

Edited by Wendy J. Deichmann & Scott T. Kisker

Heirs of Pietism in World Christianity: The 19th to the 21st Centuries

A Conference Held at United Theological Seminary,
Dayton, Ohio | June 1-3, 2022



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First Fruits Press

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Wilmore, KY

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ISBN: 9781648172083

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Heirs of Pietism in world Christianity : the 19th to the 21st centuries [electronic resource] / edited by Wendy J. Deichmann & Scott T. Kisker. – Wilmore, Kentucky : First Fruits Press, ©2024.

1 online resource (196 p. : port.) : digital.

A conference held at United Theological Seminary, Dayton, Ohio, June 1-3, 2022.

ISBN: 9781648172076 (paperback)

ISBN: 9781648172083 (uPDF)

ISBN: 9781648172090 (Mobi)

OCLC: 1420670243

1. Pietism--Congresses.
 2. Pietists--Congresses.
 3. Pietism--History--Congresses.
 4. Evangelical United Brethren Church--History--Congresses.
 5. Church of the Brethren--History--Congresses.
- I. Deichmann, Wendy J., editor. II. Kisker, Scott Thomas, 1967- editor.

BR1650.A13 H44 2024eb

280/.4

Cover design by Amanda Kessinger



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgments	i
Foreword	iii
<i>J. Steven O'Malley</i>	
Introduction	I
<i>Wendy J. Deichmann and Scott T. Kisker</i>	
1. The Influence of Gerhard Tersteegen on German American Revivalism	5
<i>J. Steven O'Malley</i>	
2. His Words Continue to Sing: Zinzendorf in Twentieth Century Brethren Hymnody	23
<i>Karen Garrett</i>	
3. John Wesley, the Almost Charismatic	41
<i>Peter J. Bellini</i>	
4. Pietist Origins of Global Deliverance Ministries	69
<i>Candy Gunther Brown</i>	
5. Ram Chandra Bose and North Indian Pietism	83
<i>Alan M. Guenther</i>	



6. Anna Mow: Reinvigorating Pietist Witness for Brethren and Beyond	107
<i>Denise D. Kettering-Lane</i>	
7. “I Perceive You Have Your Own Brand of Existentialism:” Mildred Bangs Wynkoop as an Heir of Pietism	123
<i>Steven Hoskins</i>	
8. “Dry-Eyed Pietists:” Twentieth Century Church of the Brethren Scholars, Religious Experience, and Brethren Identity	141
<i>William C. Kostlevy</i>	
9. German Pietism, Neo-Evangelicalism, and Subtle Polemics in Harold O.J. Brown’s <i>Heresies</i>	163
<i>Peter James Yoder</i>	
List of Contributors	181



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The editors would like to express appreciation for the tremendous support we received from many in the preparation and orchestration of the 2022 Heirs of Pietism in World Christianity Conference and in the production of this volume. We are grateful to President Kent Millard and the staff of United Theological Seminary for graciously hosting; and to the Advisory Council of the Center for the Evangelical United Brethren Heritage, the Manchester Wesley Research Centre of Manchester, UK, and the Brethren Historical Center and Archives in Elgin, Illinois for co-sponsoring the conference that led to this publication. Gratitude is also due to the Brethren Heritage Center in neighboring Brookville, Ohio and its staff for welcoming participants and providing a fabulous tour of its outstanding archival collections.

Rachel Hurley and Summer Lee of the marketing staff at the seminary did a superb job developing promotional materials and getting the word out about the conference. Elaine Hawley always wore a cheerful smile while overseeing registration and other essential details. The information technology staff, including Christian Messer, Heather Shellabarger, and Kim Bury worked their magic beautifully so that distance participation, including presentations, was possible from across the nation and the world. Jeri Getts and her team served up wonderfully delicious and nutritious meals and snacks, and Karen Garrett and Tesia Mallory provided leadership for heart-warming worship and music in the Pietist tradition. We are grateful to these and any others of the seminary staff whose names we may have missed.

Special appreciation must be expressed to the staff of the O'Brien Library at United Theological Seminary for their generous support and expert help with the conference. These fine folks include the Director of the Library, Ken Cochrane; EUB Archivist, Andy Wood, who provided a fabulous presentation and tour of the EUB archival materials housed at the seminary; Collections Manager Mark Condy; and student Assistant, Frederick Osei-Manu. Former Director of the Library, Sarah Blair, was also graciously instrumental. Along with Sarah Blair and the library staff, Harold and Norma Stockman warmly welcomed participants and guests. Thank you, each and all.

We are especially grateful to David Bundy of Manchester Wesley Research Centre and Jennifer Houser of the Brethren Historical Center and Archives for their partnership not only in sponsoring, but also in envisioning and planning the conference that yielded the chapters in this book. Thank you to each of the presenters and authors for your fine, scholarly work and for your kind patience. Finally, we are indebted to Steven O'Malley, who served as a wonderful sounding board for our ideas about publication. We want to express our deep appreciation to him and to Robert Danielson of the B.L. Fisher Library at Asbury Theological Seminary and First Fruits Press for shepherding this volume through to publication.



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FOREWORD

J. Steven O'Malley

Context is essential to an understanding of a text. The present study illumines German Pietism as the historical context for the life and mission of the Evangelical United Brethren (EUB), in conversation with the Church of the Brethren, an earlier Pietist denomination with European roots.¹ As the largest denomination derived from German American Pietism, the EUB spanned more than two centuries (1766-1968). It originated during the first wave of German immigration to colonial North America in the seventeenth century,² an era when Pietism was flourishing on the European continent.³ Several chapters of this volume focus on the influence of ecclesial as well as German radical Pietism upon these two denominations. Each of the chapters makes a distinctive contribution to understanding the influence of Pietism in this transatlantic context.

The Pietists appearing in this volume represent transformative voices of spiritual and ecclesial renewal in post

¹ The Church of the Brethren began in 1708 with the ministry of Alexander Mack in Schwarzenau, Germany, and adopted sacramental features of Anabaptism (e.g., adult believer baptism) in relation to Pietism, as well as pacifism.

² Beginning in 1683 in the vicinity of Philadelphia with the establishment of Germantown by Franz Daniel Pastorius, and the assistance of William Penn. Through the nineteenth century, Germans were the most prolific migrants to North America.

³ By the mid nineteenth century, German immigration to the United States had largely shifted from religious to social and political factors.

Reformation continental Europe. If John Arndt (1555-1621) was the trumpet heralding this movement at the start of the seventeenth century,⁴ the weaver Gerhard Tersteegen (1697-1769) and the United Brethren founder William Otterbein (1726-1813) might represent the metamorphosis of Pietism into “awakening” in the early eighteenth century. Between these two historical markers a cataclysmic disruption of church and state occurred during the Thirty Years War (1618-48). Ecclesial Pietism appeared in response to this polemical era of Protestant Orthodoxy.⁵

Pietism was mobilized into a personal and ecclesial renewal movement through the church Pietists with the appearance of Philipp Jakob Spener’s *Pia Desideria* (1675) and his “colleges of piety” among Lutherans, along with August Hermann Francke’s ministries at Halle, and Ludwig von Zinzendorf’s at Herrnhut. As a Holy Spirit led movement, Pietism penetrated ecclesial and dogmatic barriers, finding a home among German and Dutch Reformed pastors and theologians in the Rhineland, as well.⁶

With the dawn of the eighteenth century, apocalyptic accounts of an imminent end time were shown to be premature, and a shift toward a theology of a coming Kingdom of God on earth seeped into the Pietist mind. The new sentiment was accelerated through visitations of the Holy Spirit within lands ruined by the blanket destruction of church and society in an era of militant Counter Reformation fury. The first glimmer of light for the beleaguered Protestants was a visitation of the Holy Spirit to praying orphans in war-torn Silesia in 1708.⁷ These children, ages five to twelve, were heard spontaneously prophesying in the Spirit that a Deliverer would soon come to bring light to darkness and raise new congregations

⁴Through his influential volume on *The True Christianity*, first published in 1605.

⁵See the chapter by Peter Yoder in this volume.

⁶See my chapter on Tersteegen.

⁷The remarkable account of the children’s prayer revival is found in Eric Swensson, *The Silesian Children’s Prayer and Praise Revival* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2010.)

among scattered war refugees. “Emergency” churches were built by Francke’s Halle resources, and the awakening there occurred as a result of Pentecost homilies delivered by the Lutheran pastor in charge, Johann Adam Steinmetz, himself a product of the children’s prayer revival. Beneficiaries of this “Erweckung” included Christian David, builder of the Herrnhut community founded by Zinzendorf, and John Wesley, seeking the pneumatic gift of Christ’s redemptive and reconciling grace through the “sealing” ministry of the Holy Spirit.⁸

The appearance of supernatural fulfillment of this prophecy became the catalyst for the first transmutation of Pietism from a concern for ecclesial renewal to an ecstatic movement of awakening in key locations of central Europe, before its spread to America via Tersteegen⁹ and the EUB founders, who published Tersteegen’s sermons and hymns in their German publishing office.¹⁰ Voices of that awakening phase of Pietism are found in the chapter on Gerhard Tersteegen in this volume. Other Pietists followed a different avenue of advance, such as the German Baptist Brethren and the resulting Church of the Brethren. They developed a German version of a believers’ church marked by a visible lifestyle of humility and solemnity in following Christ through the guide of Scripture, through believers’ baptism, the love feast, and life of service in the heritage of a German radical pietist, Alexander Mack (1679-1735).

⁸ See *Journal of John Wesley, August 1738*: his conversation with Christian David at Herrnhut. See also: J. Steven O’Malley, *The Origin of the Wesleyan Vision of Christian Globalization and the Pursuit of Pentecost in Early Pietist Revivalism, with translation of the Pentecost Addresses of Johann Adam Steinmetz (1689-1762)*, Lexington: EMeth Press, 2020, Part Three.

⁹ See the chapter on Tersteegen in this volume, by this author, as well as frequent use of Tersteegen’s hymns and sermons in the issues of the official journal of the Evangelical Association, *Der Christliche Botschafter*.

¹⁰ Printed in the *Christliches Verlagshaus*, New Berlin, Pennsylvania, and the journal, *Der Evangelische Botschafter*, after 1830. Note: Candy Gunther Brown’s chapter on Pietism and Deliverance Ministries in this volume is an expression of this prophetic healing dimension that was present in the awakening under Steinmetz in Silesia from 1719-30.

The chapter by William Kostlevy presents a timeline of Brethren (also known as Dunker) development. This extended from the removal of Mack's first congregation in Krefeld, Germany to its new home in Pennsylvania in 1708, and from there to the early nineteenth century shift of many midwestern Brethren congregations from a humble, emotive, Pietist mode of worship through the inner light of Christ, to a Campbellite non-emotive style of worship. The latter focused on confessing by reason the doctrinal expression of biblical precepts pertaining to salvation in Christ and service to the world. Brethren congregations have often found their place alongside those of the EUB on the paths of German American settlement in the American heartland. In fact, among my forebears were those who attended a Dunker church for their love feast and an Albright (Evangelical) church for their revival preaching, hoping to find the whole gospel by joining the two.

The larger framework for reading these chapters may also be traced by Peter Yoder's historiographical treatment of Pietism as the point of advancing Christian thought from the polemical age of Protestant Orthodoxy, set amid Reformation and Counter Reformation contention, to the post Enlightenment age of liberal theology. There is also a line of succession from Pietism to movements of awakening where both Protestant Orthodoxy and Enlightenment rationalism were not circumvented by an anti-polemical spirit of Pietism leading to irenic, non-dogmatic Christianity.¹¹ Instead, this succession may be traced between Luther and the birth of awakenings via Steinmetz, whose influential awakening addresses provided the framework for a "whole counsel of God" soteriology inclusive of the Cross (*Christus pro nobis*) and Pentecost (*Christus in nobis*).¹² This was a theological formula that also appealed to

¹¹ A reference to the discussion in the chapter by Peter Yoder in this volume.

¹² Tr: "Christ for me," and "Christ in me," as markers for the Cross and Pentecost, or justification and sanctification. Steinmetz's biblical grounding for this in his Pentecost Addresses focused upon Ephesians 1:7-14 and 4:30. *Origin, part three*.

John Wesley during his visit at Herrnhut, and through him to the Methodist heirs of Pietism.



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INTRODUCTION

What do two Germans arriving as missionaries in India in 1706, the exorcism of a demon from a young woman in Germany in the 1840s, and an existential *Theology of Love* published by a female American professor in 1972 have in common? The simple answer is that they are examples of the innumerable heirs of historic Pietism and its astonishing influence across the centuries and continents. This book is a collection of nine such fascinating narratives that teach us more than we knew before about Pietism, its significance, and its interpretation, authored by historians from across the United States and Canada.

Pietism can seem like a perplexing topic, especially to the uninitiated in its study. Traditional narratives of the history of Christianity in the modern era have often treated it lightly, if at all. In recent decades, however, a substantive wave of scholarship about Pietism has introduced a treasure trove of new perceptions, connections, and questions that invite further research and analysis about its nature, definition, significance, and influence. These newer contributions have provided important insights, but also unsettled some long-established perspectives.

The purpose of this collection of scholarly articles is to contribute to the continuing stream of research, understanding, and interpretation of Pietism. It provides a sampling of the heirs and impact of Pietism in Germany, England, India, North America, and beyond, and includes voices and experiences of both women and men. These narratives invite not only the intellectual engagement of those who love history and grasp its importance; they also invite

consideration of the spiritual heritage exemplified by this particular content. Eighteenth-century Gerhard Tersteegen’s concept of spiritual “awakening” and his plea to those of “all different religious bodies” to unite “in Spirit,” for example, surely meant something of significance in his own context; but do his words and his story also hold meaning beyond his own historical time and place? What implications for individual and ecclesial renewal might they suggest? The essays contained here offer ample opportunity for the reader to ponder in edifying ways such useful questions while increasing in historical knowledge and understanding of Pietism.

The essays in this volume are in general arranged in chronological order. Steven O’Malley sets the course in the eighteenth century by examining the deep, transatlantic influence of Gerhard Tersteegen’s ministry and publications with a particular focus upon how they helped to shape early United Brethren in Christ and Evangelical Association communities in North America. Karen Garrett’s exploration of the ongoing use and impact of Ludwig von Zinzendorf hymns among Brethren and other Christian denominations up to the present demonstrates the important role of hymnody in Pietism.

In what he refers to as the “almost charismatic” character of the founder of Methodism’s theology and ministry, Pete Bellini considers John Wesley’s demonology, his convictions and practices of deliverance and healing, and distinguishes between Wesley’s understandings of the “ordinary” and “extraordinary” work of the Holy Spirit. In a similar vein, Candy Gunther Brown traces Pietist cosmology, especially related to exorcism or deliverance, from biblical sources through Reformer Martin Luther and Pietist Johann Christoph Blumhardt, to modern, global Pentecostalism.

Alan Guenther tracks the genesis of Pietism in North India and its development into an indigenous movement in conversation with Christianity in other parts of the world through the life and work of nineteenth-century Ram Chandra Bose. The Pietist qualities

and commitments of twentieth-century Brethren minister and author Anna Mow are insightfully considered by Denise Kettering-Lane. Steven Hoskins presents Mildred Bangs Wynkoop as an heir of Pietism on the basis of her existential interpretation of John Wesley's theology throughout her academic career, but especially as expressed in her *Theology of Love*. The nature of the relationship between Anabaptist and Pietist origins of the Church of the Brethren and twentieth-century expressions of this identity are explored by William Kostlevy. Finally, Peter Yoder evaluates Reformed historian Harold O.J. Brown's treatment of Pietism in his important, 1984 volume on the history of Christianity: *Heresies: The Image of Christ in the Mirror of Heresy and Orthodoxy*.

The co-editors of this volume are professors of the history of Christianity at United Theological Seminary in Dayton, Ohio. It is no mere coincidence that a book about Pietism should emerge from this context. The seminary was founded in 1871 by the Church of the United Brethren in Christ, an early American denomination co-founded in 1800 by German Reformed pastor Philip William Otterbein and Mennonite preacher Martin Boehm, both Pietists. This denomination merged in 1946 with another German American Pietist group, the Evangelical Church. The resulting denomination, the Evangelical United Brethren (EUB), in turn merged in 1968 with the Methodists to form The United Methodist Church. The distinctive Pietist heritage of the EUB is honored, preserved, and interpreted at the Center for the Evangelical United Brethren Heritage at the seminary. In addition to faculty roles, Wendy Deichmann serves as Director of this Center, and Scott Kisker serves as Associate Dean of Academic Programs at the seminary.

This collection of essays originated from an academic conference hosted by the Center for the EUB Heritage and held at United Theological Seminary in June 2022 around the theme: "Heirs of Pietism in World Christianity: the 19th to the 21st Centuries." The wide-ranging papers included in this volume were among the best of the eighteen superb presentations given at the conference. We are

grateful to the authors for their fine work on the chapters and their patience while this volume was being put together, and to First Fruits Press for publishing this important contribution to Pietist studies. We hope this book will not only increase available knowledge and understanding of Pietism, but also inspire continuing research and conversation about this essential subject.

Wendy J. Deichmann and Scott T. Kisker
November 2023



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The Influence Of Gerhard Tersteegen On German American Revivalism

J. Steven O'Malley

It is a lesser-known fact that, alongside Johann Arndt's four books of *True Christianity*, Gerhard Tersteegen (1697-1769) was the most widely read Pietist author in early German American culture.¹ His writings were also influential in lives of early members of the Evangelical United Brethren traditions.

My interest in Tersteegen resulted from a search through the many nineteenth century volumes of the *Christliche Botschafter* in the Evangelical United Brethren (hereafter, EUB) archival materials at United Theological Seminary in Dayton, Ohio. It had the longest history of continuous publication of any German language religious journal in American history. My intent was to discover who were the most influential authors in their repertoire. Tersteegen was number one by a long shot. In investigating the extant personal library of Bishop John Seybert, a major work by Tersteegen was prominently displayed. The early Albright people couldn't read Wesley because he was not translated into German, and their reading of Tersteegen spilled over into their later English language edition of the *Evangelical Messenger*, as well.

This paper originated with a presentation at a recent gathering on the occasion of the three hundredth anniversary of Tersteegen's

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¹ See F. Ernest Stoeffler, *Mysticism in the Devotional Literature of Colonial Pennsylvania*, (Allentown, Pa.: Pennsylvania German Folklore Society, 1949), Part One.

death held at his birth site in Mühlheim, Germany. His hymns were sung with fervor. Unlike in earlier years, his name may carry scant recognition in our day – all the more reason why this presentation may be considered foundational for a conference on the legacy of Pietism.

A word on terminology is in order. Pietism is identified with a pervasive movement in German and early German American history peaking from the mid seventeenth to the latter eighteenth centuries. Emphasis was upon the *praxis pietatis*, the heartfelt practice of the godly life as being the mark of a Christian, as distinct from external religious observance. An influential movement in the Protestant churches of continental Europe, Pietism shaped religion, education, politics, and culture in its time. Focus was placed upon lay renewal within the life of the local parish, especially through the introduction of conventicles, and with focus on the new birth. This emphasis was considered imperative in the wake of the destructive Thirty Years War of the mid seventeenth century.

Turning to Tersteegen, the early phase of his life resembled a “contemplative in recluse.” As a cottage-based ribbon weaver in the Rhineland, he was devoutly and skillfully intent on encountering the unfettered presence of God in his life. He was influenced by the Heidelberg Catechism, indigenous to his locality, with its urgent focus on finding one’s true comfort in life in Christ. He progressed from a student of Christian mystical theology to becoming a veritable beacon of awakening. Tersteegen’s early literary publications were expansive, taking him into new directions, including the first translations into German of French devotional literature (Guyon and Poiret) and a three volume series that first introduced German Protestants to the great Roman Catholic devotional literature from the Middle Ages—and that in a day when polemics between Roman Catholics and Protestants were raging, and when enlightenment writers like Leibniz were distancing personal access to God to the

end of a complex philosophical argument.² With his winsome persona, this recluse was led to forsake his life of solitude to direct seekers of the godly life into the presence of God in Christ. He did so by a patient, attentive correspondence with persons of need from all walks of life, now preserved in large tomes.

