Joint Commission has not spelled out exactly what powers the general superintendents would have but has proposed to leave this up to the General Conference, the way is left open for a fairly strong general superintendency similar to the PH type.<sup>88</sup>

### Control of Schools

The agreements set forth in the Basis for Merger provide for denominational

---

<sup>86</sup>Supra, p. 147.

<sup>87</sup>Wilkins, op. cit., p. 19.

<sup>88</sup>"Basis for Merger," loc. cit.

control of the schools, but this is not spelled out in detail.<sup>89</sup> This provision for denominational control is in line with the existing policy of both churches.<sup>90</sup>

### Standards of the Christian Life

The proposed Constitution includes an article entitled General Rules, which is patterned after the article by the same title in the present Wesleyan Methodist Constitution. The proposed General Rules are much broader and much more positive in tone than corresponding regulations in the Pilgrim Holiness Manual and the Wesleyan Methodist Discipline, however, and they deal more with general principles than with specific practices. The proposed General Rules, for instance, include the positive responsibility of members "to preserve the sanctity of the home by honoring Christ in every phase of family life; . . . ." As to dress, instead of forbidding specific items of adornment the proposed Rules merely require members "to dress so as to adorn the gospel in the spirit of I Peter 3: 3-4, and I Timothy 2: 9-10, giving clear testimony to Christian purity and modesty . . . ." <sup>91</sup> The use of the words "in the spirit of" suggests these biblical passages are to be interpreted in a more general and less legalistic way than has been true in both churches in the past.

The General Rules as proposed, then, represent a moving away from a strong and somewhat negative set of standards for the Christian life.

---

<sup>89</sup>Ibid.

<sup>90</sup>Manual of the Pilgrim Holiness Church, 1962, Sec. 228, Par. 1; Discipline of the Wesleyan Methodist Church, 1963, pp. 148-152, Par. 384-390.

<sup>91</sup>"Basis for Merger," pp. 4-5.

### Conference Boundaries

Temporary overlapping of boundaries would be allowed, according to the merger proposal, but the eventual combining of overlapping conferences would be expected. "There would be denominational and district committees to advise and help districts and local churches contemplating such combinations."<sup>92</sup>

### College Area Boundaries

It is not the intention of the Joint Commission to recommend any scheme of reorganization and realignment of our existing educational institutions that will involve the arbitrary elimination of any one of them. As to the distribution of the districts into school areas, for the time being each district would remain in the school area of which it was a part before the merger. For the present this would involve overlapping territory, . . . the denomination should encourage the development of combinations which would be as favorable as possible to the work of the Church.

The ultimate reorganization of the school areas should be subject to the action of the General Conference and should recognize insofar as is practicable, the expressed will of the district involved, and provide an equitable division of the membership of the Church among the schools of the Church.<sup>93</sup>

### Evaluation

The two churches began their negotiations with such a degree of similarity that little compromise was required of either, and where concessions were made they were not drastic.

With regard to the several basic agreements noted in this section, it would appear that on balance the union proposal represents fairly equal concessions by both churches. The resolution of most differences represents true compromise, and possible

---

<sup>92</sup>ibid., p. 1.

<sup>93</sup>ibid.

greater concessions by one church in one area seem balanced by greater concessions by the other church in another area. The Pilgrims are moving more toward the Wesleyans in the matter of ministerial and lay representation, while the Wesleyans are moving more toward the Pilgrims in regard to the general superintendency. When all agreements are reached and all details worked out, assuming the merger is authorized by the two churches, it may be that one church will have conceded more than the other, but that is difficult to ascertain and may be a rather subjective evaluation. Also such an evaluation is further complicated by the fact that some changes will undoubtedly come to both churches whether or not merger is consummated. Some Wesleyan leaders feel, for instance, that existing conference problems will prod the 1966 General Conference toward a strengthening of the central government of the denomination so the church can better deal with such problems.<sup>94</sup>

A comparison of this proposed basis of union with the Wesleyan Methodist - Free Methodist union proposal of 1955 suggests that should the Wesleyans unite with the Pilgrims they will be conceding less than they would have in 1955 had the WM-FM merger been consummated. This is due partially, however, to the changes in polity which have occurred within the Wesleyan Methodist Church since 1955.

## VI. THE MERGER DEBATE

The debate over the proposed Wesleyan-Pilgrim merger has been carried out

---

<sup>94</sup>Nicholson, personal letter, loc. cit.; Failing, personal interview, loc. cit.

almost exclusively within the Wesleyan Methodist Church, at least so far as articles in the denominational organs are concerned. In the months prior to the Wesleyan General Conference of 1959 and again now, as the 1966 General Conference approaches, The Wesleyan Methodist has carried many articles debating the merger. By contrast the Pilgrim Holiness Advocate has carried no debate. This parallels the situation in the 1955 Wesleyan Methodist - Free Methodist merger attempt.

The following pages present the arguments for and against merger as gleaned from articles in The Wesleyan Methodist, primarily in 1959 and in 1965-66, and from other sources as noted.

### THE ARGUMENTS FOR MERGER

The arguments advanced in favor of the merger can be grouped under eight main propositions: (1) continued separation is unjustifiable, (2) the united church would be stronger than either of the merging churches, (3) merger would offer many specific advantages, (4) the proposed form of government is desirable, (5) merger would not hinder spiritual renewal, (6) merger is the will of the majority, (7) merger is fast becoming a necessity, and (8) merger is the Christian thing to do.

#### A. Continued separation is unjustifiable.

A letter to the editor of The Wesleyan Methodist read,

There was a time when holiness churches could afford to be independent of one another in their witness to their local communities. Even then there was a need for them to have some measure of contact and cooperation with one another. But now there is a greater need for joining hands and hearts, to make it more effective in a world that is questioning

whether there is any relevancy in the holiness way of life.<sup>95</sup>

B. The united church would be stronger than either of the merging churches.

Dr. Roy S. Nicholson wrote,

To glorify God by advancing scriptural holiness, moral reform and holiness evangelism. These interests can be advanced more effectively through a merging of resources than by undertaking them separately with each one's limited resources.<sup>96</sup>

C. Merger would offer many specific advantages.

1. Merger would further the doctrine and experience of entire sanctification. Oliver G. Wilson, at the time Editor of The Wesleyan Methodist, wrote, "I feel deeply that the union will be in the interest of the proclamation of the doctrine and experience of entire sanctification."<sup>97</sup> Dr. Harold Sheets, presenting the case for merger as viewed by the Joint Commission in 1965, held that merger would establish "a more resourceful and adequate base for 'spreading Scriptural holiness.'"<sup>98</sup>

2. Merger would mean a stronger educational program. Dr. George E. Failing, presently Editor of The Wesleyan Methodist, implies this when he comments,

---

<sup>95</sup>Thomas B. Hersey, letter to the editor, The Wesleyan Methodist, CXXII (September 29, 1965), p. 10.

<sup>96</sup>Roy S. Nicholson, "The Question Box," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXVI (April 22, 1959), p. 3.

<sup>97</sup>Oliver G. Wilson, "I Shall Vote Yes," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXVI (June 3, 1959), p. 2.

<sup>98</sup>Harold K. Sheets, "Church Merger: Mobilizing for the Unfinished Task," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXXII (November 10, 1965), p. 3.

Some Christian colleges and Bible schools now seriously doubt that their ministries can continue without much greater support by the church. Can our separate denominations raise enough money and send enough students to keep our schools Christian and church-affiliated?<sup>99</sup>

3. There would be a significant economic advantage in merging. Dr. Oliver G. Wilson argued in 1959, "It is a matter of economy in the publishing of church periodicals, Sunday-school literature and holiness books."<sup>100</sup> Similarly his successor, Dr. Failing, recently observed, "A church of 80,000 members needs only one Editor for its denominational organ, only one Executive Secretary for Church Extension, etc."<sup>101</sup>

A special committee instituted by the Joint Commission made a study of the economic aspects of the proposed merger prior to the 1958-59 general conferences. Basing its study on previous expenditures over a quadrennium the committee estimated the united church could realize the following savings over a four-year period:<sup>102</sup>

Publishing House	\$185,000
Foreign Missions	100,000
Church Extension	141,000
Sunday School, Youth	10,000
General Conference	15,000
General Headquarters	50,000
Total (four-year period)	\$501,000

---

<sup>99</sup>George E. Failing, "I Favor Merger . . .," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXXIII (March 16, 1966), p. 2.

<sup>100</sup>Wilson, loc. cit.

<sup>101</sup>Failing, loc. cit.

<sup>102</sup>Paul F. Elliott and David Rees, "The Economic Aspects of Merger of the Pilgrim Holiness Church with the Wesleyan Methodist," 1957. Cited by Wilkins, op. cit., pp. 49-51.



And Wilkins notes in his thesis,

This saving of over one-half million dollars would be the equivalent of the total cost of running the average conference of 75 churches for two years, or several smaller ones for four years. It would amount to more than the total cost of operating either of the separate Church Extension Departments for four years; or it would equal one-third to one-half the total cost of operating either of our Foreign Missionary Departments for four years.<sup>103</sup>

Others have pointed out the stewardship aspect of the economic factor.

Noting the estimated probable savings Dr. Sheets, writing for the Joint Commission, said merger "represents a sound expression of Christian stewardship in the saving of mounting church operating costs."<sup>104</sup> And a Pilgrim Holiness minister argued pointedly,

We cannot dismiss merger without justifying ourselves before God and man in the matter of stewardship. Consider the expenditure of consecrated money for the duplication of services, overlapping of agencies, and support of personnel that could be directed toward world evangelism. For one of our Churches to spend thousands of dollars to secure a precarious foothold in an area where the other is serving well, is in itself a betrayal of sound stewardship.<sup>105</sup>

4. Merger would relieve the problem of the shortage of pastors. O. R.

Fitzgerald wrote that since merger would result in the combination of local churches, the pastor shortage problem would be relieved.<sup>106</sup>

---

<sup>103</sup>Wilkins, op. cit., p. 51.

<sup>104</sup>Sheets, loc. cit.

<sup>105</sup>"Merger . . . or the Alternatives," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXXII (December 8, 1965), p. 8.

<sup>106</sup>O. R. Fitzgerald, letter to the editor, The Wesleyan Methodist, CXX (July 13, 1963), p. 5.

5. Merger would help conserve members. Noting the rapid shift of population today, one writer commented as follows concerning his own local church:

In all this moving back and forth, our local church has "shipped out" more people over this period of thirteen years than we now have. Very few of these have moved where they can attend another Wesleyan Methodist church, thus they are lost to us. And during this time, we have received nothing from other churches in exchange. A local church in a small denomination must work day and night just to keep up with the moving van, let alone show an increase, for our members do not come easy [sic].<sup>107</sup>

6. Merger would permit an expanded publishing program. According to Wilkins, "It is without question that the united denominations could enter new fields of publication which are impossible for them as separate denominations."<sup>108</sup> Wilkins considers this matter in some detail.

D. The proposed form of government is desirable.

1. The proposed form of government is not radically different from what exists now. Dr. R. S. Nicholson said the merger would mean change, but no radical giving up of the Wesleyan form of government. The union proposal contains much of Wesleyan Methodist as well as Pilgrim Holiness polity.<sup>109</sup>

2. The proposed form of government is not unscriptural. A Wesleyan Meth-

---

<sup>107</sup>Robert Hughes, letter to the editor, The Wesleyan Methodist, CXXII (August 18, 1965), p. 4.

<sup>108</sup>Wilkins, op. cit., p. 48.

<sup>109</sup>Roy S. Nicholson, "The Question Box," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXVI (June 3, 1959), p. 3.

odist pastor wrote,

The Bible does not specifically set forth any form of church government other than for the local church, and even that is not detailed....

...there is absolutely no Biblical precedent for conference organization or conference presidents. Shall we do away with them? I hope not....

Therefore, in the interest of fairness and clarity let us remember that a centralized church government, whether denominational or conference, is not unscriptural in the sense of being opposed to the Scriptures, unless it usurps local prerogatives. It is merely one of the many things the Scripture speaks nothing about, either for or against.<sup>110</sup>

3. A more centralized government would not hinder growth. The same writer quoted above argued this point holding that

we do ourselves a great disservice to equate growth with any type of government. To blame lack of growth on a certain type of government is to find a convenient hiding place from our own spiritual powerlessness.

Look at history. The Methodist Episcopal Church grew like wildfire in the early years of the 19th century. Today the fastest growing Churches, so we hear, are the Southern Baptist and the Assemblies of God, both having types of the congregational system of government. At the same time, another denomination with autonomous congregations is going nowhere in terms of growth.<sup>111</sup>

Similarly Dr. Sheets wrote, "No single form of church government has sent one church towering above all others in growth or world conquest."<sup>112</sup>

4. The proposed form of government would provide some needed strengthening of the authority of the general church. "What we need today if true Wesleyan

---

<sup>110</sup>Larry Hughes, "Church Government and the Merger," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXXIII (January 5, 1966), p. 4.

<sup>111</sup>Ibid.

<sup>112</sup>Sheets, loc. cit.

Methodism is to be preserved is closer general supervision, co-ordination and promotion and less independence," wrote Dr. Nicholson,<sup>113</sup> He went on,

The employment of traveling (or full-time) Conference Presidents has been considered by the Church's historians to be one of the advance steps of the church. Their supervision, co-ordination and promotion led to progress such as the Conferences had never known before. Their records from about 1910 will show the gains that followed the adoption of this new program of Conference superintendency.<sup>114</sup>

A Wesleyan conference president wrote,

We definitely need stronger oversight. If merger be considered the road to centralized power, perhaps we might do well to consider our present situation where an absence of sufficient constitutional authority has, at the least, not prevented division among us.... one great need of the Wesleyan Methodist Church, even if there is no merger, is better organized authority.<sup>115</sup>

5. Further centralization of power could come only by the will of the majority.

Much is being said about "centralized government if we merge." Have we overlooked the fact that any changes come by "due process" of constitutional enactment? One of the surest guarantees against further centralization of the church structure is the strict adherence to the present constitutional law.... Fellow Wesleyans, do not confuse merger with such issues. These enactments come as a result of majority vote--merger or no merger.<sup>116</sup>

---

<sup>113</sup>Roy S. Nicholson, "The Question Box," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXVI (April 15, 1959), p. 3.

<sup>114</sup>ibid.

<sup>115</sup>Dewey O. Miller, "Merger, The Lesser Mistake," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXXIII (January 19, 1966), p. 4.

<sup>116</sup>C. Wesley Lovin, "On Merger," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXXIII (January 5, 1966), p. 2.

E. Merger would not hinder spiritual renewal.

1. The questions of merger and revival are unrelated.

Spiritual power, revival, and Holy Ghost anointing have been mentioned as an alternative to merger. Merger, or lack of it, is not a condition upon which either of these are bestowed. They may be had if we merge or if we should not merge.<sup>117</sup>

2. Merger might actually aid renewal. Dr. Sheets wrote that merger

"holds the promise of God's outpoured blessing through the restoration of needless separateness and the spiritual renewal of working fellowships with those of like precious faith."<sup>118</sup>

F. Merger is the will of the majority.

C. Wesley Lovin pointed out that sixty-six percent of the Wesleyans (in the General Conference vote) had favored merger in 1959; they remained loyal to the church even though their view did not prevail.<sup>119</sup>

G. Merger is fast becoming a necessity.

Merger "anticipates wisely the increasing outside pressures in maintaining relatively small minority groups and forethought in more adequately coping with these pressures [sic]."<sup>120</sup>

---

<sup>117</sup>Ibid.

<sup>118</sup>Sheets, loc. cit.

<sup>119</sup>Lovin, loc. cit.

<sup>120</sup>Sheets, loc. cit.

Dewey Miller cited

...the imminent risk that smaller denominations will be pushed to the outside of the circle of religious forces, and eventually, by the ecumenical efforts of larger groups, or the possible merger of our sister denominations without us, or by possible federal limitations on smaller groups, we shall be lost in a whirlpool of forces over which we have no control, and gradually lose our field, even though we might maintain our force or testimony.<sup>121</sup>

H. Merger is the Christian thing to do.

1. Merger is spiritually justified. Said one writer, "...the will to oneness is both biblical and Christian; it is at once both the will of the Master and the highest instinct of the truly Christian soul."<sup>122</sup> Another contended that inability to unite is an indication of spiritual weakness:

If some local churches are incompatible, it is no argument against merger; it is an indictment against the spiritual quality of our individual members. If we both believe in holiness, and God graciously through His Spirit has given us loving and obedient hearts, how can we possibly be incompatible?<sup>123</sup>

2. Merger would set an example of Christian unity. Dr. Wilson wrote in 1959, "In this end time, with the world filled with hate, distrust and animosity, this union could be an example of Christian generosity and good will."<sup>124</sup> Another wrote,

---

<sup>121</sup>Miller, loc. cit.

<sup>122</sup>"Merger...or the Alternatives," loc. cit.

<sup>123</sup>Charles W. Heavilin, "Facing Merger Openly and Honestly," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXXIII (March 16, 1966), p. 5.

<sup>124</sup>Wilson, loc. cit.

Should we either deliberately or by default, reject merger, we must confess to friend and foe alike, that though we are identical in doctrine and essential spiritual teaching, though we fellowship freely and with mutual blessing, we cannot take the full step of faith and commitment that leads to organic union. Faced with an opportunity to demonstrate the unifying force of Christian holiness, we must confess that we lack purpose to see its fulfillment in the extreme test.<sup>125</sup>

### Summary

Although these are probably not all the arguments which could have been advanced for merger, they do constitute a fairly complete case for merger. Certainly there have been more arguments in favor of merger in this instance than in the earlier Wesleyan-Free Methodist merger debate, and the arguments have been more specific. Basically these articles favoring merger have argued that there are many advantages and virtually no disadvantages to merging, and therefore continued separation can no longer be justified.

### THE ARGUMENTS AGAINST MERGER

The arguments advanced against the Wesleyan Methodist - Pilgrim Holiness merger have been fewer than those favoring merger. For convenience the opposing arguments can be classified under seven major propositions: (1) the two churches are not ready for merger, (2) the merger as proposed is unjustifiable scripturally and historically, (3) merger as proposed would mean a too-centralized government, (4) changing conference boundaries would be a major problem, (5) merger would mean

---

<sup>125</sup>"Merger...or the Alternatives," loc. cit.

lowered standards of membership, (6) merger would result in divisions and possibly schisms, and (7) merger efforts divert attention from more important tasks.

A. The two churches are not ready for merger.

1. They are incompatible at the local level. A resolution passed by the Ohio Conference of the Wesleyan Methodist Church in 1965 cited "the incompatibility of many of our churches on the local level" as an argument against merger.<sup>126</sup>

A conference president wrote,

Merger will affect the two churches in local areas, and this gives some of us concern. It is a fact that the two Churches have little in common in some areas. It is a fact that it would bring hardship to a few.... We must face up to the fact that some of these situations could not be solved. They are deep-seated! There are minor differences over procedure, many of them deriving from social and economic traditions. There will be some personality clashes. Wisdom may dictate it were better to let well enough alone, and at any rate, force nothing upon anyone.<sup>127</sup>

2. Opinion is too divided to make merger wise at this time. The Ohio Conference resolution gave as one reason for opposing merger "the uncertainty and confusion which have accompanied the movement."<sup>128</sup>

B. The merger as proposed is unjustifiable scripturally and historically.

---

<sup>126</sup>"Ohio Conference on Merger," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXXII (November 24, 1965), p. 7.

<sup>127</sup>Earl T. Gentry, "On Church Merger," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXXII (November 24, 1965), p. 9.

<sup>128</sup>"Ohio Conference on Merger," loc. cit.



1. Merger is unjustifiable scripturally. The president of the Alabama Conference of the Wesleyan Methodist Church argued,

...in all the arguments in favor of merger we have not read scriptural proof for such action. Brethren, this is a strong point, and ought to be one strong factor for our consideration. There seems to be a prevailing thought of "unity," and that our being apart is a ground for contention. This is not so. If organic union makes unity, then the Holy Spirit, in calling out the different organizations in the past century, was sadly mistaken.<sup>129</sup>

This writer went on to point out that denominational organizational structures are not even mentioned in the Bible and are therefore unscriptural.

2. Merger is unjustifiable historically. A minister wrote, "I would oppose the merger on historical grounds. Historically, both denominations were called out of God for specific tasks, and for specific reasons."<sup>130</sup>

C. Merger as proposed would mean a too-centralized government.

1. It would be an episcopal government. The episcopacy issue was revived by one who argued,

...we are planning to merge with a denomination whose basic form of government is episcopal, and which government will no doubt become a basic part of our Discipline in the future.<sup>131</sup>

---

<sup>129</sup>J. A. Treese, "On Church Merger," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXXII (November 24, 1965), p. 6.

<sup>130</sup>Arnold L. Lockwood, letter to the editor, The Wesleyan Methodist, CXXII (December 22, 1965), p. 6.

<sup>131</sup>Ibid.

2. It would be an over-centralized government. The Ohio Conference cited its "opposition to a too strongly centralized government" as a reason for opposing merger.<sup>132</sup> The fear that the leadership of the denomination wishes to set up a dictatorial general board which would have too much control was expressed by an anti-merger report issued by the Allegheny Conference of the Wesleyan Methodist Church in 1959. A similar line of reasoning was employed by Karl W. Johnston in a paper entitled "The Government of the Wesleyan Methodist Church."<sup>133</sup>

3. It would be a government that would violate local or conference freedom. The Ohio Conference resolution said merger involved "the possibility of surrendering some of our traditional freedoms."<sup>134</sup> It did not indicate what these freedoms were.

4. The proposed form of government would undercut the authority of the conference president. The Allegheny Conference report included this argument.

Wilkins reports the Allegheny argument as follows:

If the Union were to be carried through, there would be the demotion of the Conference President... , who would no longer preside at the Annual Conference, but would become a foot man, an errand boy, or a yes man to carry out the dictates of a General Superintendent. His duties would be to oil the machinery and arrange the furniture for the visit of the general. He must become an efficiency expert, a financier, and a policy man,

---

<sup>132</sup>"Ohio Conference on Merger," loc. cit.

<sup>133</sup>Wilkins, op. cit., p. 55.

<sup>134</sup>"Ohio Conference on Merger," loc. cit.

if he wants to keep his position.<sup>135</sup>

D. Changing conference boundaries would be a major problem.

This argument was also raised in the Allegheny Conference report. Wilkins gives this account of the argument:

The idea of a change in conference boundaries...would affect local churches, camp meetings, and would disperse the flock of God. Conference boundaries...represent different standards of Christian ethics, practice, and piety. To change such boundaries would mean the loss of Bible standards, friendships, and confuse immortal souls. Plus the fact that the district superintendent of the merged denominations would limit the freedom of an evangelistic effort in the conference, and a death blow to the conference publications [sic].<sup>136</sup>

E. Merger would mean lowered standards of membership.

Recalling the Wesleyan - Free Methodist negotiations, J. A. Treese wrote,

No church has merged without a loss to the standard of the church discipline. If you will look back and review the discipline prepared for a previous merger you will find that this was very much in evidence, and to date we are in no wise certain of what a new book of church law will bring forth.<sup>137</sup>

Treese went on to state the Proposed Discipline of 1955 "had no requirement for church membership in regard to jewelry and dress," which is incorrect.<sup>138</sup>

<sup>135</sup>Wilkins, op. cit., pp. 56-57, citing the Allegheny Conference Committee, "A Discussion of Church Merger between the Wesleyan Methodist Church and the Pilgrim Holiness Church," 1959, pp. 13-14.

<sup>136</sup>Wilkins, op. cit., p. 54, citing the Allegheny Conference Committee Report, pp. 18-22.

<sup>137</sup>Treese, loc. cit. Treese stated in a footnote that he was referring to the proposed discipline issued in connection with the Wesleyan - Free Methodist consultations.

<sup>138</sup>ibid. See supra, p. 165.

F. Merger would result in divisions and possibly schisms.

A minister wrote,

...there will no doubt be extensive injury to existing Church bodies of The Wesleyan Methodist Church. Some have already expressed intense feelings in this area of merger--not only on a local church basis but on a conference-wide basis. Anything that would disrupt the existing harmony we not enjoy as a denomination [sic], to me, would be wrong.<sup>139</sup>

G. Merger efforts divert attention from more important tasks.

The Ohio Conference resolution said, "The loss of time and strength necessary for merger adjustments... might better be used in advancing the cause of Christ through our present organization."<sup>140</sup>

Summary

Although other arguments were presented, the greatest concern of those who oppose the Wesleyan-Pilgrim merger seems to be that merger may place the united church under an intolerant dictatorial church government--at least this is the charge most frequently made. It is interesting to note that every one of these arguments against merger was raised also against the Wesleyan - Free Methodist merger in 1955, although of course some were stated differently.<sup>141</sup>

Evaluation of the Merger Debate

The arguments favoring merger in this debate showed an attempt to deal

---

<sup>139</sup>Lockwood, loc. cit.

<sup>140</sup>"Ohio Conference on Merger," loc. cit.

<sup>141</sup>Supra, pp. 159-173.

specifically and in detail with the issues involved. Several writers tried to deal specifically with objections to merger which had been raised. The arguments were generally well thought out, well informed, and free from broad generalizations with no supporting evidence. In the judgment of the present writer, they present a considerably stronger case for merger than did the arguments advanced for merger in 1955.

There is a great deal of similarity, however, in the opposing arguments of 1955 and those of the current debate. Not only have many of the same arguments been raised that were advanced earlier, but they are the same type of arguments. Especially there is considerable unsupported generalization, emotion-laden language, and inaccurate statements. The charge that the district superintendents would limit the freedom of evangelistic efforts in the annual conference seems to be nothing but unfounded polemics. Also, such terms as "errand boy," "death blow," and "surrender" do not contribute to a rational evaluation of the actual issues involved.

Actually the arguments against merger appear basically to be arguments more against change than against merger. They seem to represent the segment of the Wesleyan Methodist Church that views any change from the status quo as a move in the wrong direction.

It is impossible to know, of course, what effect the published merger debate has had and is having. The fact that sixty-six percent of the 1959 Wesleyan Methodist General Conference voted in favor of merger may suggest that most Wesleyans have been able to see through the shallowness of some of the more extreme statements made against merger.

One of the things that makes the task of those who oppose merger in 1966 more difficult than in 1955 is the lack of the episcopacy issue. Although at least one writer has tried to revive the issue,<sup>142</sup> it is rather difficult to make a convincing case that a merger of the Wesleyans with the Pilgrims would mean an episcopal government since there are no bishops. This fact, of course, robs the "centralization of power" argument of much of its force.

It is significant that no general church officers have written against the merger, although some annual conference leaders have.

A review of the two merger debates within Wesleyan Methodism--that just prior to the 1955 General Conference and the current debate--presents a stronger case for and a weaker case against merger than was true in the former debate.

## VII. MAJOR OBSTACLES TO MERGER

As the Pilgrim Holiness and Wesleyan Methodist general conferences of 1966 approach, certain factors may be identified as being major obstacles to the consummation of union in 1966.

It may be observed first of all that certain factors do not appear to be major obstacles to merger. In particular two factors noted in connection with other merger attempts seem not to be major obstacles in the present case. These are (1) differences in polity and (2) difference in size.

In the first case, the differences in polity between the two churches are not

---

<sup>142</sup>Supra, p. 265.

significant enough to be major obstacles. Although differences in polity may on occasion be cited as reasons against merger, it is likely that other underlying factors are the real obstacles.

The size factor plays no significant part because the two denominations are numerically not greatly disparate. A comparison of the two churches in 1959 showed a "home" membership for the Wesleyans of 43,174 compared to 29,577 for the Pilgrims, but the world membership was 46,174 for the Wesleyans and 47,703 for the Pilgrims, and the Pilgrims seemed to be growing at a more rapid rate. Average local church membership was forty-one for the Wesleyans and thirty-two for the Pilgrims.<sup>143</sup> The Yearbook of American Churches for 1966 gives a "home" membership for the Wesleyans of 47,683 compared to 33,165 for the Pilgrims.<sup>144</sup> Since apparently it is the Wesleyans who are more reticent toward merger, if the size factor has any role in the final outcome of the merger it probably will work for it rather than against it, on the assumption that the smaller party to a proposed merger tends to be more hesitant to merge, other factors being equal.

In this instance, then, differences in polity and difference in size cannot be considered major obstacles to merger.

Factors which may be major obstacles, though in varying degrees, are four:

---

<sup>143</sup>Roy S. Nicholson, "A Comparative Study, The Wesleyan Methodist Church and the Pilgrim Holiness Church," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXVI (March 18, 1959), p. 3.

<sup>144</sup>Benson Y. Landis (ed.), Yearbook of American Churches (New York: National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U. S. A., 1966), pp. 207-208.

(1) mutual ignorance, (2) fear of centralization of power, (3) fear of schism, and (4) ecclesiocentrism.

#### Mutual Ignorance

Since not much has been written on this matter it is difficult to evaluate how great an obstacle mutual ignorance may be at present. While one would expect there to be considerable mutual ignorance, the Pilgrim vote in 1958<sup>145</sup> and the Wesleyan vote in 1959 may suggest that this ignorance is not as significant a factor as it apparently was in the Free Methodist - Wesleyan Methodist negotiations of 1943-55. Also the geographic concentration of the two churches is in the same general areas of the United States, which may tend to lessen mutual ignorance.<sup>146</sup> Inasmuch as mutual ignorance is an unknown factor, however, it should be included as a possible major obstacle to merger.

#### Fear of Centralization of Power

This is a factor existing among the Wesleyans, for reasons that have been dealt with in some detail in an earlier chapter of this study.<sup>147</sup>

As noted in Chapter IV, many Wesleyans view their church as anti-episcopal and non-centralized, even though this is probably no longer a true picture of the church since considerable centralization has developed through the years.<sup>148</sup> There

---

<sup>145</sup>Supra, p. 231.

<sup>146</sup>Nicholson, "A Comparative Study...", loc. cit.

<sup>147</sup>Supra, pp. 181-184. Cf. Wilkins, op. cit., p. 55.

<sup>148</sup>Supra, p. 184.



is thus a somewhat unrealistic denominational self-image on the part of many Wesleyans.

The closeness of the 1959 Wesleyan vote and the realization by an increasing number of Wesleyans of the need for a more effective central denominational government may indicate that the fear of centralization may be gradually passing. It was noted earlier in this chapter that some Wesleyan leaders expect a strengthening of central denominational authority whether or not merger takes place.<sup>149</sup> Also, in the published articles favoring merger a stronger central government was called for.<sup>150</sup>

But recently organized opposition to any further centralization of power has developed within the Wesleyan Methodist Church. In April, 1966, a newly-formed "Society for the Preservation of Primitive Wesleyan Methodism" issued a "Manifesto and Constitution" which stated as a primary point,

We are unalterably opposed to and cannot cooperate with any further abridgments of our constitutional form of government. We consider the relentless move to a centralized and arbitrary character of government, that in our own historical context was considered to be justifiable grounds for separation from the parent body, as reason for us to do so today.<sup>151</sup>

Rather than withdrawing from the church, however, this group is seeking to remain in the church and prevent any further changes. Although the merger consideration is not mentioned in the Manifesto, the significance of this development for

---

<sup>149</sup>Supra, p. 245.

<sup>150</sup>Supra, p. 259-260.

<sup>151</sup>Manifesto and Constitution of the Society for the Preservation of Primitive Wesleyan Methodism (N. p.: n. n., n. d.).

merger is obvious.

There would appear to be little chance that this new society could actually prevent changes in WM polity. The threat to merger is that some who favor merger may refrain from voting for merger for fear this new development may develop into a schism.

### Fear of Schism

This factor, again, appears not to be as potent among the Wesleyans in 1966 as it was in 1955. Developments since 1955 have demonstrated that the Wesleyans are going to have the problem of possible schism, merger or no merger. Further, there is some indication that there is less readiness to leave the church over the merger issue in some conferences today than there was in 1955. Whereas there was rather widespread fear in 1955 that large numbers would leave the church in the event of merger, the attitude today seems to be more one of loyalty to the church, even if merger should take place. The strongly anti-merger resolution of the Ohio Conference in 1965 concluded,

...though we do not approve of the merger... in the event that a sufficient number of our brethren... vote favorably for the same, we wish to declare ourselves loyal to our denomination and to assure all concerned of our cooperation in making the necessary adjustments to effect such a merger for the glory of God. 152

In other words, some conferences most strongly opposed to merger--as, for example, the Allegheny Conference--may in time leave the denomination anyhow,

---

152"Ohio Conference on Merger," loc. cit.

while other conferences opposed to the merger are pledging their loyalty to the church.