A new day, or part two of Tersteegen's life and ministry, was introduced in relation to the emergence of the new term "awakening," or *Erweckung*, meaning, to be awakened from sleep, or death. The term first appeared in central Europe in the early eighteenth century, where warfare had so decimated parish life that its vitality disintegrated into ruins. In places like Silesia and Moravia, Austrian Hapsburg Roman Catholic Emperors and Jesuit allies were intent on re-catholicizing by force those lands they had lost to the Reformation. In a delayed response, what followed was the spontaneous appearance of the Holy Spirit in the songs and prayers of surviving, orphaned children in Silesia, who were seen by Pietists as harbingers of a new, post-Christendom expression of a prophetic community of faith, unfettered by decadent tradition. In its original manifestation within central Europe, awakening was theocentric in origin and mission. God was seen as doing a new thing amid the dry bones of Ezekiel 37. This new stream of awakening would impact Tersteegen as a Spirit-led movement set amid diaspora refugees fleeing devastated homelands in that troubled era of the Counter Reformation.

The central theological theme of this first awakening was to declare the time had come for the "whole counsel of God" to be proclaimed. Salvation through the cross was not to be minimized as a consensual agreement between two estranged parties. The shed blood was for Tersteegen to be viewed through the Spirit's sealing witness³ as the measure of the boundless love of God for the humble,

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² Gerhard Tersteegen, "Auserlesene Lebensbeschreibungen heiliger Seelen" (Essen 1733-35, and 1784-86) author trans.: *Gathered Life Descriptions of Holy Souls*, the first of three large volumes that were twenty years in preparation.

³ Ephesians 1:13.

unworthy sinner, that “tells the Father’s heart,” not “of what I am or must be.”⁴

When remnants of that first awakening swept westward into Tersteegen’s Rhineland by 1724, it was usually in a heterodox expression that slighted the necessity of the cross as the only salvific ground for the ministry of the Spirit. Now out of bounds, the free quest for the assurance of the Spirit had led to a mix of spiritualist and radical Pietist sects in Tersteegen’s neighborhood.

Amid such turmoil in the Rhineland, Tersteegen found peace in identifying with the sufficiency of Christ, whom he addressed as Jesus Emmanuel. Turning to the promises of faith in the gospel, he was prone to watch and wait, as he put it, “til the Lord Himself *reveals* Himself in us, *raises up* His dwelling place in us, and *inhabits* it, *filling* it with His life so that we are *clothed* in Him, and He Himself *fulfills* in us all the righteousness of the law.” “Then we will no longer strive after this virtue or that, but all virtues will be *present* in actual existence, and will *flow forth* without force of compulsion, because of the *new birth* in us.” The birth of this new man is “the Son of God *dwelling within* us, and he now “*shares with Jesus* the love of God that constrains us.” Only then are we “delivered (both) from the *bondage* of our lusts, affections and opinions, and from the terrifying *accusations* of our conscience.”⁵

For Tersteegen, this shift from darkness to light was designated by an extraordinary occasion on Maundy Thursday, 1724, when on that date he penned a letter, in his own blood, to “My Jesus,” saying in a fashion reminiscent of his Heidelberg Catechism,

I own myself to be Thine, my *only* Savior and
Bridegroom, Christ Jesus. I renounce from my heart

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⁴ Harvey and Tait, eds., *Recluse in Demand; Life and Letters of Gerhard Tersteegen*. Vol. 1, (Shoals, IN: Old Tract Society, n.d.), 22.

⁵ Harvey and Tait, *Recluse*, 21.

all right and authority that Satan *unrighteously* gave me over myself, from this evening henceforward.

On this evening, through the precious blood, Thou didst *purchase* me for Thyself...Reign in me! I *yield* myself without reserve. ...*Thy Spirit seal* what is written in the *simplicity* of my heart.

[Now as] *Thine* unworthy possession,
[signed] Gerhard Tersteegen

From that pivotal moment, Tersteegen's energies were *redirected* by the Spirit to weave at his loom by day, and to devote his nights to *prayerfully composing* hymns of praise and adoration. These he shared with all comers who crossed his path, and they soon grew numerous.

This simple, focused lifestyle provided him with opportunities to respond personally to those who sought his spiritual counsel. He became known foremost as a "*Friend of God.*" As his fame spread, he remained *oblivious* to publicity while remaining *devoted* to his humble practice of living in access to God. As for the world, he had respect for all churches, yet he did not identify as a church Pietist, like Spener, Francke, or Otterbein. His focus was on the inner life of godliness. His door was ever open to persons from *all* stations of life. This practice defied the pattern of most radical Pietists of being exclusionists *from* the world. Sensitive to human *suffering*, he *reached out* to the poor with natural medicines he developed to address their ills (before the days of professional medicine). His followers often chose to organize themselves into prayer and Bible study conventicles, some of which survived on location until the time of their resistance to the Third Reich.

With awakening in the air, Tersteegen had begun to rise from his solitude when those souls, awakened to Christ through his correspondence and hymns, suddenly urged him to venture forth as an itinerant evangelist and share his gifts with the world. His prayerful decision to do so, made with great humility before God,

led to the manifestation of significant awakenings. By 1750, these stirrings of the Spirit had touched many lives through the Rhineland region of northwest Germany and Holland.

This evangelistic work became a further expression of Tersteegen's life of meditation on the cross in hymnodic form. As he put it,

To heart and soul, how sweet Thou art,
 O great High Priest of God!
 My heart brought nigh to God's own heart,
 By Thy most precious blood.
 Is all a dream? Thou canst not lie,
 The Spirit and the blood,
 Proclaim to sinners such as I
 The boundless love of God.⁶

These words gave expression to the core of his enduring message.

The Transatlantic Tersteegen

An early link between Tersteegen and the New World appeared in the religious experience of the young John Wesley in Georgia (1735). There he produced the first English translations of two beloved Tersteegen hymns: *Gott ist Gegenwärtig* [God Himself is with Us] and *Verborgene Gottes Liebe Du* [The Hidden Love of God afar].⁷ Wesley found these hymns in the German hymnal he acquired from the Moravians on his voyage from England. He also regarded them as preparatory to his conversion at Aldersgate in 1738.⁸ His

⁶ Harvey and Tait, *Recluse*, 22.

⁷ J. Steven O'Malley, "Gerhard Tersteegen und John Wesley im Zusammenhang ihrer Welt," in *Zur Rezeption mystischer Traditionen in Protestantismus des 16. Bis 19. Jahrhunderts*, ed. Dietrich Meyer/Udo Starter (Hggg): SVRKG 152 Köln 2002, 305-312.

⁸ *The Works of John Wesley*, Bd 5, London 1872 (reprinted Grand Rapids 1958-59), 241.

final words of life in 1791 were somehow reminiscent of the most famous hymn of Tersteegen, “The best of all is God is with us!”⁹

The legacy of Tersteegen in North America found its major expression in the widespread dissemination of his published works. Before the arrival of the generation of his publishers there was already in place an informal network of his friends in the first half of the eighteenth century extending from North America to the lower German Rhineland. The city of Krefeld near the Dutch border was established as the hinge between Tersteegen’s hometown of Mühlheim and Germantown, Pennsylvania. In the records of a group of migrants led by Johannes Naas (1670-1741), who migrated to Pennsylvania from Krefeld in 1733, there were a considerable number of “Tersteegen friends and correspondents.”¹⁰ One migrant, Stephan Koch,¹¹ provided an account¹² intended for those “Friends” of Tersteegen who had remained in Europe, in which Tersteegen was addressed as “our beloved brother.”¹³

This Tersteegen network also interacted with Conrad Beissel (1691-1781), founder of the Ephrata Cloister in Pennsylvania, a spinoff from the Neutaufer or Dunkers, who originated in Schwarzenau, Germany.¹⁴ A colleague of Beissel was Christoph Sauer, the first publisher of German devotional literature in eighteenth century North America. Saur succeeded in building a “highly developed

⁹Richard Rodda, “A Discourse delivered at the chapel on Oldham Street, Manchester, March 13, 1791, on Occasion of the death of the Reverend John Wesley, Manchester, 1791,” 22; and O’Malley: “Tersteegen,” 311.

¹⁰Ulrich Bister, “Gerhard Tersteegen – die Rezeption seiner Schriften in Nordamerika und sein dortiger Freundeskreis,” in Manfred Koch u. a (Hgg): *Gerhard Tersteegen, Evangelische Mystik in mitten der Aufklärung*, SVRKG 126, Köln, 1997, 123-135.

¹¹Koch was a personal friend of Ernst Hochmann von Hochenau (2669-1721), who had ministered in the lower Rhineland region during Tersteegen’s youth. Bister, “Tersteegen,” 127.

¹²Found in the *Chronicle of Ephrata*,[®] COMMERCIAL PURPOSES.

¹³Brief 46, Blumenfeld I, 20, 10. 1753, cited in Bister, “Tersteegen,” 128.

¹⁴The present denomination is the Church of the Brethren, with its Bethany Seminary located in Richmond, IN, near Dayton, OH.

book culture” to serve the rapidly growing German immigrant population streaming into eighteenth century Pennsylvania and Maryland.¹⁵

After Saur arrived in North America from Germany in 1724, he opened his book printing establishment at Germantown, Pennsylvania.¹⁶ In time he became the main American publisher for the works of Tersteegen, continuing into the nineteenth century. In 1743 Saur published the first German Bible in America, commonly known as the Sauer Bible. One year preceding this event he had also published his first Tersteegen volume, a new edition of Thomas a’ Kempis, *Imitation of Christ*.¹⁷ American publications of Tersteegen’s writings also began to appear in European libraries as early as 1766, indicating a growing readership of Tersteegen on both sides of the Atlantic.¹⁸ It was from these publications that we detect early evidence of the close relationship then developing between Tersteegen and the awakenings among German immigrants to North America.

Tersteegen and Revival in America

¹⁵ Germans became and remained the largest immigrant and language group spoken in the North America, after English, through the mid twentieth century. Klaus Depperman, “Pennsylvanien als Asyl der frühen Pietismus,” in PuN 10 (1984), 190-210.

¹⁶ Saur’s publishing house at Germantown continued until 1830, serving for 85 years. Bister, “Tersteegen,” 129.

¹⁷ The author has a personal copy of this first American edition of this work by Tersteegen, which was later published on the press of the Evangelische Gemeinschaft in Neu Berlin, Pennsylvania.

¹⁸ Ulrich Bister has traced the growth of American publications of Tersteegen appearing in European libraries as early as 1766 through the network established by Hieronymus Annoni, a Basel friend of Tersteegen who made round trips to North America as well as in Europe to gather and distribute these publications. Ibid.

An important American advocate of Tersteegen in nineteenth century America was a descendant of Christoph Saur, Abraham Harley Cassel, who developed an unabridged directory of Tersteegen literature in America. Catalogue is located at Mt. Morris, Illinois, since 1881.

Among the various German language daily papers published in the Lancaster, PA, vicinity from the late eighteenth to the early nineteenth centuries, there was one, *The Lancaster Volksfreund und Beobachter*, where we find the first public recommendation of a Tersteegen work from persons representing what is now the EUB tradition. They were the voice of the newly launched “awakening” or “bush meeting” Deutsch,¹⁹ to borrow an expression from Don Yoder. The authors of this promo were three lay preachers associated with the newly formed United Brethren in Christ: Felix Licht, Josef Nofziger, and Jacob Ellenberger. The Tersteegen volume they were commending was among his seminal works, entitled *Spiritual and edifying Letters concerning the inward life and the true essence of Christianity, by the blessed Gerhard Tersteegen*.²⁰

Here is what these three preachers said in their commendation, using the present author’s translation:

Since the above named preachers of the Word are convinced of the benefits of the above named work, and having often personally read and meditated upon its message with much edification, we are convinced that it needs to be read not solely by persons committed to their own form of confession, but rather it should be spread abroad among all persons everywhere who confess the religion of Jesus Christ, in the hope that this very Life itself might be appropriated with much usefulness and spiritual blessing.²¹

A half century earlier, their antecedents had begun holding “big meetings” (“*grosse Versammlungen*”) in the open or in barns, including one on Pentecost 1766 in Lancaster County. There a “new light” Anabaptist preacher, Martin Boehm, was embraced at the end of his address on the new birth with “wir sind Brüder.” This

¹⁹ They were actually Deutsch, or Germans, and not Hollanders.

²⁰ This is the author’s translation of the title from the German: “Briefe über das inwendige Leben und wahre Wesen, von den seligen Gerhard Tersteegen” in *Geistliche und Erbauliche Reden*.

²¹ Bister, “Tersteegen,” 129.

surprising act was an expression of brotherly unity by a German Reformed Pietist missionary pastor from Baltimore, Philip William Otterbein. At a deeper level, this gesture may also be regarded an act of reconciliation initiated by a minister from the ranks of the persecutors of Anabaptists in the old world, a tragic historical odyssey spanning the two centuries since the Reformation. His gesture was lovingly and longingly bestowed upon a preacher who came from the ranks of persecuted Anabaptists in Europe.

Before this occurrence in colonial Pennsylvania, Tersteegen had stood before a crowd of attentive listeners in 1753 while in Amsterdam. There he delivered an awakening address that prophetically anticipated a coming Pentecost when the Holy Spirit would unite his people globally. Titled, “The outpouring of the Holy Spirit,” this timely address was subsequently published on both sides of the Atlantic in the volume of his *Awakening Addresses*.²² In his address he stated:

Let us be unanimous! Let us incessantly and unweariedly strive after it! If we cannot outwardly unite let us at least do so in Spirit. I am certain that, according to Zephaniah 3:10, the Lord will bring souls together more and more from all places and corners of the earth, from all different religious bodies, and lead and direct them all to the one thing needful... the baptism with the Holy Spirit and the heavenly unction to conversion and renewal into the image of God which entirely depends on it, to the great mystery

²² Tersteegen introduced his discussion of Pentecost by locating earlier manifestations in the Old and New Testaments, with reference to the glorious manifestations of God at Sinai, the Lukan Pentecost, and in the coming Judgment of all (Romans 16:23-27). See Albert Löschnhorn and Winfried Zeller, eds., *Gerhard Tersteegen*, (Göttingen, 1979); “Rede über Apg. 2,1-4, gehalten am 2. Pfingstage, dem n.6. 1753,” in translation: “The Address on Acts 2:1-4, on the second day of Pentecost, 1753; “The Outpouring of the Holy Ghost,” in Gerhard Tersteegen, *Sermons and Hymns* (Hampton, TN, n.d.), 40-41.

hid from the beginning of the world, now revealed to the saints of God, which is Christ in us..."²³

By 1819 Felix Licht, the Tersteegen advocate, had become leader of a local community of Otterbein/Boehm followers. They were locally known as the Liches Leute, or Light's people, the name given to the house of worship he built. The protocol of the early United Brethren designated all members as unpartisan brethren and sisters in Christ ("unparteiischen" Brüder in Christo).²⁴

The early United Brethren leaders saw their mission as advancing "unpartisan" ("unparteiischen") unity solely in Christ to accomplish His missional purposes for humanity.²⁵ Their protocol specifically identified a "party spirit" as the mark of depravity to be avoided at all costs.

Records indicate that, throughout the early years of this awakening movement, as well as in the parallel movement of Albright's *Evangelische Gemeinschaft*, meetings for prayer and proclamation, open to all comers, went simply by the name of "Pentecost" assemblies. That historical fact was remembered by one United Brethren historian's observation that "the church fathers made much of Pentecost."²⁶ Bishop Christian Newcomer's journal later recorded annual pilgrimages to a historic site of Otterbein's ministry with his "united Ministers" in Maryland for the celebration

²³ Tersteegen, "The Outpouring of the Holy Spirit," *ibid.* This selection taken from the English translation in Harvey and Tait, "Sermons and Hymns," n.d., 53. Note: here the author alludes to Ephesians 2, the epistle upon which Steinmetz based his Pentecost addresses that opened the First Great Awakening in the wake of the Silesian children's revival of 1707.

²⁴ From the "Protocol of the United Brethren in Christ" (1800), in Arthur Core, *Philip William Otterbein: Pastor, Ecumenist* (Dayton: Otterbein Press, 1968).

²⁵ See "Protocol of the United Brethren," in Arthur Core, *Philip William Otterbein: Pastor, Ecumenist* (Dayton: EUB Board of Publication, 1968), 120-1. Note: Felix Licht also reflected this Protocol as pastor of a local community of United Brethren known as the "people of the light" (Liches Leute).

²⁶ Paul Holdcraft, *History of the Pennsylvania Conference of the United Brethren in Christ*, (Craft Press, Fayetteville, PA, 1938), 36.

of Pentecost.²⁷ The United Brethren were the first expression of awakened German Americans who were touched by the Pentecost witness of the Pietist evangelist in the Rhineland.

The second stream manifested in the early awakening among Germans in America, the *Evangelische Gemeinschaft* (Evangelical Association) began with Jacob Albright (Albrecht), a converted Lutheran Pennsylvania farmer and war veteran. His fervent intercession amid the loss of family members led him to become a fervent itinerating witness to his faith among his neighbors. After his ordination by his co-laborers in the gospel, followed by his premature death, his surviving followers organized as a denomination in 1816.

With their adoption of several Methodist patterns of church discipline, these Evangelicals (or Albright people) established their own printing press in New Berlin, Pennsylvania. From this center flowed a stream of Tersteegen publications, as well as a periodical, *Die Evangelische Botschafter* (*The Evangelical Messenger*), which would have the longest publishing life of any German Christian publication in the United States.²⁸ For nineteenth century American Protestant denominations, printing offices carried more influence on mission than did bishops, pastors, and institutions of theological education.²⁹ In the pages of this periodical, which would reach tens of thousands of German Americans in its long life across the Midwest and Canada,

²⁷ The Geeting Meeting House in Maryland. Holdcraft noted, as a UB historian, “we must keep the fires of Pentecost burning upon our altars and within our souls. This is the genius of our church... When these fires burn out, we have lost our right to exist.” He also notes that “the Church of the United Brethren in Christ is the first American-born denomination.” Paul E. Holdcraft, *History of the Pennsylvania Conference of the United Brethren in Christ* (Fayetteville, PA, Craft Press, 1938), 36. Similarly, Behney and Eller also note that the early gatherings of both Evangelicals and United Brethren were commonly referred to as “Pentecost meetings.” Bruce Behney and Paul Eller, *The History of the Evangelical United Brethren Church* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1979), 73, 81, 83, 139, 148.

²⁸ Its publication, which eventually appeared in German and English (*The Evangelical Messenger*), continued until 1946.

²⁹ Frederick Norwood, *The Story of Methodism* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1973), 216-218.

there are numerous sections devoted to sermons, letters and hymns from Tersteegen. Furthermore, Evangelicals also spawned their own hymn writers, such as John Walter and Johannes Dreisbach, who modeled their work on the pattern of Tersteegen's hymns.³⁰

A leading advocate of Tersteegen among Evangelicals was their first elected bishop, John Seybert (1791-1860), who published an influential response to Tersteegen's *Weg der Wahrheit* [*The Way of Truth*], which replicated its title and reflected its content.³¹ Seybert's unpublished journal records his itinerant preaching covering 250,000 miles on horseback and buckboard, in which he held numerous big meetings, planted 100 congregations, and transported hundreds of books, including many Tersteegen volumes, while traveling over the Appalachians to readers in the Midwest during the antebellum era. Many became awakened to faith through Tersteegen's writings during the Seybert years, and articles by Tersteegen in the *Botschafter* provided prophetic insight undergirding the Pentecost-driven mission of these antislavery Evangelicals in the era of the American Civil War:

These are days concerning the kingdom of light and the kingdom of darkness, the kingdom of Jesus Christ and the kingdom of the Antichrist, and the longer we go the more extensive are the powers deployed against one another, until finally, after the birthpangs of the unregenerate are destroyed through the Spirit of the Lord, the long sought breakthrough of the Kingdom of God (which is inwardly within us) is revealed upon the ground of the earth."³²

³⁰ Johann Walter, Hymnal, 1817, 8.

³¹ The present author located Seybert's personal, hand signed and annotated copy of *Tersteegen's Geistliche und erbauliche Briefe*, published in Lebanon, PA in 1819., on display at Evangelical School of Theology at Myerstown, PA.

³² Author's translation of citation from: "Ein Wort des seeligen Tersteegen über seines Zeit" in *Der Christliche Botschafter* (26 Oktober, 1861), 170-171.

By 1850 it was discerned among the leaders of the *Evangelische Gemeinschaft*, above all Bishop J.J. Esher, that there was now a stronger, more inwardly urgent task before them of returning to their German Fatherland to advance there the ministry of preaching and the organization of conventicles for new believers.³³ Since the doors to the German state churches remained closed to them at that time, these gatherings and services needed to be implemented through improvised methods.³⁴ They first met in a synagogue in Stuttgart.

In addition to the American missionaries of the *Evangelische Gemeinschaft* who came to Germany, the first non-American, indigenous missionary was recruited, a recently converted young man from Württemberg, Gottlieb Füssle (1839-1918). He had previously sought access to the Basel Mission House, but after his conversion through the witness of American Evangelical missionaries, he chose to join with the American missionaries in the ministry of the *Evangelische Gemeinschaft*, situated in the region of Stuttgart (Württemberg).³⁵ Füssle would become a beloved poet and preacher of the *Evangelische Gemeinschaft* in German speaking Europe, and wrote many hymns similar in style to those by Tersteegen. These hymns later appeared in the hymnal of the *Evangelische Gemeinschaft* in Europe, featured in worship from Germany northward to the Baltic states and southward into Switzerland. Füssle also became a significant figure in the rediscovery of the

³³ Paul Eller, *History of Evangelical Missions* (Harrisburg: Evangelical Publishing House, 1942), 145.

³⁴ Eller, *Ibid*, 149.

³⁵ His conversion was precipitated by the preaching of Johannes Nicolai, traveling under appointment of the Board of Missions of the Mother Church in America. They had been sent to Europe in response to appeals from persons in Schwen who had been awakened to faith by one of their own, Sebastian Kurz from Bonlanden near Stuttgart, who had migrated to America, experienced conversion under the ministry of the *Evangelische Gemeinschaft*, and then returned to his homeland to share his glad tidings with his countrymen.—Testimony of Alfred Füssle in Ernst Humbarger, *Zeugen des Lichtes: Aus den Leben und Wirken von Predigern der Evangelische Gemeinschaft* (Stuttgart: Christliches Verlagshaus, 1950), 16. This mission also established the Evangelisches PredigerSeminar at Reutlingen, which continues to the time of this writing.

hymns of Gerhard Tersteegen in nineteenth century Germany and Switzerland. His service as a preacher and a thirty-year stretch as editor of the *Evangelische Botschafter*, the European equivalent of the American *Christliche Botschafter*, became a new venue for extending the transatlantic influence of Tersteegen into the early twentieth century.

The pietist theme of the new birth, tinted with terminology customary to Tersteegen, impacts deeply the devotional tenor of Füssle's hymns. For example, Füssle makes use of the term "Grund" (ground), prominent in Tersteegen's verses, but not in Tauler's sense of the inner dwelling place of God in the soul. For both Tersteegen and Füssle, the term designates the deepest dimension of the person that can be penetrated by God's Spirit. In fallen humanity, the "ground" is no longer a holy site. Yet, even as the rays of sunlight illumine a dark cavern, so God's Light appears in our inner darkness. Füssle captures this insight in his verse:

Ihn in mir verkläre ganz
 Dass sein wunderbarer Glanz,
 Meinen Wesengrund durchbricht
 In dem reinsten Tugendlicht!

May Christ be wholly illumined in me,
 that His wondrous radiance
 may break through into my core being,
 In the purest light of virtue! (Author's translation.)

In addition to this substantial influence, Tersteegen had a structural influence upon Füssle's methodology by drawing from the notion of a "Frommen Lotterie," or a "Beneficial Lottery," an edifying card game with Bible citations and selections from his writings. Tersteegen's version was on 381 cards; Füssle's was deployed in a volume of daily devotions, called the "Pilgermanna" (food for pilgrims).³⁶

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³⁶ Saur published an edition of Tersteegen's "Frommen Lotterie" in America under the title of Gerhard Tersteegen, *Die Frommen Lotterie oder Geisliche*

A twentieth century historian from the *Evangelische Gemeinschaft* in German-speaking Europe observed that, from its founding it has been as much influenced by Pietism as by Methodism, and, we might add, by Tersteegen in particular.³⁷ This influence found expression in Füssle's cultivation of a focused life, in the sense of Tersteegen's distinction between "Mannigfaltigkeit" [fragmented] and "Innerlichkeit [inwardly focused]." This theme was accentuated in the most beloved hymn from Pietism, Tersteegen's "Gott ist Gegenwärtig," [God Himself is with us] that remained as the first hymn in the official 1957 hymnal of the later Evangelical United Brethren Church (with German text following the English). In the fourth verse God is bidden to "make me einfältig [meaning, unfolding or opening], innig [inwardly intentional], abgeschieden [set apart from fleeting passions and distractions], sanft [warmly receptive], and still in Thy peace." Here was the key to overcoming the defect of "Mannigfaltigkeit" (one who is fragmented and ever distracted). Füssle's hymns track with this motif of liberation and separation from all that is found outside the Presence of God.

Concluding Observations

Our account began with Tersteegen in his home setting. His early life was the period of his deep soul searching. He was following a mode of inquiry shaped by his early encounter with the Heidelberg Catechism, which begins by asking, "what is your only comfort in life and in death?"³⁸ It took him awhile before he could affirm with assurance its answer to that question: "My only comfort is that I belong to my faithful Savior Jesus Christ..." the

Scharz-Kärtlein (Germantown, PA: Christoph Saur, 1744); compare: Gottlieb Füssle, *Pilgermanna* (Stuttgart: Christliches Verlagshaus, 1906).

³⁷ Paul Wuthrich, "Die Evangelische Gemeinschaft in deutschsprachende Europa," in Karl Steckel und C. Ernst Sommer, *Geschichte der Evangelisch-Methodistische Kirche* (Stuttgart: Christliches Verlagshaus, 1982), 156.

³⁸ Otterbein also distributed sermons on the Heidelberg Catechism in his Baltimore parish, which were written by one of his five brothers, Georg Gottfried Otterbein, pastor in Germany and fellow graduate of the Herborn Academy, a center of Pietist studies in the German Reformed Church.

bedrock of German Reformed Pietism. His pilgrimage to faith took him through the mystics, both Roman Catholic and Protestant, and to a devotional life built around their practice of self-renunciation. Finally, his life as a Pietist took him into the era of awakening, which he embodied and expressed in his revival addresses that also mentored the influential founders of major expressions of United Methodism in the twentieth century.

In a day of disarray, speaking globally, nationally, and denominationally, is it not appropriate to suggest that we as the twenty-first century recipients of the legacy of Tersteegen have before us here a priceless resource for recovery, as we revisit the core of what we were about when our founders put their hands to the task of receiving the coming Kingdom? So be it, is my prayer.



First Fruits

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His Words Continue To Sing:
Zinzendorf In Twentieth Century Brethren
Hymnody

Karen Garrett

Jesus, still lead on,
Till our rest be won,
And, although the way be cheerless,
We will follow calm and fearless;
Guide us by Thy hand
To our fatherland.

If the way be drear,
If the foe be near,
Let not faithless fears o’ertake us,
Let not faith and hope forsake us;
For, despite the foe,
To our home we go.

Jesus, still lead on,
Till our rest be won,
Heavenly Leader, still direct us,
Still support, console, protect us,
Till we safely stand
In our fatherland.¹



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¹Nicolaus von Zinzendorf, “Jesus Still Lead On,” trans. Jane L. Borthwick, in *The Brethren Hymnal* Authorized by Annual Conference Church of the Brethren (Elgin, IL: The Brethren Press, 1951), Hymn #305.

This paper takes a focused look at three hymns written by Ludwig von Zinzendorf (1700-1760) that are included in twentieth century hymnals. My claim is that the words of these hymns reflect a Pietist view of faith and a helpful way to walk in today's world. The three verses above are from the four-verse translation by Jane Borthwick (1813-1897).² These three verses are included in *The Brethren Hymnal*, 1951. The hymnal was authorized by Annual Conference, Church of the Brethren, 1945. This was the official hymnal for the denomination from 1951 to 1992. For nearly fifty years these verses of a Zinzendorf hymn were available for Brethren to sing.

While this paper surveys Zinzendorf hymns in twentieth century hymnals, it does not attempt to discern what Pietist thoughts Brethren might be singing. A reality is that some congregations never used the 1951 hymnal and the congregations who used the hymnal might not have sung this hymn. Another reality is that some congregations keep the 1951 hymnal in their pew racks singing from it rather than the 1992 *Hymnal: A Worship Book*. Research to determine what Brethren actually sing would be quite an undertaking. However, we can reflect on personal experience in worship with a variety of congregations to have a small idea of what people sing.

We take a brief step away from the hymn to include a few details about the Brethren. Throughout this essay the word "Brethren" refers to a group of believers who dared practice adult immersion baptism in the Eder River near Schwarzenau Germany in 1708. At that time adult baptism was illegal. From that action a new denomination was founded that has become a large handful plus of Brethren groups whose roots trace back to the 1708 event. Researchers of Pietism might be more familiar with the word "Brethren" used to refer to the believers at one time known as *Unitas Fratrum*, who took refuge at Herrnhut and were eventually

² In 1778 Christian Gregor compiled this hymn using stanzas from two texts written by Zinzendorf in 1721. Jane Borthwick's translation is based on Gregor's compilation. See Alice Loewen, Harold Moyer, and Mary Oyer, eds., *Exploring the Mennonite Hymnal: Handbook* (Newton KS: Faith the Life Press, Mennonite Publishing House, 1983), 56-57.

named Moravians. It goes without saying that Zinzendorf hymns and theology continue to inform Moravians. My interest is the ways Zinzendorf hymns and theology could and do inform the Church of the Brethren, historically and today, in the context of the universal church. Hymnals used by diverse denominations were surveyed for this project.

What is the connection of the Church of the Brethren to Pietism? There is ample evidence that a variety of believers living in Germany in the late 1600s and early 1700s dialoged with Pietists as they pondered their relationship with the “state churches.” Scholars Donald F. Durnbaugh, Dale R. Stoffer, Dale Brown and Carl Bowman,³ have researched the relationship these believers had with Anabaptists and Pietists living in the same region. The Brethren shared similar concerns about the state churches (Roman Catholic, Lutheran, and Reformed) as they studied scripture and felt called to live out their faith ethically and visibly.

Brethren had direct contact with Ludwig von Zinzendorf in 1741-42 when he traveled to America. Even though Zinzendorf and Brethren forebearers lived in the same region of Germany, Zinzendorf turned of age (age 21) in 1721, and by then Brethren had moved out of Germany. The Brethren were not influenced by Zinzendorf in Germany, nor did they influence him, even though they would have had common concerns. Their paths would cross only when Zinzendorf was in Germantown, Pennsylvania on his visit to America. The story is that some Brethren heard him speak of his ecumenical vision for unity among denominations. Instead of seeking closer relations with Moravians and other German Christians living near Germantown, Brethren decided instead that

³ Donald F. Durnbaugh “The Genius of the Brethren,” *Brethren Life & Thought* 4, no. 1 (Winter 1959) 4-34 and 4, no. 2 (Spring 1959) 4-18; Dale R. Stoffer, *Background and Development of the Brethren Doctrines, 1650-1987* (Philadelphia, PA: Brethren Encyclopedia Inc. 1989), 5-57; Dale Brown, *Understanding Pietism* (Grand Rapids MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co. 1978), 137-164; Carl Bowman, *Brethren Society: The Cultural Transformation of a “Peculiar People”* (Baltimore MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995), 46-50.

perhaps they needed to come to clarity as to what Brethren believe and practice.⁴

An ongoing conversation ebbs and flows through the Church of the Brethren about whether we are Anabaptist or Pietist or both. The conversation, sometimes more a debate, is surfacing again as the denomination continues to face differences of interpretation as to how we practice our faith. Some are coming to think that one way forward is to look again to Pietism. Singing the Zinzendorf hymn texts available in our hymnals is one way to hear our Pietist roots.

“Jesus, Still Lead On” is one example. While the hymn is not included in the 1992 *Hymnal: A Worship Book*, it is a hymn included in a variety of hymnals published in the twentieth century and thus is available to many congregations. The fact that this hymn is included in hymnals across denominations would please Zinzendorf. One of his passions was an ecumenism that encouraged believers to work and worship across denominations, and at the same time maintain the strength of belief that forms within denominations.

If we chose to sing “Jesus, Still Lead On,” what Pietist hope will we encounter? First, it is Christ centered, or more specifically Jesus centered. Using the name Jesus invokes a feeling of personal relationship. Using the name Christ adds a bit more authority and distance to that relationship. Borthwick begins her translation with the name of Jesus which gives us an immediate focus. The line, “Jesus, still lead on” appears again in the final verse. We sing this phrase twice and thus are reminded that our daily commitment needs to allow Jesus to lead! In *The Brethren Hymnal* the hymn is included in a section of hymns related to “Trials and Conflicts.” Other hymnals include the hymn in sections about pilgrimage. As the Church of the Brethren faces conflict and wonders what our future holds, perhaps we need to sing the words that remind us to follow ‘calm and fearless’ as we allow Jesus to be our guide.

⁴ Donald F. Durnbaugh, ed., *The Brethren in Colonial America* (Elgin IL: The Brethren Press 1967), 284.

Second, this hymn is about a communal journey, rather than an individual response. Even though we come to know Jesus as individuals, the hymn uses the pronouns ‘we’ and ‘us’ rather than ‘I’ or ‘me.’ Culture might be drawing us to individual journeys and ideas, but the journey is much safer when we do not head out solo. Our walk of faith needs the different strengths and ideas that community provides. The image in the hymn is that the journey culminates in our arrival at the “fatherland” or heaven. We might face difficult times, as well as fear and doubt, and we need Jesus daily for that journey. The ultimate journey does lead to eternity, and we might be surprised when we arrive at the ‘fatherland’ and see with whom we will share eternity.

Third, this hymn reflects on the present, past and future. “In the present, past and future move closer together as the promises in the past receive renewed reality and their future fulfillment is experienced as directly imminent.”⁵ Pietist hymn singing often remembers the past as it looks toward an eschatological perspective. In this process we also name our present reality. It is today when we need to be living out our faith. “Jesus, still lead,” assumes that Jesus has led in the past. The present way may be “cheerles:” however, we are headed “to the fatherland:” looking to heaven, if not to the end times. Pietism has a wholistic approach to our faith journey.

In 1721 Zinzendorf wrote two similar hymns on the topic of Jesus leading.⁶ It is interesting to consider the fact that Zinzendorf turned age 21 in 1721. By the time he wrote the words, he had completed his studies in law, with a side passion of theology, and had completed his *wanderjahr*. He, then an adult, could purchase property, and would soon find a marriage partner. The occasion of his writing was a pivotal birthday year. As he wrote he had no idea how or where Jesus would lead. He had confidence that Jesus would lead. In fact, from childhood, Zinzendorf considered Jesus

⁵ Steffen Arndal, “Spiritual Revival and Hymnody: The Hymnbooks of German Pietism and Moravianism” trans. and ed. Hedwig T Durnbaugh, *Brethren Life and Thought* 40 no 2 (Spring 1995), 77.

⁶ See footnote 2.

his best friend, one he played with as a child, and took walks with as an adult.⁷ The hymn, “Jesus, Still Lead On,” does not ask Jesus to simply walk with us, but requests that Jesus lead, and we follow.

“Jesus, Thy Blood and Righteousness”

One Zinzendorf hymn that continues to be published is the hymn “Jesus, Thy Blood and Righteousness.” This hymn gives us an understanding of Zinzendorf’s theology of Christ’s shed blood. The hymn text was written in 1739 while Zinzendorf was on a trip to visit mission sites, including the Moravian work in the West Indies.⁸ The following year John Wesley translated 24 of Zinzendorf’s 33 verses.⁹ Most hymnals include four verses though there is wide variation as to which verses are published, and the order in which the verses appear. One factor for its popularity could be that this translation is by John Wesley.

We begin with the text from *Worship Hymnal* published by the Mennonite Brethren.

Jesus, Thy blood and righteousness
 My beauty are, my glorious dress:
 ‘Midst flaming worlds, in these arrayed,
 With joy shall I lift up my head.

Bold shall I stand in Thy great day,
 For who aught to my charge shall lay?
 Fully absolved through these I am,
 From sin and fear, from guilt and shame.

⁷ A. J. Lewis, *Zinzendorf: The Ecumenical Pioneer* (Bethlehem, PA, Moravian Church in America, 1962), 23.

⁸ Silas Paine, *Stories of the Great Hymns of the Church* (New York, Flexo Printing Co. 1926), 53.

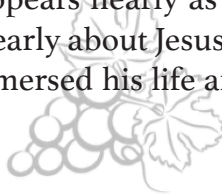
⁹ Companion to the *Hymnal: a handbook to the 1964 Methodist Hymnal* (Nashville: Abingdon Press 1970), 255.

Lord, I believe Thy precious blood,
Which, at the mercy seat of God,
Forever doth for sinners plead,
For me, e'en for my soul, was shed.

Lord, I believe were sinners more
Than sands upon the ocean shore,
Thou hast for all a ransom paid,
For all a full atonement made.¹⁰

These four verses are commonly used in twentieth-century hymnals, though there are variations. Some nineteenth century hymnals, including a Brethren hymnal, include eight or ten verses. Later in this paper, we will look at verses used in the nineteenth century that do not appear in twentieth century hymnals. Variations in wording and verse order help discern shifts in theology or different denominational emphases.

The language in the verses does not shy away from the blood of Christ shed for our sins. The theology of atonement is clear: we are guilty of sin, Jesus shed his blood on our behalf, our debt is paid – in full. These four verses are a good representation of the overall theme of the entire hymn text. The additional verses¹¹ include references to the events of the cross, some reference to hell, Satan is named as a part of the story, and some use *Lamb* as a word for Jesus. The word “Lord” appears nearly as many times as the word Jesus, though the text is clearly about Jesus’ death and our response to that act. Zinzendorf immersed his life and theology in the blood of Christ.



First Fruits

¹⁰ Nicolas von Zinzendorf, “Jesus, Thy Blood and Righteousness,” trans. John Wesley, in *Worship Hymnal* (Hillsboro, KY: Mennonite Brethren Publishing House, 1971), Hymn #270.

¹¹ I located the 24 verses as translated by John Wesley, accessed April 28, 2020, www.hymntime.com/tch/htm/j/t/b/jtbloodr.htm.

The first verse appears in all the versions I studied and is the only verse that appears in all the versions. The line about “beauty” and “glorious dress” seemed odd to me and the rest of the four verse texts do not explain it to my satisfaction. That could be because the first verse is not based on Zinzendorf’s words. Rather, Zinzendorf based his poem on one verse from Paul Eber (1511-1569). The Lutheran hymnal credits verse one to Eber;¹² other hymnals do not mention Eber.

Silas H. Paine relates the story of the origin of this text in his collection of stories about hymns. Paul Eber was a friend of Martin Luther. Eber’s stanza begins, “Jesus, Thy robe of righteousness,” using the word “robe” rather than “blood.” While visiting missionaries in the West Indies, Zinzendorf took the one verse from the Eber hymn and added thirty-two of his own.¹³ It is not surprising that Zinzendorf wrote a hymn text while traveling on a ship. Zinzendorf was prolific and quite versatile in the way he composed hymns. Often following a sermon, he would line a verse. While the congregation was singing that verse, he would compose the next verse and so on.¹⁴ If no one wrote the words down, they were sung once, not to be sung in that way again. Of course, it is possible that some of those verses ended up in other hymns.

Deeper research on the use of the words “glorious dress” expands our understanding beyond the few stanzas that usually appear in hymnals. The ten-stanza version in *The Christian’s Duty* (1825)¹⁵ provides these words in verse 5:

¹² *Service Book and Hymnal of the Lutheran Church in America*, Authorized by the Churches cooperating in The Commission on the Liturgy and the Commission on the Hymnal, 1958, Hymn #376.

¹³ Silas H. Paine, *Stories of the Great Hymns of the Church*, (New York: Flexo Printing Co.1926), 52-53. Since Eber died long before Zinzendorf was born, Zinzendorf obviously was very familiar with the Eber hymn and perhaps new it by memory.