It seems, then, that while fear of schism is a major obstacle to merger, as indicated in the merger debate,<sup>153</sup> for the moment it is a less potent factor than in 1955 and 1959.

### Ecclesiocentrism

Considering the 1958 Pilgrim vote and the tone of the Wesleyan opposition to merger as shown in the merger debate, it seems warranted to conclude that the Wesleyan Methodist Church is more ecclesiocentric than is the Pilgrim Holiness Church--in other words, the Wesleyans tend to be more self-satisfied denominationally and less open to denominational change. In this regard, at least, they seem to be more sectarian than the Pilgrims.

This ecclesiocentric attitude, it can be assumed, is a major obstacle to merger in that it lies behind and re-enforces other obstacles to merger. Without a systematic study of the extent of ecclesiocentrism in the two churches it is impossible to know how great an obstacle this is in 1966, however,

As to the comparative sectness of the Wesleyans and the Pilgrims, this too would require further study to ascertain. Though one frequently hears it alleged that the Pilgrims are more sectarian than the Wesleyans, the Pilgrims' greater openness to merger seems to point in the other direction. In the judgment of this writer the Wesleyans, on balance, are probably more sectarian in denominational character today

---

<sup>153</sup>Supra, p. 268.

than are the Pilgrims, although the opposite may have been true not many years ago.<sup>154</sup>

### Summary

The major obstacles to a merger of the Pilgrim Holiness Church and the Wesleyan Methodist Church in 1966 appear to be (1) mutual ignorance, (2) fear of centralization of power, (3) fear of schism, and (4) ecclesiocentrism. It cannot be predicted what role each of these will play in the general conferences of 1966. Should merger fail to be approved in 1966, however, it will probably be basically because of the operation of one or more of these factors within the Wesleyan Methodist Church.

## VIII. PROSPECTS

The picture presented in this chapter of the pending Pilgrim Holiness - Wesleyan Methodist merger indicates the problems involved in attempting a merger of the two churches. What are the prospects for the future?

Three factors seem to warrant a guarded optimism concerning the 1966 general conference votes on the merger question. These are: (1) the closeness of the Wesleyan vote in 1959, (2) the seeming reduction in the potency of the major obstacles to merger, and (3) the over-all sect-to-church movement of the two denominations.

---

<sup>154</sup>See suggestions for further study along this line, infra, p. 371.

If merger negotiations and the merger debate proceed smoothly and rationally on up to the general conferences, it is almost certain that these two churches will vote to merge, in the judgment of the present writer. However should the opposition be able to raise a highly emotional issue before or during the Wesleyan General Conference, particularly one that would play on fears of episcopacy or centralization or fear of schism, the merger plans could be upset.

The formation of the Society for the Preservation of Primitive Wesleyan Methodism could provide such an issue. Its Manifesto implies those in the society might leave the Wesleyan Methodist Church if there is further centralization of power, and a merger might well be interpreted as such a centralization.

There is, therefore, a great deal of uncertainty as to the outcome of the merger vote in 1966, particularly concerning the Wesleyan vote.

But the long-range perspective should not be lost sight of. The operation of long-range factors, and particularly the sect-to-church movement encouraged by ecumenical trends and the development of mass culture,<sup>155</sup> are ultimately of more importance than the more immediate factors. Therefore, even if the 1966 votes fail of the require majorities, the merger question will not be dead. It might be a period of years would pass before negotiations were resumed, but it seems likely that both the Wesleyan Methodists and the Pilgrim Holiness Church will eventually merge with one or more other holiness churches, and not improbably with each other.

---

<sup>155</sup>Supra, pp. 51-54, 62-65.

## CHAPTER VII

### UNITY AND THE HOLINESS CHURCHES: BASIC PROBLEMS

One of the purposes of this study, as given in the Introduction, is to identify and analyze those factors which work against unity among the holiness churches. This task is the particular focus of the present chapter.

Specifically, the purpose here is to suggest those basic factors which tend to keep the NHA churches apart and those factors which may be expected to arise as basic issues in future merger negotiations involving the holiness churches.

The discussion in this chapter is based both on the material already presented concerning merger attempts involving holiness churches (Chapters IV, V, and VI) and on additional reading on the general problem of church unity. Thus factors which have been seen as basic in the merger attempts studied in this thesis, and additional basic factors which have arisen in other mergers and merger attempts not involving holiness churches, are discussed here.

Nine specific basic problems are presented and analyzed in the following pages. These are: (1) doctrine, (2) prudentials, (3) polity, (4) institutionalism, (5) ecclesiocentrism, (6) socio-economic differences, (7) mutual ignorance and prejudice, (8) comparative size, and (9) danger of schism.

Difference in degree of sectness has not been included as a basic issue because of the breadth of this factor. There are doubtless significant differences in the sectarian character of the NHA denominations. These differences however will be rather completely covered in discussing the nine factors listed above. The relation

of these specific factors to the sect-church continuum will be noted where it seems particularly appropriate to do so.

These factors deserve further study and any one could be the subject of a detailed investigation as to the extent of its significance for the question of unity and the holiness churches.<sup>1</sup>

## I. DOCTRINE

In the merger negotiations studied in the previous three chapters it was seen that doctrine was an issue of relatively minor importance. This was to be expected since it is agreement in doctrine which has drawn these churches together into the National Holiness Association. It can be hypothesized therefore that in future merger negotiations involving NHA churches, doctrine will not be the determining factor.

To the extent that doctrine may be a factor in future negotiations, it is probable the issues will involve such questions as baptism and millennial views, since no particular position on such issues is required for NHA membership. Thus in the Evangelical Methodist - United Missionary negotiations differences in the doctrine of baptism were noted.<sup>2</sup>

According to Troeltsch, a strong emphasis on eschatology is a characteristic of sects,<sup>3</sup> and this seems to be borne out in the history of the holiness sects. It

---

<sup>1</sup>See Chapter X, *infra*, p. 367 ff.

<sup>2</sup>*Supra*, p. 278.

<sup>3</sup>Ernst Troeltsch, *The Social Teachings of the Christian Churches*, trans. Olive Wyon (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1949), I, 339.

is significant that several of the holiness groups specifically endorse pre-millennialism, and that this emphasis on pre-millennialism seems to be fading as the holiness denominations move away from sectarianism toward the church-type, and toward greater similarity with each other.<sup>4</sup> This suggests that millennial views will be of decreasing significance as factors in merger considerations as time passes.

Doctrine then will probably not be the determining factor in future merger attempts among the NHA churches. It cannot be assumed, however, that NHA churches will seek merger only with other NHA churches. The United Missionary Church has conducted negotiations with the Missionary Church Association and other NHA churches have negotiated with non-NHA denominations, as noted in Chapter III.<sup>5</sup> A merger of the Free Methodist Church with the Evangelical Covenant Church, not strictly a holiness church, has been proposed.<sup>6</sup> In such cases doctrine could well be an issue of major importance.

## II. PRUDENTIALS

Most of the holiness churches have established certain standards of conduct to which all those who join the church are expected to adhere. Generally these standards are concerned with individual dress, amusements, indulgences, and affil-

---

<sup>4</sup>Supra, pp. 51-54.

<sup>5</sup>Supra, pp. 72-74.

<sup>6</sup>Personal conversation with Edward C. John, Bishop of the Free Methodist Church, held at Dallas, Texas, April 13, 1966. An official approach was made to the Free Methodists by representatives of the Evangelical Covenant Church. It is doubtful that this contact will lead to actual merger negotiations, however.



iations. It is common for instance to find restrictions prohibiting membership in fraternal orders and forbidding the use of tobacco and alcoholic beverages. One section of the "Church Covenant" of the Pilgrim Holiness Church requires members to promise "to avoid worldly amusement, such as dances, shows, theatres, horse races, promiscuous bathing, and all games and places where there is gambling."<sup>7</sup> Others of the NHA churches are less specific, but some statement of standards of conduct is common.

These standards often include also promises to support the church by attendance and finances.

Differences in such standards between the NHA churches are sufficient to make the matter a possible issue in future merger negotiations. As noted in earlier chapters of this thesis, the matter was an issue in the United Missionary - Evangelical Methodist negotiations<sup>8</sup> and to a lesser extent in Free Methodist - Wesleyan Methodist negotiations.<sup>9</sup>

The matter of standards of Christian conduct is here considered under the term "prudentials." This is felt to be a fitting term because it suggests that these standards are considered by the churches as minimal standards which it is prudent to uphold as helps to personal godliness. It is the purpose of this discussion neither to attack or defend the imposition of such standards, but only to consider the role these prudentials play in the matter of unity.

---

<sup>7</sup>Manual of the Pilgrim Holiness Church (Indianapolis: The Pilgrim Publishing House, 1962), Sec. 30.

<sup>8</sup>Supra, p. 215.

<sup>9</sup>Supra, pp. 120-122, 145, 165.

Stated prudentials of the Christian life may be expected to be factors in future merger considerations not only because holiness churches differ in this regard, but also because denominational attitudes toward these prudentials are shifting. As sects move toward churches, pietistic standards begin to break down.<sup>10</sup> This has been happening, especially recently, within the holiness movement.<sup>11</sup> Most members of smaller holiness churches are very much aware that many of the more radical restrictions on personal conduct are honored today more in the breach than in the observance. This trend is viewed with alarm by some elements in the holiness churches and with approval by others.<sup>12</sup>

If past merger attempts be taken as indicators, it can be expected that future mergers will bring a de-emphasis on prudentials. It seems likely that merging churches will agree on statements of basic principles which should govern a Christian's life rather than formulating lists of specific enforceable rules.<sup>13</sup>

In summary, it can be expected that denominational differences in prudentials will arise as a basic issue in future negotiations, but that solutions will be found to such problems which will result in a de-emphasis on prudentials.

---

<sup>10</sup>Liston Pope, Millhands and Preachers, A Study of Gastonia (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1942), pp. 119, 122-123.

<sup>11</sup>Supra, pp. 107 (footnote 54), 120.

<sup>12</sup>When dissident elements within the holiness churches charge their church is becoming "liberal," they usually are referring to lack of observance of the stated prudentials of the church, not to doctrinal laxity. A small group of ministers who in December, 1965, withdrew from the Free Methodist Church cited "worldliness" in personal living in the church as a primary reason for their action (Untitled pamphlet issued by eighteen ministers of the Free Methodist Church in December, 1965).

<sup>13</sup>Cf. the handling of this issue in the Free Methodist - Wesleyan Metho-

### III. POLITY

The analysis of the three merger attempts given in this study clearly shows that a basic problem in the matter of unity among the holiness churches is differences in polity and the attendant attitudes concerning polity.

Polity, of course, raises the whole question of institutionalism. Institutionalism as such will be dealt with presently; the focus here is on differing forms of church government as a factor in the unity question.

Forms of polity among churches affiliated with the NHA range from the modified congregationalism of the Evangelical Methodist Church and others to the modified episcopacy of the Free Methodist Church and the military government of the Salvation Army. Although these differences are very real, they do not appear to be extreme; as noted in Chapter II, there is a growing similarity in church government in the United States.<sup>14</sup>

Previous merger attempts among holiness churches suggest that polity itself is not as much a barrier to merger as are attitudes toward certain types of government. With study, joint commissions can resolve problems of polity so as to provide a workable form of government and yet not depart radically from the form previously known by the merging groups. The problem is to convince the denominational constituencies of the wisdom of the proposed polity and that it is not a radical departure from what they have known.

---

dist merger proposal (supra, pp. 120-122, 145) and the United Missionary - Evangelical Methodist proposal (supra, pp. 215-216).

<sup>14</sup>Supra, p. 52.

Considering the changes which are taking place in contemporary American culture and in the Church generally, it would seem to this writer to be wiser to begin, in merger talks, with formulating some basic over-all principles upon which the polity of the merged church would be built, rather than uncritically accepting all features of the merging churches which are identical and then making as few additional adjustments as possible to solve the differences. In other words, it would be better to begin with the question, "What form of church government would be most effective in carrying out the mission of the church in contemporary society?" rather than the question, "At what points do we agree and disagree?" But both questions, of course, need to be asked.

The problem with this suggested approach is that it runs the risk of creating the impression too much is being given up. If the choice must be made, it is probably better to merge with a less-than-ideal polity than to develop an especially effective polity but fail to merge.

The experience of holiness denominations which have attempted merger and the developing homogeneity of institutional forms in contemporary society suggest that polity is one of the more basic problems in the unity problem but that polity will be of decreasing cruciality as time passes and will not be an insurmountable obstacle to union when a sufficiently broad will to unite has developed.

#### IV. INSTITUTIONALISM

"Institution" is a broader word than "polity," including in its scope not only church government but all established ways of doing things. "Institution" has

been defined as "a definite and established structure, built around and sustaining one or more social functions, and characterized by such traits as durability, persistence, and stability."<sup>15</sup> Thus institution

...is obviously a phenomenon to be found virtually everywhere in the life of the Church. Preaching and administration of the sacraments, worship and ministry, creedal statements, missions and moral conduct, may thus be termed institutions or be said to possess institutional aspects.<sup>16</sup>

The Church, and all churches, always have their institutional aspects, therefore. While the Church as the Body of Christ is unique, it is of necessity a human community also and as such has the same characteristics and institutional problems as do other social groups.<sup>17</sup>

This is true for the holiness churches as well. These churches are social institutions; they behave from the human standpoint much as other social institutions do. The history of the holiness movement as sketched in Chapter II shows that holiness groups have been no more immune to social influences than have other denominations.<sup>18</sup>

The three basic problems for the unity of the holiness churches already dis-

---

<sup>15</sup>Nils Ehrenstrom, "The Quest for Ecumenical Institutionalization," Institutionalism and Church Unity, Nils Ehrenstrom and Walter G. Muelder, editors (New York: Association Press, 1963), p. 27.

<sup>16</sup>ibid.

<sup>17</sup>ibid., p. 25.

<sup>18</sup>No attempt here is made to enter into a full scale theoretical discussion of institutionalism as manifested in the holiness churches. A rather detailed investigation of the various institutional factors of church unity, which is relevant to holiness as well as other churches, is found in Ehrenstrom and Muelder, Institutionalism and Church Unity, p. 160.

cussed in this chapter--doctrine, prudentials, and polity--all have their institutional aspects. The focus of the immediate discussion however is on institutionalism as an obstacle to unity and union as seen particularly in the matter of polity and church bureaucracy. In other words, institutionalism is narrowed here to the institutional problems for union in the governmental and organizational structures of the denominations.

Institutional problems of this type often are not obvious on the surface; also they may not be encountered until some commitment to merge has actually been made. Procedures for merging departments and offices are likely not to be formulated until there is some certainty that merger will be consummated. And even as such problems do arise, they naturally seldom are broadcast to the whole church.

For these reasons in the foregoing chapters it has not been possible to deal with institutionalism as a basic problem in merger negotiations except in its more overt, obvious manifestation in structured denominational polity. The present discussion is based, however, on the assumption that since holiness churches are social institutions, basic institutional problems which have been discovered to affect church unity generally are also problems for the unity of the holiness churches. The problems of bureaucracy generally are also the problems of a church bureaucracy, and problems of church bureaucracy are the problems of the bureaucracy of a holiness church.

#### Institutionalism and Tradition

The older a church, the more institutionalism may stand in the way of union

and cooperation with other groups. A long tradition of doing things a certain way tends to give a church not only stability but also inflexibility. It can be seen even within the holiness movement that it is often churches which have merged in the past, and thus have had to reorganize the church bureaucracy, which seem most ready to merge again. Walter G. Muelder has noted in this connection:

Administrative church bodies with long histories, procedures laden with custom, and incongruent with respect to each other in range of goals and responsibilities, offer formidable problems in negotiating mergers. There is often a blindness to needed change, a trained incapacity to sense new needs, inadequate flexibility in the adaptation of skills to changing conditions, occupational psychoses whereby personnel develop special preferences, antipathies, discriminations, and emphases not adapted to social reality, a fixation on goals and objectives however obsolescent, an excessive conformity to prescribed patterns which have become routinized, and a transference of sentiments and motivations from the aims of the organization to the particular details of behavior required by rules and rubrics.<sup>19</sup>

No particular perversity but merely common humanity need be assumed to account for such tendencies. In varying degrees, some of these tendencies certainly are hindering and will continue to hinder the progress of further unity among the holiness churches.

The paralysis of tradition has made cooperative ventures between the holiness churches slow in coming, but the new extent of cooperation among these churches noted in Chapter III, particularly in publishing, is at least a beginning in the direction of broadening the horizons of these churches.

---

<sup>19</sup>Walter G. Muelder, "Problems of Church Bureaucracy," Institutionalism and Church Unity, p. 160.

### Institutionalism and Denominational Differences

Bureaucratic institutionalism also tends to accentuate differences between denominations. Administrative organization reflects certain basic characteristics of the church; the size and focus of the different departments tell something about the character of the church. The difference between the way the department of evangelism of one church is organized and the way the department of evangelism of another church is organized may reveal some basic differences between the two churches which do not appear on the surface. Says Muelder,

Bureaucratic organization intensifies the contrasting differences among denominations with respect to the sense of mission, the style of life, and the focus of program. Moreover, class status is reflected in the operations of an administrative staff. Churches differ greatly in all these factors. The amount of energy and concern which denominations devote to the world mission of the Church varies considerably and is reflected in the size and scope of mission board activity. In some cases they are controlled directly by the denomination. Analogous problems arise with respect to education, social action, pensions, and so on.<sup>20</sup>

Since these are problems which are not immediately apparent when merger talks are first initiated they may cause negotiations to bog down as time goes on. Once the actual task of combining totally separated programs and agencies begins, a new awareness of the scope of the problems comes into focus.

This new awareness may either slow down the progress toward union or merely cause the negotiations to become increasingly realistic.

Initially unrealized differences, then, are an institutional problem which

---

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., p. 161.



is likely to emerge in future attempts to unite holiness churches.

### Vested Interests

As church bureaucracies develop and programs are initiated and promoted, it is natural that the personnel involved become closely attached to their own programs. Generally ". . . staff persons tend to feel a proprietary interest in particular programs that they have created, nursed, and brought into wide use."<sup>21</sup>

Such vested interests create problems for church union. If a merger proposal calls for the elimination of a particular program, or for its merging into another program of the other denomination, the opposition of staff personnel may be encountered. As Muelder notes, "Bureaus and bureaucrats have a tendency to protect the interests assigned to them in their terms of reference."<sup>22</sup> On the other hand, out-dated or overlapping programs may unjustifiably be continued in the united church in order to forestall such opposition.

Even within the holiness churches this may be a more important and crucial problem than is generally recognized. While it is natural for church officials to try to protect their own departmental interests, it may be rather awkward to do so publicly. Therefore some secondary aspect of a merger proposal may consciously or unconsciously be seized upon as the point of attack. Debate may therefore center upon other factors than those which are of most basic importance. An executive in

---

<sup>21</sup>James M. Gustafson, "The United Church of Christ in America: Actualizing a Church Union," Institutionalism and Church Unity, p. 337.

<sup>22</sup>Muelder, op. cit., p. 158.

one holiness denomination remarked candidly, "The things that keep us apart are the things we aren't willing to talk about."

It is possible however that increasing cooperation among the holiness churches will prepare the way for the merging of denominational programs and thus reduce the cruciality of this factor.

#### Excess Personnel

A closely related institutional problem subject to similar subtle pressures as noted above is the almost inevitable problem of excess personnel when merger is considered.<sup>23</sup> Frequently the problem is handled by instituting a transition period with larger-than-normal boards and other temporary adjustments, as was proposed in the Free Methodist - Wesleyan Methodist merger attempt.<sup>24</sup>

This problem is one which will be especially severe if multi-denominational mergers are attempted within the holiness movement in the future. Stewardship of finances and manpower will require perhaps painful provisions for preventing a top-heavy bureaucracy; it is doubtful that in such a case a position could be found for everyone without over-organization.

It is impossible to estimate, of course, to what extent opposition to merger might come from concern over this problem.

#### Problem of Established Programs

Another institutional problem closely related to vested interests has to do

---

<sup>23</sup>ibid., pp. 161-162.

<sup>24</sup>Supra, p. 149.

with the problem of established programs. Even when staff personnel are thoroughly committed to union, there remains the fact that many on-going programs are in operation. As noted previously in the discussion of polity, merger agreements tend to be arrived at through making as few adjustments as possible rather than deductively from basic principles to practical application. Something similar usually takes place the next step down, in the realm of on-going programs:

When churches are to be integrated the primary question is likely to be not what the mind of Christ means for the structure of administration, nor what pattern of administration immediately corresponds to the theoretical political organization of the church, but how to allocate effectively the available personnel and resources in order to expedite certain tasks to which the churches are committed. Since they have ongoing programs, the churches are reluctant to change the machinery which these programs have required for implementation. There is likely to be absence of any euphoria or enthusiasm about a projected church union, because the staffs of the respective denominations are always deeply involved in their given commitments. The process of unification may therefore be quite bothersome to these staffs.<sup>25</sup>

Though this may be less of a problem in smaller denominations, it yet can be expected to be a part of the problem of institutionalism which will confront unity moves among the holiness churches in the future.

#### Institutionalism and Over-All Purpose

Institutionalism presents a problem for church unity in another way. The fragmentation necessitated by departmentalization tends to break down the sense of over-all purpose within a denomination, and this problem is compounded when merg-

---

<sup>25</sup>Muelder, *op. cit.*, p. 161.

er occurs. A denomination should have a sense of world mission, but various bureaus with their limited, specialized goals may actually work against this. This is a factor which should be taken into consideration in the event of future moves toward unity among the holiness churches in order that any merged church or combination of churches may move with a sense of unified purpose and mission.<sup>26</sup>

#### Institutionalism and the Transition Period

These and other institutional factors suggest the need for merger negotiators to plan for adequate time for the transition from two churches to one. For, according to Muelder,

Many of the details of administration and polity are subject to processes and procedures as characteristic of politics and the market place as they are of the Church and they are governed not only by theological convictions and traditions but by cultural factors which are deeply intertwined with them.<sup>27</sup>

Most of these institutional problems are unavoidable where church unity is involved, and it seems inevitable that these factors which have been pointed out by students in the field of religious institutionalism will be prominent in future moves toward unity among the holiness churches.

### V. ECCLESIOCENTRISM

The term ecclesiocentrism has been used in this study to designate an attitude of denominational self-centeredness in which an individual views his as the

---

<sup>26</sup>ibid., pp. 158-159.

<sup>27</sup>ibid., p. 162.

best church and all others as in varying degrees inferior to his own.<sup>28</sup> Presumably a higher ecclesiocentric church would be one in which a majority of the members were characterized by an attitude of blind loyalty to their church and a negative, prejudiced view toward other churches. The extreme of the ecclesiocentric church would be the denomination which considers itself the one true Church of God. It has been suggested earlier that high ecclesiocentrism may be a characteristic of the sect-type of religious group.<sup>29</sup>

It can be assumed that the NHA denominations, by virtue of their affiliation with such an interdenominational organization, are not ecclesiocentric to the extreme of considering that any one of them is the only true Church. While it is possible that some of these groups may believe the holiness churches to be the only true Church, yet it was noted in Chapter III that many of these denominations also belong to the National Association of Evangelicals.<sup>30</sup>

The seeming role of ecclesiocentrism in the Evangelical Methodist - United Missionary merger attempt has been discussed in Chapter V.<sup>31</sup> The present discussion attempts in a tentative way to analyze this factor as a basic problem in the larger context of unity and the holiness churches.

In unity moves, ecclesiocentrism seems to manifest itself primarily in two ways: (1) as an unwillingness of a denomination to give up its identity and (2) as a denomination's fear that purity or spiritual vitality would be lessened through merg-

---

<sup>28</sup>Supra, p. 210.

<sup>29</sup>Supra, p. 211.

<sup>30</sup>Supra, p. 76.

<sup>31</sup>Supra, pp. 210-212.

er--in other words, that the other party to a proposed merger is spiritually inferior.

It was the first of these that was explicitly a factor in the Evangelical Methodist - United Missionary negotiations, as noted.<sup>32</sup> While one might presume that the same factor operates less obviously within other NHA denominations, without further research into this specific problem it is possible here only to suggest this aspect of ecclesiocentrism as a probable basic problem in unity among the holiness churches.

The second way ecclesiocentrism seems to operate in unity moves is as a fear of loss of purity. It is that factor referred to by Dr. Paul L. Kindschi when he once remarked concerning the failure of two holiness churches to unite, "We can't seem to get the cloak of unity on over our wings."<sup>33</sup>

While this specific factor does not appear on the surface in the merger debates noted in this study, it may be implicit in statements which point out the differences between the two parties to a proposed merger. It is possible to feel a major threat to one's denomination is the loss of spiritual purity, real or imagined, and such an attitude naturally would lead to fear whenever the possibility of merger was suggested.

Ecclesiocentrism is not a problem limited to the holiness churches, however. Aspects of this problem have been noted in merger attempts in major Protestantism.

---

<sup>32</sup>Supra, p. 209-211.

<sup>33</sup>Paul L. Kindschi, in the opening remarks of a sermon at Spring Arbor, Michigan, some years ago, which the present writer heard.

An example is the unsuccessful American Baptist - Disciples of Christ merger conversations which, in the opinion of Franklin E. Rector, "were frustrated almost entirely by institutional rather than theological factors, and a psychological climate of extreme denominational fear and insecurity."<sup>34</sup> Such fear and insecurity would seem to be an expression of ecclesiocentrism.

Assuming that all denominations are more or less ecclesiocentric, it may be well to note at this point that public merger debate can play on the ecclesiocentrism of a denominational constituency to the detriment of merger negotiations. Gibson Winter in his discussion of Presbyterian-Episcopalian merger negotiations notes the following, which may be somewhat parallel especially to Free Methodist - Wesleyan Methodist negotiations described in Chapter IV:

Two consequences have...been attributed to public debate on the union of these bodies: (1) growing anxiety which issues in a sense of undue haste in the negotiations; (2) a dawning sense of being entangled in something which one has not clearly understood or anticipated. These two consequences are damaging to negotiation, however necessary such tension may be at some later stage in the process.<sup>35</sup>

According to Winter, in these negotiations many Episcopalians "felt that further negotiation meant deeper commitment" as a result of public debate on the question.<sup>36</sup>

Among the NHA churches, it would appear the Pilgrim Holiness Church is

---

<sup>34</sup>Franklin E. Rector, "Baptist-Disciple Conversations Toward Unity," Institutionalism and Church Unity, p. 273.

<sup>35</sup>Gibson Winter, "Presbyterian-Episcopalian Negotiations," Institutionalism and Church Unity, p. 318.

<sup>36</sup>ibid.

one of the least ecclesiocentric, even though it may be, over-all, more sect-type than, for instance, the Wesleyan Methodist Church.<sup>37</sup> Their apparent willingness to merge as shown by previous mergers and by the 1958 General Conference vote on merger with the Wesleyans would seem to indicate less ecclesiocentrism.<sup>38</sup> The reason for this may be the fact that mergers seem to precipitate mergers. This apparently was true in the formation of the United Church of Canada in 1925. A pamphlet circulated prior to this three-way union pointed out that each of the uniting groups, Methodists, Presbyterians, and Congregationalists, had merged several times.<sup>39</sup>

Thus a tradition of successful union which undercut the more rigid claims of denominationalism and demonstrated to the lay public the effectiveness of union was a not insignificant factor in paving the way for the merger in 1925.<sup>40</sup>

In summary, ecclesiocentrism appears to be a basic problem in the question of unity and the holiness churches, particularly as it shows itself in an unwillingness to give up denominational identity and a fear of compromising existing purity. It is a factor which has been observed in unity moves outside the holiness movement, and it is a factor which may be influenced by mergers in the background of a denomination.

---

<sup>37</sup>Supra, p. 275.

<sup>38</sup>Supra, pp. 70, 231.

<sup>39</sup>W. E. Mann, "The Canadian Church Union, 1925," Institutionalism and Church Unity, p. 176.

<sup>40</sup>Ibid.



## VI. SOCIO-ECONOMIC DIFFERENCES

Another very complicated area of basic problem in the question of unity and holiness churches deserving more detailed specific study than can be given here has to do with the socio-economic differences between the holiness churches. Although students in the sociology of religion have made studies of socio-economic differences between denominations, to the present writer's knowledge no study of socio-economic differences in the holiness movement has been undertaken.<sup>41</sup>

It may be assumed that socio-economic differences affect unity moves in several ways. The relation between socio-economic standing and sect-church characteristics has been noted elsewhere in this study.<sup>42</sup> Also, socio-economic differences may account for differences in patterns of worship, type of church music, and other institutional aspects of the church. As Frederick A. Shippey, professor of the sociology of religion in the Theological and Graduate Schools of Drew University, notes, "Institutions are tied into an operating social system. As such, they become bearers of culture."<sup>43</sup> Dr. Berndt Gustafsson, head of the Institute of Sociology of Religion in Stockholm, Sweden, elaborates on the same point, noting that

...social classes can to a high degree institutionalize the roles within a religious organization. Some churches are more institutionalized

---

<sup>41</sup>See the suggestion for further study along this line in Chapter X, *infra*, p. 372.

<sup>42</sup>*Supra*, p. 15.

<sup>43</sup>Frederick A. Shippey, "Institution and Church in the North American Situation," Institutionalism and Church Unity, p. 64.

by the upper classes in their patterns of attitudes and roles, others by the lower classes. Conflicts between different churches are sometimes also conflicts between class attitudes and class manners.<sup>44</sup>

Although it is not known precisely to what extent this description fits the holiness churches, there are certain differences between these churches which may have socio-economic roots. Thus a denominational official recently remarked that two of the holiness churches might find a major obstacle to union to be different tastes and standards in church music.<sup>45</sup>

Since socio-economic differences constitute an underlying factor which cannot objectively be analyzed without certain specific data, it is conjectural what role such differences may have played in the merger attempts considered in this study. It seems likely, however, that it was socio-economic differences which underlay much of the feeling of "local incompatibility" occasionally referred to by opponents of merger.<sup>46</sup>

Yet socio-economic status is not something that is uniform across any one denomination. In the holiness denominations, the distance between extremes within one denomination may be greater than any basic difference between two of the denominations.<sup>47</sup> But within a particular community two holiness churches might

---

<sup>44</sup>Berndt Gustafsson, "Types of Religious Institutionalization," Institutionalism and Church Unity, p. 128.

<sup>45</sup>This remark was reported to the writer in informal conversation on April 14, 1966.

<sup>46</sup>Supra, pp. 160, 264.

<sup>47</sup>This point was made by Dr. Paul L. Kindschi in an address to the National Holiness Association, meeting in Dallas, Texas, April 13, 1966.

be considerably different socio-economically--and therefore in other ways as well.

Socio-economic differences, then, may be considered a basic problem in the unity of the holiness churches, a problem worthy of further study and evaluation.

## VII. MUTUAL IGNORANCE AND PREJUDICE

It has been noted at various points throughout this study that the holiness denominations tend to be rather ignorant of each other at the local level.<sup>48</sup> That is to say, a local church of one denomination may know there is another holiness church in town, but it may be almost totally ignorant of the character of that church. Further, such knowledge as is known is often partial and therefore tends to build a prejudiced view toward the other church. This factor, and an attempt to do something about it, were noted in the account of the Free Methodist - Wesleyan Methodist negotiations.<sup>49</sup>

Mutual ignorance and the accompanying prejudice, then, appear to be basic problems in the matter of the unity of the holiness churches. In future moves toward unity it would be well, therefore, if the role of these factors were carefully evaluated.

An obvious avenue toward the solution of this problem would seem to be interdenominational cooperative activities, such as the Inter-church Fellowship held

---

<sup>48</sup>See especially supra, pp. 94-97, 135-127, 272.

<sup>49</sup>Supra, pp. 135-137.

by the Free Methodists and Wesleyans in 1946.<sup>50</sup> Such attempts probably have their value, but such cooperative endeavor and even a measure of enthusiasm do not guarantee the success of a unity move. Franklin E. Rector, describing the unsuccessful American Baptist - Disciples of Christ merger attempt, notes the great extent of cooperation between these two denominations during the period of negotiation before the vote to discontinue talks was taken:

The most promising and fruitful period of Baptist-Disciple conversation toward unity flourished and waned in the three years between 1947 and 1950. The period extends from the conventions of the two bodies which raised the status of their joint committees to that of Joint Commissions, to the 1950 Baptist Convention in Boston which reversed the 1949 vote of approval of the timetable leading to decisive consideration and a possible vote on merger.