¹⁴ Gerhardt Teuscher, “Jesus, Still Lead On:’ Count Zinzendorf: Poet and Master-Singer of the Moravian Church,” *The Hymn* 47, no. 3 (July 1996), 35.

¹⁵ *The Christian’s Duty, exhibited in a series of Hymns*, (Germantown: Published by John Leibert, 1825), 127-128, Hymn #141.

This spotless robe the same appears,
 When ruin'd nature sinks in years;
 No age can change its glorious hue,
 The grace of Christ is ever new.

And from verse 10:

O let the dead now hear thy voice;
 Now bid thy banish'd ones rejoice;
 Their beauty this, their glorious dress,
 Jesus, the Lord, our right'ousness.

Perhaps these are the garments or robes from John's *Revelation*. Zinzendorf was attracted to an image of Christians wearing the blood Jesus shed to cover our sins. A visual image of blood washing away sin does give one pause to consider temptations we face, and the ramifications of choosing to sin. Reading the lines from verse one in the context of more verses from the hymn connects Eber's and Zinzendorf's descriptions.

By the 1730's Zinzendorf was developing a theology about the wounds of Christ, the blood shed on the cross as well as the blood shed while praying in the garden of Gethsemane. Zinzendorf used the image of the wound in Jesus' side caused by the centurion's spear as a place of refuge for Christians.¹⁶ Our twenty-first century ears might think that sounds odd, but it is worth pondering. This is poetry, this is metaphor.

One verse from "Jesus, Thy Blood and Righteousness" that appeared in some nineteenth century hymnbooks adds to our understanding of the wounds.

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¹⁶ Craig D. Atwood, *Community of the Cross*, University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2004), 203-221. Chapter 7, "Living in the Side Wound of Christ" discusses this theology in detail.

Ah, give to all thy servants, Lord,
 With pow'r to speak thy quick'ning word,
 That all who to thy wounds will flee,
 May find eternal life in thee.¹⁷

This image of fleeing to the wound, especially the side wound, gives an image of a place of safety and protection. Zinzendorf often referred to Jesus as a rock. The open side then becomes a solid place to take shelter. Martha Büninger, in her memoir in 1752, shares her understanding of the wounds. The words close a section of her memoir about the impact of joining the Moravian community and their care for her. “May the Lamb keep us in His bloody wounds, that no harm come to us until we can see Him and kiss the wounds in His hands and feet. Until the kiss of His side wound.”¹⁸ For Zinzendorf and Moravians, Christ’s side wound is the best place for safety and the best path to eternity. The image of the wound is not common to all Pietists. The need for individuals to come to personal knowledge and understanding of Jesus and His actions on the cross is a Pietist understanding of walking the Christian life in obedience to and out of love for Christ.

A survey of Brethren hymnals shows that “Jesus, Thy Blood and Righteousness” appears in nineteenth century hymn books including *The Brethren’s Tune and Hymn Book*. It then does not appear in *The Brethren Hymnal* introduced for use by the Church of the Brethren in 1901, nor in any subsequent Church of the Brethren hymnals. This shift comes after the divisions among the Brethren in the 1880s. There is no time or space here to discuss what this meant for Church of the Brethren hymnody. It does raise interesting questions for future research.

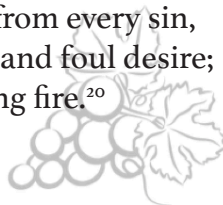
¹⁷ *The Christian’s Duty, exhibited in a series of Hymns*, (Germantown: Published by John Leibert, 1825) 127-128, Hymn #141. This verse appears as verse 8 of 10.

¹⁸ Martha Büninger, nee Marriner, trans. Katherine M. Faull, *Moravian Women’s Memoirs: Their Related Lives, 1750-1820* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1997), 32.

My initial thoughts are as follows. Church of the Brethren hymnal committees produced four hymnals during the twentieth century. In all four, hymns about Christ's suffering and death are included, and in my experience are sung during the Lent and Easter season. Only a few hymns include reference to the blood Jesus shed on the cross. As we move through the century there seems to be less and less focus on blood and more focus on death and resurrection. This reveals the theology of the hymnal committee and perhaps the 'official' stance of the denomination. It does not speak to what individuals or congregations choose to sing. Many congregations added a nondenominational hymnal with more evangelical, revivalist hymns to their pew racks. Many continue to sing from the nondenominational hymnals more frequently than the Brethren hymnals. My impression is that the denomination was removing theology related to Christ's blood, but individuals, pastors, and music teams still sing songs about Christ's blood. This might be evidence of a Pietist view within the Church of the Brethren that individuals (laity) need to come to an understanding of their own theology/personal faith.

Twenty-first century Christians continue to grapple with the weakening of both congregations and the institution of the church. As we turn to Pietism,¹⁹ I wonder if we will discover the seventeenth verse in Wesley's translation.

And while I felt Thy blood within
 Cleansing my soul from every sin,
 Purging each fierce and foul desire;
 I joyed in the refining fire.²⁰



First Fruits

¹⁹ Christopher Gehra and Mark Pattie III, *The Pietist Option* (Downers Grove, IL: Inter Varsity Press, 2017). This is one example of the re-emergence of Pietism as one path forward.

²⁰ John Wesley translation of *Jesus Thy Blood and Righteousness*, accessed April 28, 2020, www.hymntime.com/tch/htm/j/t/b/jtbloodr.htm

The final phrase of the verse reminds me of a praise hymn²¹ that was popular a few years back about the refiner's fire. This verse, that combines fire with sensing Jesus' blood within our own soul, puts a different spin on the image, but both relate to cleansing. The emotions that praise hymns often bring us remind me of Zinzendorf's belief that religion is to be an expression of our feelings and spiritual will, rather than solely based on reason.²²

“Heart with loving heart united” (“Herz und Herz vereint zusammen”)

Church of the Brethren congregations were introduced to a Zinzendorf hymn about love and unity with the publication of *Hymnal: A Worship Book* in 1992. This hymnal was a joint Mennonite and Church of the Brethren project. The “Herz und Herz” text used in this hymnal has a short history. Walter Klaassen served on the text committee for the Mennonite Hymnal published in 1969. That committee decided they wanted to use Zinzendorf's “Herz und Herz.” Several people prepared translations with Klaassen's translation chosen for publication.²³ Authors of the *Hymnal Companion* stated that the Zinzendorf work was “a major treatise 320 stanzas long.”²⁴ Klaassen did not doubt that Zinzendorf may have written a hymn text of that length. However, he worked with a shorter version of 40 verses from which he chose three that “spoke most directly to the dynamics of congregational unity.”²⁵ Klaassen said of the text, “Zinzendorf was communicating how the warmth of his piety and

²¹ I am thinking of *Refiner's Fire*, Vineyard Songs, Canada, 1990. Mercy/Vineyard Publishing in the US.

²² Katherine M. Faull, *Moravian Women's Memoirs: Their Related Lives, 1750-1820* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1997), xxi.

²³ Comments about Klaassen and the translation of this text from email correspondence between this author and Walter Klaassen, May 25, and May 31, 2020.

²⁴ Joan Fyock, Writer/Compiler, ed. Lani Wright *Hymnal: Companion* (Elgin, Ill, Newton KS, Scotsdale PA: Brethren Press, Faith and Life Press; Mennonite Press, 1996), 129.

²⁵ Email correspondence with Walter D. Klaassen, May 25, 2020.

the love for each other in the community of faith are rooted in the love of God.”²⁶ The first two lines are a powerful introduction of that theme.

Heart with loving heart united, met to know God’s holy will.
Let his love in us ignited more and more our spirits fill.
He the Head, we are his members, we reflect the light he is.
He the Master, we disciples, he is ours and we are his.

May we all so love each other and all selfish claims deny,
so that each one for the other will not hesitate to die.
Even so our Lord has loved us, for our lives he gave his life.
Still he grieves and still he suffers, for our selfishness and
strife.

Since, O Lord, you have demanded that our lives your love
should show,
so we wait to be commanded forth into your world to go.
Kindle in us love’s compassion so that ev’ryone may see
in our faith and hope the promise of a new humanity.²⁷

This has become a favorite hymn and is the hymn that encouraged me to learn more about Ludwig von Zinzendorf. When serving on a worship committee we decided to introduce this hymn to our congregation. Many congregations are open to learning a new hymn once introduced to the author, history, and context of the hymn. That reignited my interest in Zinzendorf, Moravians, and any cross fertilization with the Pietism of the Schwarzenau Brethren.²⁸ Moravians sing “Christian hearts, in love united,” a 1789 translation

²⁶ Email correspondence with Walter D. Klaassen, May 25, 2020.

²⁷ *Hymnal: A Worship Book* (Elgin, IL: Brethren Press; Newton, KS: Faith and Life Press; Scottsdale, PA: Mennonite Publishing House, 1992), 420. Used with permission of Walter D. Klaassen. The version published in 1992 used the text as revised by Klaassen to use more inclusive language in a 1983 hymnal.

²⁸ Since that time, I have included the hymn in a presentation at Timbercrest Senior Living Center, June 8, 2017; a sermon at Bethany Theological Seminary chapel, January 27, 2016; and an article “Herz und herz: Heart with heart,” *Messenger*, Vol. 165 no. 6 (July/August 2016), 16-17.

of “Herz und Herz” by Frederick William Foster, first published in the Moravian Hymn book in 1801.²⁹ The first stanza of the Foster translation reads much like Klaassen’s translation.

Christian hearts, in love united,
 seek alone in Jesus rest;
 has he not your love excited?
 Then let love inspire each breast.

Members — on our Head depending,
 light — reflecting him, our Sun,
 brethren — his commands attending,
 we in him, our Lord, are one.³⁰

It seems clear that Klaassen’s opening verse is a translation of the same verse that Foster translated as the opening verse. The language shares parallel thought. The heart language that is so common to Zinzendorf’s theology is clear in the first line of both versions. Then it is God or Jesus who “excites” or “ignites” our love. Jesus/God is our “head,” we are not the light, rather, we reflect Jesus’ light. Klaassen’s verse concludes with we are his, he is ours, we are one. In Foster’s translation the verse ends, “we in him, our Lord, are one.” This might be Zinzendorf’s thesis statement.

The three verses that complete the Foster translation continue expressing themes of love and unity. In addition, they remind the faithful of our witness to a watching world.

Come then, come, O flock of Jesus,
 covenant with him anew;

²⁹ Biographical information on Frederick William Foster, accessed April 30, 2020, https://hymnary.org/person/Foster_FW.

³⁰ Ludwig von Zinzendorf, “Christian Hearts, in Love United”, trans. Frederick William Foster, in *Moravian Book of Worship* (Interprovincial Board of Communication, Bethlehem PA, 1995), Hymn #673 verse 1. Interestingly this hymnal also includes Klaassen’s translation *Heart with Loving Heart United* as hymn #401. Two versions of Zinzendorf’s hymn are published in the same hymnal.

unto him, who conquered for us,
 pledge we love and service true;
 and should our love's union holy
 firmly linked no more remain,
 wait ye at his footstool lowly,
 till he draw it close again.

Grant, Lord, that with thy direction,
 "Love each other," we comply,
 aiming with unfeigned affection
 thy love to exemplify;
 let our mutual love be glowing;
 thus the world will plainly see
 that we, as on one stem growing,
 living branches are in thee.

O that such may be our union
 as thine with the Father is,
 and not one of our communion
 e'er forsake the path of bliss;
 may our light break forth with brightness,
 from thy light reflected shine;
 thus the world will bear us witness
 that we, Lord are truly thine.³¹

Both translations emphasize the kind of love we need to show others. Both speak of the importance of our witness to the world. Zinzendorf seems to have drawn from the Gospel of John as he wrote the hymn. Both the Klaassen and the Foster translations show a clear connection to some of Jesus' final words to his disciples:

That they may all be one. As you, Father, are in me and I am in you may they also be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. The glory that you have given me I have given to them, so that they may be one, as we are one. I in them and you in me, that

they may become completely one, so that the world may know that you have sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me. John 17:21-23 (NRSV)

This unity, where, with all our differences we can *become completely one*, can seem like an impossible ideal. As impossible as it seems this is an ideal that Zinzendorf tried to emulate. The verse Klaassen includes as the second verse seems the most powerful of all the verses in either version. I reprint it here for easy reference.

May we all so love each other and all selfish claims deny,
so that each one for the other will not hesitate to die.
Even so our Lord has loved us, for our lives he gave his life.
Still he grieves and still he suffers, for our selfishness and
strife.

This is a verse that was revised from the 1965 translation. In 1965 Klaassen used the words “brother” and “brotherhood.” Those do not appear in the 1983 translation. These revisions most likely were made in response to increased sensitivity for being gender inclusive. Zinzendorf used the word “Brüder,”³² which makes complete sense in an eighteenth-century context, perhaps less appropriate in the twenty-first century.

Klaassen’s second verse stops us short, as we sing: We “will not hesitate to die.” We will love each other to the point that the “other,” whether friend or opponent, perhaps even enemy, is more important than our “selfish claim.” When we read or sing this verse in the current divisive context in the Church of the Brethren it makes us hold our breath or at least pause. I hope we continue to sing the words and desire to accept their challenge. If we are not willing to concede that a person with a different theological understanding than ours, has a right to hold a particular view, and that it is a valued view, and might be beneficial for us to consider and at least be in conversation about, then can we sing this hymn with integrity?

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³²I have a copy of seven verses of this hymn in the German, unfortunately I do not remember the source to make proper citation.

I shared “Heart with loving Heart United” with the residents at Timbercrest Retirement Community in Indiana during a spirituality workshop. We used a words-only handout so that we could read the words in-depth, pondering each line. As we took time to share thoughts, one person commented, as others nodded in agreement, “I am not certain I can sing this with integrity and agree to do that – to ‘die’ for another.”³³ She had sung the song before, but reading the words separate from the lines of music spoke with great impact. This coupled with the image that our selfish statements or acts cause Jesus to grieve and suffer. That is powerful, and some expressed sadness, if that is a reality.

When we then sang the song together, we sang with a new understanding of the entire hymn. The third verse helped us sum up what we want to do. We want our witness to be one of love. Some commented that this is a high ideal, but one for which we should, at least, strive. Others commented that it is clear in the three verses, that we need to allow the Lord to take control in our lives for us to fully accomplish this unity.

Commentary about the Klaassen hymn states, “[The] three stanzas in this hymn focus on the important Anabaptist emphasis of the fellowship of believers.”³⁴ I do not know if the author of the commentary was trying to show a difference between Pietism and Anabaptism or show a difference between Mennonite and Moravian. When I sing or read this hymn I think of martyrs like Dirk Willems, of Mennonite fame, or Ted Studebaker, of Brethren fame. Both died because they cared about others, who most people would have considered enemies. The Klaassen translation of “Herz und Herz” appears in the 1995 Moravian Worship Book.³⁵ They have added it to their collection in addition to the Foster translation

³³ I am intentionally omitting the name of the individual who made this statement. That person stated what many in the room were thinking. The quote is a paraphrase.

³⁴ Fyock, *Hymnal: Companion*, 129.

³⁵ *Moravian Book of Worship* 1995, accessed April 30, 2020, <https://hymnary.org/hymnal/Mor1995>

of “Christian Hearts in Love United.” I don’t think the Moravians identify as Anabaptists; they are more likely to identify with the Pietist heart language of Zinzendorf. I find this the kind of hymn text all Christians need to sing and grapple with as we walk in the world.

Conclusion

The list of Zinzendorf hymn texts included in twentieth century hymnals is short, except of course for Moravian hymnals. Refreshingly his hymns are included in hymnals across a spectrum of denominations. The specific hymns included vary from hymnal to hymnal. Early twentieth century Church of the Brethren hymnals did not include Zinzendorf hymns.

As hymnal committees search for new hymns to include, they draw from a variety of hymnals. The ripple effect gives us the ability to widen our repertoire and introduces the possibly of deeper faith understandings. With the availability to hymn texts and music notations available at online sites such as *Hymnary.org*, there is opportunity to expand our selections of hymns. My preference is to sing hymns as first written, or translated, while acknowledging the context of the cultural sensibility of those times. We dare not revise everything to current cultural standards, lest we forget history, and thus repeat rather than learn from history.

As a lifelong Church of the Brethren member, I continue to claim more of the Pietist influences, which has deepened my spiritual walk and expanded the ways I express my faith. It is possible that I am one of few Brethren who consider hymns or thought from Zinzendorf important as we discern how closely we identify with Pietism. I know for certain that Brethren have been and continue to have a Christ-centered theology for faith and practice. Our hymnals can add Zinzendorf’s Pietist thought to our theology, if we chose to not only sing his hymns, but also study the words, and the ways they encourage us to live.

John Wesley, The Almost Charismatic

Peter J. Bellini

Considering Pietism and its various heirs within global Christianity today, I turn to the founder of Methodism, John Wesley (1703-1791), for a conversation with contemporary charismatic Christianity. Wesley, a prominent heir of Pietism, carries the DNA of that tradition, a tradition that still thrives globally even to this day in Methodist and Anabaptist circles among others. But what about the largest expression of global Christianity, the charismatic movement? Can current charismatic Christianity lay claim to the Pietist tradition or Wesley in any substantive way? Or more directly, is there a familial resemblance between the Pietism of John Wesley and that of charismatic Christians today? More specifically, did John Wesley, a descendent of the Pietist movement and the father of Methodism, claim the gifts of the Spirit to be normative for Christian faith and practice as most charismatic believers do today? Simply, was Wesley a “charismatic” Christian?

The charismatic movement is one of the fastest growing segments of the global Christian population, ranging anywhere from 25%-30% of world Christianity. Many well-versed accounts, such as those from Donald Dayton and Vinson Synan among others, trace Pentecostalism, at least in part, back to early Methodism and John Wesley.¹ Many charismatics, including those in my own Methodist tradition (unofficially coined “Methocostals”), turn to Wesley to

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¹ There have also been counter and supplemental accounts that trace that lineage through Higher Life, Keswick, and more Reformed lines. I tend to see the full lineage as a both/and rather than an either/or with the greater DNA influence coming from the Wesleyan-Holiness line.

moor their spiritual experiences historically and theologically. The evidence has been clear that there is a *historical* connection between early Methodism and charismatic movements, but can we also make an *ontological* connection between charismatic Christianity and the Methodist founder, whose heart was strangely warmed? Imagine, if today's charismatic movement were able to take a theological DNA test through ancestry.com. Would the results yield a shared DNA between charismatics and John Wesley, or is he merely a friend of the family?

Defining Terms

First, let us briefly examine the preliminary nomenclature of our conversation. The term “charismatic” and other cognates and adjacent terms such as “Pentecostal” can be too narrow or too broad, vague, and problematic. The nomenclature and taxonomies for Pentecostals, charismatics, and neo-charismatics of all stripes are vast, intricate, and vary from researcher to researcher. Some scholars use “Pentecostal” to encompass all so-called Spirit-filled Christians and institutions, even as it can be used specifically to speak about classical Pentecostalism in North America.² While the term “charismatic” can likewise be used in *general* to describe Christians and institutions that put an emphasis on the person and work of the Spirit, it also can be employed more specifically to a post-WWII Spirit-filled movement among Roman Catholics and Protestants. A third category is usually reserved for neo-pentecostal charismatics, independents, so-called third-wavers, and others.

Pentecostal-charismatic-renewalist (hereafter, PCR) Christianity is a broad or general missiological designation referring to the global Christian movement or various expressions, traditions, churches, groups or individuals that focus on the experience of the person and work of the Holy Spirit, specifically the charismata, in

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² Anderson, Alan, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism*, (Cambridge University Press, 2013), 6. Yong, Amos, *The Spirit Poured Out on all Flesh: Pentecostalism and the Possibility of Global Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2005), 18.

theology, worship, evangelism, preaching, discipleship, teaching, ministry, and mission. Pentecostal pioneer, Smith Wigglesworth, in his classic work, *Ever Increasing Faith*, made an iconic connection between the presence of the Spirit and the charismata, “Wherever the Holy Ghost has right of way, the gifts of the Spirit will be in manifestation; and where these gifts are never in manifestation, I question whether He is present.”³ Wigglesworth’s rule of thumb will be my plumbline. Wigglesworth’s statement seems consonant with most PCR denominations’ and institutions’ statements of faith. For example, “Fundamental Truth” number seven in the Assemblies of God doctrinal statement claims the gifts of the Spirit are for all believers. Is Wesley a charismatic in the sense of gift-normativity? And equally as important, can Wesley serve as a model for Wesleyan Holiness Christians seeking more of a charismatic approach to the Holy Spirit?

Overall, it seems that there are at least **four** general assertions one can make about Wesley and the *charismata*: 1. Wesley was not a cessationist. 2. Wesley applied a holiness hermeneutic when discerning the authenticity of gifts, distinguishing between the extraordinary and the ordinary work of the Spirit and applying a holiness hermeneutic to discern the authenticity of gifts. 3. Wesley was not a charismatic in theory. 4. He was, however, a charismatic in practice.

I. Wesley was not a cessationist.

Deism, Closed Naturalism and Cessationism

In considering both Wesley’s theology and his practice of the charismata, it is no revelation that his 18th century context was averse to any claim of the so-called supernatural. Much of Enlightenment religious thinking was contested by a stubborn cessationism left over from the Reformation’s *sola scriptura* and a tightly closed naturalism

³ Wigglesworth, Smith, *Ever Increasing Faith* (Springfield, MO., Gospel Publishing House, 1971), 30.

promoted by deism and natural philosophy. Cessationism and closed naturalism are not synonymous but, in the end, similar in their conclusions. Cessationism disallows post-biblical miracles. Closed naturalism denies miracles in general. The claims and nuances of both perspectives will not be discussed in this limited space but are merely stated as main contentions against early Methodist and evangelical claims to the miraculous in Wesley's day.

Although cessationism was not officially adopted by Anglicanism, many Christians of Wesley's day were influenced by a prevailing Calvinist cessationist view that the gifts functioned as evidence (evidentialism) for the veracity of the ministry of Christ and the apostles. The gifts also established credence to the preaching of the gospel and the penning of scripture but ceased either after the canonization of scripture or after the apostolic age, e.g. Conyers Middleton.⁴ On the other hand, Wesley, a witness to the supernatural in his day, vehemently defended it and often rigorously debated the great ecclesial minds of his time on the issue, including Conyers Middleton, Bishop William Warburton of Gloucester, Bishop Joseph Butler, and others.

The founder of Methodism thoroughly defended the authenticity of biblical miracles and the occurrence of post-biblical miracles in his lengthy letter to the polemical Middleton. Middleton, in opposition, explained away post-biblical miracles by attacking the credibility of the church fathers in his treatise, "A Free Inquiry into the Miraculous Powers." Wesley's basic position, in line with Anglican tradition, was that miracles still occurred in post-biblical and post-apostolic ages but in less frequency after the first two or three centuries when it received state tolerance and then support. In his sermon "The More Excellent Way," Wesley asserted that "the

⁴ Middleton, Conyers, *A Free Inquiry into the Miraculous Powers which are supposed to have subsisted in the Christian church from the earliest ages through several successive centuries. By which it is shown that we have no sufficient reason to believe, upon the authority of the primitive fathers, that any such powers were continued to the church after the days of the Apostles* (London: R. Manby and H. S. Cox, 1748).

love of many,' almost of all Christians, so called, was 'waxed cold,'" following the alleged conversion of Constantine.⁵

Wesley's commitment to the authority of scripture, the testimony of the Church Fathers, and his own church tradition prevented him from denying the existence of miracles in the early church. Further, his predilection for the confirming power of experiential religion precluded him from denying the real, empirical work of the Spirit, including the miraculous, in his own life and ministry. *Simply, Wesley was not a cessationist.*

2. Wesley distinguished between the extraordinary and the ordinary.

One cannot read Wesley's corpus without noticing that he consistently made a division between the *ordinary* and the *extraordinary* work of the Holy Spirit, a division with antecedence in numerous sources, including the Puritan John Owen⁶ and Jonathan Edwards in Wesley's day.⁷ In his sermon, "Scriptural Christianity," Wesley identified the *extraordinary* gifts as the "gift of healing, of working other miracles, of prophecy, of discerning spirits, the speaking with divers kinds of tongues, and the interpretation of tongues."⁸ Wesley added that not all had these gifts, "perhaps one in a thousand." But the gift of the Holy Spirit was "for a more excellent purpose," the "[*ordinary*] fruits, which we are assured will remain throughout all ages; - of that great work of God among the children

⁵ Wesley, John, "The More Excellent Way" in Thomas Jackson, ed., *Works of John Wesley* (London: Wesleyan Conference Office, 1872), 7:26–27.

⁶ Owen, John, *Pneumatologia*, (Cedar Lake, MI: Waymark Books, 2012), II, 754.

⁷ For example, see Edwards, Jonathan, "Love More Excellent Than Extraordinary Gifts of the Spirit," *Works of Jonathan Edwards*. vol. 1, sec. 8 (Edinburgh, UK: Banner of Truth, 1979), 157.

⁸ John Wesley, *Wesley's 52 Standard Sermons* (Salem: Schmul Pub. Co., Inc., 1988), 28.

of men, which we are used to express in one word, Christianity...”⁹ Wesley listed some of the *extraordinary* gifts of the Holy Spirit again in “The More Excellent Way:” “[healing] the sick, prophesying, in the proper sense of the word, that is, foretelling things to come; speaking with strange tongues, and the miraculous interpretation of tongues,” only to then speak of the *ordinary* gifts which would make us more “useful in our generation.”¹⁰

The Bifurcation of the Ordinary and Extraordinary

For Wesley, the work of the Spirit in salvation was ordinary, meaning common, regular, and available to all, while the miraculous gifts of the Spirit were not necessary for salvation but were extraordinary and not given to all. We see the same logic in Wesley’s “Farther Appeal to Men of Religion and Reason”: “Neither do I confound the extraordinary with the ordinary operations of the Spirit. And as to your last inquiry, ‘What is the best proof of our being led by the Spirit?’ I have no exception to that just and scriptural answer which you yourself have given, — ‘A thorough change and renovation of mind and heart, and the leading a new and holy life.’”¹¹

For the father of Methodism, the ordinary work of the Spirit (soteriological) was preferable and normative over against the extraordinary work (the *charismata*). Wesley defined and discerned a true movement of the Spirit not by demonstrations of power but by the fruit of holiness. Embedded in Wesley’s bifurcation is what I am calling a “holiness hermeneutic,” which was his method of interpreting and discerning whether a belief or a practice stemmed from the ordinary (normative) and essential (salvific) work of the

⁹ John Wesley, “Scriptural Christianity” in *Works of John Wesley*, ed. Thomas Jackson (London: Wesleyan Conference Office, 1872), 37-38.

¹⁰ John Wesley, “The More Excellent Way” in Thomas Jackson, ed., *Works of John Wesley*, vol. 7, *Sermons*, vol. 3 (London, Wesleyan Conference office, 1872), 26.

¹¹ John Wesley, “Thoughts Upon Methodism,” in Thomas Jackson, ed., *Works of John Wesley*, vol. 5, *Addresses, Essays, Letters* (London: Wesleyan Conference Office, 1872), 57.

Spirit. Here, Wesley bifurcated and prioritized certain extraordinary works of the Spirit over ordinary ones. This holiness hermeneutic is what prevented him from making gifts normative as fruit is normative and ultimately discounts him as a modern day charismatic. The *ordinary* work was available to all believers, and the *extraordinary* work, though available, was given on occasion to some but should not be hastily claimed or primarily pursued. Anything more was enthusiasm.

This bifurcation appears to be an operative hermeneutical framework for Wesley when approaching the charismata and the question of their normativity. Free Methodist Howard Snyder has also identified this bifurcation in Wesley, claiming that Wesley made an unbiblical distinction, for example when he divided the list of gifts in 1 Corinthians 12 between extraordinary or ordinary.¹² Wesley made this bifurcation when commenting on certain “charismatic” passages in his *Explanatory Notes upon the New Testament*. Although Bengel’s *Gnomon* was his source in this work, Snyder notes that Wesley “employs the ordinary/extraordinary distinction, in contrast to Bengel.”¹³ Under Acts 1:5, Wesley claimed all true believers will be baptized with the Holy Ghost, but adds that the “extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost also are here promised.”¹⁴ Wesley commented on Acts 8:15, the “Samaritan Pentecost,” that they might receive the Holy Ghost “in his miraculous gifts, or his sanctifying graces? Probably in both.”¹⁵ For Wesley, “miraculous” is another word for “extraordinary” when identifying the gifts, while “sanctifying grace” is a reference to one of the “ordinary” works of the Holy Spirit.

¹² Howard Snyder, “The Church as Holy and Charismatic” in *Wesleyan Theological Journal* vol. 15, no. 2 (Wesley Center Online: 2006), 14. https://wtsociety.com/files/wts_journal/1980-wtj-15-2.pdf; Howard Snyder, *The Divided Flame: Wesleyan and Charismatic Renewal* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1986), 58.

¹³ Snyder, “Church as Holy,” 28.

¹⁴ John Wesley, *Explanatory Notes upon the New Testament* (London: Epworth Press, 1950), 393.

¹⁵ Wesley, *Notes*, 425.

Again, in his *Notes* in 1 Cor. 12:9, Wesley qualified the gift of faith as an *extraordinary* trust as opposed to common saving faith. 1 Thess. 1:5 declares that the word came with “power,” the “Holy Spirit,” and “with much assurance.” Wesley added that with the Holy Spirit, “neither are the extraordinary operations of the Holy Ghost ever wholly withheld.”¹⁶ Wesley was making a distinction in part between the ordinary accompaniment of the word with conviction and its extraordinary accompaniment with miraculous gifts. Also, in 1 Peter 4:10, “as everyone hath received a gift” was debated by Wesley to mean either *ordinary* or *extraordinary*, “although the latter seems primarily intended.”¹⁷ Throughout his *Notes*, Wesley made similar distinctions with many other “charismatic” passages.

Wesley contended that ordinary gifts, such as “convincing speech” and the “gift of persuasion”¹⁸ should be coveted rather than a “demonstration of the Spirit and power.” However, Wesley’s intent in bifurcating the work of the Spirit and prioritizing the Spirit’s work was hardly to prohibit the manifestation of the charismata among Methodists, which were in frequent manifestation. Prioritizing the Spirit’s work served apologetic, soteriological, and pastoral purposes, as Wesley built a movement that raised disciples to be holy and responded to detractors who claimed he was an enthusiast.

3. “In theory,” Wesley was not a charismatic

Although Wesley and the early Methodists experienced a profusion of manifestations of the Spirit, Wesley never claimed to be endowed with apostolic or extraordinary (supernatural) gifts. John Whitehead, in his early *Life of the Rev. John Wesley* (1739), quotes the very scholarly Bishop Joseph Butler’s critical remark to Wesley, “Sir, the pretending to extraordinary revelations and gifts

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¹⁶ Wesley, *Notes*, 754.

¹⁷ Wesley, *Notes*, 884.

¹⁸ Wesley, “More Excellent Way,” 27.

of the Holy Ghost is a horrid thing, a very horrid thing.”¹⁹ Wesley replied, “I pretend to no extraordinary revelations, or gifts of the Holy Ghost: none but what every Christian may receive, and ought to expect and pray for,” referencing the ordinary work of salvation.²⁰ On another occasion, the Bishop of Gloucester accused Wesley of claiming apostolic and miraculous gifts and being a false prophet and a fanatic, weighty accusations in the Enlightenment, the age of reason. Wesley responded, “I do not pretend to any extraordinary measures of the Spirit. I pretend to no other measure of it than may be claimed by every Christian minister,”²¹ and later, “I claim no *extraordinary gift* at all.”²²

When confronted by the Bishop that Wesley claimed to pray for the sick and God healed them, Wesley did not deny the accounts but attributes being used in this work to the “providence of God,” who “now hears and answers prayer, even beyond the ordinary course of nature.”²³ Here, Wesley did not respond with false humility but with a consistent retort given throughout his ministry when so accused. Throughout the letter, Wesley affirmed the supernatural work of the Spirit but deflected any claim to possessing an extraordinary gift of the Spirit. Wesley would not give his detractors any further fodder for accusation. The healing was merely God’s answer to prayer. Although in my estimation, Wesley experienced, but did not claim, the manifestation of the gifts, he did not believe or teach that the gifts of the Spirit were normative to the Christian life but extraordinary and occasional. Simply, the Spirit’s ordinary and primary work is salvific leading to sanctification and growth in grace. For Wesley, this could occur without miraculous gifts given to the believer.

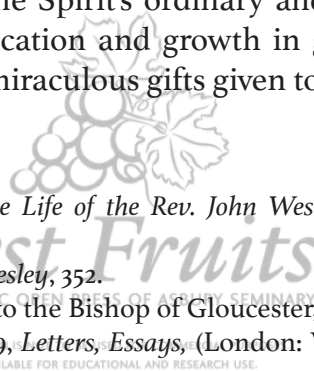
¹⁹ John Whitehead, *The Life of the Rev. John Wesley*, (Dow & Jackson, Boston, 1845), 352.

²⁰ Whitehead, *Life of Wesley*, 352.

²¹ John Wesley, “Letter to the Bishop of Gloucester,” in Thomas Jackson, ed., *Works of John Wesley*, vol. 9, *Letters, Essays*, (London: Wesleyan Conference Office, 1872), 118.

²² Wesley, *Letters, Essays*, 125.

²³ Wesley, *Letters, Essays*, 124.



In caring for the flock, pastor Wesley was also safeguarding against charismatic excesses like those he witnessed in the tongue-speaking French Huguenot prophets and in his own preachers, Thomas Maxfield and George Bell,²⁴ self-proclaimed prophets and faith healers who spoke in tongues and flippantly predicted that the world would end on February 28, 1763. Although Wesley's unbiblical bifurcation is not to be affirmed, its related holiness hermeneutic is to be acknowledged, especially as he applied it to problems in ministry. When understanding Wesley's use of this bifurcation of the work of the Holy Spirit, we need to not only interpret it in its soteriological and apologetic context but also its pastoral context.

Wesley created an intentional, well-organized, systematic structure and regimen of accountability to facilitate a widespread revival that would spread over multiple continents and foster growth in grace among the faithful. He knew excesses would arise and the imperative to safeguard the flock. Wesley observed as with Maxfield and Bell and others like the French Prophets, that a push for the normative function of extraordinary gifts could be dangerous, leading to claims of impeccable perfectionism, antinomianism, and schism, as when Maxfield separated from Wesley to start his own work.

As we have noted, clearly Wesley did not prohibit the use of the gifts or claim that they ceased. He exercised pastoral oversight and discernment by evaluating the fruit of the ministry. His conclusion was incisive and prophetic not just for his time but for our day. It is scriptural to claim that both gifts and fruit should be normative in the life of the believer. However, the fruit of the Spirit manifested in one's life and ministry must be placed above gifts and offices of the Spirit to provide the environment from which they arise. This explains Wesley's enforcement of a holiness hermeneutic.

²⁴Kenneth Newport and Gareth Lloyd, "George Bell and Early Methodist Enthusiasm": A New Manuscript Source from the Manchester Archives, <https://www.escholar.manchester.ac.uk/api/datastream?publicationPid=uk-ac-man-scw:1m4038&datastreamId=POST-PEER-REVIEW-PUBLISHERS-DOCUMENT.PDF>. Accessed February 21, 2020.

4. Wesley was a practicing charismatic

Although Wesley and early Methodists did not teach or seek after supernatural manifestations, they occurred rampantly, nonetheless. Dreams, visions, healing, and deliverance were quite common among the people called Methodists. On one occasion he traveled to Everton and interviewed three persons who had claimed to experience trances and visions.²⁵ Upon interviewing them, Wesley discovered that they were all in agreement as to when the trances occurred and to the nature of the trances. When they “were in the fullest of the love of God”²⁶ their senses and strength were taken away in an instance, and they felt transported to another world. That afternoon Wesley heard women singing hymns downstairs, when one Alice Miller fell into a trance.²⁷ They called on Wesley who immediately came “to test the spirits.” Seeing the young woman seated on a stool against the wall with her eyes open, Wesley feinted a blow toward her face. Her eyes did not move. Wesley wrote:

Her face showed an unspeakable mixture of reverence and love, while silent tears stole down her cheeks. Her lips were a little open, and sometimes moved, but not enough to cause any sound. I do not know whether I saw an human face look so beautiful... I observed her countenance change into the form of fear, pity, and distress; then she burst into a flood of tears, and cried out, “Dear Lord; they will be damned! They will all be damned!... Dear Lord, they will go to hell...Cry aloud! Spare not!”...about seven her senses returned. I asked, “Where have you been?” - “I have been with my Saviour.” “In heaven, or on earth?” - “I cannot tell; but I was in glory.” “Why then did you cry?” - “Not for myself, but for the world; for I saw they were on the brink of hell” “Whom did you desire to give the glory

²⁵ John Wesley, Journal entry for August 6, 1759, in Thomas Jackson, ed., *Works of John Wesley*, vol. 2, *Journals*, vol. 2 (London, Wesleyan Conference office, 1872), 509.

²⁶ Wesley, *Journals*, 509.

²⁷ Wesley, *Journals*, 509.

to God?” – “Ministers that cry aloud to the world: else they will be proud; and then God will leave them, and they will lose their own souls.”²⁸

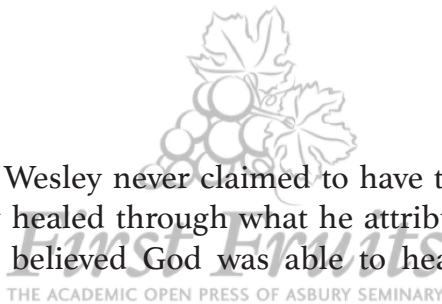
Wesley later described a terrible vision of hell that a man, who was overthrown by sin and despair, received prior to his conversion:

When he found power to speak, he cried out, “I thought I had led a good life; I thought I was not so bad as others; but I am the vilest creature upon earth; I am dropping into hell! Now, now; this very moment!” He then saw hell open to receive him, and Satan ready to cast him in; but it was not long before he saw the Lord Jesus, and knew he had accepted him. He then cried aloud in an unspeakable rapture, “I have got Christ! I have got Christ!” For two hours he was in the visions of God; then the joy, though not the peace abated.²⁹

The Methodist leader claimed to have known several people who were changed through visions and dreams of Christ on the cross or seated in glory.³⁰ Wesley did not judge the validity and origin based on the outward display of emotion, although it was present, but “from the whole tenor of the life; till then many ways wicked, from that time holy and just, and good.”³¹ He did not contend that visions or manifestations should be relied upon for guidance. They needed to be tested “by the law and the testimony” and the fruit produced.

Healing

Although Wesley never claimed to have the gift of healing, he did see many healed through what he attributed to the prayer of faith. Wesley believed God was able to heal, and it was his



²⁸ Wesley, *Journals*, 509. ON IS NOT TO BE USED FOR COMMERCIAL PURPOSES.

²⁹ Wesley, *Journals*, 504. FREELY AVAILABLE FOR EDUCATIONAL AND RESEARCH USE.

³⁰ Wesley, *Letters, Essays*, 142

³¹ Wesley, *Letters, Essays*, 142.

providential will to heal. Wesley recalled several instances in a letter to the Bishop of Gloucester when God healed the sick through his prayers.³² Once when Wesley had a headache and his horse was lame, he prayed for both and saw instant recoveries. Wesley went to visit a Mr. Lunell, who had a violent fever. At the very moment he saw Wesley's presence, Lunell was revived and gradually recovered. Wesley prayed for one woman who was not able to talk for a long period of time. As soon as Wesley and others began to pray, she was immediately healed and able to speak. A Mr. Meyrick was also rendered "speechless and senseless." He received his healing while they were still praying. Wesley prayed for many who had what he called, "spotted fever, which had been extremely mortal."³³ Every person prayed for was healed.

Healings occurred throughout early Methodism, especially through the ministry of George Bell. Wesley believed that Bell had claimed many gifts of the Spirit, including discernment of spirits and prophecy (even predicting the end of the world).³⁴ Wesley had his qualms about Bell, but Wesley was present to investigate one alleged healing of hard lumps in a young woman's breasts. She had experienced the painful lumps for four years, when one began to discharge. She was admitted to St. George's Hospital and treated, but the situation became worse. The woman then attended a prayer meeting where Bell prayed for her. In a moment both breasts were healed. The next day the woman felt a little pain, but after she prayed it went away. Wesley confirmed that both breasts were completely made whole in a moment.³⁵ Wesley wrote of one of the most acute healings that he experienced in his own life.³⁶ He was in bed for nearly three days with a "disorder." He was seized with a cough that rendered him unable to speak in the presence of around

³² Wesley, *Letters, Essays*, 123-124.