In this period of time the work of the Joint Commission was organized and its subcommittees produced favorable results in their assignments to explore the possibility of union. Considerable enthusiasm was raised among both Baptist and Disciple congregations, and literally hundreds of pulpit exchanges were arranged between their pastors. College and seminary youth groups entered into several ventures of united fellowship, and the ultimate union of the two denominations was promoted by these groups. Ministerial fellowship and Bible study retreats were sponsored with considerable response from both denominations. Worship and study aids were produced and published jointly. On the local level, at least six united churches were formed by former Baptist and Disciple congregations, and the matter was discussed and studied in other places, nearly all these being east of the Mississippi River. Simultaneous state conventions of Baptists and Disciples were held in Nebraska, Illinois, and Pennsylvania, a joint visitation and evangelism program was carried on in Cleveland; and there was considerable cooperation between the two groups in many scattered cities and associations.

In the face of all this progress toward unity and cooperation, however, severe opposition was spreading among many local churches, particularly in the Midwest and West.<sup>51</sup>

---

<sup>50</sup>Supra, pp. 104-105.

<sup>51</sup>Rector, op. cit., pp. 263-264.

The apparent significance of the geographical factor in the above account should serve as a warning that cooperation between two denominations should be distributed fairly evenly throughout the churches if union is to be successful.

It may also be noted here that forms of organized interdenominational cooperation short of actual merger may be effective in breaking down mutual ignorance and prejudice. To get denominations cooperating at an associational level may prepare the way for cooperation in a more intimate way. Thus the National Holiness Association has fostered interest in a holiness federation and such a federation could lead to a multi-denominational merger.<sup>52</sup> Muelder notes how such a process works in regard to councils of churches, and presumably something similar occurs with other types of interdenominational cooperative attempts:

The council provides for the maximum autonomy of the various church bureaucracies, and for the least risk to denominational life while patterns of co-operation and ecumenicity are being explored and formed. Obvious practical areas of co-operation can be developed on a piecemeal basis, while denominational bureaucracies are left largely intact....

As a council of churches grows it develops its own specializations and bureaucratic structure. The churches participating in the new conciliar patterns begin to modify their practices. Just as the pluralistic bureaus of the churches shape the institutional growth of the councils in the first instances, so the conciliar process in time modifies the bureaucratic structure and scope of the churches.

...Radio, television, journalism, the preparation of church school materials, approaches to government, lobbying, strategies of social work, policies on church-state questions in education and welfare--these are a few of the areas in which bureaucratic development in ecumenical bodies tends to modify and make more uniform the corresponding boards and commissions of the denominations. All this can be and is done without radically challenging the doctrinal distinctiveness or the theological foundations of the polity of churches.<sup>53</sup>

---

<sup>52</sup>Supra, p. 81ff.

<sup>53</sup>Muelder, op. cit., pp. 162-163.

In other words, interdenominational cooperation, while allowing the denominations to remain autonomous, brings about bureaucratic changes which make further unitive moves easier.

### VIII. COMPARATIVE SIZE

Comparative denominational size, as noted with reference to merger attempts considered in this study,<sup>54</sup> appears to be a basic factor in union considerations. Generally speaking, it appears that the smaller of two denominations tends to be fearful of being "swallowed up" in the event of merger. A denomination can feel that should merger take place, most decisions would be decided in line with the thinking of the larger group.

Such thinking commonly overlooks the fact that in a merged church not one but both denominations are "swallowed up" in the larger whole, and that denominations are not groups of people who are unanimously agreed on every point. Denominations act on the basis of majorities, not unanimous consent.

It is understandable, however, that where there is considerable disparity in size, and where the two denominations also differ widely in other ways, there would be a special sense of caution among the smaller group. The greater the similarity between the two churches, however, the less the size factor is crucial since there are few areas where compromise will be necessary.

There is considerable disparity in size between the NHA churches; the

---

<sup>54</sup>Supra, pp. 184-185, 204, 271.

membership of the constituent groups ranging from about 7,000 for the Ohio Yearly Meeting of Friends to about 265,000 for the Salvation Army.<sup>55</sup> There is a great deal of similarity among these denominations, however, when it comes to doctrine, prudentials, and methodology if one puts the Salvation Army in a somewhat separate category because of its military organization and unique ministry.

With such a disparity in size it can be expected, however, that size will be an important consideration in any future unity moves. But mergers between some of the groups may help ease this problem in succeeding merger attempts. For instance, if the Wesleyans and Pilgrims merge, the combined church might be more ready to merge with the Free Methodists than either the Wesleyans or Pilgrims might be inclined to do at present because of the size factor.

A merger could also hinder further mergers, however. If several of the holiness denominations unite into one fairly large denomination, any smaller denominations which were yet outside this union might be more hesitant to join the united church than to join a group of more comparable size.

These considerations seem to suggest the wisdom of adopting an "equality principle" in further unitive moves. Each individual denomination should, in principle, be considered as an equal with all the other holiness churches, regardless of its size. In practical application it might be necessary at times to operate with reference to size, but whenever possible denominations should be considered as separate,

---

<sup>55</sup>Benson Y. Landis (ed.), Yearbook of American Churches, 1966 (New York: National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U. S. A., 1966), pp. 198-210.

equal entities.

For instance, in the case of two denominations merging, for the sake of true unity it would seem to be better to give equal representation on church boards to each group unless there is a drastic difference in size. Giving the larger church a larger number of delegates only tends to increase the fear of being "swallowed up."

This principle, of course, applies to the actual merger of denominations which are fairly comparable in size, though there is some difference. It would not apply to a situation where a very small group decided to join and become a part of a much larger denomination. But in every case where separate, established, recognized denominations seek to cooperate, the principle of equality should be observed insofar as possible.<sup>56</sup>

In any case, it seems clear from the study of the merger attempts considered in this thesis that comparative size will continue to be a basic problem in greater unity of the holiness churches.

## IX. DANGER OF SCHISM

That fear of schism has sometimes worked against a proposed merger has been seen in the consideration of the Free Methodist - Wesleyan Methodist merger attempt and the Wesleyan Methodist - Pilgrim Holiness attempt at merger.<sup>57</sup> The

---

<sup>56</sup>Cf. supra, p. 175ff.

<sup>57</sup>Supra, pp. 180-181, 274-275.



consideration here is somewhat broader, taking into its scope not only the fear of schism but the whole problem of possibility of schisms in the holiness churches.

As noted in Chapter II, various schisms within holiness churches have taken place and others appear to be imminent; further, there is some evidence of a re-alignment among the holiness people into basically rural and urban groups.<sup>58</sup> In other words, schism is already a problem; it is not therefore a problem which is related exclusively to merger considerations.

The relationship of this problem to merger attempts is obvious; merger and schism are both part of the larger problem of the unity of the church.

If such a re-alignment as suggested above does indeed come, this will probably be the solution to the schism problem. Those elements in the holiness churches which feel sectarian characteristics must be maintained may leave their churches and unite into a holiness church with new sectarian characteristics.

But the danger of schism operates as an immediate obstacle to union largely in the form of the fear of schism. While there is the opposition to merger of the few who threaten to secede, there is often the opposition to merger by many who feel schism is too great a price to pay for merger. This latter view has been expressed more than once in the merger debates within Wesleyan Methodism.<sup>59</sup>

The danger of schism, then, will continue to operate as a major problem to unity, but it can be expected that in the next decade the now somewhat ambiguous

---

<sup>58</sup>Supra, pp. 56-59.

<sup>59</sup>Supra, pp. 169-171, 268.

picture will become clear and a re-alignment within holiness ranks may begin to crystallize. Thus whereas the danger of schism now threatens the prospects of unity moves, in time actual schisms may further the likelihood of mergers.

#### SUMMARY

At present it appears that those factors which currently are or may become major problems to increased unity among the holiness churches are (1) doctrine, (2) prudentials, (3) polity, (4) institutionalism, (5) ecclesiocentrism, (6) socio-economic differences, (7) mutual ignorance and prejudice, (8) comparative size, and (9) danger of schism. It was noted that of these, doctrine and prudentials are perhaps the least crucial problems. Also, several of these problems cannot be fully evaluated without further specific study of these problems.

It appears safe to say, however, that these nine problems areas are the ones which will be most central as attempts are made to further unity the holiness churches

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE HOLINESS CHURCHES AND THE LARGER ECUMENICAL PERSPECTIVE

There are few more insistent facts before the Christian churches today than the ecumenical movement. Attitudes toward the movement run from active support to open condemnation, but churches and sects large and small are being forced to take cognizance of it.<sup>1</sup>

What is the relationship of the holiness movement in America to the ecumenical movement? More particularly, what relationship is there between moves toward unity among the holiness churches and the larger ecumenical thrust throughout Christendom?

These questions are the concern of this chapter. The story of unity and the holiness churches is not complete until it is seen in perspective. An attempt has been made in this study to see the unity question in the perspective of the historical roots of the holiness denominations. Now, before concluding the study, it is important also to see the matter of unity and the holiness churches in the perspective of the broader ecumenical situation today.

The approach here is first to examine the attitudes of the holiness churches toward ecumenicity, then to discuss unity moves as an expression of ecumenism, then to consider the churches--that is, Protestantism generally--and the holiness witness. Following this the relationship between the holiness churches and the evangelical-

---

<sup>1</sup>Cf. supra, p. 62ff.

fundamentalist tension in relation to ecumenism will be noted, and then there will be a consideration of the ecumenical questions which are facing the holiness churches today. Finally some tentative conclusions concerning the prospects for the future will be drawn.

## I. ATTITUDES TOWARD ECUMENISM

A distinction should be made between ecumenism and the ecumenical movement. The former has come to refer primarily to the basic unitive impulse within Christianity while the latter refers primarily to the more or less institutionalized thrust of ecumenism in the world today. Within Protestantism the ecumenical movement is frequently equated with the World Council of Churches, and, within the United States, with the National Council of Churches. In its broadest aspects the ecumenical movement in America would properly include all moves toward unity among Christian churches, even including the National Association of Evangelicals and the National Holiness Association. As will be seen in the material presented on the following pages, however, the equation of the ecumenical movement with the National Council of Churches (NCC) and the World Council of Churches (WCC) is generally presupposed. Thus when holiness writers refer to the ecumenical movement they are referring more or less specifically to the NCC and WCC and perhaps incidentally to expression of ecumenical interest within Roman Catholicism, such as Vatican II.

The terms "ecumenism," "ecumenicity," and "ecumenical" are likewise used by holiness writers usually to refer to the ecumenical movement as institution-

alized in the NCC and WCC. As will be seen however, some writers have attempted to distinguish between ecumenism and the ecumenical movement as such.

In this section, comments on the ecumenical movement generally by several holiness writers will be noted. The following section will continue the discussion by noting how holiness writers relate unity moves among the holiness churches to the ecumenical movement.

The material presented in these two sections comes primarily from the pages of the denominational organs of the holiness churches which have been the particular focus of this study. It is not assumed, of course, that all the holiness churches see identically on this matter, but inasmuch as most of the opinions expressed come from leaders in the holiness churches it may be assumed that these views are more or less representative of the holiness movement in America.

On the basis of this material, then, the attitudes of the holiness churches toward ecumenism and the ecumenical movement appear to be as follows.

- A. It is believed the major purpose of the ecumenical movement is to bring about a world church.

This is probably the most basic attitude of evangelicalism generally toward the ecumenical movement, and it is frequently expressed by holiness writers. Even when not expressed, many other arguments presuppose this conception of the ecumenical movement.

George E. Failing, editor of *The Wesleyan Methodist*, refers to ecumenism as "the goal of organizational unity."<sup>2</sup> The previous editor of the same publication

---

<sup>2</sup>George E. Failing, "The Unity We Need," *The Wesleyan Methodist*,

wrote in 1949,

From pulpit and press comes a great deal of emphasis on the theme, "One Church for Our World." While it is not so stated, yet it is clearly implied that were all the churches, outside of the Catholic church, to unite in one great world-church, we would go a long way toward solving the problems of the world.<sup>3</sup>

A Free Methodist, Dr. W. Curry Mavis, has written similarly:

Leaders of the ecumenical movement...are envisioning an ultimate goal of the corporate union of all Christian groups into one great world church.<sup>4</sup>

And Dr. George L. Ford, former general director of the National Association of Evangelical and also a Free Methodist has more recently written, "There is no question but that the real thrust of the ecumenical movement is 'one church for one world.'"<sup>5</sup>

Ford quotes various ecumenical leaders who have indicated they envision one unified world church.<sup>6</sup>

A basic view, then, of the holiness churches is that the ecumenical movement seeks to establish a world church, and several of the following arguments are based on this premise.

---

CXXII (July 7, 1965), p. 1.

<sup>3</sup>Oliver G. Wilson, "Will a World-Church Cure Our Worldliness?" The Wesleyan Methodist, CVI (April 20, 1949), p. 1.

<sup>4</sup>W. Curry Mavis, Beyond Conformity (Winona Lake, Indiana: Light and Life Press, 1958), p. 136.

<sup>5</sup>George L. Ford, "Union or Unity--The Present Day Dilemma," The Dynamics of Christian Unity, W. Stanley Mooneyham, editor (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1963), p. 99.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., pp. 97-99.

Whether or not this view is an accurate interpretation of the ecumenical movement will be discussed later in this section.

- B. The emphasis of the ecumenical movement on organizational unity is believed to be a misplaced emphasis.

It is felt the ecumenical movement places primary emphasis on matters of secondary importance. More particularly,

1. The approach of the ecumenical movement is said to be too this-worldly. Dr. Oliver G. Wilson wrote,

The chief objective is to produce a church organization that will speak with unified voice on political, social, and economic world problems; a voice which world statesmen, diplomats and political leaders would not venture to ignore. The design is to mold and to shape this world, not to prepare men for the world to come.<sup>7</sup>

2. It is held that organizational unity is not the way to spiritual unity.

Bishop Leslie R. Marston has written,

Unity in the Spirit is not achieved by organizational union apart from revival of personal religion, and to unite today's spiritually inert masses into a vast world Church is to build upon the sand.<sup>8</sup>

3. Holiness writers contend that denominationalism is not necessarily an evil. It is felt that God had a purpose in permitting existing denominations to come

---

<sup>7</sup>Wilson, loc.cit.

<sup>8</sup>Leslie R. Marston, "Are We Ecumenical?" The Wesleyan Methodist, CXXI (September 9, 1964), p. 2.

into existence and that the Church has realized certain benefits it never would have known had some divisions not occurred. According to Dr. Failing, "The diverse denominations of our day do not, of themselves, fragmentize us. Nor would the organizational merger of all these bring the Christian unity we sorely need."<sup>9</sup>

According to this view, in other words, the ecumenical movement is primarily concerned with organizational union, which is a secondary matter not deserving such primary emphasis.

C. The basis on which the ecumenical movement rests is felt to be too latitudinarian.

Basically it is felt the basis for ecumenical union is so broad that it does not effectively screen out those who are not genuine Christians. Particularly,

I. The doctrinal standards of the NCC and WCC are said to be too weak.

This is a frequently-hit point. Dr. Wilson wrote,

There is a very significant ignoring of the foundation principles of the Christian Church such as the inspiration of the Scriptures, the virgin birth of our Lord, the exceeding sinfulness of man, Christ's vicarious atonement for sin. When these are discarded as of no consequence by those who are seeking unity, no one who believes in the Bible as God's revealed book would dare go along.<sup>10</sup>

Dr. Mavis writes similarly with particular reference to the way one becomes a Christian. Says Mavis,

---

<sup>9</sup>Failing, loc. cit.

<sup>10</sup>Wilson, loc. cit.



The ecumenical movement tends to be equivocal and latitudinarian in this matter. Little attention seems to be given to the way in which one becomes a Christian. It is assumed that there is room for many viewpoints with the conclusion that one way is as good as the others.<sup>11</sup>

2. It is also argued that the ecumenical movement is essentially a liberal movement, theologically speaking. According to Everek R. Storms, editor of the Gospel Banner, "The Ecumenical movement is receiving its greatest support from the liberal churches."<sup>12</sup>

Storms notes,

It is the very denominations which are so skeptical about the great Christian doctrines... that are the most enthusiastic about the ecumenical movement.

The more orthodox bodies such as the Southern Baptist Convention and the Lutheran Church (Missouri Synod), show considerably less interest.<sup>13</sup>

3. Cooperation with the ecumenical movement would, it is felt, mean doctrinal compromise. According to Marston, "Efforts at conciliation by widely distinct communions will deplete doctrinal content and betray evangelicalism."<sup>14</sup> And Storms adds a related comment: "... let us beware of the National Council of Churches and the ecumenical movement associated with it. There are too many dangers in this connection for evangelicals to become involved."<sup>15</sup>

---

<sup>11</sup>Mavis, op. cit., pp. 138-139.

<sup>12</sup>Everek R. Storms, "Dangers in the Ecumenical Movement," Gospel Banner, LXXXVIII (August 12, 1965), p. 5.

<sup>13</sup>ibid.

<sup>14</sup>Marston, loc. cit.

<sup>15</sup>Storms, loc. cit.

In summary, the basic argument here is that the doctrinal basis on which ecumenical activity is now taking place--in other words, the doctrinal statement of the WCC--is an inadequate basis on which to build a world church. This argument thus presupposes the first argument, that a world church is the goal of the ecumenical movement.

Partially because of this view that the existing doctrinal statement is inadequate as the basis of a united church, the holiness churches tend to view the ecumenical movement as theologically liberal.

D. It is believed a world church would be too large to be spiritually dynamic.

The feeling is that "... as a religious institution becomes large and powerful, it attracts men who covet the power but not the purity."<sup>16</sup> A world church would be likely to become powerless and ineffective in different ways:

1. A world church, it is said, could not maintain an evangelistic fervor.

Effective, soul-saving evangelism will be diluted by that organizational dominance which the history of denominations clearly discloses quite inevitably occurs with increase in membership.<sup>17</sup>

2. It is felt also that a world church would suffer in stewardship.

The weight of vast majorities will dampen the stewardship fervor of earnest Christians, for we are only too familiar with the paradox of stewardship's inverse ratio to magnitude of church membership.<sup>18</sup>

---

<sup>16</sup>ibid.

<sup>17</sup>Marston, loc. cit.

<sup>18</sup>ibid.

3. Further, it is feared that in a world church religious freedom might be endangered.

A high superchurch such as the ecumenical movement seeks, would result in the same kind of religious monopoly as dominated the Middle Ages. The dearly bought freedom of the past 400 years would disappear.<sup>19</sup>

This fear is increased by what is seen already as "a new and frightening form of religious bigotry" within the ecumenical movement. Says Storms, "The assumption is that any church which holds out for its own doctrinal beliefs is guilty of a perversely obstinate and un-Christian attitude."<sup>20</sup>

E. The formation of a world church, it is believed, would prompt further divisions, thus actually defeating unity.

Bishop Marston has written in this regard,

The pressure toward organizational unity will precipitate further organizational fragmentation by the withdrawal of those earnest Christians who are not satisfied with the doctrinal residue conciliation has left them.<sup>21</sup>

F. The ecumenical movement, it is said, may well lead to a union of Protestantism with Roman Catholicism.

"The ecumenical movement is headed towards Rome."<sup>22</sup> The union of the churches into one world church "will mean absorption into Romanism."<sup>23</sup>

---

<sup>19</sup>Storms, loc. cit.

<sup>20</sup>ibid.

<sup>21</sup>Marston, "Are We Ecumenical?" The Wesleyan Methodist, CXXI (September 9, 1964), p. 2.

<sup>22</sup>Storms, loc. cit.

<sup>23</sup>Marston, loc. cit.

G. True ecumenicity, it is said, is a thing of the spirit.

The holiness churches, in common with most of evangelicalism, believe, or are coming to believe, that there is a true biblical ecumenicity, but that this is essentially a oneness of spirit. Dr. Mavis writes,

Evangelicals believe in an ecumenicity of the Spirit which they consider to be the highest type of Christian unity. They recognize that there may be an organizational integration without a oneness of spirit and that there may be a spiritual unity without corporate mergers. They hold that spiritual unity must precede organizational union if the latter is to be meaningful.<sup>24</sup>

This, then, in essence, is the position of the holiness churches relative to the ecumenical movement insofar as such a position has been set forth to date. An important aspect of the holiness view of ecumenism, however, has to do with the way in which holiness leaders justify moves toward unity within holiness ranks in the light of these views on the ecumenical movement. This will be treated in some detail in the next section.

It is appropriate at this point, however, to present an evaluation of the foregoing attitudes toward ecumenism and the ecumenical movement.

### Evaluation

The most striking aspect of these attitudes toward ecumenism is that nearly all of them relate to the possibility of the establishment of a world Christian church. There is a rather total equation of the ideas of "ecumenical" and "world church." The view presented first in the foregoing discussion, that the primary purpose of the

---

<sup>24</sup>Mavis, Beyond Conformity, p. 146.

ecumenical movement is the establishment of a world church, is basic to the other attitudes noted. Several of the arguments against the ecumenical movement would lose much of their force if it could be shown that the ecumenical movement is not, in fact, leading to such a world church.

Thus, the first point emerges as crucial, and it is here the present evaluation must concentrate. Are the holiness churches correct in their view that the major purpose of the ecumenical movement is the establishment of an organized world church?

This is a very complex question and cannot be treated fully here. Briefly, however, some suggested answers to the problems raised by this question may be given.

For clarity this matter may be broken down into four sub-questions. These are: (1) What is the ecumenical movement? (2) Is a world church the aim of the World Council of Churches? (3) Is the WCC becoming a world church? And, (4) is the WCC bringing about the formation of a world church?

#### 1. What is the ecumenical movement?

The presupposition of the viewpoints expressed by holiness writers apparently is that basically the ecumenical movement is, nationally, the NCC and globally, the WCC.

In a theoretical sense, the ecumenical movement probably should be thought of as having a broader scope than this. As suggested earlier in this chapter, the ecumenical thrust today finds expression in many ways, and in the broadest sense

every unitive move from Vatican II to the Wesleyan-Pilgrim merger attempt is part of the ecumenical movement.

In a more practical sense, however, one may be justified in equating, with qualifications, the ecumenical movement with the organized conciliar movement, and particularly with the World Council of Churches. The WCC is not the ecumenical movement; yet insofar as the ecumenical thrust is an organized, institutional movement, the WCC is the major representative of this movement today.

When the holiness churches talk about participation in the ecumenical movement they are referring to NCC and/or WCC membership. To them, these ecumenical agencies are, for all practical purposes, the ecumenical movement. In proceeding to examine the claim that the ecumenical movement seeks to establish a world church, therefore, the question will be narrowed to a consideration specifically of the World Council of Churches as the major institutional embodiment of the ecumenical movement today. The essential question, then, is:

2. Is a world church the aim of the World Council of Churches?

Fortunately there are materials available which allow one to answer this question rather fully. The question is one to which the WCC and its constituent agencies have turned their attention.

The document of primary importance in this discussion is the so-called "Toronto Statement" which was considered "a landmark in the World Council's thinking about itself and its relation to work for unity."<sup>25</sup> This statement, officially

---

<sup>25</sup>World Council of Churches, The New Delhi Report, The Third Assembly of the World Council of Churches, 1961 (London: SCM Press, 1961), p. 117.

entitled "The Church, the Churches and the World Council of Churches," was "received" by the Central Committee of the WCC at Toronto, Ontario, Canada, in July, 1950. As such it constitutes an official pronouncement of the WCC as well as the basis for continuing debate within the WCC and its constituent churches.<sup>26</sup>

The portions of this statement most directly relevant for the question at hand follow:

The World Council of Churches is not and must never become a Super-Church.

It is not a Super-Church. It is not the World Church....

...membership in the Council does not in any sense mean that the churches belong to a body which can make decisions for them. Each church retains the constitutional right to ratify or to reject utterances or actions of the Council....

The purpose of the World Council of Churches is not to negotiate unions between Churches, which can only be done by the Churches themselves acting on their own initiative, but to bring the Churches into living contact with each other and to promote the study and discussion of the issues of church unity.

By its very existence and its activities the Council bears witness to the necessity of a clear manifestation of the oneness of the Church of Christ. But it remains the right and duty of each Church to draw from its ecumenical experience such consequences as it feels bound to do on the basis of its own convictions. No Church, therefore, need fear that the Council will press it into decisions concerning union with other churches.<sup>27</sup>

---

<sup>26</sup>Norman Goodall, The Ecumenical Movement, What It Is and What It Does (second edition; London: Oxford University Press, 1964), p. 141. This document is given in part in the above source (pp. 140-142) and in full in G. K. A. Bell, Documents on Christian Unity (fourth series, 1948-57; London: Oxford University Press, 1958), pp. 215-223.

<sup>27</sup>G. K. A. Bell, Documents on Christian Unity, pp. 216-217. (Portions of this statement in its printed form appear in italics. However, for ease of reading and to avoid extensive underscoring all quotations from the statement appear in ordinary typescript. Sub-divisional numbering has also been omitted.)

The World Council exists in order that different Churches may face their differences, and therefore no Church is obliged to change its ecclesiology as a consequence of membership in the World Council.<sup>28</sup>

The Council stands for church unity. But in its midst there are those who conceive unity wholly or largely as a full consensus in the realm of doctrine, others who conceive of it primarily as sacramental communion based on common church order, others who consider both indispensable, others who would only require unity in certain fundamentals of faith and order, again others who conceive the one Church exclusively as a universal spiritual fellowship, or hold that visible unity is unessential or even undesirable. But none of these conceptions can be called the ecumenical theory. The whole point of the ecumenical conversation is precisely that all these conceptions enter into dynamic relations with each other.

In particular, membership in the World Council does not imply acceptance or rejection of the doctrine that the unity of the Church consists in the unity of the invisible Church.<sup>29</sup>

The Churches can and should help each other...by a mutual exchange of thought and of experience. This is the significance of the study-work of the World Council and of many other of its activities. There is no intention to impose any particular pattern of thought or life upon the Churches. But whatever insight has been received by one or more Churches is to be made available to all the Churches for the sake of the "building up of the Body of Christ."

None of these positive assumptions, implied in the existence of the World Council, is in conflict with the teachings of the member Churches. We believe therefore that no Church need fear that by entering into the World Council it is in danger of denying its heritage.

As the conversation between the Churches develops and as the Churches enter into closer contact with each other, they will no doubt have to face new decisions and problems. For the Council exists to break the deadlock between the Churches. But in no case can or will any Church be pressed to take a decision against its own conviction or desire. The Churches remain wholly free in the action which, on the basis of their convictions and in the light of their ecumenical contacts, they will or will not take.<sup>30</sup>

---

<sup>28</sup>ibid., pp. 217-218.

<sup>29</sup>ibid., p. 218.

<sup>30</sup>ibid., pp. 222-223.



More recently, a report on Unity was approved in substance by the Third Assembly of the World Council of Churches meeting in New Delhi, India, in 1961.<sup>31</sup> This report expressed the faith that

The Lord who is bringing all things into full unity at the last is he who constrains us to seek the unity which he wills for his Church on earth here and now.<sup>32</sup>

Further, the unity God wills is being made visible today, according to the report, as all Christians (1) "...are brought by the Holy Spirit into one fully committed fellowship,..." (2) "...are united with the whole Christian fellowship ...in such wise that ministry and members are accepted by all, and that all can act and speak together as occasion requires..."<sup>33</sup>

The report makes clear that the word "fellowship" as used above "clearly implies that the Church is not merely an institution or organization"; "fellowship" is not intended to carry any implication of over-arching ecclesiastical structure.<sup>34</sup>

Some other relevant passages from this report:

We are not yet of a common mind on the interpretation and the means of achieving the goal we have described. We are clear that unity does not imply simple uniformity or organization, rite or expression. We all confess that sinful self-will operates to keep us separated and that in our human ignorance we cannot discern clearly the lines of God's design for the future.<sup>35</sup>

It is agreed that the WCC must not attempt to violate the autonomy of any member church. Neither may the Council make official pronouncements on unity which contravene the recognized doctrines of member

---

<sup>31</sup>World Council of Churches, The New Delhi Report, p. 116.

<sup>32</sup>Ibid.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid., p. 119.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid., p. 117.

churches, nor attempt to impose any one conception of unity.<sup>36</sup>

A certain kind of consultative assistance can be given by the Council to churches which are engaged in unity conversations. The Commission on Faith and Order has already begun to render such service, though only, of course, upon the request of churches concerned, by sending persons of exceptional knowledge and experience to meet the church members who are responsible for negotiating union.

The Council's Faith and Order Commission has also convened several consultations on church union with representatives from nearly all countries and churches where union negotiations are in progress. And it has been publishing regularly a survey of such developments, as well as distributing the relevant documents. We trust that this will continue.<sup>37</sup>

Finally, one statement coming out of the 1963 Montreal Faith and Order Conference may be noted for its relevance to the question of the purpose of the WCC. One report of this conference stated, in part,

...there can be no higher unity than that of which we partake around the Lord's Table, and...every other form of unity can only be justified as an expression of that fundamental unity. This implies that the right of separate ecclesiastical bodies or organizations to continued existence, as well as all movements towards organizational unification, must always be judged anew in the light of that unity and its witness to the world. At various times, groups of Christians have found it imperative to express their faith and worship in particular confessional, national, linguistic, cultural and other associations. We recognize that, under the providence of God, these associations have, in their particular historical situations, often contributed powerfully to the faithful witness of the Church. However, it is clear to us that today God is leading us to be the Church and to bear our witness in unity rather than in separation. In many areas the continuance of the traditional denominational groupings is felt as a scandal. Organizational structures will always be necessary; at the same time we affirm that the unity of the Church is to be found not only in the merger of denominational structures but even more profoundly in the koinonia of true eucharistic worship where the whole Catholic Church is mani-

---

<sup>36</sup>ibid., p. 129.

<sup>37</sup>ibid., p. 130.

fested.<sup>38</sup>

These various statements pretty well speak for themselves. Rather obviously, they call into serious question the view that a world church is the aim of the World Council of Churches. A fair appraisal of these statements requires that the following conclusions be drawn:

1. It is abundantly clear that an organizationally united world church is not the aim of the WCC insofar as official statements accurately present the position of the WCC on this matter. The official aim of the WCC is "unity," and this is a goal the implications of which are unknown or at least not agreed upon as yet.

2. The WCC is concerned to safeguard the autonomy and independence of individual denominations in their relationship with the WCC.

3. The WCC is officially interested in union negotiations and does what it can to help them. It is in no sense hostile to church mergers.

4. Implicit in several of these statements noted is the view that church mergers are a move in the right (that is, ecumenical) direction, at least in principle. This does not mean, of course, that the WCC would consider every merger justified just because it was a merger, nor that its role is to bring about mergers.

5. WCC attempts to assist in merger considerations should be viewed in the context of an as yet undefined view of the nature of the goal of the ecumenical movement. The WCC considers it an ecumenical service to give whatever assistance

---

<sup>38</sup>p. C. Rodger and Lukas Vischer (eds.), The Fourth World Conference on Faith and Order, Montreal, 1963 (New York: Association Press, 1964), p. 46.

it can to merger negotiations, such as holding consultations on church union, but it is unfair to conclude from such actions that the WCC feels mergers are the answer to the ecumenical problem.

6. There is room within the WCC for considerable difference of opinion as to what expression Christian unity should take, and there is in fact considerable diversity of views within the WCC and between WCC member churches.

The answer to the question, then, "Is a world church the aim of the World Council of Churches?" must be: No, not necessarily. The WCC is working for a Church characterized by unity, but this is not assumed necessarily to mean organizational amalgamation. Whether the WCC is in fact bringing about a world church, or actually becoming a world church, is another matter which will now be considered.

### 3. Is the WCC becoming a world church?

This question has to do with fact, not intent. Granted the WCC is seeking an as yet undefined unity, is it in fact becoming organizationally the expression of the unity being sought?

The official WCC statements presented in the preceding discussion remind the reader that the WCC itself is prevented from taking on super-church characteristics by its own constitutional limitations. Even granting these limitations could change, there yet appears to be little evidence that the WCC is becoming a world church. It disclaims being such; it disclaims the wish to be such.<sup>39</sup>

---

<sup>39</sup>Bell, Documents on Christian Unity, p. 216.

It is impossible here to go into a detailed study of the institutional character and development of the WCC and of its relationships with the member churches. It is worth noting, however, that the WCC includes in its membership churches and groups which would not feel, for theological and ecclesiological reasons, that they could join with other churches into one world church.

It does not appear, then, that the WCC is actually becoming a world church, and in any case the possibility of withdrawing from the WCC is always an option open to member churches.

4. Is the WCC bringing about the formation of a world church?

Even if it be assumed that the WCC is not itself becoming a world church, is not the total thrust of the ecumenical movement, and specifically the WCC, leading to a world super-church?

This question cannot really be answered here. However these observations may be suggested:

1. The WCC is only the expression, not the cause, of the ecumenical movement. Whatever influence the WCC has had, moves toward unity within Christendom were sure to come with the shrinkage of the world into one global neighborhood.<sup>40</sup> Blaming the WCC for the ecumenical thrust today is like blaming the calendar for the passage of time. If a world church is coming it is because of the basic ecumenical thrust today, not because of the WCC.

---

<sup>40</sup>Cf. supra, pp. 62-65.

2. If a world church is coming, the WCC, as a forum for the leaders of the Christian churches, is playing an important role in the formation of such a church. The character of the WCC therefore is important to all Christians.

3. The crucial point is that the WCC seems to be sincerely open to the leadership of the Holy Spirit, as it understands that leadership, in finding the unity it seeks. There is no commitment to the concept of an organizational world church. No easy assumptions can be made therefore about the future role of the WCC. Of course some evangelicals probably would question whether this sincerity and openness to the leadership of the Holy Spirit has much meaning among those ecumenical leaders who may be liberals or neo-liberals.

In evaluating the basic argument of holiness writers, then, that the purpose of the ecumenical movement is to bring about a world church, in the light of the evidence the conclusion seems inescapable that this is basically an invalid argument based on an incomplete understanding of the true nature of the ecumenical movement.

This conclusion is based primarily on the fact that a review of the relevant materials from the World Council of Churches clearly reveals the aim of the WCC is a unity which cannot be defined as organic union or any other specific form of unity.

Some would raise the question, of course, whether the WCC is sincere in the statements it makes. Some within holiness churches appear convinced that statements such as those quoted in the preceding pages are merely propaganda designed to disarm the unwary and lead them into an ecumenical trap.

Such thinking raises the question as to how well acquainted with the litera-

ture of the ecumenical movement are those who voice such opinions. Only a superficial impression can be gotten from news items concerning the ecumenical movement. An acquaintance with the writing of men prominent in the ecumenical movement brings one to a place where credulity must be greatly strained to attribute insincerity to ecumenical leaders. Evangelicals may strongly differ in their interpretation of ecumenical issues, but sincerity, at least, must be attributed to the great majority of ecumenical leaders.

If, then, the argument that the ecumenical movement purposes to build a world super-church is largely invalid, how does this affect the other contentions raised by holiness writers? The following corollary conclusions follow:

1. The charge that the ecumenical movement is guilty of a misplaced emphasis in concentrating on organizational unity is invalid because in fact organizational unity is not the major concern of the ecumenical movement, contrary to the impression given by the news media. That organizational unity will not bring spiritual unity has been realized by ecumenical leaders for years.

2. The charge that the ecumenical movement is too latitudinarian is not abrogated by the fact that the ecumenical movement is not concerned solely with a world church. But the significance of the argument is altered. If the doctrinal basis for membership in the WCC is viewed as the foundation for a world church, then the latitudinal nature of this doctrinal basis may be cause for alarm. But if the WCC is a forum for the churches, this basis has a different significance.

Actually the charge that the basis of faith is too latitudinarian tends to beg the question. It is impossible to organize any cooperative venture without a basis of

agreement. No one would try to organize a United Nations and limit membership to those countries which would agree to adopt the United States Constitution. The only way a World Council of Churches could be organized is on a basis of faith agreeable to nearly all Christian churches. Of course this statement was the lowest common denominator. Cooperative associations can only be formed on a basis to which all agree. The WCC statement of faith may be inadequate as the doctrinal statement for a world church, but it has not been proposed as such.

Evangelicals are quick to point out, of course, that interpretations of the WCC doctrinal statement may be so diverse as to make adherence to the statement of little significance. This matter cannot be gone into in detail here; it may be suggested, however, that the WCC can do little more than agree on a basis of faith. How it may be interpreted by those who adhere to it can only be left to the member churches.

Holiness churches may be mistaken, then, in thinking cooperation with the ecumenical movement must necessarily be equated with doctrinal compromise. Adopting the WCC basis of faith in order to belong to the WCC can hardly be construed as meaning that basis of faith is henceforth all the church believes.

3. The argument that a world church would be too large is seen to be irrelevant to the question of ecumenical cooperation inasmuch as a world church is not being proposed.

4. Similarly, fears about what might happen to existing unity in the event of the formation of a world church are irrelevant to the question of cooperation with the ecumenical movement--although the question may be crucially important in the



broader question of the future of the Christian Church.

5. The fear that ecumenical dialog may lead to a Protestant-Catholic union remains as a possibility to cause some concern.

6. That true ecumenicity is a thing of the spirit is agreed upon by many, both inside and outside the ecumenical movement. It is the kind of ecumenicity being primarily sought by the WCC.

In conclusion, the case against the ecumenical movement today from the perspective of the holiness churches, as presented in the denominational organs, suggests the case as presented is in large measure invalid since it rests on an inaccurate conception of the ecumenical movement. This is not, however, to pass judgment on the criticisms of the ecumenical movement made by other holiness writers who have written outside these denominational organs.

It should be pointed out that the arguments against ecumenism presented in the denominational organs do not exhaust the possible objections which the holiness churches, in common with other evangelical denominations, might raise against the ecumenical movement as it is institutionalized today in the WCC and the national councils. Problems in the area of missions and ecumenism are especially acute. It should not necessarily be concluded from the foregoing discussion, therefore, that there is no valid basis for opposition to the ecumenical movement as seen in the WCC and NCC on the part of the holiness churches. The compass of the foregoing discussion was limited to points brought up by representative holiness writers.

Some further aspects of this total problem will receive consideration in later sections of this chapter. It is the immediate task, however, to examine the

relationship between unitive moves within the holiness movement and ecumenism generally.

## II. UNITY MOVES AS AN EXPRESSION OF ECUMENISM

Are the holiness churches part of the ecumenical movement? Is there any connection between merger talks among NHA churches and merger discussions among the large American Protestant denominations?

### Attitudes Toward Merger

In the light of attitudes toward the ecumenical movement noted in the previous section, it is not surprising to find any real relationship between holiness church mergers and the ecumenical movement disclaimed. As seen, many holiness people are opposed to the ecumenical movement which is more or less equated with the NCC and WCC. Since this attitude is fairly prevalent among holiness people the tendency is not to interpret holiness church unity moves as expressions of the ecumenical movement.

For example, Dr. Harold K. Sheets, Wesleyan Methodist General Superintendent, said regarding the pending Wesleyan-Pilgrim merger,

...the word "merger" is used in the sense of bringing together relatively small holiness denominations and involves people whose doctrines and practices are virtually identical. The world church issue of today is quite beside the point.<sup>41</sup>

---

<sup>41</sup>Harold K. Sheets, "Church Merger: Mobilizing for the Unfinished Task," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXXII (November 10, 1965), p. 4.

Similarly Dr. Paul W. Thomas, Pilgrim Holiness General Superintendent, in response to the question "Do you think that the proposed merger of our denominations has any relation to the ecumenical movement?" said, "None whatever, Brother. We have been thinking about this before this other sun rose in the sky, or whatever it is that did rise."<sup>42</sup>

Dr. Sheets has more recently given a fuller statement of this view:

There is a true ecumenical spirit which the New Testament teaches which may, or may not, result in organic union. . . . It seems to me that we do a disservice to this entire issue when we equate the present trend toward a one-world church which would embrace Protestants, Roman Catholics, Greek Orthodox, and even Moslem and other religions, with the considerations now before us of grouping small holiness bodies of like precious faith into one.<sup>43</sup>

This attempt not to equate merger attempts within the holiness movement with the ecumenical movement is understandable. And the point being made is a valid one from one perspective. For the proposed mergers within the holiness churches represent what might be called "controlled ecumenism"; that is, the negotiations involve denominations which are so similar there are few risks of compromise in doctrine and the kind of merged church that may be formed can be pretty well foreseen. The goal sought is a limited one and there is no sense of participation in the ecumenical movement. From this perspective it can be said that there is little connection between unity moves among NHA churches and the ecumenical movement.

---

<sup>42</sup>George E. Failing, "What About The Pilgrim Holiness Church?" The Wesleyan Methodist, CXXIII (February 16, 1966), p. 10

<sup>43</sup>George E. Failing, "As Our General Superintendents View The Church," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXXIII (March 2, 1966), p. 7.

But from other perspectives unity moves among the holiness churches are very definitely related to the ecumenical movement. Some of the forces and pressures giving rise to the ecumenical movement generally are the same ones that are bringing the holiness churches closer together.<sup>44</sup> Also, many of the arguments employed for the union of holiness churches are the same arguments used throughout the dialog of the ecumenical movement generally, only the context is different. It is particularly striking how often appeals to the seventeenth chapter of John are made by holiness writers when advocating the unity of the holiness churches.<sup>45</sup>

In a negative way also there is a connection between "holiness unity" and the ecumenical movement. One element of the impulse toward unity has been the sense of a need to take defensive action against the ecumenical movement, as has earlier been noted in this study.<sup>46</sup>

There is a relationship, then, between unity moves among the holiness churches and the larger thrust of the ecumenical movement.

### "Holiness Ecumenicity"

With the increasing impulse toward unity among the holiness churches there is gradually developing a distinctively holiness view of ecumenism. Whereas in the past holiness leaders talked of unity mostly in pragmatic terms, there is now develop-

---

<sup>44</sup>As noted in Chapter II, supra, pp. 51-54.

<sup>45</sup>For example, see supra, p. 155.

<sup>46</sup>Supra, p. 155.

ing a theoretical basis for holiness ecumenism. There is coming into being a distinctive holiness ecumenical thinking.

The name of Paul L. Kindschi may especially be associated with this development. While many holiness leaders have advocated specific mergers and even broader moves toward holiness unity, Dr. Kindschi has been one of the first to see this whole question in its larger significance and has been giving expression to his views in writing and speaking.<sup>47</sup> In his thinking he has been ahead of most denominational leaders so far as the question of unity is concerned.

Since coming into a place of leadership in the National Holiness Association Dr. Kindschi has strongly advocated greater unity among the holiness churches. The most recent of his presentations urging unity, and one which may in the hindsight of history be seen as particularly significant, was his presidential address to the National Holiness Association at its ninety-eighth convention in Dallas, Texas, April 13-15, 1966.

This address may be thought of as an attempt to lay the biblical basis for the union of the holiness churches.

Other writings by holiness leaders might be cited as advocating the unity or union of the holiness churches. Dr. Kindschi's address is the most significant such presentation, however, because it treats the question in a larger perspective and it represents what is probably the vanguard of ecumenical thinking among holiness leaders today. For this reason portions of this 1966 presidential address, "One in

---

<sup>47</sup>Cf. supra, pp. 59-62.

Christ," are quoted below and a fuller account of his address is included as Appendix F.

Basing his address on John 17, Dr. Kindschi questioned the usual interpretation of Christ's prayer "that they may be one" as referring only to spiritual unity. He asked,

...if the normal, the natural interpretation that I've always heard of this--"Oh, this means we're one in Christ, we're one in the Body, we're one in the true Church"--why did Christ take all this time to plead with the Father and testify and declare over and over, they were one in Christ, in God? But now he shifts in prayer for a final petition that they may be one even as He and the Father are one in unity, even in organic unity.

I believe the oneness that he's praying for is a wholeness, a unity, a visible unity. Note this is interwoven constantly...with his teaching on sanctification, and being filled with the Holy Spirit.<sup>48</sup>

Later in the address Dr. Kindschi noted,

Of all Christian people there is a special responsibility on those of us who profess to emphasize sanctification and being filled with the Holy Spirit and a perfect heart and life. We have a special responsibility. Don't let the ecumenical movement scare you. Just as sure as you say there is the wrong and the counterfeit, there has to be the genuine. And there is a true, Christian ecumenicity--a oneness that Christ begged for and prayed for and sanctified himself for. And I say this is all involved with the groups that sit right here in this ballroom in Dallas.<sup>49</sup>

We are so much alike in the holiness movement. If you'll stop and analyze, we must have a closer liaison and a closer connection with each other.... It seems nothing short of the definite hand of God that we have remained so close in so many ways.<sup>50</sup>

---

<sup>48</sup>Paul L. Kindschi, "One in Christ," presidential address to the National Holiness Association, Dallas, Texas, April 13, 1966.

<sup>49</sup>Ibid.

<sup>50</sup>Ibid.

After demonstrating the similarities of the holiness churches, he said,

Oh, while we're so nearly alike I pray God that we can, with eyes open, enter in even into a fuller cooperative spirit....

My conviction is that we must fulfill Christ's prayer, "that they may be one." I may not know how to bring it about. But I promise you this: I shall be near it...<sup>51</sup>

I believe God will get his church visibly together. I believe it must come--I believe it will come. It may be in the next five to ten years, may be fifteen years. If it doesn't come in my time that too is all right, but it'll come. I would enjoy seeing it; I pray I might. But I don't have to in order to keep working for it. The greatest encouraging thing to me is that we may be on the verge of a breakthrough.<sup>52</sup>

Dr. Kindschi concluded,

...we face a crisis hour in the holiness movement. There's a new surge of interest in the work and experience of the Holy Ghost by many not in the so-called holiness movement. We will either rise to the challenge with a united front, take the wraps off, and turn our blessed truth of the Holy Spirit loose, and expose it to hungry hearts, or...become a selfish, pharisaical holiness society with orthodox doctrine but no love, no passion or power to promote God's kingdom in our generation. God's program will go on. He's no respecter of persons. If we do not let Him use us as wholesome, selfless channels, He may well permit us to sit on the sidelines as critics, stroking our beards, examining the shibboleths, while he goes on with revival and raises up others who can use the same scriptures, tarry for, and receive the Holy Spirit of God.

I call, I call once more as a voice, I say again as an irritant: Holiness people, let's unity. Every way we can. Let's arise and shake ourselves of suspicion, and join hands, that we might march forward together as a mighty Holy Ghost-filled army, giving scriptural holiness a united voice.<sup>53</sup>

It appears that this is coming to be, in essence, the new ecumenical thinking within the holiness movement.

Space will not be taken here to quote from them, but three articles which

---

<sup>51</sup>ibid.

<sup>52</sup>ibid.

<sup>53</sup>ibid.

have appeared in the organs of holiness churches can be cited as being particularly relevant to this discussion. The first, "The Main Idea" by Dr. Roy S. Nicholson, appeared as an editorial in The Wesleyan Methodist in 1944 and gives Dr. Nicholson's justification for the uniting of holiness churches.<sup>54</sup> Second is an editorial by Everek Storms in the Gospel Banner in 1962 entitled "Mergers."<sup>55</sup> The third is a longer article by the same author in the December 3, 1964, Gospel Banner entitled, "Why Not a Merger of Holiness Churches?"<sup>56</sup> The last article suggests reasons why the holiness churches should unite.

In summary, two things may be noted regarding the relationship between the ecumenical movement and unity moves among the holiness churches: (1) such moves are a part of the ecumenical movement in the sense that they are prompted by some of the same pressures and forces, are influenced negatively by the ecumenical movement itself, and are, after all, unity moves; and (2) there is developing within the holiness movement a "holiness ecumenicity" similar to ecumenical thinking generally but limited in its scope to the holiness churches.<sup>57</sup>

---

<sup>54</sup>Roy S. Nicholson, "The Main Idea," The Wesleyan Methodist, CI (November 1, 1944), p. 2.

<sup>55</sup>Everek R. Storms, "Mergers," Gospel Banner, LXXV (September 13, 1962), p. 6.

<sup>56</sup>Everek R. Storms, "Why Not a Merger of Holiness Churches?" Gospel Banner, LXXXVII (December 3, 1964), pp. 6, 12-13.

<sup>57</sup>See infra, p. 339ff.



### III. THE CHURCHES AND THE HOLINESS WITNESS

In tracing the history of the holiness movement in Chapter II it was seen how the holiness witness was revived within Methodism in the mid-eighteen hundreds. This revival of the doctrine and experience of Wesleyan holiness led to the rise of independent holiness associations within Methodism, many of which eventually became small independent holiness sects.

It was noted there was considerable difference of opinion during the period of sect formation as to whether those professing holiness should remain in the Methodist church or should leave Methodism to form distinctly holiness churches.<sup>58</sup> Even as late as 1914 Joseph H. Smith urged the holiness people to maintain a holiness witness to the larger, not strictly holiness denominations. He wrote,

Not extraction, but permeation is our mission! I know not one of these holiness churches--the Free Methodist, the Nazarene, the Holiness Church (and if there be others that are distinctly set for holiness) but what I sincerely believe has a mission and a place in the present order and condition of things. And in every way possible, the holiness movement should further their agency. But, oh beloved, no one of these, nor all together, can begin to fill the place of the holiness movement!<sup>59</sup>

Yet today the major holiness witness is found outside the major denominations, outside Methodism, in the smaller holiness denominations. And this change has been reflected in the changing nature of the National Holiness Association whereby it is now primarily an association of holiness denominations rather than an associa-

---

<sup>58</sup>Supra, p. 36ff.

<sup>59</sup>Joseph H. Smith, Things Behind and Things Before in the Holiness Movement (Chicago: Evangelistic Institute Press, 1916), p. 50.

tion of individuals endeavoring to maintain the holiness witness within Methodism.<sup>60</sup>

Considering developments within Methodism, perhaps this change was inevitable. But the question immediately at hand is, what is the responsibility of the contemporary holiness movement to the churches--the major Protestant denominations in America today?

This question must be raised and considered here because it is totally bound up with the whole question of unity and the holiness churches. If the holiness churches unite, will this further sever the holiness witness from Methodism? Will it spell the demise of the National Holiness Association? Further, how far should the unity impulse in the holiness ranks extend? What about a possible reunion with the Methodist Church? The last question places this matter squarely within the problem of the relation of the holiness churches to the larger ecumenical perspective today.

This problem of the churches and the holiness witness can be divided into two aspects: (1) the future role of the NHA, and (2) the limits of holiness ecumenicity.

#### Future Role of the NHA

Concern has been expressed by some that an amalgamation of the holiness churches may bring the end of the NHA. The feeling is that the NHA has become so much an association of denominations rather than of individuals within the major

---

<sup>60</sup>Supra, pp. 59-62.

denominations that should the NHA churches merge the NHA might cease to exist. In other words, the witness of the holiness movement to and within the Methodist Church would come to an end.<sup>61</sup>

Bishop Myron F. Boyd of the Free Methodist Church, who is to serve as chairman of the study conference on federating the holiness churches to be held in December, 1966, was asked by the present writer specifically what effect a federation of holiness churches would have on the future of the NHA. Bishop Boyd answered,

We do not know what the future will be for the NHA. The suggestion of a federation of holiness churches came out of the NHA itself. The NHA is sponsoring the committee to set up this conference next December. It may be that in promoting such a federation the NHA will lose itself and not be necessary in the future. This, however, we cannot say at present. No one knows the answer to this question.<sup>62</sup>

It is clear from Dr. Kindschi's presidential address to the NHA in Dallas in April, 1966, and from NHA sponsorship of the 1966 federation conference, that the primary task of the NHA today as viewed by the association's leadership is the bringing about of some kind of union of the NHA denominations.<sup>63</sup> This, of course, reflects the changing character of the NHA today as compared with thirty or forty years ago. Since the leadership of the NHA today is drawn almost entirely from the

---

<sup>61</sup>J. Sutherland Logan, interview with the writer, conducted at Asbury Theological Seminary, Wilmore, Kentucky, October 21, 1965; Delbert R. Rose, interview with the writer, conducted at Wilmore, Kentucky, March 9, 1966.

<sup>62</sup>Myron F. Boyd, personal letter to the writer, dated March 3, 1966.

<sup>63</sup>Supra, pp. 331-336.

smaller holiness denominations, it is understandable that this leadership should be primarily concerned with the ministry of the NHA to these denominations.

But the question needs to be asked whether there is to be any longer a holiness witness to and within Methodism? Or does the NHA in promoting the unity of the holiness churches tacitly admit that it is never again to have a ministry to and within the Methodist Church?

In the judgment of the present writer the NHA should officially, deliberately and carefully consider whether the NHA may yet be able to have a ministry outside and in addition to the now established holiness churches.

Perhaps Joseph H. Smith's admonition to the holiness movement is in essence as relevant today as it was fifty years ago:

...may I not submit two reasons--yes, three--which yet remain to urge us to make at least one more hopeful, concerted effort for the spread of holiness in the great Methodist Churches of our time?  
 (1) They are the largest and most influential among the churches of our country. (2) They have the most people in their membership that are eligible to this experience. (3) They, of all the large churches, have the only true doctrine of sanctification.<sup>64</sup>

Perhaps the day is past when the National Holiness Association can have such a ministry. But the possibility needs to be considered. If it is not considered then, in the judgment of this writer, it is likely the NHA will cease to render a vital ministry once a union of holiness churches takes place.

#### Limits of Holiness Ecumenicity

Viewing the same concern for a holiness witness to major Protestantism from

---

<sup>64</sup>Smith, op. cit., p. 42.

the perspective of the holiness denominations themselves, the question arises: What are, or should be, the limits of "holiness ecumenicity"? How far should the unitive impulse carry the holiness churches? J. Sutherland Logan asks, where do we stop? Do we form one large holiness church and stop there, or do we go on to seek union with, say, the Methodist Church?<sup>65</sup>

It is abundantly clear from the attitude of the holiness churches toward the ecumenical movement, as presented in the early part of this chapter, that at present the holiness churches would look with disfavor, if not horror, on the prospect of a union with Methodism. But opinions and attitudes change and it is possible that, should the holiness churches unite, in time there would be a union of the united church with Methodism--for better or worse.

Even today there are some who feel, as some prominent holiness leaders of the past have felt, that holiness people belong inside the larger churches, not outside them.<sup>66</sup>

There has been no force strong enough so far to keep the holiness people inside Methodism and the other large churches. It may be the ecumenical movement will be such a force.

This question is one of those great imponderables of the future. But it needs to be understood that it is a question which will become increasingly crucial and insistent if and as a union of holiness churches occurs.

---

<sup>65</sup>Logan, loc. cit.

<sup>66</sup>Kenneth Kinghorn, personal conversation with the writer at Asbury Theological Seminary, February, 1966.

#### IV. ECUMENISM AND THE EVANGELICAL-FUNDAMENTALIST TENSION

It has been the purpose of this chapter to see the question of unity and the holiness churches in the larger ecumenical perspective. It may be helpful therefore at this point to relate unity and the holiness churches to what has come to be known as the fundamentalist-evangelical controversy within conservative Protestantism.

During the first half of this century the term "fundamentalist" was used to describe those theologically conservative groups and individuals who believed in the authority and infallibility of the Bible and in the fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith. In the earlier part of the century fundamentalism was the conservative side of the liberal-conservative controversy within Protestantism.

In more recent years, however, the terms "evangelical," "new evangelical," and "neo-evangelical" have come into use in order to describe a type of theological conservatism which, while holding to the fundamentals of the faith, wished to dissociate itself from certain attitudes and viewpoints common among fundamentalists. So today there exists within conservative Protestantism a tension between fundamentalists and evangelicals.<sup>67</sup>

Two books in particular may be cited which deal with this relatively new development. The first is by Ronald H. Nash and is entitled The New Evangelicalism.<sup>68</sup> This is a cogent and readable presentation of the new evangelicalism.

---

<sup>67</sup>Ronald H. Nash, The New Evangelicalism (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1963), pp. 21-32.

<sup>68</sup>Ibid., 183 pp.

The second, which attempts to show the failures of the new evangelicalism from a fundamentalist point of view is Robert P. Lightner's Neo-Evangelicalism.<sup>69</sup>

Lightner defines fundamentalism as

The movement which was born in the early part of the twentieth century in opposition to and as a reaction against liberalism. It strongly reemphasizes the fundamentals of historic Christianity. In addition to other doctrines which were held to be basic and fundamental the area of conflict centered around: (1) the inerrancy of the Scripture, (2) the deity of Christ, (3) the virgin birth of Christ, (4) the substitutionary atonement of Christ, and (5) the physical resurrection and future bodily return of Christ.<sup>70</sup>

Lightner holds that

Though the leaders of fundamentalism have changed, the movement still exists as a vibrant, reactionary movement. It has not died because its original enemy has reproduced many followers who, in spite of their orthodox disguise, are still the avowed enemies of Bible-revealed Christianity. Its enemies are more numerous and subtle, hence, more dangerous. Fundamentalism will not lay down the armour until the enemy has been eternally captured by the King of kings and Lord of lords.<sup>71</sup>

It is pretty clear from his book that Lightner is including the new evangelicals among the "enemies of Bible-revealed Christianity."

From the evangelical point of view, fundamentalism may be defined as follows:

In the narrow sense, "fundamentalism" is used today to refer to the American reaction against religious modernism at the turn of this

---

<sup>69</sup>Robert P. Lightner, Neo-Evangelicalism (Findlay, Ohio: Dunham Publishing Company, n. d.), 170 pp. This book was published before Nash's book and is discussed by Nash in The New Evangelicalism.

<sup>70</sup>Ibid., p. 17

<sup>71</sup>Ibid., p. 33.

century that based its defense of orthodoxy on the fundamentals of the faith... one of the major arguments of evangelicalism... is that contemporary fundamentalism has forfeited its right to be considered the historic successor of the early fundamentalists.<sup>72</sup>

Though in their use so far the terms "fundamentalist" and "new evangelical" seem to have particular reference to those branches of Protestantism with an essentially Calvinistic theology,<sup>73</sup> the evangelical-fundamentalist controversy at least runs parallel to certain developments within the holiness churches. The parallel, in fact, is so striking that it merits considerably more study than can be given here.<sup>74</sup>

In general, it may be said that most of the holiness denominations, at least at the level of denominational leadership, appear to be in essential harmony with the new evangelicalism in their basic attitudes toward themselves and toward other groups. For instance, at the 1951 General Conference of the Free Methodist Church the bishops spoke out against "rabid fundamentalist groups" that have "a tendency... to be emotionally hot and ethically cold."<sup>75</sup>

Further, it appears that as the National Association of Evangelicals for the most part represents the neo-evangelical point of view, so the NHA represents the neo-evangelical point of view within the holiness movement.

---

<sup>72</sup>Nash, *op. cit.*, p. 16.

<sup>73</sup>E. g., Nash refers to "the Calvinistic neo-evangelicalism of Clark and Henry" (*Ibid.*, p. 162).

<sup>74</sup>See Chapter X, p. 375.

<sup>75</sup>Leslie R. Marston et al., "The Legacy and Responsibility of Free Methodism," The Free Methodist, LXXXIV (June 19, 1951), p. 12.



There exists also an organization known as the Independent Fundamental Churches of America which does not cooperate with NAE because of NAE's so-called "broad doctrinal position."<sup>76</sup> This organization also has its parallel within the holiness movement in the Inter-Church Holiness Convention (IHC) which seems to be a "counter-nucleation" of the more radical groups and individuals in the holiness movement in reaction to the NHA and which has no contact with the NHA.<sup>77</sup> The IHC is headed by a Wesleyan Methodist who has consistently opposed proposed Wesleyan mergers. Others active in the IHC include former Free Methodists and former Pilgrims who have left their denominations to form new sects in the face of the growing "liberalism" among the holiness churches.

Basically the thinking of the IHC, which advocates "sweet radical holiness," conforms to that of Calvinistic fundamentalism except that the basic theology is Arminian and Wesleyan. In attitudes toward the world, toward ecumenism, and toward matters of schism and separation, those holiness people represented by the IHC are fundamentalists.

Speaking of present day fundamentalists Ronald Nash writes,

One of the prime "virtues" of the twentieth-century separatist is theological pugnaciousness. One can hear them speak proudly and boastfully of their "militant fundamentalism," "uncompromising fundamentalism," "fighting fundamentalism," and so on, ad nauseam. The trouble is that these men are often refusing to compromise on issues that are of secondary importance and the people they are fighting are

---

<sup>76</sup>Lightner, op. cit., p. 91.

<sup>77</sup>Cf. various issues of the I. H. Convention Herald, official publication of the IHC.

often those who simply refuse to follow their acceptance of these minor issues. When there are no more liberals within range, they don't stop fighting. The issues simply change. So they now challenge all those who refuse to concur with their belief, for example, that the rapture takes place before the tribulation.<sup>78</sup>

A review of the IHC's Convention Herald shows this description is totally applicable to the more radical elements in the holiness movement.<sup>79</sup>

The evangelical-fundamentalist tension is found within the holiness movement, then, but with a Wesleyan-Arminian context. In the holiness churches it cuts across denominational lines so that the tension is found within most of the NHA denominations. It is this which is leading to what may be the re-alignment of holiness people in the near future noted in Chapter II.

The significance of this evangelical-fundamentalist tension within the holiness movement has to do with the holiness churches as seen in the larger ecumenical perspective. Already the lines are forming sufficiently so that one can see that in any future ecumenical cooperation by the holiness churches beyond the bounds of the holiness movement, the general trend will be parallel to that of evangelical Protestantism generally. The ecumenical thinking of the NAE and of Christianity Today, for instance, will continue to be pretty much the thinking which will be generally accepted by the holiness movement. The direction the new evangelicalism is moving ecumenically is probably the direction the holiness churches will go. Only minor elements of the holiness movement appear to run parallel to modern fundamentalism.

---

<sup>78</sup>Nash, op. cit., p. 91.

<sup>79</sup>See also the United Holiness Sentinel, official organ of the newly-formed United Holiness Church.

The holiness movement, then, in the main, is moving away from fundamentalism right along with the larger community of Protestant evangelicalism of which it is a part.<sup>80</sup>

## V. ECUMENICAL QUESTIONS FACING THE HOLINESS CHURCHES

Some of the matters considered in this chapter--and, in fact, whole thrust of this thesis--raise certain ecumenical questions for the holiness churches. Basically these questions concern four aspects of the relationship of the holiness churches to the ecumenical movement: (1) basic attitude toward the ecumenical movement, (2) ecumenical cooperation, (3) basic attitudes toward Christian unity, and (4) the extent of unity. Numbers one and three are more foundational and numbers two and four more of a corollary nature.

### Basic Attitude Toward the Ecumenical Movement

Here the essential question facing the holiness churches is: What should be our attitude toward the ecumenical movement?

This question, of course, has particular reference to the first section of this chapter where it was seen that at least some commonly accepted attitudes toward the ecumenical movement on the part of holiness people are not solidly based on fact. Especially is this true of the commonly accepted view that the major aim of the ecu-

---

<sup>80</sup>Although it has not been dealt with here, certain parallels between fundamentalism and sectarianism, and evangelicalism and the church-type, are recognizable. At least at the level of basic attitudes and ways of thinking there seems to be a correspondence between the evangelical-fundamentalist tension and the sect-church continuum.

menical movement is a world church.

No attempt is made here to answer this basic question. Some cautions may be raised, however, to prevent a too-shallow answer.

1. The answer should be based on an acquaintance with the literature of the ecumenical movement. Writing on the ecumenical movement by conservatives, even in such books as the NAE-sponsored symposium, The Dynamics of Christian Unity,<sup>81</sup> often betrays only a casual acquaintance with ecumenical literature, or at best "proof-texting" from ecumenical sources in order to substantiate preconceived assumptions about the ecumenical movement. The holiness churches need students of the ecumenical movement to interpret accurately and sympathetically the movement to the holiness people so they may develop a solidly based attitude toward the movement. Such an acquaintance with ecumenical literature might in fact substantiate existing basic attitudes toward the movement. But it is certain that at least some points altered attitudes would be required.

2. The answer should not be based on the assumption that "ecumenical" and "liberal" can be equated. Such an assumption is unfair and requires one to prejudge many whose theological beliefs are unknown to him. It is also unfair because it is too convenient: it allows one comfortably to dismiss the matter without examining the facts.

3. The answer must be in harmony with the doctrine of perfect love. Paul

---

<sup>81</sup>W. Stanley Mooneyham, The Dynamics of Christian Unity (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1963), 116 pp.

says love "thinketh no evil."<sup>82</sup> In harmony with the theology they preach, therefore, holiness churches must not assign the worst possible motives to ecumenical leaders but rather the best possible motives in the light of the evidence.

### Ecumenical Cooperation

The basic question here is: Should the holiness churches cooperate with the ecumenical movement? The question takes in view cooperation in local councils of churches, membership in the National and World Councils, and other forms of cooperation such as social concerns.

The answer to this question must, of course, be based upon the underlying attitude toward the ecumenical movement. But some additional aspects of this specific question may be noted.