³³ Wesley, *Letters, Essays*, 124.

³⁴ John Wesley, *JOURNAL* entries for November 22, 1762-April 23, 1763, in Thomas Jackson, ed., *Works of John Wesley*, vol. 3, *Journals*, vol.3 (London, Wesleyan Conference office, 1872), 122, 124, 132.

³⁵ Wesley, *Journals*, December 26, 1751, 76-77.

³⁶ Wesley, *Letters, Essays*, 156.

two hundred people. At that point he began to cry out to the Lord for an increase of faith. In that very instant, it was observed by all that Wesley had been delivered from the pain and the sickness.

In one instance recorded in his journal for December 15, 1742, Wesley prayed for a Mr. Meyrick who was on his deathbed without a pulse. The attending physician claimed he could do no more for the man and announced that he would not make it through the night. Wesley and those assisting prayed until they began to see several responses, first his eyes opened, then his speech returned, and finally his strength. Wesley documented that Mr. Meyrick was restored to “perfect health.” It seems that this was a raising from the dead or something quite close. Wesley did not recollect other extreme cases such as this but did record numerous other healings by the hand of God as a result of prayer. In most cases, Wesley noted that these were accomplished for the glory of God.

Wesley’s Demonology

Paranormal historian Owen Davies claims that Wesley adhered to “the old elite, theological conceptions of diabolism.” Simply put, Wesley held a scriptural view of the demonic that is confirmed throughout Christian tradition (See Wesley’s sermon “Of Evil Angels”). Satan and the hosts of hell, once angels in God’s service, fell from grace and were cast down to earth. These fallen angels constitute a hierarchy of demonic powers that rule the kingdom of darkness. Demons are neither myth nor metaphor but truly exist, and their mission is to tempt, deceive, and destroy the souls of women and men.

In terms of demonology, Wesley’s view would not have been considered a product of Enlightenment rationalism, which would have dismissed the existence and operation of preternatural spirits. He held a traditional Christian worldview that included hierarchies of angels and demons and their daily activity in the world. From early exposure to the paranormal, including “Old Jeffrey,” the house

ghost at Epworth, sister Anne Wesley's levitation experience, to later encounters with the demonic in ministry, Wesley acknowledged the existence of demons and the havoc they wreak on the human soul. Concerning the demonic, Wesley crafted sermons on the topic, penned his encounters in his journals, and combated the demonic in his ministry. He believed his view on the subject was grounded in scripture and confirmed empirically by the reliable eye-witness testimonies of his day, including his own. Wesley's *Journals* are replete with dozens of demonic encounters (e.g., Oct. 25-28, 1739; Jan. 11, 1741; Jan. 13, 1743; June 5, 1753, and May 25, 27, 1768 among many others). This fact is often ignored, demythologized, or reduced to an antiquated peculiarity held over from medieval demonology.

Ordinary and Extraordinary Means of Deliverance

Wesley not only believed demons existed and had been encountered by him, but he practiced deliverance in his ministry through what he would call "ordinary means." The father of Methodism employed the same ordinary/extraordinary distinction regarding the work of the Spirit to the practice of deliverance and exorcism. Wesley listed "casting out devils" as one of the chief *extraordinary* or spiritual gifts.³⁷ "Extraordinary means" involved the *gift* of faith. Wesley separated ordinary, saving faith from the gift of extraordinary faith that works miracles.³⁸ In his comment on Matthew 12:20, Wesley called this mountain-moving faith, "a supernatural persuasion given a man, that God will work thus by him at that hour." Consequently, by extraordinary faith demons may be expelled directly. Although he did not lay claim to this gift, Wesley was convinced that ministers could expel demons by *ordinary* means, such as *hearing the Word, repentance, prayer, and worship*. Wesley would employ these ordinary means in his deliverance ministry.

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³⁷ John Wesley, "A Letter to the Reverend Dr. Conyers Middleton, January 4, 1748-49, in Thomas Jackson, ed., *Works of John Wesley*, vol. 10, *Letters, Essays, Dialogs, Addresses* (London, Wesleyan Conference Office, 1872), 16.

³⁸ Wesley, *Notes*, Matt. 7:22.

In his sermon, “A Caution Against Bigotry,” Wesley identified two of the *ordinary* means in which all ministers of Christ may cast out devils, *hearing the Word and repentance*: “By the power of God attending his word, he brings these sinners to repentance; an entire inward as well as outward change from evil to all good. And this is, in a sound sense, to cast devils out of the souls wherein they had hitherto dwelt.”³⁹

Striking demonic manifestations also accompanied Wesley’s deliverance ministry. Frequently, unbelievers under conviction were thunderstruck and dropped to the ground in spiritual combat by the power of the Spirit. These encounters were attended by all sorts of peculiar manifestations, such as howling, groaning, roaring, convulsing, speaking in strange voices, and other eerie expressions. However, the end result in most cases was repentance, deliverance and peace with God.

In an April 17, 1739, journal entry, Wesley was preaching from Acts chapter 4, when he asked the Lord to “confirm” his Word. At that very moment, an individual cried out aloud in “the agonies of death.”⁴⁰ Wesley and the others present continued fervently in prayer. Two others then joined in “roaring for the disquietness of their heart.”⁴¹ Not long after all three found rest. The latter two broke out in praise, and the former was “overwhelmed with joy and love, knowing that God had healed his backslidings.”⁴²

Wesley understood these occurrences as primarily a work of the Holy Spirit battling against the enemy. Through the preached word, the sword of the Spirit exposes and penetrates the shackled

³⁹ John Wesley, “A Caution Against Bigotry,” in Thomas Jackson, ed., *Works of John Wesley*, vol. 5, *Sermons*, vol. 1 (London, Wesleyan Conference office, 1872), 483.

⁴⁰ John Wesley, Journal entry for April 17, 1739, in Thomas Jackson, ed., *Works of John Wesley*, vol. 1, *Journals*, (London, Wesleyan Conference office, 1872), 187.

⁴¹ Wesley, *Journals*, 187.

⁴² Wesley, *Journals*, 187.

heart. The blow to the stronghold of darkness causes the persons to fall to the ground, which Wesley frequently described as being “thunderstruck.” This was quite a graphic description for a man not prone to hyperbole. The shuddering enemy refuses to release the soul from its clutches, but after much convulsing and supplicating, the individual finds repentance and relief. Wesley identified these struggles as the “chief times at which Satan is cast out.”⁴³ Wesley often used an image of the sword of the Spirit “wounding and healing” the sinner. One was “struck through, as with a sword, and fell trembling to the ground.”⁴⁴ As Wesley would preach, “God was present, both to wound and to heal.”⁴⁵

While Wesley witnessed deliverance through *preaching* and *repentance*, he also witnessed deliverance through other ordinary means, such as *prayer* and *worship*. In a journal entry for October 1, 1763, Wesley recorded a powerful four and a half-hour deliverance session that ended with a woman being set free through corporate prayer and singing.⁴⁶ For years, the woman was haunted by a demon that tormented and tempted her to kill her father and herself. She unsuccessfully attempted to commit suicide on several occasions. She would often throw raging, violent fits until her brother had her fitted for a “strait waistcoat” that meticulously bound her limbs together and to her bed. Nonetheless, with uncanny strength, she often broke free effortlessly with a mere twisting of her limbs.

⁴³ John Wesley, Journal entry for July 18, 1759, in Thomas Jackson, ed., *Works of John Wesley*, vol. 2, *Journals*, (London, Wesleyan Conference office, 1872), 502.

⁴⁴ John Wesley, Journal entry for July 30, 1739, in Thomas Jackson, ed., *Works of John Wesley*, vol. 1, *Journals*, (London, Wesleyan Conference office, 1872), 213.

⁴⁵ John Wesley, Journal entry for April 16, 1773, in Thomas Jackson, ed., *Works of John Wesley*, vol. 3, *Journals*, (London, Wesleyan Conference office, 1872), 490.

⁴⁶ John Wesley, Journal entry October 1, 1763,” in Thomas Jackson, ed., *Works of John Wesley*, vol. 3, *Journals* (London: Wesleyan Conference Office, 1872), 148.

Her doctor concluded her condition was “partly natural, partly diabolical.”⁴⁷

One day Wesley came to visit her. He interviewed the woman. She claimed to be possessed of the devil and did not want prayer. Wesley prayed anyway. She convulsed and began to scream in agony, swearing, cursing, and blaspheming God. Wesley did not stop praying until the convulsion and screaming ceased. Two days later he followed up. Although more lucid and able to pray, the woman still insisted that the devil was going to kill her. Wesley exhorted her to have faith and continued to intercede.

Later, Wesley led a group from 10:30 in the evening until 3:00 in the morning to pray for her deliverance. She was once again strapped to the bed, and began to roar, convulse, and “bark like a dog.” Wesley painstakingly described her demonic manifestations. Her face was grossly distorted. Her mouth stretched from one side of her face to the other, and her eyes were crossed and bulging out of the sockets. Her convulsing throat and body were swollen as if she would burst.⁴⁸ The intercession went on into the morning. Several individuals left, unable to sustain the exhausting battle. Along with the straps of the waistcoat, four men sought to hold the woman down with all of their strength (reminiscent of the Gadarene man).

The more that they prayed, the more violent she became. Suddenly, she had a vision of the tormenting demon and began to cry out to God. Then, the group felt led to worship and sing. The Spirit fell mightily. She continued to cry out for deliverance and the power to believe. Immediately, she became quiet. Wesley invited her to sing a hymn with the words:

“O Sun of Righteousness, arise
With healing in the wing;

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⁴⁷ Wesley, *Journals*, 149.

⁴⁸ Wesley, *Journals*, 150.

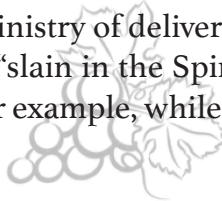
To my diseased, my fainting soul
Life and salvation bring.⁴⁹

The time came (2:30 am) when the demon said he would kill her, but “instead of a tormentor, he sent a comforter. Jesus appeared to her soul and rebuked the enemy... and she mightily rejoiced in the God of her salvation,” Wesley exclaimed. She was fully delivered, set free, and saved through the power of intercession and song.⁵⁰

Even though Wesley claimed no extraordinary gift but employed what he termed ordinary means for deliverance, the woman was set free. To the supernatural work of God, Wesley would normally respond in this manner; “I believe God now hears and answers prayer, even beyond the ordinary course of nature.”⁵¹ In deliverance, Wesley sought the move of God through ordinary means rather than claiming and exercising a gift of the Spirit, which stemmed from his ordinary/extraordinary distinction and his reticence to claim the later.

Deliverance, Thunderstruck, and “Slain in the Spirit”

Wesley did not lay claim to any special *gift* of exorcism to combat in the preternatural fray. Wesley was convinced that ministers could expel demons by *ordinary* means, such as *hearing the Word, repentance, prayer, and worship*. Wesley would employ these ordinary means in his deliverance ministry. Frequently accompanying Wesley’s ministry of deliverance was a phenomenon that today is called being “slain in the Spirit,” which Wesley called being “thunderstruck.” For example, while Wesley was preaching at Newgate, several persons:



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⁴⁹ Wesley, *Journals*, 151.

⁵⁰ Wesley, *Journals*, 151.

⁵¹ John Wesley, “Letter to Bishop of Gloucester” in Thomas Jackson, ed., *Works of John Wesley*, vol. 9, *Letters, Essays* (London, Wesleyan Conference office, 1872), 124.

dropped on every side as thunderstruck. One of them cried aloud. We besought God in her behalf, and he turned her heaviness into joy.

A second being in the same agony, we called upon God for her also; and he spoke peace into her soul. In the evening I was again pressed in spirit to declare, that “Christ gave himself a ransom for all.” And almost before we called upon him to set to his seal, he answered. One was so wounded by the sword of the Spirit, that you would have imagined she could not live a moment. But immediately his abundant kindness was showed, and she sang of his righteousness.⁵²

There seems to be a distinction between the terms, “thunderstruck” and “slain in the Spirit,” based on the spiritual *state* of those falling and their *contexts*. Being “thunderstruck” in Wesley’s day seemed to be related to an *unbeliever’s* repentance and deliverance from the demonic, while being “slain in the Spirit” today is often connected to a *believer* in the context of worship. My simple analysis of this phenomenon is that the mind is “short-circuited” by the powerful, euphoric presence of God, and they “fall out” under the anesthesia of the Spirit. In that sedate state, God often speaks intimately to the person’s heart, ministers healing, and/or performs a deeper work of the Spirit.

The two phenomena are distinct. ‘Thunderstruck’ is related to deliverance from sin and the demonic and is often unsettling. ‘Slain in the Spirit’ is related to worship, which can open the door to healing and receiving other gifts such as words, visions, or prophecy. Rather than a disquieting experience, ‘being slain’ is actually a peaceful experience. I believe both types occurred in Wesley’s day and today, though most of what Wesley documents is the “thunderstruck” type.

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⁵² John Wesley, Journal entry for April 26, 1739, in Thomas Jackson, ed., *Works of John Wesley*, vol. 1, *Journals*, (London, Wesleyan Conference office, 1872), 188-89.

We notice ‘thunderstruck phenomena’ throughout Wesley’s *Journals* and *Letters* and the journals of other early Methodists.

Here are some notable examples of being “thunderstruck”:

Some said, they felt as if a sword was running through them; others, that they thought a great weight lay upon them, as if it would squeeze them into the earth. Some said, they were quite choked, so that they could not breathe; that their hearts swelled ready to burst: Others that it was as if their heart, as if their inside, as if their whole body, was tearing all to pieces. I can make no doubt, but it was Satan tearing them, as they were coming to Christ.⁵³

And now the arrows of God flew abroad. The inexpressible groans, the lamenting, praying, roaring, were so loud, almost without intermission, that we who stood without could scarce help thinking all in the church were cut to the heart.⁵⁴

One sunk down, and another, and another. Some cried aloud in agony of prayer...One young man, and one young woman were brought with difficulty... and continued there in violent agonies, both of body and soul...the bodily convulsions of the young man were amazing: the heavings of his breast were beyond description; I suppose, equal to the throes of a woman in travail. We called upon God to relieve his soul and body: And both were perfectly healed.⁵⁵

In other instances, Wesley used the phrase “fell down as dead” to describe the phenomena. Wesley writes, “While I was speaking,

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⁵³ Wesley, *Journals*, 1:415.

⁵⁴ Wesley, *Journals*, 2:506.

⁵⁵ Wesley, *Journals*, 2:511-12.

one before me dropped down as dead, and presently a second and a third.”⁵⁶ And again:

That evening six were wounded and fell to the ground, crying aloud for mercy. One of them, hearing the cry, rushed through the crowd to see what was the matter. He was no sooner got to the place than he dropped down himself, and cried as loud as any. The other three pressing on, one after another, were struck just in the same manner. And indeed all of them were in such agonies that many feared they were struck with death. But all the ten were fully delivered before the meeting concluded.⁵⁷

At Wapping, Wesley had prepared to preach on Romans 3:19 but could not open his mouth. He sought God for immediate direction as he was unsure about what to preach. Wesley opened the Bible to Hebrews 10:19 and began to read and apply the passage:

While I was earnestly inviting all sinners to enter into the holiest by this new and living way, many of those that heard began to call upon God with strong cries and tears. Some sunk down, and there remained no strength in them; others exceedingly trembled and quaked: Some were torn with a kind of convulsive motion in every part of their bodies, and that so violently, that often four or five persons could not hold one of them...one woman greatly offended...also dropped down in as violent an agony as the rest...Twenty-six of those who had been affected...were in a moment filled with peace and joy.⁵⁸

In all of these cases cited, persons were smitten with the Word of God and led into repentance by God’s Spirit. Along the way, they experienced tumultuous and even violent manifestations before

⁵⁶ Wesley, *Journals*, 2:06.

⁵⁷ Wesley, *Journals*, 3:471.

⁵⁸ Wesley, *Journals*, 204.

they ultimately found deliverance and peace with God. One cannot help but ask if all of these intense phenomena were necessary, and if so, for what purpose?

What is the Purpose of Being Thunderstruck?

What do all of these manifestations mean? Wesley often employed a holiness hermeneutic to determine the purpose of these manifestations by their *outcome*. Regardless of unsettling manifestations, if the result of hearing the Word of God was repentance, prayer, deliverance, and salvation, then Wesley determined that it was a work of God. Wesley interpreted this thunderstruck phenomenon as a complex multifaceted battle that involved the inward work of God on the human will. It also involved the battle of the human will seeking to be loosed from the devil, who was ripping at both the soul and body.⁵⁹ God's Spirit would penetrate the human heart through the preached Word. The person would respond by attempting to draw near to Christ in their quest for repentance. The enemy would "tear" or strike at them as they came closer to Christ, trying to thwart their advance.⁶⁰ After this long bout, carried out with accompanying "convulsions", "roaring," and much "agony," the penitent would find deliverance, salvation, and peace. Wesley seemed to understand that an interior battle for the soul was taking place between God's Word in the human heart and the enemy's tormenting stronghold of sin, with the body often suffering as a casualty.

Trying to make sense of this complicated phenomenon, Wesley explained, "if the mind be affected to such a degree, the body must be affected by the laws of the vital union. The mind I believe was, in many of those cases, affected by the Spirit of God, in others by the devil, and in some by both; and, in consequence of this, the body was affected also."⁶¹ In his letter to Dr. Rutherford, he

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⁵⁹ Wesley, *Letters, Essays*, 142-144; 14:357-358.

⁶⁰ Wesley, *Letters, Essays*, 144.

⁶¹ Wesley, *Letters, Essays*, 142.

simply stated; “I speak of them as outward symptoms which have often accompanied the inward work of God.”⁶² In other words, being thunderstruck was the collateral effect of God’s power colliding with the kingdom of darkness, felt by the penitent sinner in both body and soul. Falling to the ground was not the goal but a side effect of the deliverance encounter.

In this sense, I would compare spiritual deliverance to delivering a child (as an observer, obviously). Pushing, heavy breathing, roaring, convulsions, and pain can accompany childbirth, and at times even accompany the new birth. Being thunderstruck and similar manifestations are new birth pains. Thus, to be thunderstruck is not a goal sought out by the minister or the seeker. Deliverance and redemption are the goals. But at times other collateral effects, like thunder, lightning, and quaking, manifest when hell is shaken and a new creation is birthed! I think it can be fairly stated that most of the cases cited in Wesley’s deliverance ministry can be classified as an *ordinary, indirect* type of casting out of devils, as opposed to an extraordinary gift.

Conclusion: An Almost Charismatic

Wesley, despite not claiming, teaching, or pursuing extraordinary gifts as normative, frequently witnessed extraordinary works of the Spirit, including healing, deliverance, prophecy, and a questionable raising of the dead,⁶³ as documented in his *Journals* and *Letters*. These “extraordinary” gifts were always judged by a holiness hermeneutic that prioritized fruit over gifts, evaluating the origin, nature, and end of extraordinary gifts based on the fruit they produced. Wesley’s understanding of the person and work of the Holy Spirit served a larger soteriological function, which was to experience the work of the Spirit in terms of holiness, piety, and

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62 Wesley, *Letters, Essays*, 357. BE USED FOR COMMERCIAL PURPOSES.

63 John Wesley, Journal entry for April 17, 1739 in Thomas Jackson, ed., *Works of John Wesley*, vol. 1, *Journals*, (London, Wesleyan Conference office, 1872), 405-06.

assurance. In “A Farther Appeal to Men of Religion and Reason,” he stated that a “thorough change and renovation of mind and heart, and the leading a new and holy life” are the true measures of being led by the Spirit. In this sense, his view was in contrast to the pneumatology of the modern charismatic which is often expressed as a distinctive theology of subsequence (the baptism of the Holy Spirit), primarily to receive and minister spiritual gifts as a norm for Christian life and ministry. PCRs seemed to hold to a more intentional, aggressive, and realized sense of human agency that participates with the Spirit in healing, deliverance, miracles, and the prophetic as the norm. Wesley seemed to reserve our participation more for the inner work of the Spirit toward holiness.