There are many advantages, for instance, to cooperating in a local council of churches program. Robert Lee notes that in such cooperation

Not only is there widespread acceptance of sociological tools for survey, but experience reveals that community surveys done by a council are less expensive and more manageable. After an area has been surveyed by three or four different religious groups, the residents will understandably refuse to co-operate on the fifty query. Church directories and various types of handbooks, published by local councils, respond to the need for information, in view of the complexities of organizational life in a community. The handbooks typically contain resources for referral agencies, including psychiatric clinics, family counseling, adoption services, homes for the aged, and other references within the enlarged scope of the present-day minister's functions.<sup>83</sup>

---

<sup>82</sup>1 Corinthians 13: 5 (KJV).

<sup>83</sup>Robert Lee, The Social Sources of Church Unity (New York: Abingdon Press, 1960), p. 137.

There may well be valid arguments against such cooperation, but the arguments pro and con need to be given a fair hearing.

So also with the sensitive question of membership in the National Council of Churches. Holiness churches may be justified in their indignation at statements occasionally made by NCC spokesmen, but that alone does not settle the question. It needs to be asked whether the holiness churches have rationally considered exactly what NCC membership would mean, or whether emotional factors, such as fear of the denunciations of some fundamentalists, have played an unduly large part.

It must be noted that, contrary to what is often implied by conservatives, cooperation with the NCC is not synonymous with doctrinal compromise. Holding back from NCC membership must be justified on some other grounds than that membership would mean acceptance of a world church based on inadequate doctrine.

The foregoing should not be understood as necessarily advocating NCC membership. It is merely an attempt to clear the ground for a sound basis on which to decide whether or not cooperation with the ecumenical movement is wise.

#### Basic Attitude Toward Christian Unity

Here the essential question is: What should be the attitude of the holiness churches toward Christian unity? Or, in other words, in the light of ecumenical thinking on unity, how should holiness people interpret the oneness spoken of in the Bible?

Is it sufficiently deep thinking to say the only unity Christ wants for his church on earth is a spiritual, invisible unity? Paul L. Kindschi has suggested that

it is not.<sup>84</sup> Likewise Lesslie Newbigin in his provocative little book Is Christ Divided? argues,

There is, unfortunately, a loose use of the word "spiritual" which enables people in ordinary speech to put asunder the two things which Scripture unites--the one body and the one Spirit. People talk of a "spiritual unity" as something separate from unity in one body. It is often difficult to know what this means. Sometimes it means a feeling of unity which can express itself in occasional courtesies, or in occasional joint demonstrations, but is not strong enough to stand the strain of living together in one body. When people are content with this, feeling degenerates into sentimentality. When Paul speaks about "one Spirit" he is talking about something far removed from this. He is talking of the one Holy Spirit of God given to believers. And he links this indissolubly with "one body," because the proper fruit of the presence of the Spirit of God is a love that is not sentimental but strong and enduring and patient as the love of Christ Himself. Such love expresses itself in more than occasional demonstrations. It expresses itself in a deep and enduring commitment to one another to live as brethren in one family. If we think that a "spiritual unity" which is content with mere feeling and does not seek visible expression in that kind of steady and enduring commitment, is an adequate expression of our unity in Christ, we deceive ourselves.<sup>85</sup>

Probably the biggest problem for the holiness churches in this area is simply this: What is the Church? Who are in the Church? Is a particular church as a church part of the Church if many of its members are not actually converted? And how can one know which churches are apostate and which are not? It is a problem, largely, of ecclesiology. There can be little agreement as to the kind of unity Christ wills until there is some agreement as to the nature of the Church.

This is an area, then, where some profound theological issues are involved.

---

<sup>84</sup>Paul L. Kindschi, "One in Christ," presidential address to the National Holiness Association, Dallas, Texas, April 13, 1966.

<sup>85</sup>Lesslie Newbigin, Is Christ Divided? (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1961), pp. 16-17.

These issues have for the past number of years been wrestled with by ecumenical thinkers; it is time some in the holiness churches deal with this basic question of Christian unity from an avowedly Wesleyan-Arminian point of view, and with a background of acquaintance with the new ecumenical literature on this subject.

### Extent of Unity

The final ecumenical question facing the holiness churches is: How far should moves toward unity go? What is the extent of the unity being sought by the holiness churches?

This question relates especially to the earlier discussion of this chapter concerning the churches and the holiness witness. For the crucial focus of this question for the holiness churches is, does a union of the holiness churches exhaust the possibilities of the unity we seek?

This is a question, of course, which cannot really be answered this far in advance of the possibility of its arising. But it is an ever-present background question when unity moves are undertaken. And it would perhaps be well if some holiness thinkers were to consider the advantages and disadvantages of an independent holiness voice as compared to a reunion with the larger Protestant churches. Perhaps the widespread belief that a holiness witness could not be maintained with the Methodist Church today is a too uncritical assumption. In any case, the question is there.

But a more basic aspect of this matter concerns the degree of openness on the part of the holiness churches to whatever, in the will of God, the future may hold. Is a controlled ecumenicity really a Christian ecumenicity? Even though it



might be with somewhat different assumptions, perhaps the holiness churches need more of an attitude like that expressed by Leslie Newbigin:

None of us knows exactly what we ought to do, exactly what kind of unity He wants for us. Only He can show us. But we do know--unless we shut our eyes--that these divisions are contrary to His will, and that we ought to repent of them and turn together to Him. When we do that, He will surely use us to fulfill His purpose of drawing all men to Himself.<sup>86</sup>

Newbigin is assuming here, of course, something which most leaders in the holiness churches would not accept--namely, that separate denominational entities are, in and of themselves, sinful, since they fragmentize the Church. But the essential point remains that all churches, not least the holiness churches, must be open to whatever God has for them in the way of ecumenical cooperation.<sup>87</sup>

### Summary

If and as the holiness churches move into greater unity with each other they will discover in a way they do not as yet realize that the matter of unity and the holiness churches is integrally related to many ecumenical questions. Ecumenical questions which will, and to an extent already are, facing the holiness churches are: (1) What should be our attitude toward the ecumenical movement? (2) Should the holiness churches cooperate with the ecumenical movement? (3) What should be our attitude toward Christian unity? And, (4) how far should moves toward unity go?

---

<sup>86</sup>ibid., p. 10.

<sup>87</sup>Cf. Gerald Kennedy, "The Church and Unity," The Christian Century, LXXVIII (February 8, 1961), pp. 170-172.

## VI. PROSPECTS

The questions raised and discussed in this chapter do not reveal what may be expected in the way of the relationship of the holiness churches to the ecumenical movement in the years to come. There are some signs, however, which seem to indicate the direction the holiness churches are moving.

Basically, on the basis of a new impulse toward unity, the development of a holiness ecumenical thinking, and the alliance of the holiness movement with the vitality of evangelicalism generally, it appears the holiness churches are moving in the direction of a greater openness toward ecumenicity generally. And the whole question is also to be placed, of course, within the context of the sect-to-church continuum whereby a less self-conscious, sectarian character is developing.

It may be there are forces at present unforeseen which will alter the direction of movement. However, on the basis of all the factors known to be working together to bring about a greater openness, it should not be thought surprising if in the coming years (1) several of the holiness churches merge, (2) the possibility of a union with the Methodist Church is seriously considered by one or more holiness churches, and (3) several of the holiness churches, or a merged holiness church, begin to cooperate with the National or World Council of Churches while at the same time maintaining affiliation with the National Association of Evangelicals.

Perhaps developments will occur within the ecumenical movement which will drastically alienate the holiness churches. But if not, the prospects suggested above would not be surprising, given a period of several decades. Whether such

developments would or would not be in the best interest of spreading scriptural holiness it is not the task of this study to decide.

## CHAPTER IX

### MAJOR CONCLUSIONS OF THIS STUDY

In this study "Unity and the Holiness Churches" has been taken in a rather broad perspective in order that some of the less obvious ramifications of the subject might be seen.

This task now having come to completion, the task of the present chapter is to state in concise form the major conclusions which have been drawn incidentally throughout this study and additional conclusions which may be distilled from the study.

The procedure will be to present the major conclusions under the major concerns of this study as reflected in the chapter titles. However chapters IV, V, and VI are grouped under the one title, "merger negotiations."

The major conclusions of this study, then, are grouped under the subjects, (1) history of the holiness movement, (2) past and present moves toward unity, (3) merger negotiations, (4) basic problems, and (5) the larger ecumenical perspective.

#### I. HISTORY OF THE HOLINESS MOVEMENT

The review of the history of the holiness movement presented in Chapter II suggests the following general conclusions:

1. Several of the present day denominations affiliated with the National Holiness Association arose during the period 1880-1930 as an outgrowth of holiness revivalism within American Methodism or of the influence of Methodist holiness re-

vivalism on other denominations, such as the Mennonites and the Friends. Frequently new holiness sects came into being as regional, state, and local holiness associations arose and then gradually moved toward independency. A number of the holiness sects formed in this manner consolidated into such churches as the Pilgrim Holiness Church and the Church of the Nazarene. Notable exceptions to this general pattern were the Wesleyan Methodist Church and the Free Methodist Church, which came into being as a result of schisms in the Methodist Episcopal Church between 1830 and 1860, and the Salvation Army.

2. In general the holiness churches in their origin and development appear, on the basis of a preliminary survey of their history, to have demonstrated the characteristics of the sect-type of religious organization as set forth by Ernst Troeltsch and have moved along the sect-to-church continuum, following the pattern of change outlined by H. Richard Niebuhr and Liston Pope. While most of the holiness churches now affiliated with the NHA seem never to have been sects in the most extreme sense, sectarian characteristics were present. Gradually many of the sect characteristics have faded and most of the NHA denominations are today becoming fully churches. While the above analysis seems to the present writer to be valid on the basis of the material presented in Chapter II, it should be understood that this is a tentative conclusion which would require investigation beyond the scope of this study to fully validate.

3. Despite similarities among the holiness churches, there have been significant differences. Particularly, the issues leading to the formation of these groups were not always the same. Thus in their origin the new sects tended to react against

the parent church at different points. The present diversity in polity among these groups, for example, is related to issues in the formation of these sects.

4. The issues and factors in the origin of the various holiness sects have been sufficiently diverse that it is not possible to attribute the origin of these groups to any one factor nor to conclude that the formation of these groups can always be attributed to the short-sightedness, ambition, or even desire of those who formed them.

5. The period from 1930 to the present has seen a significant change in the role of the National Holiness Association. With the rise and establishment of the various holiness churches the NHA has come to be primarily a fraternity of holiness denominations rather than primarily an organ for furthering the holiness witness within Methodism.

6. Social and religious factors at work in America today are bringing a commonality among the holiness churches which is furthering the tendency toward unity and cooperation among these groups. The holiness churches have definitely not remained untouched by the winds of ecumenicity.

## II. PAST AND PRESENT MOVES TOWARD UNITY

1. There is a new impulse toward unity and union among the NHA churches. At least twenty-two mergers involving NHA-affiliated churches have been attempted or consummated. Of these, thirteen have occurred since 1950. Further evidence of this new unity impulse can be seen in the significant new areas of cooperation within the holiness movement, particularly in interdenominational associations, publishing,

education, and missions.

2. The National Holiness Association has formally assumed the task of attempting to bring the holiness churches closer together and is sponsoring a conference on church federation in late 1966. This is a further evidence of the new impulse toward unity and union within the holiness movement.

### III. MERGER NEGOTIATIONS

#### Free Methodist - Wesleyan Methodist Negotiations

1. The Free Methodist - Wesleyan Methodist merger negotiations between 1943 and 1955 were thorough and generally well conducted.

2. At the beginning the major obstacles to union appear to have been (1) mutual ignorance and (2) differences in polity. Differences in polity which were especially crucial concerned (1) the general superintendency, (2) pastoral placement, (3) denominational schools.

3. In the union proposal as finally embodied in the proposed discipline for a united church it appears that the Wesleyans conceded more than did the Free Methodists. However the union proposal in no sense represented a radical departure for either church from the polity they had already had.

4. Debate over the proposed merger was extensive within the Wesleyan Methodist Church and virtually non-existent within Free Methodism.

5. Arguments advanced for merger were of a general and confirmatory nature rather than specific or polemical. In contrast the opposing arguments were more polemical and propagandistic, often employing emotion-laden language and over-

generalization.

6. The opposition to merger expressed in the merger debate probably played a significant role in halting negotiations. The arguments of "episcopacy" and "centralization of power" were probably particularly influential.

7. This merger attempt failed primarily because of two immediate and four underlying factors. The immediate factors were (1) fear of episcopacy and (2) fear of schism. Underlying factors were (1) differences in polity, (2) differences in denominational self-image, (3) difference in size, and (4) differences in sectness.

8. The factors working both for and against union in the Free Methodist and Wesleyan Methodist churches today allow a guarded optimism toward the possibility of an eventual union of these two churches, since it appears the negative factors are becoming less powerful and the positive factors are increasing in significance. But there are imponderable factors which make the future largely inscrutable.

#### United Missionary – Evangelical Methodist Negotiations

1. It appears the pending merger between the United Missionary Church and the Evangelical Methodist Church will not be consummated.

2. Major obstacles to union were differences in doctrine, standards, polity, and, especially, differing views toward merger generally. While the first three of these factors were largely overcome through negotiations, it appears that the higher degree of ecclesiocentrism, or denominational self-awareness and self-centeredness, on the part of the Evangelical Methodists is the factor which will prevent merger.



3. The basis on which it has been proposed to unite these two churches shows a willingness to make reasonable compromises on the part of both churches.

4. The eventual merger of these two churches does not seem likely unless it is via a multidenominational union in the future. However it does appear likely the United Missionary Church will unite with some other church or churches in the not distant future, as this church demonstrates a desire for such a union.

#### Wesleyan Methodist - Pilgrim Holiness Negotiations

1. Negotiations between the Wesleyan Methodist Church and the Pilgrim Holiness Church have proceeded more rapidly than did the Free Methodist - Wesleyan Methodist negotiations.

2. The merger debate, as was true in the Free Methodist - Wesleyan Methodist negotiations, was most extensive among the Wesleyans. Generally the arguments favoring merger were stronger and more specific than was true in 1955 among the Wesleyans. The opposing arguments were similar in thought and language to those set forth in 1955.

3. The major obstacles to a merger of the Wesleyan Methodist and Pilgrim Holiness churches today seems to be (1) mutual ignorance, (2) fear of centralization of power, (3) fear of schism, and (4) ecclesiocentrism.

4. There are some grounds for optimism concerning the Wesleyan-Pilgrim merger; however the extent to which opposition to merger could build up within the Wesleyan Methodist Church prior to the 1966 general conferences cannot be estimated. Should the 1966 merger attempt not succeed, however, it appears likely that further

cooperation and perhaps union of the two churches might still come about.

### General Conclusions Concerning Merger

In addition to the above conclusions several general conclusions concerning mergers of holiness churches may be drawn from the studies of the three merger attempts presented in this thesis.

1. Generally it would seem to be wiser, in merger negotiations, to vote on merger on the basis of a brief but carefully prepared basis of union, rather than a full discipline. If a full discipline is prepared, when voting takes place delegates must vote for the entire discipline if they wish to vote for merger, whereas they might not approve of all the provisions of the proposed discipline. Presumably some who favored merger would vote against it because they did not approve of the proposed basis. Therefore, it would be better to make the basis for union as brief and simple as possible, leaving most of the details to be worked out later. This is essentially the procedure being following in the current Wesleyan-Pilgrim merger considerations.

2. When the two denominations participating in merger talks are not drastically different in size, it would be better to treat both churches as equals rather than trying to work out proportional representation on church boards and for general church offices. This would be more sensible because denominations are more than an aggregate of people; they also represent certain traditions and common practices and beliefs. Such an approach of equality also has the practical advantage of creating a more favorable attitude toward the merger on the part of the smaller church.

3. Considering the extent of mutual ignorance and prejudice that exists between the holiness denominations, churches contemplating merger would do well to attack more effectively and seriously this problem. Perhaps a special joint committee should be set up to work with, but separate from, the joint commission. For this task is equally important as that of working out a basis for union.

4. Careful attention should be given to the matter of procedure for voting on merger at the general conference. There should be safeguards so that one vote taken in a moment of high emotion could not kill further progress toward union. A possible solution might be to present to the general conference a proposed procedure which would be followed when the actual merger vote was to be taken. Such a procedure might provide that if more than half but less than two-thirds of the delegates voted favorably the question would automatically come up for consideration at a later sitting. Or it could be decided before the actual vote on merger that, should the vote be unfavorable, merger negotiations would be continued for another quadrennium. Another possibility might be to separate the question of merger itself from any particular basis of merger: vote first on the question, "Shall we merge?" and then on the question, "On what basis shall we merge?"

5. Finally, it appears likely that a federation of holiness churches could well be an effective step toward merger. Cooperation through federation would allow the holiness churches to get better acquainted, cooperate in many programs, unite some ministries--in short, accomplish some of the tasks a merger itself would require--while at the same time maintaining their individual identities.

## IV. BASIC PROBLEMS

1. Factors which currently are or may be expected to become major problems to increased unity among the holiness churches are (1) doctrine, (2) prudentials, (3) polity, (4) institutionalism, (5) ecclesiocentrism, (6) socio-economic differences, (7) mutual ignorance and prejudice, (8) comparative size, and (9) danger of schism.

2. Doctrine will probably only emerge as a crucial problem in the event a holiness denomination attempts to unite with a church which is outside the NHA.

3. Prudentials will probably be an issue in future negotiations but will likely not be crucial enough to prevent merger.

4. While polity appears to be one of the more basic issues in the unity question, it probably will be of decreasing importance as time passes since the holiness denominations seem to be moving toward a common polity with the passage of time. Polity will not be an insurmountable obstacle to union when a sufficiently broad will to unite has developed.

5. A number of problems of an institutional nature unavoidably arise when union is considered. Although it is difficult to evaluate the significance of such factors, it can be predicted they will play a prominent part in any future merger considerations.

6. Ecclesiocentrism appears to be a basic problem in the question of unity, particularly as it shows itself in an unwillingness to give up denominational identity for the sake of union and as a fear of compromising existing purity.

7. Socio-economic differences may be considered to be an underlying factor in the unity question. It is sufficiently complex and yet sufficiently important that it should receive further study.

8. Mutual ignorance and prejudice remain a basic obstacle to the unity of the holiness churches. Forms of interdenominational cooperation short of merger probably would work to break down such ignorance and prejudice.

9. Comparative size tends to work against mergers, usually in the form of a fear on the part of the smaller group of being "swallowed up." Considering merger on the basis of the principle of equality should tend to alleviate this problem.

10. The danger and the fear of schism is, and probably will continue to be, a major problem to unity. Some schisms appear likely in some of the NHA denominations regardless of the unity question, however, and there may come a re-alignment of holiness people into the main body now within the holiness churches and a smaller body which through schism will form its own sect or sects. If such a re-alignment occurs the schisms bringing it about may actually further the progress of unity moves in the main branches of the holiness movement.

11. These basic problems are areas where further study might make a contribution to the question of unity and the holiness churches.

## V. THE LARGER ECUMENICAL PERSPECTIVE

1. In general, the holiness churches appear to have an attitude of disfavor or disapproval toward the ecumenical movement. So far as writing in denominational organs of the holiness churches is concerned, this seems to be based largely

on the belief that the goal of the ecumenical movement is the amalgamation of all churches into one world church.

2. A review of the relevant materials does not support the view that the ecumenical movement is seeking to establish one world church, although there appears to be an implicit assumption on the part of ecumenical organizations that mergers are commendable.

3. Unity moves among the holiness churches are actually a part of the whole ecumenical movement, the impulse for such moves coming from some of the same factors which have given rise to the ecumenical movement generally. Unity moves among the holiness churches are thus an expression of ecumenism.

4. There is developing within the holiness movement a "holiness ecumenicity," that is, an ecumenical thinking specifically related to the holiness churches.

5. A crucial question confronting the holiness movement today concerns the role of the National Holiness Association: Is the NHA ever again to have the ministry of a holiness witness to the Methodist Church? Or is the NHA to confine its ministry to the holiness denominations which are now affiliated with NHA? This question is especially crucial in the light of the prospect of a federation of holiness churches.

6. The main body of the holiness movement today is more in sympathy with the evangelical, as distinct from the fundamentalist, interpretation of conservative Christianity. However there is a division within the holiness movement today roughly corresponding to the evangelical-fundamentalist tension in conservative Calvinistic

circles. This means that a greater cleavage between these two groups in the holiness movement may conceivably come and ecumenical thinking in the main body of the holiness movement will probably develop along the lines of ecumenical thinking in contemporary evangelical circles.

7. There are four basic ecumenical questions facing the holiness churches today: (1) What should be the attitude toward the ecumenical movement? (2) Should the holiness churches cooperate with the ecumenical movement? (3) What should be the attitude toward unity? (4) To what extent should unity go?

8. In particular the holiness churches need to objectively evaluate, from the perspective of a knowledge of the ecumenical literature, whether or not they should continue to cut themselves off so completely from established ecumenical agencies.

9. The future may see greater ecumenical cooperation and interest on the part of the holiness churches.

10. Inasmuch as little study has been done on the subject of unity and the holiness churches further studies in several of the aspects of this problem covered in this thesis would be valuable.

These conclusions represent the major findings of this study. The evidence on which each conclusion is based may be studied by reviewing the chapter to which it relates.

## CHAPTER X

### SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

It has been the intention of this study to investigate rather broadly the matter of unity and the holiness churches, especially since little work has been done in this area.

Such an approach runs the risk of lack of depth, and this lack has been noted at various points throughout the study. These areas of weakness in particular are points where further investigation could well be undertaken.

Viewing the seven major chapters of this study in retrospect, the present writer suggests the following studies which might be undertaken in the general area of unity and the holiness churches.

#### 1. HISTORY OF THE HOLINESS MOVEMENT

##### Sect and Church

Various studies could be undertaken to more fully apply the sect-type and church-type classifications to the holiness churches. Specifically:

1. One of the holiness denominations could be studied, or two of them could be compared, as to their sectarian character today. This could be done by means of a carefully prepared survey, using established research and statistical procedures, of laymen, ministers, and denominational officials, possible employing the twenty-one point scale used by Liston Pope in his study of Gastonia, North Car-



olina.<sup>1</sup>

2. The movement of any one of the holiness churches along the sect-church continuum during its history could be studied in detail. A careful study of denominational literature from the time of origin on should provide a sufficient basis for such a study. Again, Pope's twenty-one points could be used.

3. Sect-type and church-type also suggest the matter of socio-economic differences between the holiness denominations. These churches could profitably be compared according to socio-economic factors. This would have relevance for the matter of unity.

4. Another related problem has to do with the matter of the rural-urban division in the holiness movement--to what extent has there been such a division? The extent to which some of the holiness churches originally were and have remained essentially rural churches could profitably be studied.

#### Rise of Holiness Sects

The whole matter of the rise of holiness sects between 1880 and 1930 deserves more study than it has been given. Not all these sects developed into the same type of denomination. Why? What similarities and differences attended the movement from holiness association to holiness sect in various places throughout the United States? To what extent has the geographical location of new sects--particularly whether they were rural or urban--been related to the growth of these sects?

---

<sup>1</sup>Liston Pope, Millhands and Preachers, A Study of Gastonia (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1942), pp. 122-124.

## Role of NHA

The role of the National Holiness Association, past, present and future, could well receive further study.

### II. PAST AND PRESENT MOVES TOWARD UNITY

Regarding past and present moves toward unity, some of the areas of interdenominational cooperation mentioned in Chapter III could be analyzed further. Also the movement toward a federation of holiness churches deserves continuing study.

### III. FREE METHODIST - WESLEYAN METHODIST NEGOTIATIONS

Some of the more crucial factors leading to the failure of the Free Methodist - Wesleyan Methodist negotiations could be studied in more detail than has been done here. Also the study of the presence of some of the same factors today might be helpful. For instance, a study by means of a questionnaire to discover the reality of the current denominational self-image among the Wesleyan Methodist might be of some value.

### IV. UNITED MISSIONARY - EVANGELICAL METHODIST NEGOTIATIONS

On the basis of further research it would be possible to give a more full account of the United Missionary - Evangelical Methodist merger attempt than has been given here. Such a study would be appropriate following the actual termination of negotiations.

## V. WESLEYAN METHODIST - PILGRIM HOLINESS NEGOTIATIONS

The Wesleyan Methodist - Pilgrim Holiness merger attempt should receive further attention once its outcome is decided. A more thorough analysis of reasons for failure or success than has been presented here should be undertaken.

## VI. BASIC PROBLEMS

Further investigation into the nine basic problems suggested in Chapter VII could be undertaken as follows:

### Doctrine

A detailed comparison of the official doctrinal position of each of the NHA denominations would reveal in what areas differences exist, how great the differences are, and how serious a factor doctrine will be in future unitive moves. Such a study might actually undertake the writing of a doctrinal statement which might be acceptable to all the NHA churches.

### Prudentials

A similar study to that suggested above could be made regarding prudentials. But such a study would have to take into consideration the extent to which prudentials are adhered to in each church and the speed with which the thinking of the denominations is changing on this matter.

### Polity

A significant comparative study could be undertaken in regard to polity.

The study should include not only a point-by-point comparison of the holiness denominations but also a consideration of the basic philosophy and principles behind each form of polity. Such an approach might reveal an underlying similarity in the actual operation of the various church governments which is presently disguised by dissimilar terms and procedures.

### Institutionalism

Additional study relating various institutional problems to the holiness churches is needed. Such a study would be difficult and would require rather extensive background study concerning social organization generally. Relatively new studies in institutionalism from the standpoint of ecumenism, such as Institutionalism and Church Unity,<sup>2</sup> should also be taken into consideration in such a study.

### Ecclesiocentrism

The factor of ecclesiocentrism in relation to the problem of unity needs to be clarified and more precisely defined. A scale could be devised and administered to a sampling of individuals in several holiness denominations which would give a fairly accurate measure of the degree of ecclesiocentrism in each church. Such a study, if carefully thought through and administered, could be very helpful in determining the likely outcome of particular merger attempts.

A study relating ecclesiocentrism to sectness also would be helpful. Again,

---

<sup>2</sup>Nils Ehrenstrom and Walter G. Muelder (eds.), Institutionalism and Church Unity (New York: Association Press, 1963), 378 pp.

a survey might be the best tool for such a study. A properly devised scale might show whether high ecclesiocentrism always accompanies high sectness, or whether a denomination can be highly sectarian and yet not highly ecclesiocentric.

#### Socio-Economic Differences

It has already been suggested in this chapter that a study of socio-economic differences among the NHA denominations might well be undertaken. These denominations could be compared as to present socio-economic status, degree of difference in socio-economic status within a particular denomination, or comparative change of two or more denominations over a specified period of time. Data for such a study might include, among other things, records of pastoral income, location and valuation of church property, quality and type of appeal of denominational literature, worship practices, extent of education and occupational status of membership, and educational level of the clergy.

#### Mutual Ignorance and Prejudice

Here again a study by means of surveys would be instructive. The extent of ignorance and prejudice of two denominations toward each other could be measured and, in the opinion of this writer, the results would be rather surprising. Such a survey conducted at the beginning of a period of merger negotiations could be invaluable in assisting the two churches to dispel such ignorance and prejudice. Such a study would, of course, be inherently related to ecclesiocentrism and the two factors could be made parts of a larger study of denominational attitudes toward merger and toward issues affecting merger.

### Comparative Size

Attitudes concerning comparative size could be included in such a study as that just suggested, above.

### Danger of Schism

1. A study of denominational attitudes presumably could be structured in such a way as to give some indication of the likelihood of schism in the event of merger.

2. Another type of study which could be helpful would be a study of one or more of the recent schisms in NHA denominations. Such a study could include factors leading up to schism, identification of danger signs, general effects of schism on the parent church, and actual causes of the schism. A study of this type might have real relevance to the question of unity and the holiness churches.

3. Along this same line, the hypothesis that there is coming a re-alignment of holiness people more or less along rural-urban, radical-progressive lines could be tested as a separate study.

### Additional Studies of Basic Problems

In addition to the suggestions noted above, studies which would investigate the various problems involved in attempting to unite the holiness churches could be most helpful. Specifically:

1. A carefully prepared "synthesis proposal" for uniting the holiness churches could be the object of a separate study. The aim would be not merely to build a patchwork polity from existing church structures but rather to distill out the

underlying principles of each denomination's polity and then build a consistent church polity on the basis of these principles. Such a synthesis proposal could be helpful, at least in a suggestive way, to churches considering merger.

2. The crucial problem of combining programs of higher education when two denominations merge should receive considerable study. A comparative study of the educational programs of selected holiness denominations and some suggestions for combining these programs could be attempted.

3. Similar studies might be worthwhile in other areas which would be affected by merger. Youth program, evangelism through mass communication, publishing program, and general evangelism are possible areas of study.

4. The problem involved in uniting churches at the conference and local levels would be a legitimate subject for further investigation.

## VII. THE LARGER ECUMENICAL PERSPECTIVE

1. A fuller analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the evangelical position toward the ecumenical movement than was given in Chapter VIII would meet a real need.

2. An analysis of the Salvation Army's participation in the ecumenical movement, or of ecumenical participation on the part of other evangelical groups, might be highly instructive for the holiness churches.

3. As suggested earlier in this chapter, a study of the role of the NHA, and especially its future role in relation to Methodism, would be helpful.

4. A careful analysis of the advantages and disadvantages of an eventual

union of the holiness churches with the larger Protestant churches, particularly with Methodism, is needed. This issue is going to become increasingly crucial in coming years, and its outcome should be prepared for in advance by clear thinking and writing.

5. The relationship between the holiness movement and the contemporary evangelical-fundamentalist tension deserves further study beyond that given it in this thesis. Particularly the similarity between fundamentalism, as primarily a Calvinistic phenomenon, and those elements in the holiness movement which proclaim "sweet radical holiness" could be studied with profit.

6. Each of the ecumenical questions facing the holiness churches today demands a great deal of further study. These are crucial and pressing questions and call for careful studies which can provide some answers. The observations concerning these questions given in the discussion of these questions in Chapter VIII could furnish the guidelines for such studies.<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>3</sup>Supra, pp. 346-354.



## BIBLIOGRAPHY

### A. BOOKS

- Bell, G. K. A. Documents on Christian Unity. Fourth series, 1948-57. London: Oxford University Press, 1958.
- Ehrenstrom, Nils, and Walter G. Muelder (eds.). Institutionalism and Church Unity. New York: Association Press, 1963.
- Goodall, Norman. The Ecumenical Movement, What It Is and What It Does. Second edition. London: Oxford University Press, 1964.
- Hogue, Wilson T. History of the Free Methodist Church of North America. 2 vols. Chicago: The Free Methodist Publishing House, 1915.
- Jones, E. Stanley. The Next Great Step: A United Church of America. Brookline, Massachusetts: Association for a United Church of America, n. d.
- Landis, Benson Y. (ed.). Yearbook of American Churches, 1966. New York: National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U. S. A., 1966.
- Lee, Robert. The Social Sources of Church Unity. New York: Abingdon Press, 1960.
- Lightner, Robert P. Neo-Evangelicalism. Findlay, Ohio: Dunham Publishing Company, n. d.
- McLeister, Ira Ford, and Roy S. Nicholson. History of the Wesleyan Methodist Church of America. Revised edition. Syracuse, New York: The Wesley Press, 1951.
- Marston, Leslie R. From Age to Age a Living Witness. Winona Lake, Indiana: Light and Life Press, 1960.
- Mavis, W. Curry. Beyond Conformity. Winona Lake, Indiana: Light and Life Press, 1958.
- Mead, Frank S. Handbook of Denominations in the United States. Fourth edition. New York: Abingdon Press, 1965.
- Mooneyham, W. Stanley. The Dynamics of Christian Unity. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1963.

- Nash, Ronald H. The New Evangelicalism. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1963.
- Newbigin, Lesslie. Is Christ Divided? Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1961.
- Niebuhr, H. Richard. The Social Sources of Denominationalism. Cleveland: The World Publishing Company, 1964 (c. 1929).
- Pope, Liston. Millhands and Preachers, A Study of Gastonia. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1942.
- Rodger, P. C., and Lukas Vischer (eds.). The Fourth World Conference on Faith and Order, Montreal, 1963. New York: Association Press, 1964.
- Rose, Delbert R. A Theology of Christian Experience. Minneapolis: Bethany Fellowship, 1965.
- Smith, Joseph H. Things Behind and Things Before in the Holiness Movement. Chicago: Evangelistic Institute Press, 1916.
- Smith, Timothy L. Called Unto Holiness. Kansas City, Missouri: Nazarene Publishing House, 1962.
- \_\_\_\_\_. Revivalism and Social Reform in Mid-Nineteenth-Century America. New York: Abingdon Press, 1957.
- Storms, Everek Richard. History of the United Missionary Church. Elkhart, Indiana: Bethel Publishing Company, 1958.
- Troeltsch, Ernst. The Social Teaching of the Christian Churches. 2 vols. Trans. Olive Wyon. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1949.
- Washburn, Josephine M. History and Reminiscences of the Holiness Church Work in Southern California and Arizona. S. Pasadena, California: Record Press, n. d. (Covers the period 1880-1911.)
- World Council of Churches. The New Delhi Report, The Third Assembly of the World Council of Churches, 1961. London: SCM Press, 1961.
- Yinger, J. Milton. Religion, Society and the Individual, An Introduction to the Sociology of Religion. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1957.
- Zahniser, Clarence Howard. Earnest Christian, Life and Works of Benjamin Titus Roberts. Circleville, Ohio: Advocate Publishing House, 1957.

## B. DENOMINATIONAL MANUALS, DISCIPLINES, AND YEARBOOKS

Conference Minutes, 1955, of the Free Methodist Church. Winona Lake, Indiana: Free Methodist Publishing House, 1955. (This is the same publication which is now called the Yearbook.)

Constitution and Manual of the United Missionary Church. Elkhart, Indiana: Bethel Publishing Company, 1962.

Discipline of the Evangelical Methodist Church, 1958. N. p.: Evangelical Methodist Church, 1960.

Discipline of the Wesleyan Methodist Church of America. Syracuse, New York: Wesleyan Methodist Publishing Association, 1951.

Discipline of the Wesleyan Methodist Church of America. Marion, Indiana: Wesleyan Methodist Publishing Association, 1959.

Discipline of the Wesleyan Methodist Church of America. Marion, Indiana: Wesleyan Methodist Publishing Association, 1963.

Doctrines and Discipline of the Free Methodist Church of North America, 1964. Winona Lake, Indiana: The Free Methodist Publishing House, 1965.

Manual of the Pilgrim Holiness Church. Second edition. Indianapolis: The Pilgrim Publishing House, 1962.

Yearbook 1964 of the Free Methodist Church. Winona Lake, Indiana: The Free Methodist Publishing House, 1964.

Yearbook 1965 of the Free Methodist Church. Winona Lake, Indiana: The Free Methodist Publishing House, 1965.

## C. PERIODICALS

Abbott, J. D. "Merger Progress Report," Pilgrim Holiness Advocate, XLV (March 13, 1965), 3.

Angell, Edward D. "A Concern for Future Ministers," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXII (May 4, 1955), 10-11.

- Armstrong, C. I. "Meeting of the Joint Hymnal Commission," The Wesleyan Methodist, CVI (February 23, 1949), 12.
- "Associational Holiness," The Pentecostal Advocate, XI (November 19, 1908), 8.
- "Beulah Camp," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXXII (August 18, 1965), 12.
- "Bishop Marston's Address," The Free Methodist, LXXIX (May 17, 1946), 5.
- Blews, R. R. "The World Council of Churches," The Free Methodist, LXXIX (May 10, 1946), 4-5.
- "Board of Administration on Merger," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXII (March 2, 1955), 3.
- Carter, Charles W. "Is It Practicable?" The Wesleyan Methodist, CXII (April 27, 1955), 6.
- "Commission on Church Union Recently Met at Marion," The Wesleyan Methodist, CV (November 24, 1948), 12.
- Cox, Martin W. "Will the Vision Fail?" The Wesleyan Methodist, CXII (May 11, 1955), 7, 10.
- Crockett, H. L. "Denominational Coalescence," The Wesleyan Methodist, CIV (August 20, 1947), 8.
- Crossman, R. C. "What Shall Be Gained," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXII (April 20, 1955), 6.
- "Denominations Meet to Discuss Publishing Programs," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXXII (February 3, 1965), 14.
- Densmore, B. W. "Church Union Does Not Exist," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXII (April 20, 1955), 6-7.
- "Discussions on Church Merger," The Free Methodist, LXXXVIII (February 22, 1955), 5.
- Eddy, F. R. "The Agent's Letter," The Wesleyan Methodist, CI (March 29, 1944), 16.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Agent's Letter," The Wesleyan Methodist, CI (May 3, 1944), 8.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Agent's Letter," The Wesleyan Methodist, CI (October 18, 1944), 8.

- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Agent's Letter," The Wesleyan Methodist, CII (May 23, 1945), 16.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Agent's Letter," The Wesleyan Methodist, CIV (June 25, 1947), 16.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "On Church Merger, Why I Cannot Support It," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXII (March 9, 1955), 4.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "A Report of the Committee on Church Union," The Wesleyan Methodist, CII (March 14, 1945), 2.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "A Statement on Church Union," The Wesleyan Methodist, CI (June 14, 1944), 2; same, The Free Methodist, LXXVII (July 7, 1944), 4.
- \_\_\_\_\_, and Harold D. Dieter. "The First Meeting Between the Wesleys and the Pilgrims," The Wesleyan Methodist, CI (November 1, 1944), 2.
- "Evangel Churches Unite with E. M. C.," Voice of Evangelical Methodism, VIII (June, 1960), 1.
- "Evangelical Methodist Pastors Attend United Missionary Convention," Voice of Evangelical Methodism, XI (December, 1963), 7.
- "Executive Board Hears Reports," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXXI (September 30, 1964), 15.
- "Executive Council," Voice of Evangelical Methodism, XIII (April, 1965), 8.
- Failing, George E. "As Our General Superintendents View the Church," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXXIII (March 2, 1966), 6-9.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Highlights of the General Conference," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXVI (July 15, 1959), 3-5.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "I Favor Merger...", The Wesleyan Methodist, CXXIII (March 16, 1966), 2.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "I Oppose Merger...", The Wesleyan Methodist, CXXIII (March 2, 1966), 2.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Report on General Conference 1963," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXX (July 31, 1963), 2, 14.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Should We Discuss Church Merger," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXVI (June 10, 1959), 6.

- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Unity We Need," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXXII (July 7, 1965), 1-2.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "What About the Pilgrim Holiness Church?" (Interview with the general superintendents of the Pilgrim Holiness Church), The Wesleyan Methodist, CXXIII (February 16, 1966), 8-10, 4.
- Fitzgerald, O. R. Letter to the editor, The Wesleyan Methodist, CXX (July 13, 1963), 5.
- Ford, George L. "The Azusa-LAPC Merger Story," The Free Methodist, XCVIII (November 23, 1965), 16-17.
- "Free and Wesleyan Methodist Youth Hold Joint Camp in Oregon," The Wesleyan Methodist, CII (October 10, 1945)
- "The Free Methodist," The Wesleyan Methodist, CI (March 29, 1944), 14.
- Geiger, Kenneth E. "Dr. Geiger Travels 85,000 Miles in Year for Christ and the Church," Gospel Banner, LXXXVI (October 24, 1963), 10-11, 15.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Report of the General Superintendent," Gospel Banner, LXXXIII (October 6, 1960), 12-13.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Report on Proposed Merger," Gospel Banner, LXXXVIII (August 26, 1965), 15.
- "General Board Makes Decision," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXXII (June 30, 1965), 6, 9.
- "The General Board Meets," Pilgrim Holiness Advocate, XLV (June 12, 1965), 2.
- "General Board to Recommend Merger," Gospel Banner, LXXXVII (November 5, 1964), 12.
- "General Conference Legislation," The Wesleyan Methodist, C (July 14, 1943), 6-7.
- "General Conference News," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXII (July 6, 1955), 14.
- Gentry, Earl T. "On Church Merger," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXXII (November 24, 1965), 9.
- Heavilin, Charles W. "Facing Merger Openly and Honestly," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXXIII (March 16, 1966), 5, 13.

- "A Helping Hand," The Wesleyan Methodist, CI (November 1, 1944), 2.
- Hersey, Thomas B. Letter to the editor, The Wesleyan Methodist, CXXII (September 29, 1965), 10.
- Hersey, Thomas D. "Local Acquaintance Before Merger," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXII (March 23, 1955), 4.
- Hessler, John G. "Is Church Merger Possible?" The Free Methodist, LXXXVIII (April 12, 1955), 6.
- "Highlights of the Conference," Voice of Evangelical Methodism, X (August, 1962), 4-5.
- Hilson, George B. "Free and Wesleyan Meth. Youth of Houghton Area to Meet in Joint Convention," The Wesleyan Methodist, CIII (March 20, 1946), 8.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Wesleyan Young People's Society Invites Free Methodists to Join in Convention," The Free Methodist, LXXVII (July 21, 1944), 11.
- Howland, Carl L. "Inter-Church Fellowship," The Free Methodist, LXXIX (November 1, 1946), 4.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Wesleyan-Free Methodist Merger--History and Prospect," The Free Methodist, LXXXVIII (August 2, 1955), 4.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Wesleyans and the Free Methodists," The Free Methodist, LXXVII (May 12, 1944), 5.
- Hughes, Larry. "Church Government and the Merger," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXXIII (January 5, 1966), 4.
- Hughes, Robert. Letter to the editor, The Wesleyan Methodist, CXXII (August, 18, 1965), 4.
- Iloff, E. R. "On Church Merger," The Free Methodist, LXXXVIII (April 26, 1955), 6.
- "Indiana Favors Merger Negotiations," Gospel Banner, LXXXVI (August 1, 1963), 13.
- "Joint Commission," The Wesleyan Methodist, CVI (November 16, 1949), 12.
- "Joint Commission Meeting," The Wesleyan Methodist, CIV (May 7, 1947), 2.

"The Joint Commission Meeting," The Wesleyan Methodist, CII (November 14, 1945), 2.

Joint Commission of the Wesleyan Methodist and Free Methodist Churches. "The Case for Merger," The Free Methodist, LXXXIII (January 10, 1950), 6, 12.

Kennedy, Gerald. "The Church and Unity," The Christian Century, LXXVIII (February 8, 1961), 170-172.

Kindschi, Paul L. "An Analysis of the National Holiness Association," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXIII (February 8, 1956), 3-4.

\_\_\_\_\_. "The Organization Called Wesleyan Methodist," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXVIII (May 22, 1961), 11.

Landrey, J. L. "A Wesleyan Methodist Speaks About Church Merger," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXII (March 30, 1955), 7.

"Latest Merger Development," Gospel Banner, LXXXV (March 29, 1962), 2.

Livingston, Maria (Mrs. H.). "Wesleyan and Free Methodist Youth at Asbury Organize," The Wesleyan Methodist, CIII (April 17, 1946), 9.

Lockwood, Arnold L. Letter to the editor, The Wesleyan Methodist, CXXII (December 22, 1965), 6.

Lovin, C. Wesley. "On Merger," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXXIII (January 5, 1966), 2.

McBride, J. B. "Has Interdenominationalism Been a Success?" The Pentecostal Advocate, XI (December 17, 1908), 2-3.

Marston, Leslie R. "Are We Ecumenical?" The Wesleyan Methodist, CXXI (September 9, 1964), 2.

\_\_\_\_\_. "The Broader Fellowship of NAE," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXX (September 25, 1963), 2.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Closer Relationships with the Wesleyan Methodist Church," The Free Methodist, LXXX (July 11, 1947), 5, 13.

\_\_\_\_\_, and F. R. Eddy. "The Joint Commission Reports its Fourth Meeting," The Wesleyan Methodist, CIII (December 25, 1946), 14.

\_\_\_\_\_, F. R. Eddy, and Stephen W. Paine. "Activities of Third Joint Commission Meeting," The Wesleyan Methodist, CII (November 28, 1945), 2.



- \_\_\_\_\_, F. R. Eddy, and Stephen W. Paine. "Fourth Meeting of Joint Commission," The Free Methodist, LXXX (January 17, 1947), 5.
- \_\_\_\_\_, Roy S. Nicholson, and Stephen W. Paine. "Fifteenth Meeting, Joint Commission, Wesleyan and Free Methodist Churches," The Free Methodist, LXXXVI (March 24, 1953), 4.
- \_\_\_\_\_, Roy S. Nicholson, and Stephen W. Paine. "Ninth Meeting of the Joint Commission of the Wesleyan and Free Methodist Churches," The Free Methodist, LXXXIV (January 9, 1951), 5, 13.
- \_\_\_\_\_, Roy S. Nicholson, and Stephen W. Paine. "Seventeenth Meeting, Joint Commission, Free Methodist and Wesleyan Methodist Churches," The Free Methodist, LXXXVI (November 10, 1953), 4.
- \_\_\_\_\_, Roy S. Nicholson, and Stephen W. Paine. "The Sixth Meeting of the Joint Commission," The Free Methodist, LXXXII (January 18, 1949), 6.
- \_\_\_\_\_, Roy S. Nicholson, and Stephen W. Paine. "Tenth Meeting of Joint Commission of the Wesleyan and Free Methodist Churches," The Free Methodist, LXXXIV (May 8, 1951), 5.
- \_\_\_\_\_, Roy S. Nicholson, and Stephen W. Paine. "Tenth Meeting of Joint Commission of the Wesleyan and Free Methodist Churches," The Wesleyan Methodist, CVIII (May 9, 1951), 11.
- \_\_\_\_\_, Roy S. Nicholson, and Stephen W. Paine. "Twelfth Meeting, Joint Commission, Wesleyan and Free Methodist Churches," The Free Methodist, LXXXV (February 19, 1952), 5.
- \_\_\_\_\_, and Stephen W. Paine. "First Meeting of Joint Commission's Official Acts," The Wesleyan Methodist, CI (May 17, 1944), 2.
- \_\_\_\_\_, and Stephen W. Paine. "First Meeting of Joint Commission of Wesleyan and Free Methodist Churches," The Free Methodist, LXXVII (May 12, 1944), 5.
- \_\_\_\_\_, and Stephen W. Paine. "May Meeting of the Joint Commission," The Free Methodist, LXXXV (July 22, 1952), 5.
- "Memorial Opposes Union," Voice of Evangelical Methodism, XIII (August, 1965), 2.
- "Merger Favored with Evangelical Methodists," Gospel Banner, LXXXVIII (April 22, 1965), 8-9.

- "Merger in Washington," Gospel Banner, LXXXVIII (September 9, 1965), 16.
- "Merger Lost by 1%," Gospel Banner, LXXXVI (February 14, 1963), 4.
- "Merger of Azusa College and Los Angeles Pacific College," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXXII (May 26, 1965), 13.
- "Merger...or the Alternatives, An Open Letter from a Pilgrim Holiness Minister to a Wesleyan Methodist Minister," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXXII (December 8, 1965), 8.
- Millard, William. "Pension or Social Security," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXII (March 30, 1955), 6.
- Miller, Dewey O. "Merger, The Lesser Mistake," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXXIII (January 19, 1966), 4.
- Mitchell, Virgil A. "Allegheny Conference Report," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXXI (July 15, 1964), 13.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Discipline, 1963 Edition," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXXI (February 26, 1964), 2.
- Neff, William H., and Roy S. Nicholson, "The Pilgrims and the Wesleyans Meet," Pilgrim Holiness Advocate, XXXVII (October 12, 1957), 7.
- \_\_\_\_\_, and Roy S. Nicholson, "The Principal Bases for the Joint Commission's Recommendation for Union of the Pilgrim Holiness and The Wesleyan Methodist Churches," Pilgrim Holiness Advocate, XXXVIII (November 29, 1958), 5-6.
- \_\_\_\_\_, and Roy S. Nicholson. Report on the Proposed Wesleyan-Pilgrim Church Merger," Pilgrim Holiness Advocate, XXXVIII (May 17, 1958), 8.
- \_\_\_\_\_, Melvin H. Snyder, and Paul W. Thomas. "Prayer for Merger Proposal," Pilgrim Holiness Advocate, XLVI (January 1, 1966), 3.
- "New Hymnal Soon to be Published," The Wesleyan Methodist, CVII (January 25, 1950), 2.
- Nicholson, Roy S. "A Comparative Study, The Wesleyan Methodist and The Pilgrim Holiness Church," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXVI (March 18, 1959), 3.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "An Evaluation of the Recent General Conference," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXVI (July 29, 1959), 3.

- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Joint Commission Meeting," The Wesleyan Methodist, CI (May 17, 1944), 1-2.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Joint Commission Meets Again," The Wesleyan Methodist, CI (November 22, 1944), 1.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Question Box," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXVI (April 15, 1959), 3-4.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Question Box," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXVI (April 22, 1959), 3.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Question Box," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXVI (June 3, 1959), 3.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Question Box," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXVI (May 6, 1959), 3.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Question of Church Union," The Wesleyan Methodist, CIII (December 4, 1946), 2.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Report of the General President," The Wesleyan Methodist, CVII (June 21, 1950), 6-7.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Report of the General President 1951," The Wesleyan Methodist, CVIII (June 27, 1951), 3-4.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Why I Favor Church Merger," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXII (March 2, 1955), 4.
- \_\_\_\_\_, Leslie R. Marston, and Stephen W. Paine. "Eighth Meeting of the Joint Commission," The Free Methodist, LXXXIII (June 20, 1950), 5.
- \_\_\_\_\_, Leslie R. Marston, and Stephen W. Paine. "Eighth Meeting of the Joint Commission of the Free Methodist and Wesleyan Methodist Churches," The Wesleyan Methodist, CVII (June 21, 1950), 8.
- \_\_\_\_\_, Leslie R. Marston, and Stephen W. Paine. "The Sixth Meeting of the Joint Commission," The Wesleyan Methodist, CVI (January 19, 1949), 12.
- \_\_\_\_\_, and Stephen W. Paine. "Ninth Meeting of the Joint Commission of the Wesleyan and Free Methodist Churches," The Wesleyan Methodist, CVIII (January 10, 1951), 13.
- \_\_\_\_\_, Stephen W. Paine, Leslie R. Marston, and Charles V. Fairbairn. "The Case for Merger," The Wesleyan Methodist, CVII (January 11, 1950), 3-4, 6.

- \_\_\_\_\_, et al. "Report of the Committee on Merger to the Board of Administration 1958," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXV (July 23, 1958), 13-14.
- Northrup, Arthur O. "Why I Believe In It," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXII (May 11, 1955), 7.
- "The November Meeting of the General Board," Pilgrim Holiness Advocate, XXXVI (December 8, 1956), 12-13.
- "Ohio Conference on Merger," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXXII (November 24, 1965), 7.
- Paine, Stephen W. "Comfort or Conquest?" The Wesleyan Methodist, CXII (May 11, 1955), 10.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Free-Wesleyan Methodist Interchurch Fellowship," The Wesleyan Methodist, CIII (November 13, 1946), 6.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Report of the Committee on Church Union to the Board of Administration, June, 1952)," The Wesleyan Methodist, CIX (July 16, 1952), 8.
- Pearce, William B., et al. "The Supreme Task of the Church," 1947 Pastoral Address to the General Conference, The Free Methodist, LXXX (June 13, 1947), 4, 6, 8, 10, 15-16.
- Phaup, B. H. "Allegheny Conference Report," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXXII (August 4, 1965), 14.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Report on Merger," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXXIII (February 16, 1966), 3.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Report of the Commission on Church Union," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXXI (April 15, 1964), 13.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Report of the Joint Commission on Church Union," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXXII (February 24, 1965), 2.
- \_\_\_\_\_, and H. R. Ingersoll. "Union Committees Meet," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXXI (March 4, 1964), 14.
- \_\_\_\_\_, Harold K. Sheets, and Virgil A. Mitchell. "Report of the General Superintendents to the Board of Administration," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXXI (April 15, 1964), 4.
- "Pilgrim Holiness Church Selects a Committee on Church Union," The Wesleyan Methodist, CI (August 2, 1944), 2.

- "The Pilgrim Vote," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXIX (July 18, 1962), 13.
- "Plan Federation of Holiness Churches," Gospel Banner, LXXXVIII (June 3, 1965), 3.
- Pritchard, Dorothy M. "Free Methodist Youth Join in Area Convention," The Wesleyan Methodist, CIII (October 9, 1946), 8.
- "Quality Missions," United Evangelical Action, XXV (March, 1966), 4.
- "Questions on Union with the Pilgrim Holiness Church Answered," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXVI (February 25, 1959), 2.
- Reber, Carson E. "The Twenty-Second Session of the General Conference of the Free Methodist Church of North America," The Free Methodist, LXXX (July 4, 1947), 4, 9-10.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Twenty-third Session of the General Conference of the Free Methodist Church of North America," The Free Methodist, LXXXIV (June 26, 1951), 12-13, 15, 17.
- "Recommendations from Boards and Committees," Gospel Banner, LXXXVIII (February 11, 1965), 14.
- Reisdorph, Rufus. "Why I Do Not Favor the Merger as Now Proposed," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXII (March 30, 1955), 6-7.
- "A Report and a Request," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXIX (July 4, 1962), 2.
- "Reports from the Executive Board," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXXI (December 16, 1964), 13.
- "Resolutions Adopted by Wesleyans at Interchurch Fellowship," The Wesleyan Methodist, CIII (November 13, 1946), 7.
- "Resolutions re Church Union," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXXII (August 18, 1965), 2.
- Riggs, Isabelle F. "A Layman Favors It," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXII (May 5, 1955), 10.
- Roberts, B. T. "Religious Meetings," The Earnest Christian, X (August, 1867), 66.
- Scott, David H. "I Believe In It," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXII (April 20, 1955), 6.

- "The Second Meeting of Joint Commission," The Wesleyan Methodist, CI (December 6, 1944), 2.
- Shea, Alton J. "Principles that Point Toward Merger," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXII (April 20, 1955), 7.
- Sheets, Harold K. "Church Merger: Mobilizing for the Unfinished Task," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXXII (November 10, 1965), 3-4, 11.
- "Spotlight on CYC," Pilgrim Holiness Advocate, XLV (March 20, 1965), 13.
- Swauger, J. R. "Why I Am Opposed to It," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXII (April 6, 1955), 11.
- Taylor, Richard S. Review of A Theology of Christian Experience by Delbert R. Rose, The Nazarene Preacher, XL (July, 1965), 46.
- "Tentative Draft for a Church Discipline for the United Wesleyan Methodist Church of America" (same as the Proposed Discipline for the United Wesleyan Methodist Church), printed in installments in The Wesleyan Methodist, CXI, October 20, 1954, 6-7; October 27, 1954, 4, 6; November 3, 1954, 13-14; November 10, 1954, 4-5; November 17, 1954, 7, 11; November 24, 1954, 6-7; December 1, 1954, 6-7; December 8, 1954, 7; December 15, 1954, 7, 14; December 22, 1954, 12; December 29, 1954, 10, 12; CXII, January 5, 1955, 7, 12; January 12, 1955, 12-13; January 19, 1955, 11; January 26, 1955, 10, 13; February 2, 1955, 7, 11; February 9, 1955, 12, 14.
- Terpe, Guy E., and M. Spikes. "Massillon, Ohio, on Merger," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXII (May 18, 1955), 6.
- Thomas, Paul W. "'The Days of our Pilgrimage,'" The Wesleyan Methodist, CXXIII (February 16, 1966), 5, 13.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Pilgrim-Wesleyan Church Merger," Pilgrim Holiness Advocate, XXXIX (July 25, 1959), 2.
- \_\_\_\_\_, and Phyllis Ihrkey. "The General Conference of the Pilgrim Holiness Church," Pilgrim Holiness Advocate, XLII (July 14, 1962), 3-6.
- Thurber, Gordon L. Letter to the editor, The Wesleyan Methodist, CXIX (August 29, 1962), 9.
- Trafton, N. E. "Merger Could Be a Mistake," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXXI (November 18, 1964), 2.

Treese, J. A. "On Church Merger," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXXII (November 24, 1965), 6.

"Twelfth Meeting of the Joint Commission of the Wesleyan and Free Methodist Churches," The Wesleyan Methodist, CIX (February 20, 1952), 15.

"United Missionary, Evangelical Methodist Ministers Meet," Voice of Evangelical Methodism, XII (November, 1964), 10-11.

Vanderwood, Ralph. "Steps Forward," Voice of Evangelical Methodism, XII (May, 1964), 2.

Van Valin, Howard W. "The Twenty-First Session of the General Conference of the Free Methodist Church of North America," The Free Methodist, LXXVI (June 25, 1943), 9.

Watson, C. Hoyt. "Midwinter Meeting of Executive Commission," The Free Methodist, LXXXVI (February 17, 1953), 11, 13-14.

Wilson, Oliver G. "An Analysis of 'The Case for Merger,'" The Wesleyan Methodist, CVII (February 22, 1950), 2.

\_\_\_\_\_. "I Shall Vote Yes," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXVI (June 3, 1959), 2.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Looking Back at General Conference," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXII (July 20, 1955), 2.

Woodhead, Royal S. "Why I Favor Merger," The Wesleyan Methodist, CXII (May 11, 1955), 7.

Worboys, Lawrence W. "The 24th Session of the General Conference of the Free Methodist Church of North America," The Free Methodist, LXXXVIII (June 28, 1955), 6-7, 14-17.

#### D. PAMPHLETS AND REPORTS

"The Basis for Merger and The Proposed Constitution...", Document released April 23, 1966, by the Joint Commission of the Pilgrim Holiness and Wesleyan Methodist Churches. 8 pp.

"Delegate Manual and Directory, Twentieth General Conference, United Missionary Church, March 15-21, 1965," 154 pp. (Mimeographed.)

- Kindschi, Paul L. An Analysis of the National Holiness Association (Pamphlet).  
Minneapolis: National Holiness Association, n. d.
- McKenna, David L. The Study of Free Methodist Higher Education. Study sponsored by the Commission on Christian Education of the Free Methodist Church and the Association of Free Methodist Colleges. N. p.: n. n., 1962. (Mimeographed.)
- Manifesto and Constitution of the Society for the Preservation of Primitive Wesleyan Methodism. N. p.: n. n., n. d. Issued in April, 1966. 8 pp.
- Minutes of the Thirtieth General Conference of the Wesleyan Methodist Church of America, 1959. Syracuse, New York: The Wesley Press, 1959.
- Minutes of the Thirty-First General Conference of the Wesleyan Methodist Church of America, 1963. Marion, Indiana: The Wesley Press, 1963.
- Minutes of the Twenty-ninth Quadrennial Session of the General Conference of the Wesleyan Methodist Church, 1955. Syracuse, New York: The Wesley Press, 1955.
- National Association of Evangelicals. The Story of Evangelical Cooperation (Pamphlet). Wheaton, Illinois: National Association of Evangelicals, n. d.
- Proceedings of the General Conference of the United Missionary Church, February 25-March 2, 1959. N. p.: n. n., n. d.
- Proceedings of the Nineteenth General Conference, United Missionary Church, February 27-March 5, 1962. N. p.: n. n., n. d.
- Proceedings of the Twentieth General Conference, United Missionary Church, March 15-21, 1965. N. p.: n. n., n. d.
- Proposed Discipline for the United Wesleyan Methodist Church. N. p.: n. n., n. d.
- Tentative Report of the Joint Commission of the Wesleyan Methodist Church of America and the Free Methodist Church of North America on Church Union. Syracuse, New York: Wesley Press, 1951.
- Untitled pamphlet issued by a group of ministers of the North Michigan Conference of the Free Methodist Church in December, 1965, indicating their intention to withdraw from the Free Methodist Church. N. p.: n. n., n. d. 8 pp.



## E. UNPUBLISHED MATERIALS

1. Minutes

- "Journal of the General Conference of the Free Methodist Church" (unpublished), from 1903 to 1923 and from 1943 to 1964. Filed at Free Methodist Headquarters, Winona Lake, Indiana.
- "Minutes, Executive Committee, National Holiness Association, Marion, Indiana, November 9, 1965," 5 pp. (Mimeographed.)
- "Minutes of the Board of Administration of the Free Methodist Church of North America" (unpublished), from 1951 to 1955. Filed at Free Methodist Headquarters, Winona Lake, Indiana.
- "Minutes of the Fourteenth Meeting of the Joint Commission of the Wesleyan and Free Methodist Churches." November 24, 1952. 3 pp. (Mimeographed.)
- "Minutes of the Fifteenth Meeting of the Joint Commission of the Wesleyan and Free Methodist Churches." January 26-27, 1953. 4 pp. (Mimeographed.)
- "Minutes of the Sixteenth Meeting of the Joint Commission of the Free Methodist and Wesleyan Methodist Churches." April 6, 1953. 4 pp. (Mimeographed.)
- "Minutes of the Seventeenth Meeting of the Joint Commission of the Free Methodist and Wesleyan Methodist Churches." September 25, 1953. 2 pp. (Mimeographed.)
- "Minutes of the Eighteenth Meeting of the Joint Commission of the Free Methodist and the Wesleyan Methodist Churches." November 17, 1953. 3 pp. (Mimeographed.)
- "Minutes of the Nineteenth Meeting of the Joint Commission of the Free Methodist and Wesleyan Methodist Churches." December 15, 1953. 3 pp. (Mimeographed.)
- "Minutes of the Twentieth Meeting of the Joint Commission of the Free Methodist and Wesleyan Methodist Churches." March 18, 1954. 4 pp. (Mimeographed.)
- "Minutes of the Twenty-First Meeting of the Joint Commission of the Free Methodist and the Wesleyan Methodist Churches." May 25, 1954. 4 pp. (Mimeographed.)
- "Minutes of the Twenty-Second Meeting of the Joint Commission of the Free Methodist and the Wesleyan Methodist Churches." July 22, 1954. 3 pp. (Mimeographed.)

## 2. Letters

Abbott, J. D. Personal letter to the writer, dated March 4, 1966.

Boyd, Myron F. Personal letter to the writer, dated March 3, 1966.

Kindschi, Paul L. Personal letter to the writer, dated October 26, 1965.

Knox, Lloyd H. Personal letter to the writer, dated October 25, 1965.

McKenna, David L. Personal letter to the writer, dated October 28, 1965.

Marston, Leslie R. Personal letter to the writer, dated January 19, 1966.

\_\_\_\_\_. Personal letter to the writer, dated March 4, 1966.

Neff, William H. Personal letter to the writer, dated February 4, 1966.

Nicholson, Roy S. Personal letter to Bishop Charles V. Fairbairn, dated December 1, 1953.

\_\_\_\_\_. Personal letter to the writer, dated March 3, 1966.

Paine, Stephen W. Personal letter to the writer, dated January 28, 1966.

\_\_\_\_\_. Personal letter to the writer, dated March 4, 1966.

Vanderwood, Ralph A. Personal letter to the writer, dated March 14, 1966.

## 3. Interviews

Andrews, Robert F. Personal conversation with the writer, held at Winona Lake, Indiana, February 21, 1966.

Dayton, Wilber T. Personal interview with the writer, held at Asbury Theological Seminary, Wilmore, Kentucky, March 3, 1966.

Failing, George E. Personal interview with the writer, held at Wesleyan World Headquarters, Marion, Indiana, February 23, 1966.

Knox, Lloyd H. Personal interview with the writer, held at Wilmore, Kentucky, January 26, 1966.

- Logan, J. Sutherland. Personal interview with the writer, held at Asbury Theological Seminary, Wilmore, Kentucky, October, 1965.
- Mavis, W. Curry. Personal interview with the writer, held at Asbury Theological Seminary, Wilmore, Kentucky, March 2, 1966.
- Parks, David W. Personal conversations with the writer, held at Wilmore, Kentucky, April 22 and 23, 1966.
- Rose, Delbert R. Personal interview with the writer, held at Wilmore, Kentucky, March 9, 1966.

#### 4. Miscellaneous

- Ford, Jack. "Rise and Growth of the Church of the Nazarene in Britain." Paper comprising the Miller Lectures at Northwest Nazarene College, Nampa, Idaho, 1957.
- "Joint Commission on Merger, Wesleyan Connexion - Free Methodist Church, 'The United Wesleyan Methodist Church of America,' Papers, Notes, and Minutes from May 10, 1950 and on---(With Review of All Work 1944-1950)." Contains minutes of the Joint Commission, reports of sub-committees, and miscellaneous other materials relating to the merger study. N. p.: n. n., n. d. 107 pp. (Mimeographed and typewritten.) Filed at Free Methodist Headquarters, Winona Lake, Indiana.
- Kindschi, Paul L. "One in Christ." Presidential address to the National Holiness Association, ninety-eighth convention, Dallas, Texas, April 13, 1966.
- Knox, Lloyd H. "Preliminary Proposals to the Joint Denominational Exploratory Committee on a United Publishing Program." October, 1964, 5 pp. (Mimeographed.)
- Miscellaneous working papers of the Joint Commission on Merger of the Free Methodist and Wesleyan Methodist Churches dealing with "The Ministry," "Ministers and Annual Conferences," "General Superintendents," "The Conference Superintendent," "'Qualifications and Work' of the Ministry," "Conference Claimants Plan." (Mimeographed.) Filed at Free Methodist Headquarters, Winona Lake, Indiana.
- National Holiness Association. "Officers, National Holiness Association, 1965-66." Marion, Indiana, n. d. (Mimeographed.)