The Results of the DNA test

So, what are the results of our DNA test? Is Wesley a charismatic? Did he hold to the belief and practice that the gifts of the Spirit are normative in the life of the believer or at least for himself? As much as I would like to see Wesley as a charismatic, Wesley did not seem to espouse or teach the notion that supernatural manifestations of the Spirit are normative for the believer, which characterizes PCR Christians. Yet, in practice, the *charismata* clearly operated through Wesley and the early Methodists in quite a regular or normative manner. With that said, Wesley can be considered a charismatic on one of two counts, making him half a charismatic, or playing on Wesley’s “an almost Christian” – “an almost charismatic.”

The four inferences drawn from Wesley concerning the gifts of the Spirit further serve as correctives for a proper balance for Wesleyans of all stripes, who often neglect the miraculous power of God, and for today’s PCR movement, which often lacks a robust doctrine of sanctification and sound theology for its supernatural experiences. Simply put, all of the work of the Spirit should be normative in our lives, including the gifts and fruit of the Spirit. The Spirit gives gifts to and produces fruit in every true believer. No Christian should ever settle for anything less than the promises

of God in scripture. However, PCR Christians would do well to take heed to the Wesleyan corrective of a holiness hermeneutic in their theology and practice of the charismata. Fruit takes priority over gifts and should be the seedbed from which the gifts spring forth. On the other hand, Wesleyan Christians would do well to not make an unscriptural division of extraordinary and ordinary gifts, which results in denying their normative use in scripture. Wesleyan Christians may be underperforming as a result and could use a charismatic upgrade. 1 Corinthians 12:31 exhorts us to covet after the gifts, as PCR believers indeed model well for us. However, remember to pursue the gifts in and for the purpose of holy love as 1 Corinthians 13 states.

The gifts are judged by the fruit from which they spring and the fruit that they bear. Ultimately, fruit and not gifts are a reflection of true spiritual growth, health, and maturity. Christ emphasized that a tree is judged and known by the fruit, particularly love. Our calling and gifting from God are irrevocable and not a sign of our salvation (Rom. 11:29). It is possible to operate in the gifts of the Spirit, while not walking in the fruit of the Spirit, like the Corinthian church. From Saul to Solomon to Judas, persons who had fallen from a state of grace could still operate in the gifts of the Spirit. Theoretically, one could function in all of the supernatural signs and wonders, and yet it could still be possible to hear the final condemning words from Christ, "I never knew you."

Simply, the fruit and not the gifts are the scriptural way in which the tree is judged to be good or evil. However, that does not mean the gifts are to be denied or relegated to the apostolic age or to charismatic superstars. The prophecy of Joel in Acts 2 declares that the power of the Spirit for service is poured out on all people. Christians today should walk in the same anointing, power, and authority that Christ and the apostles did because the same Holy Spirit and promises are given to us unto the end of the age. We should not quench the Spirit by forbidding speaking in tongues or despising prophecy, as Paul exhorts, or any other gift. But in love,

we should eagerly seek the gifts of the Spirit for the edifying of the Body of Christ and the work of the ministry.



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Pietist Origins Of Global Deliverance Ministries

Candy Gunther Brown

The historian of Pietism Jonathan Strom calls for explorations of parallels and influences connecting the history of Pietism with other past and present church renewal movements.¹ This chapter traces lines of influence from the Bible to Martin Luther (1483-1546) to nineteenth-century Pietists—in particular, Johann Christoph Blumhardt (1805 - 1880), to twenty-first-century global deliverance practices. The paper argues that modern Pentecostal and Charismatic demonology and deliverance are, in part, a theological and historical outgrowth of Pietism, and that today’s global deliverance ministries are heirs of the Pietist tradition.

Pietist demonology emerges from piecing together biblical fragments, including those in the Apocrypha, which Martin Luther printed in his German translation of the Bible, as “useful and good to read,” although not “equal to the Holy Scriptures.”² In the Pietist cosmology, before God created humans, he created angels, spiritual creatures without physical bodies, but with wills, intellects, and emotions. An angel named Lucifer, or Morning Star, wanted worship for himself, and so rebelled against God, taking a third of the angels with him. God drove Lucifer, who became known as Satan or the devil, meaning accuser or adversary, and his followers, who became known as demons, or evil spirits, out of heaven, down to the earth. In the Garden of Eden, Satan used a serpent to tempt Eve and Adam to sin by seeking to become godlike. Thus, sin, sickness, and death

¹ Jonathan Strom, “Problems and Promises of Pietism Research,” *Church History* 71, no. 3 (2002): 554.

² Martin Luther, quoted in *A Cyclopedia of Biblical Literature*, Vol. 1, ed. John Kitto (New York: Mark H. Newman, 1845), 556.

entered the world. Jesus's atoning death and resurrection paid the penalty for human sin and exemplified God's ultimate victory over Satan. In God's mercy, he did not, however, immediately execute final judgment on Satan and his followers. Until the creation of a new heaven and a new earth, humans must continue to resist the devil and his demons.³

Pietist cosmology emphasizes the clash between the kingdoms of God and Satan that animates the New Testament gospels. The gospel according to John attests that "the reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work."⁴ As soon as Jesus began his ministry, he "began to preach, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.'"⁵ To demonstrate the nature of the kingdom, and to evidence its nearness, Jesus traveled around "proclaiming the good news of the kingdom, and healing every disease and sickness . . . those suffering severe pain, the demon-possessed."⁶ Indeed, "many who were demon-possessed were brought to him, and he drove out the spirits with a word and healed all the sick. This was to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet Isaiah: 'He took up our infirmities and bore our disease.'"⁷ The gospels recount seven separate stories of Jesus commanding evil spirits to leave specific

³ Brian Stanley, "The Evangelical Christian Mind in History and Global Context," in *Every Leaf, Line, and Letter: Evangelicals and the Bible from the 1730s to the Present*, ed. Timothy Larsen (Downers Grove, Ill.: IVP Academic, 2021), 301; Candy Gunther Brown, "Christian Perspectives on Praying for Deliverance from Demons," in *Human Interaction with the Divine, the Sacred, and the Deceased: Psychological, Scientific, and Theological Perspectives*, ed. Thomas G. Plante (New York: Routledge, 2021), 106-111; Candy Gunther Brown, "Toward a Globally Contextual Model of U.S. Demonology and Deliverance," in *The Pentecostal World*, ed. David Wilkinson and Jörg Haustein (New York: Routledge, 2023), 175.

⁴ 1 John 3:8; all references are to NIV.

⁵ Matthew 4:17.

⁶ Matthew 4:23-24.

⁷ Matthew 8:16-17.

individuals.⁸ A quarter of the healings described by Mark involve driving out demons.⁹

Jesus's followers likewise expelled demons as they preached and healed. Jesus appointed twelve disciples "that they might be with him and that he might send them out to preach and to have authority to drive out demons."¹⁰ Thus, the twelve "went out and preached that people should repent. They drove out many demons and anointed many sick people with oil and healed them."¹¹ Likewise appointing seventy-two others to go ahead of him, Jesus instructed: "Heal the sick who are there and tell them, 'The kingdom of God has come near to you.'" Thereafter, "the seventy-two returned with joy and said, 'Lord, even the demons submit to us in your name.'" Jesus replied, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven."¹² The gospel writers report that after Jesus's resurrection, he commissioned his disciples to "go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation. . . . And these signs will accompany those who believe: In my name they will drive out demons."¹³

The early church continued to drive out demons, a practice that came to be known as "exorcism," meaning casting out through binding by oath.¹⁴ Church fathers such as Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, Tertullian, and Cyprian all described the valuable work of exorcists.¹⁵

⁸ Mark 1:21–28, 3:22–27, 5:1–20, 7:24–30, 9:14–29; Luke 13:10–17; Matthew 9:32–34.

⁹ Francis MacNutt, *Deliverance from Evil Spirits: A Practical Manual*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Chosen, 2009), 44; Neil T. Anderson, *The Bondage Breaker: Overcoming Negative Thoughts, Irrational Feelings, Habitual Sins* (Eugene, Ore.: Harvest House, 1990), 31.

¹⁰ Mark 3:14–15.

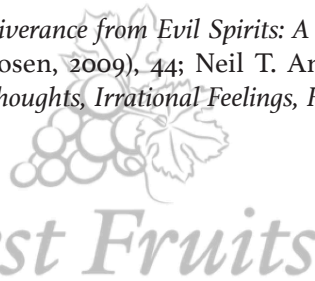
¹¹ Mark 6:12–13.

¹² Luke 10:9, 17–18.

¹³ Mark 16:15, 17–18.

¹⁴ Joseph P. Laycock, *The Penguin Book of Exorcisms* (New York: Penguin, 2020), ix; Tracy Wilkson, *The Vatican's Exorcists: Driving Out the Devil in the 21st Century* (New York: Warner, 2007), 2.

¹⁵ Ramsay MacMullen, *Christianizing the Roman Empire (A.D. 100–400)* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1984), 27; Oskar Skarsaune, "Possession



Christians identified the Greco-Roman gods and pantheon of lesser spirits as demons, and perceived pagan magical practices as openings to demonic influence.¹⁶ Baptism involved anointing with the Oil of Exorcism, renouncing Satan, and commanding evil spirits to depart.¹⁷ There is historical evidence that the frequent successes of exorcists help to explain the rapid expansion of Christianity in the Roman empire.¹⁸ As the Roman Catholic Church took institutional shape, exorcism became a sacramental practice, performed less often by fewer Christians, and only as prescribed by the Church.¹⁹

During the Protestant Reformation, although Martin Luther criticized much of the Church's sacramental system as merely "human additions" to "God's Word," he included exorcisms in the Order of Baptism he wrote in 1523 and revised in 1526.²⁰ The latter version begins: "Depart thou unclean spirit, and give room to the Holy Spirit," and calls upon the baptized child's sponsors to "renounce the devil" and "all his works" and "ways."²¹ As Luther explained in a preface, "it is by no means a light matter or a bit of fun to take sides against the devil and not only to drive him away from the little child . . . but also strengthen him, so that like a good

and Exorcism in the Literature of the Ancient Church and the New Testament," Lausanne Movement, <https://lausanne.org/content/historical-overview-1>, trans. Tormod Engelsviken from *Norsk Tidsskrift for misjon*, No. 3 (1997): 157-171.

¹⁶ Birgit Meyer, *Translating the Devil: Religion and Modernity among the Ewe in Ghana* (Trenton, N.J.: Africa World, 1999), 41.

¹⁷ Hippolytus, *The Apostolic Tradition of Hippolytus*, 3.21.1-3.22.6, c. 215, trans. Burton Scott Easton (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1934), 33-41, <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/61614/61614-h/61614-h.htm>; Skarsaune, "Possession."

¹⁸ MacMullen, *Christianizing*, 110.

¹⁹ Philip Schaff, "Exorcism," in *The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge*, Vol. IV: Draeseke – Goa, ed. Samuel Macauley Jackson, (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker, 1909), Christian Classics Ethereal Library, <https://www.ccel.org/s/schaff/encyc/encyco4/htm/ii.vii.htm#ii.vii>.

²⁰ Martin Luther, *The Order of Baptism* (1523), 197-206, and *The Order of Baptism Newly Revised* (1526), 207-211, in *Works of Martin Luther: The Philadelphia Edition*, Vol. 6, ed. Paul Zeller Strodach (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg, 1932), <http://www.ctsfw.net/media/pdfs/LutherBaptismalRites.pdf>.

²¹ Luther, *Order* (1526), 207, 209.

knight he may resist [the devil] in life and death.”²² Luther, although influenced by Augustine, rejected the Augustinian view of evil as merely a privation of good, and emphasized the personal agency of the devil and demons.²³ Luther felt keenly aware of demonic activity in his own time, citing as examples witchcraft and magical practices rampant in popular religion. Luther maintained, moreover, that Satan’s attacks, which could include temptation to sin, accusations of unworthiness, bodily sickness, or even bad weather, grew stronger the more that Christians grew in faith. Despite rejecting many Roman Catholic and folk protection rituals as superstitious, Luther affirmed the necessity of exorcising demons through baptism, prayer, biblical preaching, and song.²⁴

Indicative of this emphasis, Luther’s hymn, “A Mighty Fortress is Our God,” written in 1529, centers on Christian participation in the battle between God and Satan.²⁵

For still our ancient foe
Does seek to work us woe;
His craft and power are great . . .
Did we in our own strength confide,
Our striving would be losing,
Were not the right Man on our side, . . .
Christ Jesus, it is he; . . .
And he must win the battle.
And though this world, with devils filled,
Should threaten to undo us,
We will not fear, for God has willed
His truth to triumph through us.

²² Luther, *Order* (1523), 204-205.

²³ Jussi Koivisto, “Is Evil Inevitable for Creation and Human Life? Studies on Martin Luther’s Biblical Interpretation,” (Ph.D. diss., University of Helsinki, 2012), 13, 172; Meyer, *Translating the Devil*, 44.

²⁴ Luther’s Works, ed. and trans. Theodore G. Tappert, Vol. 54: *Table Talk* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1967), 24, 82, 34; Meyer, *Translating the Devil*, 42, 45.

²⁵ Hymnary.org, “A Mighty Fortress,” accessed September 28, 2023, https://hymnary.org/text/a_mighty_fortress_is_our_god_a_bulwark.

The Prince of Darkness grim, —
 We tremble not for him;
 His rage we can endure,
 For lo! His doom is sure, —
 One little word shall fell him. . . .
 The Spirit and the gifts are ours
 Through him who with us sideth . . .
 His kingdom is forever.

The hymn instructs its singers that, although Christ's victory on the cross assures the outcome, Christians must continue to fight with word, Spirit, and spiritual gifts against a personal foe.

Luther's cosmology, including his diabolology, animated the Pietist renewal that emerged in seventeenth-century Germany. Lutherans hungry for deeper piety devoted themselves to Bible reading and prayer, and strove to repent from sins and cultivate holy, Christ-like lives.²⁶ Like Luther, Pietist renewalists envisioned themselves as battling against a personal devil and his demons, who threatened to derail them from the narrow path to heaven through temptations of earthly pleasures as well as attacks on their physical and mental health.²⁷

With the development of eighteenth-century Enlightenment rationalism, educated elites grew more interested in understanding the natural laws that govern the material world, and correspondingly more skeptical of spiritual explanations for observed phenomena. Diseases and mental disturbances once attributed to demons came to be explained naturalistically.²⁸ Medieval and early modern witch hunts, which resulted in the deaths of thousands of accused witches, produced a backlash against belief in magic as not only superstitious but also dangerous.²⁹ Although Pietist theologians retained a

²⁶ Strom, "Problems," 537, 538, 539.

²⁷ Meyer, *Translating the Devil*, 34, 40–41.

²⁸ Andrew Delbanco, *The Death of Satan: How Americans Have Lost the Sense of Evil* (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 1995), 14.

²⁹ Meyer, *Translating the Devil*, 43.

traditional diabolology, not only witch hunts but also exorcisms became increasingly rare. Ordinary folk, however, continued to invoke spiritual sources of help to counteract misfortunes such as physical and mental illnesses.

Folk religious practices, including sorcery and magic, comprised the backdrop for a new phase in the Pietist awakening. One watershed event, in particular, catalyzed renewed interest in demons. In 1841, a female parishioner named Gottliebin Dittus approached her Lutheran pastor, Johann Christoph Blumhardt, desperate for help. Just three years earlier, Blumhardt had begun his pastorate in the small village of Möttlingen, Württemberg in the Black Forest of southern Germany. The twenty-five-year-old Dittus lived her with siblings, since her parents, devoted members of the Lutheran church, had died young. Despite being raised in the church, Dittus had, as a child, been introduced to sorcery through an aunt. Since childhood, Dittus had also suffered from a series of physical and mental afflictions that the village physician could neither explain nor treat. Recently, Dittus had been suffering from strange bleeding, fell unconscious when a mealtime prayer invoked the name of Jesus, and felt tormented nightly by unexplained noises and an apparition that looked like a deceased villager. When Blumhardt visited Dittus, she avoided eye contact and seemed not to listen, behavior which he found off-putting. Nevertheless, realizing that “something demonic was at work . . . indignation seized” Blumhardt, and he commenced an eighteen-month “battle” against the demons.³⁰

Although Blumhardt had never denied the existence of Satan, prior to encountering Dittus, he had not concerned himself overmuch with demons.³¹ But now, to quote Blumhardt, “everything that had hitherto been reckoned under the most ridiculous popular

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³⁰ Johann Christoph Blumhardt, quoted in Christian T. Collins Winn, “Seeing What Jesus Can Do: The Blumhardts and the Healing of Creation,” *Christian History* 142 (2022): 26-27.

³¹ Meyer, *Translating the Devil*, 50.

superstition, stepped over from the world of fairytales into reality.”³² Rejecting recourse either to Roman Catholic sacramentalism or folk remedies as risking further demonization, Blumhardt relied on prayer, with laying on of hands and fasting, and the Bible, rather than employing verbal formulas or ritually significant objects.³³ After months with this approach, the final confrontation occurred during an intense few days surrounding Christmas 1843. Blumhardt, and everyone within earshot, knew that the last major battle had been won when a voice, coming from Gottlieb’s sister Katharina, by this point also apparently manifesting demons, “bellowed”: “Jesus is the Victor!” The spirit apparently departed from the Dittus family, and the following morning, villagers reported hearing “mournful cries” of “Into the abyss!”³⁴ In “amazement and trembling,” villagers, one by one, began coming to Blumhardt, distressed about their own sins, including their participation in folk magic, wanting to confess and receive absolution. A revival ensued, marked by confession, repentance, prayer, biblical devotion, and physical and mental healing.

News spread, and people came from surrounding villages and even from other countries, seeking healing, deliverance, and spiritual renewal. Looking back from the perspective of global pentecostalism, Blumhardt’s response to the revival of his day may sound prophetic: “I long for another outpouring of the Holy Spirit, another Pentecost. ... The gifts and powers of the early Christian time – oh, how I long for their return!”³⁵ Not everyone shared Blumhardt’s enthusiasm. Lutheran ecclesiastical authorities, as well as physicians, expressed concerns that Blumhardt was drawing people away from their home parishes, reverting to Roman Catholic practices of confession and absolution, and treating medical conditions with prayer. Authorities forbade Blumhardt from laying hands on the sick or ministering to those coming from outside his own parish. After trying for several

³² Johann Christoph Blumhardt, quoted in and trans. by Meyer, *Translating the Devil*, 48. PUBLICATION IS NOT TO BE USED FOR COMMERCIAL PURPOSES.

³³ Meyer, *Translating the Devil*, 52.

³⁴ Zündel, *Blumhardt*, 160; Winn, “Seeing What Jesus Can Do,” 26-27.

³⁵ Zündel, *Blumhardt*, 160; Winn, “Seeing What Jesus Can Do,” 26-27.

years to minister within these restrictions, finally, in 1852, Blumhardt moved to an abandoned sulfur spa at Bad Boll to open a retreat center. He continued ministering there until his death in 1880, after which his son Christoph continued the ministry.³⁶

Although Blumhardt arguably exerted the greatest influence of any Pietist on healing prayer practices, Blumhardt was not unique. Other awakened Pietist clergy and laity, both men and women, shared his cosmology and practiced Bible-based prayer for healing and deliverance from demons, integrating these practices into developing institutions.³⁷ As the anthropologist Birgit Meyer argues, a “direct line” of influence can be traced from Blumhardt and awakened Pietism more broadly to German Pentecostalism in the twentieth and twenty-first century.³⁸

This influence, moreover, extended from southern Germany globally, notably to western Africa. Blumhardt had close personal ties to a missionary training center in Basel, Switzerland, which sent missionaries overseas, including to Ghana.³⁹ Although more reticent than Blumhardt to talk too much about, let alone, confront demons, these Pietist missionaries communicated a cosmology of battle between God’s and Satan’s kingdoms.⁴⁰ The missionaries interpreted the African spirits they encountered as demonic and real, rather than as mere inventions of superstition. Missionaries admonished converts to forsake “idol-worship,” “heathen ceremonies,” and amulets.⁴¹ African converts went further, reading the Bible literally as a practical guidebook for driving out demons.⁴² The Pietist cosmology resonated with that of African Christian

³⁶ Meyer, *Translating the Devil*, 46.