- "Observations of the Committee to Study and Make Recommendations Concerning the Pension Funds of the Free Methodist and the Wesleyan Methodist Churches." Report to the Joint Commission on Merger of the Wesleyan and Free Methodist Churches, 1943-55. N. p.: n. n., n. d. 11 pp. (Mimeographed.)
- "Proposed Federation of Holiness Churches." News release from the National Holiness Association, Marion, Indiana, n. d. 2 pp. (Mimeographed.)
- Questionnaire responses, solicited by the writer between November, 1965, and March, 1966, from officials of the following denominations: Brethren in Christ, Central Yearly Meeting of Friends, Christian and Missionary Alliance, Church of the Nazarene, Churches of Christ in Christian Union, Evangelical Methodist Church, Free Methodist Church, Holiness Christian Church, Kansas Yearly Meeting of Friends, Missionary Church Association, Ohio Yearly Meeting of Friends, Pilgrim Holiness Church, Primitive Methodist Church, Rocky Mountain Yearly Meeting of Friends, United Brethren in Christ, United Missionary Church, Wesleyan Methodist Church.
- "Report of Church Federation Study Conference Planning Committee Meeting." Report to the Executive Committee of the National Holiness Association, November 9, 1965. 2 pp. (Mimeographed.)
- "Report of the Sub-Committee on Doctrine." Report to the Joint Commission of the Free Methodist and Wesleyan Methodist Churches, n. d. 11 pp. (Type-written.)
- "Schedules, Accrediting Association of Bible Colleges" (unpublished), containing completed schedules for Central Pilgrim College. Fort Wayne, Indiana: Accrediting Association of Bible Colleges, n. d.
- Turner, George A. (comp.). "Evangelicals and the Ecumenical Movement: A Seminar in Ecumenics." Compilation of papers prepared for a seminar course in ecumenics at Asbury Theological Seminary, Wilmore, Kentucky, spring quarter, 1947.
- Wilkins, Chester. "A Review of the Recently Proposed Union of the Wesleyan Methodist Church and the Pilgrim Holiness Church." Unpublished Master's thesis, Butler University, Indianapolis, 1960. 77 pp. With additional pages (78-80) appended, entitled "Merger Transactions Since 1959." (Duplicated.)
- "Worksheets on Ritual of the United Wesleyan Methodist Church of America." Prepared in connection with the work of the Joint Commission on Merger of the Wesleyan Methodist and Free Methodist Churches. N. d. 46 pp.

APPENDIX A  
PRELIMINARY QUESTIONNAIRE  
AND ACCOMPANYING LETTER

Asbury Theological Seminary  
Wilmore, Kentucky 40390  
November 8, 1965

I am presently engaged in research for a thesis concerning interdenominational cooperation and merger negotiations within the holiness movement. There are some aspects of this subject which necessitate my appealing directly to you for assistance.

I will be grateful if you can find it possible to take a few moments to answer the accompanying brief questionnaire. I hesitate to make this request, appreciating your heavy schedule, but I know of no other way to obtain this information. This is not merely a poll or survey; I need your answers in order to determine in what directions my research should proceed.

The questions can be answered in the space provided on the questionnaire, or on the back.

Thank you very much for your cooperation in this matter. I pray that this project can make some contribution to the task of spreading scriptural holiness.

Sincerely,



Howard A. Snyder

## COOPERATION AND MERGERS AMONG THE HOLINESS CHURCHES

1. Has your denomination ever merged with another denomination?  
(Please specify any such mergers.)
  
2. Has your denomination participated in unsuccessful attempts at merger in the past? When, and with what denominations?
  
3. Are you presently engaged in merger negotiations or conversatic with any other denomination(s)? Which?
  
4. Would you say the question of possible merger with another denomination(s) is a live issue within your denomination?
  
5. How would you describe the general attitude of your denomination toward the question of possible merger with another denomination of similar doctrinal position? Favorable? Unfavorable?
  
6. Please direct me to sources for primary information regarding merger negotiations in which your denomination may have participated or is participating, or to a denominational officer who could provide such information.
  
7. Are you now actively cooperating with another denomination(s) in any part of your total program (e.g., missions, publication, education)? In what ways?
  
8. Any additional comments:

Thank You!

APPENDIX B

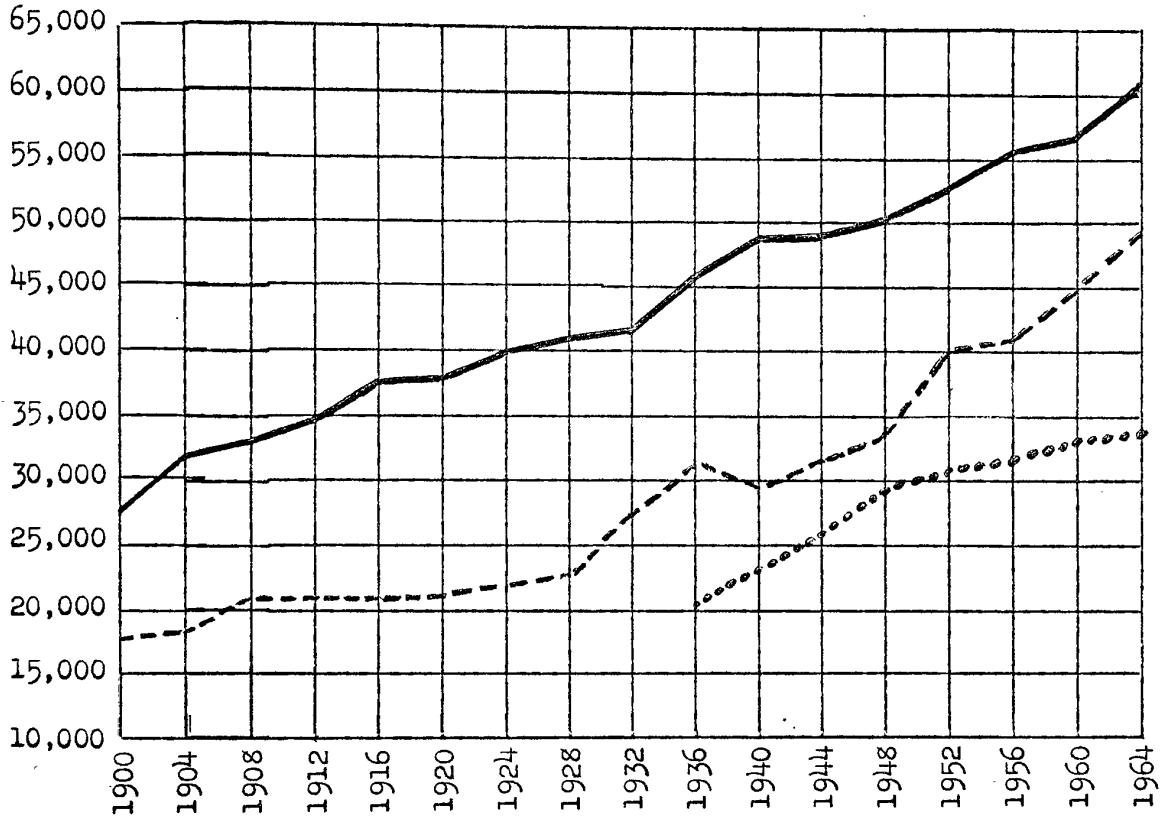
MEMBERSHIP OF NHA-AFFILIATED DENOMINATIONS

Denomination	Year	Inclusive Church Membership (U. S.)	No. of Churches	Pastors Having Charges	Average Local Membership
Brethren in Christ . . . . .	1963	7,578	155	145	49
Churches of Christ in Christian Union . . . . .	1964	6,980	225	220	31
Evangelical Methodist Church . . . . .	1963	8,041	139	152	58
Free Methodist Church . . . . .	1964	58,164	1,159	1,150	50
Holiness Christian Church . . . . .	(No statistics available)				
Ohio Yearly Meeting of Friends . . . . .	1963	6,784	90	88	75
Pilgrim Holiness Church . . . . .	1964	33,165	991	927	33
Rocky Mountain Yearly Meeting of Friends . . . . .	(No statistics available)				
Salvation Army . . . . .	1964	264,910	1,234	2,343	21
United Missionary Church . . . . .	1963	11,013	215	194	51
Wesleyan Methodist Church . . . . .	1964	47,683	1,083	1,085	44
Totals . . . . .		444,318	5,291	6,304	

Source: Benson Y. Landis (ed.), Yearbook of American Churches (New York: National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U. S. A., 1966), pp. 198-210.

## APPENDIX C

RATE OF GROWTH IN MEMBERSHIP  
OF THE FREE METHODIST, WESLEYAN METHODIST,  
AND PILGRIM HOLINESS CHURCHES



- FREE METHODIST CHURCH -- Total membership, United States and Canada, excluding ministers in conference relation
- WESLEYAN METHODIST CHURCH -- Total membership, United States and Canada
- ..... PILGRIM HOLINESS CHURCH -- Total membership, United States

SOURCE: Minutes and Yearbooks of the Free Methodist Church; Editor's Annual Statistical Reports in The Wesleyan Methodist; History of the Wesleyan Methodist Church; Yearbook of American Churches.



# The Pilgrim Holiness Church and The Wesleyan Methodist Church of America present

The Basis for Merger and The Proposed Constitution for consideration by the General Conference of each denomination. The following statements and positions have been approved by the Joint Commission on Merger, and have been reviewed by the two Boards of Administration.

Released on April 23, 1966

## THE BASIS FOR MERGER

- I. Membership—Mutual Reception  
At the time of merger each person shall enter into the united church with the same membership status as he had in his church before merger. This provision shall also apply to those of ministerial status.
- II. The Discipline shall contain three major divisions:
  - (1) The Constitution
  - (2) The Statutory Laws
  - (3) The Ritual
 The Constitution is herewith presented. The Statutory and Ritual portions of the Discipline may be amended or changed by a majority vote of the uniting General Conference and succeeding General Conferences.
- III. There shall be provision for election of equal numbers of lay and ministerial representatives in the general and district conferences. The method of lay and ministerial representation shall be worked out.
- V. There shall be a general secretary and a general treasurer for the united church. These offices may be combined. There shall be various general departments as determined by the General Conferences, and the head of each will be an executive officer.
7. Upon the vote of approval of merger by both denominations the General Board of the Pilgrim Holiness Church and the Board of Administration of The Wesleyan Methodist Church shall serve as

the planning and polity committee for the uniting conference.

- VI. Conference Boundaries.  
All district boundaries shall be left as they are for the present (although this would, of course, involve overlapping jurisdiction for awhile), with the encouragement of the merged group to work out combinations which would be as favorable as possible to the work of the church in each locality.  
There would be denominational and district committees to advise and help districts and local churches contemplating such combinations. The realignment of local church boundaries shall be by mutual consent. When merger of two or more churches is agreed upon, final approval shall be by the district or districts involved. In dealing with overlapping or duplication in district boundaries, ultimate realignment shall be subject to the action of the General Conference and shall recognize, insofar as is practicable, the expressed will of the districts involved. When two or more districts are involved in merger, final approval shall rest with the General Board of Administration.

- VII. College Control and Boundaries.  
It is not the intention of the Joint Commission to recommend any scheme of reorganization and realignment of our existing educational institutions that will involve the arbitrary elimination of any one of them. As to the distribution of the districts into school areas, for the time being each district would remain in the school

area of which it was a part before the merger. For the present this would involve overlapping territory, and the united denomination may see fit to continue policy of overlapping territory minimizing the element of competition through the offering of complementary programs in various institutions. But the nomination should encourage development of combinations which would be as favorable as possible to the work of Church.

The ultimate reorganization of school areas should be subject to the action of the General Conference and should recognize insofar as is practicable, the expressed will of the district involved, provide an equitable division of the membership of the Church among the schools and districts after merger and their assignment to a school area will be subject to the direction of the General Conference, or at its discretion to the General Board of Administration.

For better retention of ministerial talent the merged denomination may well decide to retain and utilize certain institutions of Bible college status and also to promote an active campaign to draw its students in theological seminaries back into pastoral ministry. The essential spiritual tone of colleges and schools must be of prime consideration. Expansion shall not be encouraged to an extent that non-spiritual facilities are required or a

ponderance of unsaved students are added to the student body. Emphasis shall be placed upon spiritual values connected with the maintenance of a program of Christian education through the church-related academy.

#### VIII. Legal Resolutions.

### THE CONSTITUTION

#### Preamble

¶ 10. In order that we may wisely preserve and pass on to posterity the heritage of doctrine and principles of Christian living transmitted to us as evangelicals in the Arminian-Wesleyan tradition, and to insure church order by sound principles of ecclesiastical polity, and to prepare the way for more effective cooperation with other branches of the church of Christ in all that makes for the advancement of God's kingdom among men, we, the ministers and lay members of The Wesleyan Church meeting in official assemblies, do hereby ordain, establish, and set forth as the fundamental law, or constitution, of The Wesleyan Church the articles of religion, rules of Christian living, privileges and conditions of church membership, and articles of organization and government, here following:

#### ARTICLE I. NAME

¶ 11. The name of this communion is The Wesleyan Church.

#### ARTICLE II. ARTICLES OF RELIGION

##### I. Faith in the Holy Trinity

¶ 12. There is but one living and true God, everlasting, of infinite power, wisdom, and goodness; the Maker and Preserver of all things, visible and invisible. And in unity of this Godhead there are three persons of one substance, power, and eternity—the Father, the Son (the Word), and the Holy Ghost.

Gen. 1:1; 17:1; Ex. 3:13-15; 33:20; Deut. 6:4; Ps. 90:2; 104:24; Isa. 9:6; Jer. 10:10; John 1:1-2; 4:24; 5:18; 10:30; 16:13; 17:3; Acts 5:3-4; Rom. 16:27; I Cor. 8:4, 6; II Cor. 13:14; Eph. 2:18; Phil. 2:6; Col. 1:16; I Tim. 1:17; I John 5:7, 20; Rev. 19:13.

##### II. The Son of God

¶ 13. Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, was conceived by the Holy

Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, very God and very Man, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried—to be a sacrifice, not only for original guilt, but also for the actual sins of men, and to reconcile us to God.

Mark 15; Luke 1:27, 31, 35; John 1:14, 18; 3:16-17; Acts 4:12; Rom. 5:10, 18; I Cor. 15:3; II Cor. 5:18-19; Gal. 1:4; 2:20; 4:4-5; Eph. 5:2; I Tim. 1:15; Heb. 2:17; 7:27; 9:28; 10:12; I Peter 2:24; I John 2:2; 4:14.

##### III. The Holy Ghost

¶ 15. The Holy Ghost proceeding from the Father and the Son is of one substance, majesty, and glory with the Father and the Son, very and eternal God.

Job 33:4; Matt. 28:19; John 4:24-26; Acts 5:3-4; Rom. 8:9; II Cor. 3:17; Gal. 4:6.

##### IV. The Resurrection of Christ

¶ 14. Christ did truly rise again from the dead, taking His body with all things appertaining to the perfection of man's nature, wherewith He ascended into heaven, and there sitteth until He returns to judge all men at the last day.

Ps. 16:8-10; Matt. 27:62-66; 28:5-9, 16-17; Mark 16:6-7, 12; Luke 24:4-8, 23; John 20:26-29; 21; Acts 1:2; 2:24-31; 10:40; Rom. 8:34; 14:9-10; I Cor. 15:6, 14; Heb. 13:20.

##### V. The Sufficiency and Full Authority of the Holy Scriptures for Salvation

¶ 16. The Holy Scriptures contain all things necessary to salvation; so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man, that it should be believed as an article of faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation. We do understand the books of the Old and New Testaments to constitute the Holy Scriptures. These Scriptures we hold to be the inspired and infallibly written Word of God, fully inerrant in their original manuscripts and superior to all human authority.

The canonical books of the Old Testament are:

Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, I Samuel, II Samuel, I Kings, II Kings, I Chronicles, II Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, The Song of Solomon, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi.

The canonical books of the New Testament are:

Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Acts, Romans, I Corinthians, II Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, I Thessalonians, II Thessalonians, I Timothy, II Timothy, Titus, Philemon, Hebrews, James, I Peter, II Peter, I John,

II John, III John, Jude, and Revelation. Ps. 19:7; Luke 24:27; John 17:17; Act. 2:11; Rom. 1-2; 15:4; 16:26; Gal. 1:1; Thess. 2:13; II Tim. 3:15-17; Heb. James 1:21; I Peter 1:23; II Peter 1:1; Rev. 22:14, 19.

##### VI. The Old Testament

¶ 17. The Old Testament is not contrary to the New; for both in the and New Testaments everlasting life offered to mankind through Christ, is the only Mediator between God and man. Wherefore they are not to be heard, who feign that the old fathers look only for transitory promises, though the law given from God by Moses touching ceremonies and rites, not binding Christians, nor ought the precepts thereof of necessity be received in any commonwealth, yet notwithstanding no Christian whatsoever is free from the obedience of the commandments which are called moral.

Matt. 5:17-19; 22:37-40; Luke 24:27; John 1:45; 5:46; Rom. 15:8; II Cor. 1:1; Eph. 2:15-16; I Tim. 2:5; Heb. 10:1; I John 2:3-7.

##### VII. Relative Duties

¶ 18. Those two great commandments which require us to love the Lord our God with all the heart, and neighbors as ourselves, contain the substance of the divine law as it is revealed in the Scriptures: they are the measure of the perfect rule of human duty, as well as the ordering and directing of families and nations, and all other social bonds, as for individual acts, by which we are required to acknowledge God as our only Supreme Ruler, and all men as created by Him, equal in all natural rights. Wherefore all men are bound so to obey their individual and social and political acts as to render to God the due and absolute obedience, and to secure all men the enjoyment of every natural right, as well as to promote the greatest happiness of each in the possession and exercise of such rights.

Lev. 19:18, 34; Deut. 1:15, 17; II Sam. 3; Job 29:16; 31:13-14; Jer. 21:12; 22:3; 5:44-47; 7:12; Luke 6:27-29, 35; John 13:35; Acts 10:34-35; 17:26; Rom. 12:9; 13:8, 10; Gal. 5:14; 6:10; James 2:8; I Peter 2:17; I John 2:5; 4:12-13; II John 6; 3:1.

##### VIII. Original or Birth Sin

¶ 19. Original sin standeth not in the following of Adam (as the Pelagians vainly talk), but it is the corruption of the nature of every man, that nature is engendered of the offspring of Adam, whereby man is very far gone from original righteousness, and of his own nature inclined to evil, and that continually.

Gen. 8:21; Ps. 51:5; Jer. 17:9; Mark 7; Rom. 3:10-12; 5:12, 18-19; Eph. 2:1-

\* The paragraphs are numbered to correspond with similar paragraphs in the 1963 Discipline of The Wesleyan Methodist Church.

## IX. The Atonement

¶ 20. The offering of Christ, once made, through His sufferings and meritorious death on the cross, is that perfect redemption and propitiation for the sins of the whole world, both original and actual. There is none other ground of salvation from sin but that alone. This atonement is sufficient for every individual of Adam's race, and is graciously efficacious to the salvation of the irresponsible from birth, or to the righteous who have become irresponsible, and to the children in innocency, but is efficacious to the salvation of those who reach the age of responsibility only when they repent and believe.

Luke 24:46-47; John 3:16; Acts 3:18; 4:12; Rom. 5:8-11, 18-19; 8:34; Gal. 2:16; 3:2-3; Eph. 1:7; 2:13, 16; I Cor. 6:11; 15:22; I Tim. 2:5-6; Heb. 7:23-27; 9:11-15, 24-28; 10:14.

## X. Free Will

¶ 21. Man's creation in God-likeness included ability to choose between right and wrong. Thus man was made morally responsible for his choices. The condition of man since the fall of Adam is such that he cannot turn and prepare himself, by his own natural strength and good works to faith and calling upon God. Wherefore we have no power to do good works pleasant and acceptable to God without the grace of God by Christ working in us, that we may have a good will, and working with us when we have that good will. That the grace of God through Jesus Christ is bestowed upon all men, enabling all who will to turn and be saved is clearly taught in both the Old and New Testaments. It is possible that one who is in possession of the highest experience of grace may fall from grace, for there is no such height or strength of holiness from which it is impossible to fall. But by the grace of God one who has fallen into sin may by true repentance and faith find forgiveness and restoration.

Gen. 6:5; Deut. 30:19; Josh. 24:15; I Kings 20:40; Isa. 64:6; Luke 16:15; John 7:17; 15:15; Heb. 11:16; I Tim. 2:5; Titus 3:5; I John 1:9; 2:1; Rev. 22:17.

## XI. Justification of Man

¶ 21. We are accounted righteous before God only for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, by faith, and not for our own works or deservings. Wherefore, that we are justified by faith only is a most wholesome doctrine, and very full of comfort.

Acts 13:38-39; 15:11; 16:31; Rom. 3:28; 4:2-6; 5:1-2; Eph. 2:8-9; Phil. 3:9; Heb. 11.

## XII. Good Works

¶ 22. Although good works, which are the fruit of faith and follow after

justification, cannot put away our sins and endure the severity of God's judgment, yet they are pleasing and acceptable to God in Christ, and spring out of a true and lively faith, insomuch that by them a lively faith may be as evidently known as a tree is discerned by its fruit.

Matt. 5:16; 7:16-20; John 15:8; Rom. 3:20; 4:2, 4, 6; Gal. 2:16; Phil. 1:11; Titus 3:5; James 2:18, 22; I Peter 2:9, 12.

## XIII. Sin After Justification

¶ 23. Not every sin willfully committed after justification is the sin against the Holy Spirit and unpardonable (Matt. 12:31-32). Wherefore, the grant of repentance is not to be denied to such as fall into sin after justification. After we have received this grace, we may depart therefrom and fall into sin, and by the grace of God rise again and amend our lives. Therefore, they are to be condemned who say they can no more sin as long as they live here, or deny the place of forgiveness to such as truly repent (Mal. 3:7; Matt. 18:21-22; I John 1:9; 2:1).

## XIV. Regeneration

¶ 24. Regeneration is that work of the Holy Spirit by which the pardoned sinner becomes a child of God; this work is received through faith in Jesus Christ, whereby the regenerate are delivered from the power of sin which reigns over all the unregenerate, so that they love God and through grace serve Him with the will and affections of the heart—receiving "the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father."

John 1:12-13; 3:3, 5; Rom. 8:15, 17; Gal. 3:26; 4:5, 7; Eph. 1:5; 2:5, 19; 4:24; Col. 3:10; Titus 3:5; James 1:18; I Peter 1:3-4; II Peter 1:4; I John 3:1.

## XV. Entire Sanctification

¶ 25. Inward sanctification begins the moment one is justified. From that moment until a believer is entirely sanctified, he grows daily in grace and gradually dies to sin. Entire sanctification is effected by the Baptism of the Holy Spirit which cleanses the heart of the child of God from all inbred sin through faith in Jesus Christ. It is subsequent to regeneration and is wrought instantaneously when the believer presents himself a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, and is thus enabled through His grace to love God with all the heart and to walk in all His holy commandments blameless. The crisis of cleansing is preceded and followed by growth in grace and the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. When man is fully cleansed from all sin he is endued with the power of the Holy Spirit for the accomplishment of all to which he is called. The ensuing

life of holiness is maintained by a continuing faith in the sanctifying blood of Christ, and is evidenced by an obedient life.

Gen. 17:1; Deut. 30:6; Ps. 130:8; Ezek. 25:29; Matt. 5:48; Luke 1:74-75; 3:16-17; 49; John 17:2-23; Acts 1:5, 8; 2:1-4; I Rom. 8:3-4; 11:26; 15:16; I Cor. 6:11; I Eph. 4:13, 24; 5:25-27; Phil. 2:5, 7; Col. I Thess. 3:10; 4:3, 7; 5:23; II Thess. 2:1 Tim. 3:17; Titus 2:12; Heb. 9:13-14; 10:1-22; James 1:27; 4:8; I Peter 1:2, 10; II Peter 1:4; I John 1:7, 9; 3:8-9; 4:17-18; Jude 24

## XVI. The Gifts of the Spirit

¶ — The Gift of the Spirit is Holy Spirit himself. He is to be desired more than the gifts of the Spirit, or supernatural endowments which the Spirit in His wise counsel bestows upon individual members of the Church to enable them to properly fulfill their function as members of the body of Christ. The gifts of the Spirit, although different from natural endowments, are bestowed upon them for the edification of the whole Church. These gifts are to be exercised in love under the administration of the Lord of the Church, not through human volition. The relative value of the gifts of the Spirit is to be tested by their usefulness in the Church and by the ecstasy produced in the recipient.

Luke 11:13; 24:49; Acts 2:38-39; 10:44; Cor. 12:4, 11, 18, 21-25, 29-31; 13:1-13; Eph. 11-16; Rom. 12:6-8.

## XVII. The Sacraments

¶ 26. Sacraments ordained of Christ are not only tokens of Christian profession, but they are certain signs of grace and God's good will toward us by which He doth work invisibly in us and doth not only quicken but strengthen and confirm our faith in Him.

There are two sacraments ordained by Christ our Lord in the Gospel: that is to say, Baptism, and the Supper of the Lord.

Matt. 26:26-28; 28:19; Mark 14:22-24; I Cor. 12:28-29; 4:11; I Cor. 10:16; 11:23-26; Gal.

## XVIII. Baptism

¶ 27. Baptism is not only a sign of profession and mark of difference whereby Christians are distinguished from others who are not baptized, but it is also a sign of regeneration or new birth. The baptism of young children is to be retained in the Church.

Adult persons and parents of children to be baptized shall have the ordinance of baptism by immersion, sprinkling, or pouring.

Num. 8:7; Isa. 52:15; Ezek. 36:25; Mat. 13-17; Mark 1:10; 16:16; John 3:22, 26; Acts 2:38, 41; 8:12, 13-17; 9:18; 16:33; 19:5; John 3:22, 26; 4:1-2; Acts 2:38, 41; 13-17; 9:18; 16:33; 18:8; 19:5; 22:16; I Cor. 13; Gal. 3:27-29; Col. 2:11-12; Titus 3:5.

## XIX. The Lord's Supper

¶ 28. The Supper of the Lord is not only a sign of love that Christians ought to have among themselves one to another, but rather it is a Sacrament of our redemption by Christ's death; inasmuch that to such as rightly, worthily and with faith receive the same, it is made a medium through which God doth communicate grace to the heart.

Luke 22:19-20; John 6:53, 56; I Cor. 5:7-8; 10:3-4, 16; 11:28.

## XX. The Church

¶ — The Christian Church is the entire body of believers in Jesus Christ. The Founder and only Head of the Church is Christ. It is composed of all faithful believers in Christ, some of whom have gone to be with the Lord and others of whom remain on the earth, having renounced the world, the flesh, and the devil and are dedicated to the work which Christ committed unto His Church till He come. The Church is to preach the pure Word of God and duly administer the Sacraments according to Christ's ordinance, in all those things that are of necessity requisite to the same.

A local church is a body of believers formally organized on gospel principles meeting regularly for the purposes of worship, edification, instruction, and evangelism.

The Wesleyan Church is a denomination consisting of those members within district conferences and local churches who as members of the Body of Christ hold the faith set forth in these Articles and acknowledge the ecclesiastical authority of its governing body.

Matt. 16:18; 18:17; Acts 2:41-47; 7:38; 9:31; 11:22; 12:5; 14:23; 15:22; 20:28; I Cor. 12:28; 16:1; Eph. 1:22-23; 2:19-22; 3:9-10, 21; 5:22-33; Col. 1:18, 24; I Tim. 3:15; Heb. 12:23; James 5:14.

## XXI. The Second Coming of Christ

¶ 31. The doctrine of the second coming of Christ is a precious truth and a glorious hope to the people of God. The certainty of the personal and imminent return of Christ is a powerful inspiration to holy living and zealous effort for the evangelization of the world. We believe the Scriptures teach that at His return He will cause the fulfillment of all prophecies made concerning His final and complete triumph over all evil.

Job 19:25-27; Dan. 12:1-4; Ps. 17:15; Isa. 11:1-12; Zech. 14:1-11; Matt. 24:1-51; 26:64; Mark 13:26-37; Luke 17:26-37; 21:24-36; John 14:1-3; Acts 1:9-11; I Cor. 1:7-8; I Thess. 4:13-18; Titus 2:11, 14; Heb. 9:27-28; James 5:7-8; II Peter 3:1-14; I John 3:2-3; Jude 14; Rev. 1:7; 19:11-16; 22:6-7, 12, 20.

## XXII. The Resurrection of the Dead

¶ 32. We hold the Scriptural state-

ments concerning the resurrection of the dead to be true and worthy of universal acceptance. We believe the bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ was a fact of history and a miracle of supreme importance. We understand the manner of the resurrection of mankind to be the resurrection of the righteous dead, at Christ's second coming, and the resurrection of the wicked at a later time. Resurrection will be the reuniting of soul and body preparatory to final reward or punishment.

Job 19:25-27; Ps. 17:15; Dan. 12:2; Matt. 22:30-32; 28:1-20; Luke 14:14; John 5:28-29; Acts 23:6-8; Rom. 8:11; I Cor. 6:14; 14:1-58; II Cor. 4:14; 5:1-11; I Thess. 4:14-17; Rev. 20:4-6, 11-13.

## XXIII. The Judgment of Mankind

¶ 33. The Scriptures reveal God as the Judge of all mankind and the acts of His judgment to be based on His omniscience and eternal justice. His administration of judgment will culminate in the final meeting of mankind before His throne of great majesty and power, where records will be examined and final rewards and punishments will be administered.

Ecc. 12:14; Rom. 14:10-11; II Cor. 5:10; Acts 17:31; Rom. 2:16; Matt. 10:15; Luke 11:31-32; Acts 10:42; II Tim. 4:1; Heb. 9:27; Matt. 25:31-46; Rev. 20:11-13; II Peter 3:7.

## XXIV. Destiny

¶ — The Scriptures clearly teach that there is a conscious, personal existence after the death of the body. The eternal destiny of man is determined by God's grace and man's response, evidenced inevitably by his moral character which results from his personal and volitional choices and not from any arbitrary decree of God. Heaven with its eternal glory and blessedness of Christ's presence is the final abode of those who choose the salvation which God provides through Jesus Christ. Hell with its eternal misery and separation from God is the final abode of those who neglect this great salvation.

Dan. 12:2; Matt. 25:34-46; Mark. 9:44-48; Luke 13:3; John 8:21, 23; 14:3; II Cor. 5:6, 8, 10; Heb. 2:1-3; 9:27-28; 10:26-31.

## ARTICLE III. GENERAL RULES

¶ 34. It is expected of those who are admitted to our churches that they should continue to evidence their desire for salvation: First by doing good, by being merciful after their power; as they have opportunity, doing good of every possible sort, and as far as possible to all men, especially to them that are of the household of faith.

To their bodies, of the ability which God giveth, by giving food to the hungry, by clothing the naked, by visiting or helping them that are sick or in prison.

To their souls, by instructing, reprov-

ing, or exhorting them in love with possible diligence, that the gospel be blamed. By running with patience a race which is set before them, despising themselves, and taking up their cross daily; submitting to bear the reproach of Christ.

¶ 35. It is expected of all who are admitted to our churches that they should further evidence their desire for salvation by continuing:

To reverence the name of Deity and observe the Lord's Day by divine worship and spiritual edification; and avoid all unnecessary commerce, late travels, and pleasures, which do not contribute to the moral and spiritual improvement of this Day.

To abstain from the manufacture, and use of alcoholic beverages and harmful drugs.

To abstain from the cultivation, manufacture, sale, and use of tobacco.

To respect the inherent individual rights of all persons regardless of color, or sex.

To walk circumspectly in the world; to be just in all transactions; to be faithful in all commitments; to contract obligations only with due care to fulfill them.

To respect all duly constituted authority in the home, the church, and the state; except when to do so violate clear teachings of the Scriptures.

To strive together for the advancement of God's kingdom and for the mutual edification of fellow believers by holiness, knowledge, and love; to together in Christian fellowship, in usefulness, giving and receiving admonition with meekness and affection; to pray for the other; to aid one another in need and distress; to cultivate Christian sympathy and to demonstrate practical charity, and courtesy in all manner of conversation.

To dress so as to adorn the gospel; the spirit of I Peter 3:3-4, and I Tim. 2:9-10, giving clear testimony to Christian purity and modesty by proper clothing the body and refraining from superfluous adornment.

To recognize our responsibility to and the Church by careful use of our time; to engage only in such activities as may contribute to our spiritual, intellectual, and physical well-being; that of those who share in them (Matt. 3:17).

To make wise use of our material resources, ever mindful of our obligation to Christ's Church and the needs of fellow men; exercising strict self-discipline in personal indulgences and demonstrating Christian liberality to those whose distress we may help alleviate, thus laying up treasure in heaven (Matt. 6:19-21).

To preserve the sanctity of the home by honoring Christ in every phase of family life; to encourage the nurture and education of our children in the Christian faith so as to bring them ear-

the saving knowledge of Christ, and to encourage by all possible means their Christian education.

To abstain from membership in secret societies and lodges which are oath-bound, believing that the quasi-religious nature of such organizations divides the Christian's loyalty, and their secret nature contravenes the Christian's open witness (John 18:20); and the secret nature of their oaths is repugnant to the Christian conscience (Matt. 5:34-36; James 5:12). [These prohibitions do not restrict membership in labor, civic, or other organizations which do not contradict loyalty to Christ and the Church. When in these relationships Christian principles are violated members shall be dealt with because of such violations and not because of the membership itself.]

To grow in the knowledge and love of God by attending upon all the means of grace, such as the public worship of God; the ministry of the Word either read or expounded; the Supper of the Lord; family and private prayer; searching the Scriptures; and fasting or abstinence.

To observe the teachings of Scripture regarding marriage and divorce. We regard adultery as the only justifiable cause for divorce. In the case of a divorce for such cause the innocent party may marry again; but the guilty party has by his or her act forfeited membership in the church. In the case of divorce for other cause neither party shall be permitted to marry again during the lifetime of the other, and violation of this law shall be punished by expulsion from the church (Matt. 5:32; Mark 10:11-12). In the carrying out of these principles, guilt shall be established in accordance with judicial procedures set forth in the Discipline.

These are the General Rules of our Church. We believe all these to be consistent with the principles of Christ as taught in the Word of God, which is the only and sufficient rule both of our faith and practice. If any among us do not observe them and habitually break any of them we will admonish him with charity of the error of his ways and will bear with him for a season. But if then he repent not, he shall have no more place among us.

#### ARTICLE IV. ELEMENTARY PRINCIPLES

¶ 42. Christ is the only Head of the Church, and the Word of God the only rule of faith and conduct.

¶ 43. No person who loves the Lord Jesus Christ, and obeys the gospel of God our Saviour, ought to be deprived of church membership.

¶ 44. Every man has an inalienable right to private judgment in matters of religion, and an equal right to express his

opinion in any way which will not violate the laws of God or the rights of his fellow man.

¶ 45. All church trials should be conducted on gospel principles only; and no minister or member should be excommunicated except for immorality, the propagation of unchristian doctrines, or for neglect of duties enjoined by the Word of God.

¶ 46. The pastoral or ministerial office and duties are of divine appointments, and all elders in the church of God are equal; but ministers are forbidden to be lords over God's heritage, or to have dominion over the faith of the saints.

¶ 47. The Church has a right to form and enforce such rules and regulations only as are in accordance with the Holy Scriptures, and may be necessary or have a tendency to carry into effect the great system of practical Christianity.

¶ 48. Whatever power may be necessary to the formation of rules and regulations is inherent in the ministers and members of the Church; but so much of that power may be delegated from time to time, upon a plan of representation, as they may judge necessary and proper.

¶ 49. It is the duty of all ministers and members of the Church to maintain godliness and oppose all moral evil.

¶ 50. It is obligatory upon ministers of the gospel to be faithful in the discharge of their pastoral and ministerial duties, and it is also obligatory upon the members to esteem ministers highly for their works' sake, and to render them a righteous compensation for their labors.

#### ARTICLE V. MEMBERSHIP

¶ 51. The privileges and conditions of full membership in the Church are constitutional, and changes therein may be made only by constitutional enactment. The General Conference may at its own discretion establish categories of membership other than full membership. Nothing shall be included in the membership ritual that is contrary to the following definitions, conditions, and privileges of membership.

¶ 52. The conditions of full membership are:

(1) Confession of a personal experience in regeneration, and a pledge to seek diligently until sanctified wholly if that grace has not been obtained.

(2) Christian baptism.

(3) Acceptance of the Articles of Re-

ligion, the General Rules, the Elementary Principles, and the authority of the discipline in matters of church govern-

(4) A covenant to support the Church, to live in fellowship with members thereof, and to seek God's glory in all things.

(5) The approving vote of a majority of the members of the receiving church who are present and voting, unless the church by vote shall delegate this to the church board, provided that no objections are urged against the reception of a member, it shall require a vote of three-fourths of those present voting to receive.

¶ 53. The rights of full membership are:

(1) The fellowship of the saints and the encouragement, admonition, and ritual guidance of the ministry.

(2) The access to the sacraments and ordinances of the church.

(3) The right to vote and the eligibility to hold any office for which a person in full membership is eligible not under discipline.

(4) The right to trial and appeal in cases charged with failure to maintain the conditions of membership, with the special provision that joining another religious body shall of itself sever membership from the church.

(5) A member in good standing in a Wesleyan church is entitled to membership privileges in any Wesleyan church to which he may wish to transfer membership, subject to ¶ 52 (5).

¶ 54. Church membership may be terminated only by one or more of the following:

(1) Voluntary withdrawal.

(2) Joining another religious body in secret order.

(3) Expulsion after proper trial and conviction.

(4) Persistent neglect of church membership as defined by the Discipline.

#### ARTICLE VI. THE MINISTRY

¶ 55. The General Conference from time to time enact provisions for the training, qualification, and ordination of the ministry. Every Wesleyan minister must be a member of a Wesleyan church, and each elder must be a member of a district. An elder is a minister of the gospel fully involved with all the functions of the Christian ministry.

¶ 56. The constitutional rights of ministers in The Wesleyan Church if not under discipline shall include the following:

(1) To preach the gospel and in the case of ordained elders to administer baptism and the Lord's Supper, to perform all parts of divine worship, and to solemnize the rite of matrimony.

(2) To be eligible, in the case of ordained elders, for election to any office in the church for which elders are eligible.

(3) To contract the pastoral relationship with local Wesleyan churches subject to the other provisions of this constitution (subparagraph 6 below, and paragraph 60, subparagraphs 1 and 2 below).

(4) To enjoy the use for religious meetings of the church building or buildings of the pastoral charge to which he has been appointed by the district conference.

(5) To serve his assigned pastoral charge without interference by unauthorized activities of another minister of The Wesleyan Church.

(6) To transfer in the manner prescribed by the Discipline from one district to another, subject to the concurrence of the district superintendent and the general superintendent of the area in whose bounds the district to which he seeks to transfer is located.

(7) To have recourse, even if under discipline, to a proper court of jurisdiction in any matters involving complaint against his character or ministerial conduct and to appeal the decision of such court.

#### ARTICLE VII. ORGANIZATION AND GOVERNMENT

¶ 57. Pastoral Charges. The members of the denomination shall be grouped into local churches, one or more of which shall constitute a pastoral charge. The following are the constitutional rights of each pastoral charge:

(1) To receive and expel or discontinue members subject to the provisions of the Discipline. This right vests severally in each local church.

(2) To call its own pastor, subject to confirmation by the district conference.

(3) To grant licenses to preach and exhort, and take away the same.

(4) To recommend local preachers and special workers to the annual conference.

(5) To elect its own officers and to remove the same for cause. No pastor or other official has any right to appoint

an officer or declare an office vacant. This right belongs to the church alone, and vests severally in each local church.

(6) To elect trustees and through such trustees to supervise, control, and maintain its property for the use and benefit of the ministry and members of The Wesleyan Church and subject to its regulations and appointments as from time to time legislated and declared. This right vests severally in each local church.

(7) To be represented in the voting membership of its district conference, if not under discipline.

(8) To have recourse to a proper court of jurisdiction in any matters of controversy between itself and other local, or district, or general units or agencies of the denomination. This right vests severally in each local church.

¶ 58. The District. The General Conference shall organize the work at large into districts, which shall operate under its jurisdiction and promote the interests of the denomination, whose voting membership shall include the following: All elders on the stationed, reserve, and superannuated lists; all licensed ministers elected to elders' orders; all licensed ministers serving as pastors of organized Wesleyan churches; lay delegates elected by organized Wesleyan churches as provided in the Discipline. In addition the district conference shall include such non-voting members as the Discipline shall provide. The principle of equal representation of the ministry and the laity in the district conference shall be maintained.

¶ 59. In transacting the business of the district conference the ministers and lay members shall deliberate as one body; but on the final vote on any question, at the call of one-fourth of the members, the house shall divide, and the ministers and lay members shall vote separately; and it shall require a majority vote of each branch to pass any question upon which the division has been called.

¶ 60. The constitutional rights of each district shall include the following:

(1) The right to take charge of all the ministers and churches within its bounds, as modified by ¶ 69 (3) (e) [except such of the general officers of the church as the General Conference shall define who shall be amenable to the General Board of Administration for their official conduct and to their districts for their moral character, and except the district superintendent who shall be amenable both to the district and to the General Board of Administration], and subject to the right of the ministers and churches to enter into pastoral engagements for one year from the next session of the district conference, or to contract the pastoral relationship at any

time during the interval of the district conference when this does not interpose any arrangement which was sanctioned by the district conference at its previous session.

(2) To alter the agreement entered into by any pastor and charge, or the action of the church and appoint another pastor on said charge when deemed this to be for the best interest of the charge or pastor involved or of the general interest of the work of the district would be better served by such change; and the said church or charge shall receive the pastor appointed by district conference, provided that such alteration of a previous arrangement between a pastor and church shall be separately reported and passed vote of the district conference to be effective.

(3) To elect and ordain elders, to receive elders from other denominations subject to the restrictions of Discipline.

(4) To receive or decline local preachers and special workers recommended it by the pastoral charges within bounds.

(5) To organize and receive local churches within the boundaries of territory assigned to it by the General Conference, and to fix the boundaries of its circuits and stations.

(6) To take such actions and adopt such rules as it shall judge necessary to promote the interests and prosperity of the church and to amend or rescind the same, provided it shall not add or take from any provision of the constitution or of the Discipline, and provide further that if three members of a district shall take exception to its act on the ground that it violates this restriction, they may make an appeal therefrom through the channels prescribed by the Discipline.

(7) To elect its own officers as outlined in the Discipline and to discontinue them for cause.

(8) To elect in the manner prescribed by the Discipline its own board of trustees and through them to receive, encumber, and dispose of all district property within the bounds of the district, including local property held by the district, according to the provisions of the Discipline and the laws of the state. All properties held by the district shall be held in trust for the use and benefit of the ministry and members of The Wesleyan Church and subject to regulations and appointments as from time to time legislated and declared.

(9) To be represented in the lay and ministerial voting membership of the General Conference, if not under discipline.

(10) To have recourse to a proper court of jurisdiction in any matters of controversy between itself and other district, local, or general units or agencies of the denomination.

¶ 61. General Conference Membership. The General Conference shall be composed of an equal number of elders and laymen elected by the several districts, and each district superintendent and a lay delegate elected on his behalf; and of such General Conference officials as the General Conference may establish by legislation, provided that it shall at the same time enact provisions to secure such further representation as shall be necessary to continue the principle of equal lay and ministerial membership.

¶ 62. General Conference Delegates.

(1) Each district, if not under discipline, shall be entitled to send one elder and one layman as delegates to the General Conference and additional ministerial and lay delegates according to membership on a basis of representation to be fixed by the General Conference.

(2) The delegates shall be elected by ballot. The ministerial delegates must be elders, and at the time of their election, as also at the time of General Conference, must be members of the district which elected them.

(3) The lay delegates shall be chosen from the members of the church in full relation within the bounds of the district they represent, and at the time of the General Conference they must be members of a church within the bounds of the district which elected them.

¶ 63. General Conference Sessions.

(1) The General Conference shall meet quadrennially on a date specified by the Discipline and at such place as shall have been determined by the preceding General Conference. However, in case of emergency the General Board of Administration shall have power to change both time and place of the General Conference.

(2) The president or other elected officer of the General Conference whenever two-thirds of the districts shall request it, or the General Board of Administration, by such vote as the General Conference shall determine, shall call an extra session of the General Conference, fixing the place thereof and the time of assembling later than the next session of each district conference.

¶ 64. General Conference Presidency. The various sittings of the General Conference shall be presided over by the general superintendents in such order as these may determine; but in case no general superintendent be present, the

General Conference shall elect by ballot an elder as president pro tem.

¶ 65. Other officers. The General Conference shall elect by ballot a secretary and such other officers as it shall decide upon.

¶ 67. General Conference Quorum. At all times when the General Conference is in session, it shall require a majority of all the delegates elected by the districts to form a quorum to do business, but a smaller number may adjourn from time to time, until a quorum is obtained.

¶ 68. General Conference Voting. The ministers and lay members shall deliberate in the sessions of the General Conference as one body, but upon the final vote on any question except proposed amendments to the constitution, on a call of one-fourth of the members, the house shall divide and ministers and lay members shall vote separately; and it shall require a majority vote of each branch to pass any question upon which the division has been called.

¶ 66. General Board of Administration.

(1) There shall be a General Board of Administration to carry out the will of the General Conference during the quadrennium. Such Board shall be composed of the general superintendent(s) and such other general officers as shall be elected by the General Conference together with an equal number of elders and laymen chosen by the General Conference to represent equitably the several administrative areas of the Church. The number of such representative members shall be determined by the action of the General Conference.

(2) The General Board of Administration is the chief governing body of the Church in the interim of the General Conferences, and as such is empowered to perfect all plans necessary to the performances of its duties; it shall constitute or create the basic board of control of each and all of the Wesleyan societies and institutions now incorporated or hereafter incorporated under the laws of any state of the United States or of any province of Canada or under any other jurisdiction where such is permitted by the laws of said jurisdiction.

¶ -- The General Superintendency.

(1) The General Conference shall elect by ballot from among the elders one or more general superintendents, who shall be considered as the general spiritual and administrative leaders of the Church.

(2) They shall be elected for a four-year term of office to begin on the date

determined by the General Conference

(3) The general superintendents shall preside over the sittings of the General Conference and over the district conferences assigned to their supervision. The district conference over which a general superintendent is presiding, the district superintendent shall serve by being seated at the presiding officer's table advise and assist in the chairmanship. In the event a general superintendent unable to be present at a district conference to serve as chairman, it is the duty of the district superintendent to preside or to take the responsibility for the same unless the district conference invites the general representative to perform these duties.

(4) Further duties of the general superintendent(s) shall be defined by the General Conference.

#### ARTICLE VIII. POWERS AND RESTRICTIONS OF THE GENERAL CONFERENCE

¶ 69. (1) The General Conference shall have power to designate a criteria for parliamentary procedure for itself and for the other bodies of The Wesleyan Church.

(2) The General Conference shall have full power to elect its officers and the general officials of the Church and to define their duties and responsibilities and these general officers so designated together with the district superintendents shall be amenable to the General Board of Administration for their official duties.

(3) It shall make and administer rules and regulations for The Wesleyan Church subject to the constitution and the following restrictions:

(a) It shall not have power to revoke, alter, or change our Articles of Religion, Elementary Principles, or a General Rule or the conditions of membership, or to establish any standards of doctrine contrary to our present existing and established standards of doctrine.

(b) It shall not change or alter any part or rule of our government so as to destroy the principle of equal representation of ministers and laymen in the representative bodies of the Church; or to do away with the right of each General Conference to elect its own officers, or the maintenance of itinerant ministry.

(c) It shall make no rule that shall deny any church the right to receive, discontinue, or expel its own members subject to their right of appeal; or elect and remove its own officers; that shall deny to the district conference the final disposition of all pastoral arrangements, except those districts which the General Conference or the General Board of Administration

transferred the supervision to a related executive secretary or a general superintendent, or that shall deny to preachers and churches initial negotiations concerning the same.

(d) It shall make no rule that will discriminate against any member or minister on account of ancestry or color. This shall not be interpreted to encourage racial intermarriage.

(e) It shall make no rule that will interfere with the supervision of established districts (in distinction from mission districts) over the ministers and churches within their bounds, unless said district (or districts) is under discipline.

(f) It shall not have the power to deprive any members or minister of the right of trial by an impartial committee, or of the right of appeal.

#### ARTICLE IX. THE SUPREME JUDICIARY

§ 70. There shall be a judicial council to be known as the Board of Review whose number of members, qualifications, terms of office, and method of election

shall be determined by the General Conference.

§ 71. The Board of Review shall have authority:

(1) To determine the constitutionality of any act of the General Conference upon appeal of the general superintendents, or one-fifth of the members of the General Conference.

(2) To hear and determine any appeal from the decisions of the general superintendents as to the constitutionality of an action by a district or upon a point of Church law.

(3) To hear and determine the legality of any action by any general Church board upon appeal of one-third the members thereof, or by request of the general superintendents.

(4) To settle questions in dispute between districts upon appeal by a two-thirds vote of a district that claims it has a grievance against another district.

(5) To determine the validity of any complaints against books used in the course of study or in our schools.

(6) To settle and determine the legality of issues arising between a district and the General Conference.

§ 72. A decision of the Board of Review shall be final unless the General Conference votes to overrule the same by a two-thirds vote of those present and voting.

#### ARTICLE X. AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

§ 73. Upon the recommendation of a two-thirds vote of all members of several district conferences who present and vote on a proposed change of any matter involving the constitution the next ensuing General Conference may by a two-thirds vote ratify the same and it shall become constitutional law. Also, when the General Conference shall originate and recommend by a two-thirds vote any such change, as soon as members of the several district conferences present and voting shall have concurred by a two-thirds plurality, the same shall be declared constitutional law.



## APPENDIX E

# MANIFESTO AND CONSTITUTION

## of the Society For The Preservation Of Primitive Wesleyan Methodism

## A MANIFESTO. . .

The apostle Paul writing to the young Elder Timothy in II Timothy 3:1 says, "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come." We believe these days we are now living are those described by the Apostle in this Epistle and that no other time in history has ever more fully fulfilled these words than the present day. We also recognize the greatest peril to be that of losing our own souls and the souls entrusted into our care, for whom we must give an account, (Hebrews 13:17), therefore we feel we must save ourselves from this untoward generation and any or all who judge us must do so with this consideration.

Seeing we are ministerial and lay members of the Wesleyan Methodist Church we shall circumscribe our remarks to our relationship to her. The following list of grievances will be our basis for the action we feel pressed to take:

(1) We are unalterably opposed to and cannot cooperate with any further abridgments of our constitutional form of government. We consider the relentless move to a centralized and arbitrary character of government, that in our own historical context was considered to be justifiable grounds for separation from the parent body, as reason for us to do so today.

(2) We shall not cooperate with any further attempts to abridge the Disciplines that characterized primitive Wesleyan Methodism, as stated in the Wesleyan Methodist Discipline under Articles III, and IV, (General Rules and Special Direction - especially related to these specific areas:) (a) Adornment, the wearing of gold - to be defined as including the wedding ring; (b) Modesty of dress - especially - are our feelings strong as these points relate to our missionaries who in general do not support or practice these views.

(3) We are further opposed to the arbitrary and discriminatory use of power as demonstrated by the action of the 1965 Ohio Conference Committee of Character in demanding that several Elders be censured for wilfully withholding, and advising their churches to do the same, several budget items that they and their respective churches felt to be not worthy of their support, and shall consider any further action of the same to be grounds to demand full judicial review.

(4) After repeated attempts to correct the open practiced worldliness in our colleges and organized non-disciplinary move away from the express purpose of our schools, and unless corrective measures are undertaken immediately, we feel any further support of these institutions would involve us morally in their evil.

(5) Because of the four aforesaid complaints, we recognize no common ground on which we can trustingly expect fellowship and this we sorrowfully admit has destroyed our collective effectiveness as a Conference for God, but we firmly declare that fellowship will never be the altar upon which we shall sacrifice our principles. Here we stand - we cannot recant.....

Therefore, after serious thought and prayer, after long periods of debate where the issues and consequences of these actions have been carefully weighed in view of the great day of judgment where the secrets of all hearts shall be disclosed, we submit this statement reverently, discreetly, and in the fear of God, who shall be our judge. We make no appeal to history to guarantee the lawfulness of these actions but willingly submit to her tests. We do not make this statement in the heat of or immediately following a conference but only after long months of careful thought. Believing we have duly considered the issues and recognize the responsibilities and serious obligations that such a move thrusts upon us, and believing, in the fear of God, we are prepared to enter into such, we humbly, advisedly, submit the following statement of resolution.

This we submit---that we may wisely maintain the simplicity and spiritual nature of pure religion as has been demonstrated in primitive Wesleyan Methodism; and in order that we may pass on to our posterity the great heritage of doctrine and principles of Christian living transmitted to us in the fundamental, evangelical, Wesleyan tradition, and in order to insure no further encroachments into those areas we specified in the preamble, which we do believe to be conformed to Scripture and primitive usage, and to prepare a way for more concrete and effective fellowship and association with like minded people, we the undersigned do resolve:

THEREFORE TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

(1) Be it resolved that a society be formed and if need be for the preservation of such that this society be incorporated under the limitations and laws of the State.

(2) - and that the name of such society be: The Society for the Preservation of Primitive Wesleyan Methodism.

(3) This is not necessarily to be interpreted as a declaration of withdrawal or severance from the parent body, the Wesleyan Methodist Church of America.

(4) - and that officers be elected at the 1st called meeting and a constitution be considered.

(5) - and that a copy of this statement of resolution with our signatures affixed be sent to the Conference President, Advisory Board, Vice President, Second Vice President.

Samuel M. Miller	Carroll N. Miller
Edsel R. Trouten	Richard H. Addison
Gene E. Stanley	Charles O. Switzer
William Dillon	James Hillman
Ralph Tilley	L. Edward Colburn
John C. Woodward	Bernice L. Woodward
Frank Johnston	William F. Wright
J. L. Collins	Delbert Fruth
Sherman M. Burton	David Neville
Kenneth Peyton	Robert Vermilyea
Coy R. McGinnis	Irene Hanley
Paul Collins	John Headley

George Gee

#### CONSTITUTION

In order that we may wisely maintain the simplicity and spiritual nature of pure religion as has been demonstrated in primitive Wesleyan Methodism; and in order that we may pass on to our posterity the great heritage of doctrine and principles of Christian living transmitted to us in the fundamental, evangelical, Wesleyan tradition, and to prepare a way for more concrete and effective fellowship and association with like minded people, we so unite in this Society.

#### ARTICLE I Name of Society

The name of this Society shall be: "The Society for the Preservation of Primitive Wesleyan Methodism."

#### ARTICLE II Purpose of this Society

The purpose of this Society shall be to provide for an association of Wesleyan Methodist ministers and their respective churches that they might collectively, as a body, seek ways and means to preserve the principles, practices, and governmental usages that have been characterized in Primitive Wesleyan Methodism.

#### ARTICLE III Membership

The condition of membership in this Society shall be threefold: 1. That each member shall

be a minister and/or a regular attendant of a Wesleyan Methodist Church. 2. And that each member shall be in complete support of the Manifesto and its implications and who show such by signing their names to a Manifesto to be kept on file with the secretary of the Society. 3. And that in the event that any member should for any reason feel compelled to withdraw their names from the Manifesto this action would constitute a withdrawal of membership from the Society.

#### ARTICLE IV Officers

1. The officers of this society shall be: Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer.
2. These officers shall be elected by this Society.
3. These officers shall constitute the Executive Committee.
4. These officers shall be members of a local Wesleyan Methodist Church.
5. These officers shall act as a committee to prepare in depth a study to augment the protests in the Manifesto.
6. The Executive Officers shall be the Trustees of the corporation.

#### ARTICLE V Duties of Officers

1. The chairman shall preside at the meetings of the Society and of the Executive Committee.
2. In the absence of the chairman the vice-chairman shall fulfill these duties.
3. The secretary shall keep an accurate record of the proceedings of this Society and each meeting of the Executive Committee. He shall further collect and retain in file all names of members of each local Society.
4. The treasurer shall keep an accurate account of all monies of the Society given to him and shall keep in trust all funds for the Society, paying out the same on order of the Executive Committee.

#### ARTICLE VI Voting

The right to vote shall be guaranteed each co-operating church and minister. Each church shall have two (2) votes, one ministerial and one lay member. The lay member shall be appointed by the pastor but in case a local Society is organized they shall be elected by the local Society.

#### ARTICLE VII Committees

1. The Society shall have the right to elect all committees they feel necessary to carry on the work of said Society.
2. A committee of two (2) ministerial members shall be elected by the Society who shall receive and answer, if possible, for the Society and its respective members, any charges from the Wesleyan Methodist Church of America as they relate to the Society and its work.

## APPENDIX F

## "ONE IN CHRIST"

EXCERPTS FROM THE PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS BY DR. PAUL L. KINDSCHI TO THE NINETY-EIGHTH CONVENTION OF THE NATIONAL HOLINESS ASSOCIATION, DALLAS, TEXAS, APRIL 13, 1966

Scripture: John 17.

The first portion here, down to the eleventh verse, is stating his conviction to the Father that they are Christians, they have believed, they do have eternal life, . . . they are Christians.

Now he changes to a prayer or a petition. Starting with the eleventh verse: "I am no more in the world. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one as we are." He's praying now for a oneness to come to these people that are already individually in Christ . . . .

This is all wrapped up, and all involved in sanctification, and in perfectness . . . .

"That they all may be one." He's not praying for them to be one in Christ. He's proven that to the Father in his earliest part of the prayer. He's stated his strong declaration . . . , they are one in Christ and in the Father. But he's here now praying for something additional to happen to them. "That they may be one"--that they also, in addition to being Christians, in addition to being Christ's, that they also may be one, together, as a body. In the twenty-second verse he repeats it again, "And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them, that they may be one, even as,

Father, we are one." I want them as one. And then the twenty-third verse again, he prays, "I in them and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one." Why, . . . if the normal, the natural interpretation that I've always heard of this--"Oh, this means we're one in Christ, we're one in the Body, we're one in the true Church"--why did Christ take all this time to plead with the Father and testify and declare over and over, they were one in Christ, in God? But now he shifts in his prayer for a final petition that they might be sanctified, they might receive the Holy Spirit, and they may be one even as He and the Father are one in unity, even in organic unity.

I believe this oneness that he's praying for is a wholeness, a unity, a visible unity. Note this is interwoven constantly . . . with his teaching on sanctification, and being filled with the Holy Spirit.

Now I shift here from the conviction and the petition to the event. We see they did attempt to do what Jesus prayed for here. They fumbled first, we find them behind closed doors here in the nineteenth, twentieth, twenty-first chapters, but finally we see them trying to carry out what Christ prayed the Father they would do. And so we find them in Acts 2:1 coming together as one. "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place." Not one in Christ; that's all settled: He's proven that. But finally the Church, those he's praying for, we find them moving toward each other and their attempt to come together in one accord and in one place . . . .

Now let's notice not only the petition here, or the conviction, the petition, and the attempt, but the fulfillment. In Acts 2:4, "And they were all filled with the

Holy Ghost." . . . A oneness--every one of them, that was involved in this coming together on the day of Pentecost, were filled with the Holy Ghost. Note the effect, now. Every man heard in his own tongue, in his own native language. Everyone heard because those in Christ came together in one place in one accord. They were all filled, and as a result there was an impact on the total world outside . . . .

In Acts 5:1: "Thou hast not lied to men, but unto God." They broke the oneness. They broke the physical oneness. You remember he went out and sold a parcel of ground and brought part of it. He said, you haven't kidded anybody. You haven't lied to anyone. The Wesleyans haven't cheated the Frees and the Frees haven't cheated the Pilgrims and the Nazarenes and the Salvation Army. You're not involved with each other, your brethren. What you have done by holding out is that you've lied to God. And the judgment fell, because a oneness was being broken. In I Corinthians 3:4, "While one saith I am of Paul, and another, I am of Appollos, are ye then sanctified?" Are ye then the true holiness church for which I prayed? While one saith, "I am of Paul," and another saith, "We're Appollosites," are ye not carnal?

I hasten to the lesson. Where are we today? Do we stand at Acts 2:1 or do we stand at I Corinthians 3:4--"I am of Paul," and another, "I am of Appollos"? Are ye not carnal?

Possibly more pertinent than that--for that is a point for an altar call--maybe it'd be better to ask ourselves this question: In which direction are we moving? Then I see a little light, and I'm more encouraged . . . .

Of all Christian people there is a special responsibility on those of us who profess to emphasize sanctification and being filled with the Holy Spirit and a perfect heart and life. We have a special responsibility. Don't let the ecumenical movement scare you. Just as sure as you say there is the wrong and the counterfeit, there has to be the genuine. And there is a true, Christian ecumenicity--a oneness that Christ begged for and prayed for and sanctified himself for. And I say this is all involved with the groups that sit right here in this ballroom in Dallas . . . .

When I was elected in 1954 to the full-time office of Executive Secretary (it was called then) of the NHA, I said I didn't know whether they called me as a mortician or a midwife. I didn't know whether grandma was dead or slipping fast and they wanted someone to act as a mortician to give her last rites, or whether Grandma was going to have a baby . . . .

In all seriousness, I believe grandma had a baby. Whether the baby will live or not is the question that faces us now . . . .

We are so much alike in the holiness movement. If you'll stop and analyze, we must have a closer liaison and a closer connection with each other. You know, through all the various backgrounds--and not all are Methodist in their backgrounds-- . . . it seems nothing short of the definite hand of God that we have remained so close in so many ways . . . . We're so close in doctrine . . . . We're so close in our motivation. . . . We're so close in standards. I hear it said, "Oh, Mr. Kind-schi, our standards, we're so different in our standards." No, we are the same. We abhor worldliness, and worldly trends. We hold a very high standard of conduct in life . . . . We believe in a clean life . . . . Oh, there is some difference in,

some variations, in details of proper personal conduct or convictions or modesty of dress . . . . Because, you tell me what group you're from and I'll find all those variations within your own denomination that you point at in some other denomination. I'll find all, the whole scope, the whole gamut, of extremes. In fact, you tell me what district or conference of your denomination and I'll find it for you . . . .

We use all the same methods. We have revivals, camp meetings, Sunday schools, youth programs, prayer meetings, prayer retreats, evangelism, missions, printed word--we're alike!

Oh, while we're so nearly alike I pray God that we can, with eyes open, enter in even into a fuller cooperative spirit. Am I going too far to say Jesus was praying that God would motivate the disciples to come together? He didn't force them. They had to make the decision themselves . . . .

My conviction is that we must fulfill Christ's prayer, "That they may be one." I may not know how to bring it about. But I promise you this: I shall be near it . . . .

I don't know how it's going to be brought about. Somebody else is going to have to find the way, but I promise you, you're going to hear about it. I'm going to be near it. I'll try to be a voice. It's a conviction, it's a deep conviction . . . .

It's a deep conviction of mine that God wants us together. I will not accept temporary defeat. There may be many. I'm a very patient man on some points . . . . If it doesn't come one way, it'll come another. Thank God for the encouraging signs . . . .

I believe God will get his church visibly together. I believe it must come--

I believe it will come. It may be in the next five to ten years, maybe fifteen years. If it doesn't come in my time that too is all right, but it'll come. I would enjoy seeing it; I pray I might. But I don't have to in order to keep working for it. The greatest encouraging thing to me is that we may be on the very verge of a breakthrough . . . .

I say finally, . . . we face a crisis hour in the holiness movement. There's a new surge of interest in the work and experience of the Holy Ghost by many not in the so-called holiness movement. We will either rise to the challenge with a united front, take the wraps off, and turn our blessed truth of the Holy Spirit loose, and expose it to hungry hearts, or . . . in monk-like fashion become a self-ish, pharisaical holiness society with orthodox doctrine but no love, no passion, or power to promote God's kingdom in our generation. God's program will go on. He's no respecter of persons. If we do not let him use us as wholesome, selfless channels, he may well permit us to sit on the sidelines as critics, stroking our beards, examining the shibboleths, while he goes on with revival and raises up others who can use the same scriptures, humble themselves, tarry for, and receive the Holy Spirit of God.

I call, I call once more as a voice, I say again as an irritant: Holiness people, let's unite! Every way we can. Let's arise and shake ourselves of suspicion, and join hands, that we might march forward together as a might Holy Ghost-filled army, giving scriptural holiness a united voice.

--Paul L. Kindschi