³⁷ Stanley, “Evangelical Christian Mind,” 301.

³⁸ Meyer, *Translating the Devil*, 46.

³⁹ Meyer, *Translating the Devil*, 46.

⁴⁰ Meyer, *Translating the Devil*, 146; Stanley, “Evangelical Christian Mind,”

301.

⁴¹ Meyer, *Translating the Devil*, 83, 9.

⁴² Philip Jenkins, *The New Faces of Christianity: Believing the Bible in the Global South* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 4.

converts who perceived themselves to be engaged in a spiritual battle and who wanted more effective protection against evil spirits. What changed, through missionary encounters, was that converts came to reinterpret traditional spirits in terms of Christian demonology and to counter these spirits with the name of Jesus and the power of the Holy Spirit. Although the missionaries did little directly to combat demons, their African converts did, fueling the growth of Christianity throughout the region.⁴³

Blumhardt's influence multiplied further through printed accounts of his ministry. The first of these was written by Blumhardt himself in 1850 in response to a request from church authorities for a detailed report of his activities with Dittus. This account, Blumhardt's *Battle*, was translated into English in 1970.⁴⁴ The Swiss Friedrich Zündel published a German-language biography in 1880.⁴⁵ An American, R. Kelso Carter, wrote an English-language biography in 1883, which was published by the printing press of Charles Cullis—a leader in the U.S. and international movement to renew divine healing.⁴⁶ These autobiographical and biographical accounts have continued to circulate globally up until the present day. One reason for the popularity of such accounts is that, despite the frequency with which the Bible reports exorcisms, it provides scant instructions for how Christians should use Jesus's name and authority to drive out demons. Modern Christians inspired by biblical stories have often experienced mixed success in delivering people from demonic power, fueling a search for exemplary

⁴³ Meyer, *Translating the Devil*, 109, 138.

⁴⁴ Frank S. Boshold, *Blumhardt's Battle: A Conflict with Satan* (New York: Lowe, 1970).

⁴⁵ Friedrich Zündel, Pfarrer J.C. Blumhardt: Eine Lebensbild (1880), trans. by Hugo Brinkmann as *Pastor Johann Christoph Blumhardt: An Account of His Life*, ed. By Christian T. Collins Winn and Charles E. Moore (Eugene, Ore.: Cascade, 2010).

⁴⁶ Russell Kelso Carter, *Pastor Blumhardt: A Record of the Wonderful Spiritual and Physical Manifestations of God's Power in Healing Souls and Bodies, through the Prayers of His Servant, Christoph Blumhardt* (Boston: Willard Tract Repository, 1883); Paul Gale Chappell, "The Divine Healing Movement in America" (Ph.D. diss., Drew University, 1983), 40.

models.⁴⁷ Modern communication and travel networks transformed local mentors into globally emulated heroes.

Despite controversies, Christians worldwide have, from the 1840s until the present, taken Blumhardt as such a model. Blumhardt's reputation and influence in Germany and surrounding regions continued long after his death. For instance, the Dutch woman Corrie Ten Boom took inspiration from Blumhardt, following his approach of resisting the devil through faith, prayer, and, if necessary, fasting. During World War II, Ten Boom sheltered Jews from the Nazis, whose power she attributed to demons. When Ten Boom was captured and imprisoned in a Nazi camp, she ministered to those around her, later reporting many experiences of "victory over the demons." After the war, Ten Boom traveled around Europe, teaching in churches and through publications, such as her 1962 book, *Defeated Enemies*. In this book, Ten Boom asks readers: "Have you heard of the name Pastor Blumhardt?"⁴⁸

Countless lesser-known individuals have read and taken inspiration from Blumhardt. As one example, take Dean Hochstetler, a twentieth-century German Mennonite from northern Indiana who read Blumhardt's *Battle*.⁴⁹ Hochstetler grew up in Mennonite and Amish communities where folk healing practices included the magical use of verbal formulas and rituals in "broucha" or "pow-wowing," water divining and smelling, horoscopes, and iridology.⁵⁰ Even as Blumhardt traced Dittus's demonization to folk magic, Hochstetler concluded that although folk healers might bring temporary relief, they also opened doors to demons, which then

⁴⁷ Sean McCloud, *American Possessions: Fighting Demons in the Contemporary United States* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), 40.

⁴⁸ Corrie Ten Boom, *Defeated Enemies* (1962; Fort Washington, Penn.: CLC, 2008), 10; Michael W. Cuneo, *American Exorcism: Expelling Demons in the Land of Plenty* (New York: Doubleday, 2001), 95.

⁴⁹ Cuneo, *American Exorcism*, 202, 228.

⁵⁰ June Naugle, *Solomon's Touch: The Life and Work of Solomon J. Wickey* (Bloomington, IN: AuthorHouse, 2005), 39.

had to be cast out.⁵¹ In 1986, Hochstetler became the first person ever ordained by the Indiana-Michigan Mennonite Conference to minister “deliverance”—a term that many practitioners have come to prefer to exorcism, because it emphasizes freeing the person over battling their demons. For forty years, Hochstetler took time from his work as a farm equipment repairman and welder to pray for deliverance, not only locally, but in other states, and forty-two countries.⁵² During ministry sessions, Hochstetler was often heard repeating a phrase he learned from Blumhardt: “Christ is victor,” reminding all those present that “we are working from a position of victory, which [Christ] bought for us on the cross” where he “defeated Satan and his host.”⁵³

Blumhardt’s influence extends beyond German religious communities. For example, Francis MacNutt—credited with catalyzing the Catholic Charismatic Renewal throughout Latin America—acknowledged being influenced by Blumhardt, as did Vineyard founder John Wimber.⁵⁴ These leaders’ ecumenical connections, international travel, training seminars, and books renewed global attention to healing and deliverance as central components of the gospel. Since the 1980s, Blumhardt’s influence

⁵¹ Dean Hochstetler, “In Pursuit of Truth—My Journey into Deliverance Ministry,” Blogspot, comp. by Clair Hochstetler, March 2003, http://deanhochstetler.blogspot.com/2003/03/dean-hochstetler-in-his-own-words_18.html.

⁵² “Dean L. Hochstetler Obituary,” *Goshen News*, October 31, 2006, <https://obituaries.goshennews.com/obituary/dean-hochstetler-716087341>.

⁵³ David and Cathy Payne, “Dean’s Gift of Spiritual Discernment was Wonderful, Actually Awesome,” Blogspot, November 4, 2006, <http://deanhochstetler.blogspot.com/>; Dean Hochstetler, “Epistle General: The Life and Times of Dean Hochstetler,” Blogspot, comp. by Clair Hochstetler, May 11, 2001, <http://deanhochstetler.blogspot.com/>; 1 John 3:8.

⁵⁴ Francis MacNutt, *The Healing Reawakening: Reclaiming Our Lost Inheritance* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Chosen, 2006), 167-170; Francis MacNutt, *Healing Line* (April/May 2008), 3, <https://www.christianhealingmin.org/index.php/archives/2006-2010>; R. Andrew Chesnut, *Competitive Spirits: Latin America’s New Religious Economy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003); Edward L. Cleary, *The Rise of Charismatic Catholicism in Latin America* (Gainesville, Fla.: University Press of Florida, 2011).

on Ghanaian Christians has also flowed back to Germany through the growth of African migrant churches.⁵⁵

As of 2023, Pentecostals and Charismatics number in excess of 635 million people, more than a quarter of the world's Christians.⁵⁶ Scholars of global pentecostalism credit deliverance, alongside divine healing, with fueling the movement's growth worldwide.⁵⁷ The Pew Forum reported in 2006 that a majority of Pentecostals in seven of ten countries surveyed had personally experienced or witnessed evil spirits being driven out of a person; even in the United States, 34 percent of Pentecostals and 22 percent of Charismatics reported personal involvement in an exorcism.⁵⁸ Polls conducted in 2020 show that 50% of all Americans believe that demons definitely or probably exist, suggesting that deliverance may prove a potent strategy for twenty-first-century U.S. Pentecostals to attract adherents.⁵⁹ To conclude, although Blumhardt, and his Pietist coreligionists, were not unique in their emphasis on deliverance,

⁵⁵ Cephas Omenyo, "New Wine in an Old Wine Bottle? Charismatic Healing in the Mainline Churches in Ghana," in *Global Pentecostal and Charismatic Healing*, ed. Candy Gunther Brown (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 232; Claudia Wahrlich-Oblau, "Material Salvation: Healing, Deliverance, and 'Breakthrough' in African Migrant Churches in Germany," in *Global Pentecostal and Charismatic Healing*, ed. Brown, 61-80.

⁵⁶ "Pentecostals/Charismatics, 1900-2050," in Todd M. Johnson and Gina Zurlo, *World Christian Encyclopedia Online*, 3rd ed. (Leiden, Netherlands: Brill, 2020), <https://brill.com/display/db/wceo>.

⁵⁷ Harvey Cox, *Fire from Heaven: The Rise of Pentecostal Spirituality and the Reshaping of Religion in the Twenty-first Century* (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1995), 222; Jenkins, *New Faces*, 13; R. Andrew Chesnut, *Born Again in Brazil: The Pentecostal Boom and the Pathogens of Poverty* (Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1997), 38; Candy Gunther Brown, *Global Pentecostal and Charismatic Healing* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012).

⁵⁸ The Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life, "Spirit and Power—A 10-Country Survey of Pentecostals," October 2006, file:///C:/Users/browncg/Downloads/pentecostals-08.pdf.

⁵⁹ Jamie Ballard, "About Half of Americans Believe Ghosts and Demons Exist," YouGov, October 30, 2020, https://today.yougov.com/society/articles/32807-ghosts-demons-exist-poll-data?redirect_from=%2Ftopics%2Flifestyle%2Farticles-reports%2F2020%2F10%2F30%2Fghosts-demons-exist-poll-data.

they shaped a cosmology and modeled practices that continue to be emulated today. Global deliverance ministries can thus be viewed as heirs of the Pietist tradition.



First Fruits

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Ram Chandra Bose And North Indian Pietism

Alan M. Guenther

Ram Chandra Bose (1837-1892) is largely unknown in scholarship on global Pietism, though in the late 19th century he gathered much attention through his participation in two General Conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church, his numerous speaking engagements in churches, camps, and auditoriums throughout the States on his two visits, and his abundant publications. As a convert from Hinduism who spoke and wrote eloquent English, he caught the imagination of American supporters of missionary work in India. He was the most prolific writer among Indian Methodists in the 19th century, publishing four substantial books on various aspects of Hinduism as well as books on the defence of Christianity and innumerable articles in journals and newspapers in India, the United States, and Britain. It is in these articles that we find his interpretation and critique of the Pietism he had inherited, revealing him to be fully committed to a “heart religion” and the conversion of his fellow Indians, but critical of some of the ecclesiological and missiological practices that accompanied the evangelistic efforts of American Methodists in India.

German Pietists in India

However, the history and heritage of Pietism in India begins much earlier. From its inception, Pietism has had a global dimension with a particular focus on the Indian subcontinent. As Douglas Shantz writes, “The remarkable vitality of German Pietism is nowhere more evident than in the drive to make Christianity

a world religion.”¹ Early in the 18th century, Frederick IV, the King of Denmark, requested that the University of Halle provide missionaries for his colonies in India and the Caribbean. Accordingly, Bartholomäus Ziegenbalg and Heinrich Plütschau were sent by the Danish-Halle Mission society to India and arrived in Tranquebar on the eastern coast in 1706, more than a hundred years prior to the sending of the first Wesleyan missionaries to the region.²

The spread of Pietism beyond the borders of Christendom added new dimensions to the movement. No longer would it be simply a renewal movement within the existing Protestant churches and a challenge to the Roman Catholic Church; it would also be an evangelistic movement seeking converts from Hinduism and Islam. This entailed actively seeking knowledge of other religions and discerning what of their religious beliefs and practices must be rejected and what could be retained as a foundation upon which to build a more complete understanding of God and his salvation.³ Another dimension was the reality of colonial power and expansion. As with the Roman Catholic monastic orders which accompanied Portuguese and Spanish imperial forces, the early Pietist missionaries worked in India under the umbrella of the Danish colonial government, creating other questions. If the European governments provided the funds, to what extent were the activities of the missionaries to be guided by colonial priorities? How would this relationship impact their ecclesiology—would the Indian Church they established be a state church? Would the church government in the Indian periphery be a copy of that of the Danish and German Lutheran metropole, or would the Indian Church be

¹ Douglas H. Shantz, *An Introduction to German Pietism: Protestant Renewal at the Dawn of Modern Europe* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2013), 269.

² Heike Liebau, “Country Priests, Catechists, and Schoolmasters as Cultural, Religious, and Social Middlemen in the Context of the Tranquebar Mission,” in *Christians and Missionaries in India: Cross-Cultural Communication since 1500*, ed. by Robert Eric Frykenberg; *Studies in the History of Christian Missions*, ed. R. E. Frykenberg and Brian Stanley (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2003), 71-72.

³ Shantz, *Introduction to German Pietism*, 246-247.

permitted to develop independently? Connected to this was the question of ordaining Indian clergy and training Church leaders who could continue the work both of evangelism and pastoring the Church. Many of these same issues would once again be analyzed by Chandra Bose 170 years later in the context of American Methodists working in North India under British rule.

This new development in Pietism had a noticeable reciprocal impact on the European Church. Ziegenbalg and subsequent missionaries faithfully sent detailed reports of all aspects of the religion, language, literature, and culture of the people they encountered to Orientalist professors at Halle who regularly published these letters.⁴ These written reports exposed the early generations of Pietists to Indian culture in its multifaceted expressions and informed them of the growth of the Christian Church within that culture. A more direct exposure to Indian Christianity occurred when young converts such as Timothy Kudiyan and Peter Malaiappan accompanied the missionaries returning to Europe not only as living proof of the success of the mission but also as budding scholars to assist with translation of both traditional Hindu texts into German and the Bible and other Christian literature into Indian languages.⁵ Ram Chandra Bose would repeat this pattern with his publications in American periodicals and his visits to the States in the second half of the 19th century.

Beyond the work of the missionaries, the role of the Indian Christians who were the direct heirs of the Pietist tradition deserves significant scholarly attention in the study of global Christianity because of the way they transformed that heritage into an indigenous movement. In 1733, the first South Indian preacher to be ordained by the German Pietists was Arumugam Pillai who was given the name Aaron. The decision was made to adopt Tamil culture with respect to his ministerial garb, and so, instead of black

⁴ Robert Eric Frykenberg, *Christianity in India from Beginnings to the Present, Oxford History of the Christian Church*, ed. Henry and Owen Chadwick (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 148-149.

⁵ Shantz, *Introduction to German Pietism*, 248-249.

robes with a collar and a wig as worn by the European clergy, he wore “a long gray closed robe without collar tied together with two cloth belts, a turban and Indian slippers typical of those worn by notables.”⁶ While that cultural adaptation may have been relatively painless, the question of caste created a greater difficulty. Because of the reality that most of their early converts were low caste, the “Pietists were, initially at least, relatively indifferent to caste status.”⁷ But as the decades passed, that began to change as the complexity of the role of caste within the culture became more apparent and as people of higher castes were drawn to the movement. An early catechist, Rajanayakkan, who worked effectively with the German missionaries as a preacher, church planter, and translator for 44 years, was never ordained because he was of a lower caste; and converts of a higher caste would not want to receive communion from his hand.⁸ This may have been a factor in his choice at one point to join the Moravians who had come to the region and in his subsequent suspension from the Lutheran mission. The Moravians welcomed him warmly and ate with him, treating him as a social equal.⁹ When Chandra Bose addressed the issue of inequality a century and a half later, his concern was less the distinctions between Indian Christians of various castes and more the treatment of native Christians—particularly native pastors—as having a lower rank than foreign missionaries.

The Moravians sent missionaries to South Asia but did not have the success that the Lutheran Pietists had there. In other parts of the world, their contribution to the global spread of Pietism had gained renown. As with its counterparts in other German churches,

⁶ Liebau, “Country Priests,” 81.

⁷ Will Sweetman and Ines G. Županov, “Rival Mission, Rival Science? Jesuits and Pietists in Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century South India,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 61, no. 3 (2019): 639, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0010417519000203>. THE ACADEMIC OPEN PRESS OF ASBURY SEMINARY

⁸ D. Dennis Hudson, “Protestant Origins in India: Tamil Evangelical Christians, 1706-1835,” *Studies in the History of Christian Missions*, ed. R. E. Frykenberg and Brian Stanley (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing), 46-47.

⁹ Hudson, *Protestant Origins*, 48.

the Moravian community had been stimulated in its missionary vision by visits from Christians of other cultures. Christian Jacob Protten, a young man of mixed parentage from the Danish colony on the Gold Coast had spent time in Herrnhut after his conversion and education in Denmark.¹⁰ He eventually married Rebecca Freundlich, an evangelist from the island of St. Thomas who had come to Herrnhut after her first husband had died, and returned to Africa as a missionary.¹¹ In 1743, the Moravians sent missionaries to Sri Lanka, thinking it could be the gateway for missions to Asia; but within a year they had been expelled by the Dutch governor because of suspicions of their doctrine.¹² Other attempts were made at Tranquebar as already mentioned, and in the Nicobar Islands, but these, too, proved relatively unfruitful.¹³

Wesleyan Methodists in South Asia

With the dawn of a new century, a new group of Pietists in the form of the Wesleyan Methodists from Britain began arriving on India's shores. In 1813, Thomas Coke embarked on his fateful voyage to Sri Lanka with a hope of finally fulfilling his vision to begin missionary work in that part of the world. He died on the way, but his colleagues continued and established the work in Sri Lanka as well as on mainland India. Thus began the spread of Wesleyan expressions of Pietism in the subcontinent, facing similar challenges which earlier groups had faced. One Indian representative of this group, Wesley Abraham (d. 1837), an elderly Tamil convert from Hinduism, had an impact on another aspect of missionary policy and the Indian Church. At his baptism in 1836, he recounted his testimony in the form of a song of praise consisting of 33 couplets detailing his former religious practices counterbalanced with the deliverance

¹⁰ Jon F. Sensbach, *Rebecca's Revival: Creating Black Christianity in the Atlantic World* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006), 162-170.

¹¹ Sensbach, *Rebecca's Revival*, 171-172, 183-186.

¹² James Hough, *The History of Christianity in India, from the Commencement of the Christian Era. Second Portion, Comprising the History of Protestant Missions, 1706-1816*, vol. 1 (London: Seeley, Burnside, and Seeley, 1845), 358-363.

¹³ Hough, *History of Christianity*, 363-375.

he experienced in Christ.¹⁴ This became part of a collection of songs which proved immensely popular in Tamil communities throughout South India and Sri Lanka and quickly went through several editions. Within a few years, a hundred thousand copies had been printed and distributed.¹⁵ Conversions and public testimonies of such conversions—key elements of Pietism—were increasingly being expressed in indigenous cultural forms such as music.

Wesley Abraham was not the only one engaged in this transformation of the Pietist heritage through musical localization. His contemporary, Vedanayagam Sastri became the chief poet of the Tamil Christian community. In his youth he had been mentored by another missionary to India from the University of Halle, Christian Friedrich Schwarz.¹⁶ Sastri soon became recognized as an accomplished poet and devoted his talent to composing devotional *bhakti* poetry and Tamil dance dramas to communicate the Gospel and other biblical stories.¹⁷ Since the time of Ziegenbalg, German hymns had been translated into Tamil to be sung in churches, but Vedanayagam's compositions in a thoroughly Tamil musical form had transformed the hymnody of the church. While the Tamil Christians and some of the missionaries showered awards on him, some of the newer Lutheran missionaries objected to his performance of his songs at music festivals and the use of musical instruments to accompany the songs.¹⁸ But the 500 devotional songs he wrote had indelibly transformed the Pietist heritage he had

¹⁴ Robert Carver, "Wesley Abraham," *The Wesleyan-Methodist Magazine* 60 (1837): 620-621.

¹⁵ John Smith, *The Missionary's Appeal to British Christians, on behalf of Southern India; comprising Topographical Descriptions of the Madras Presidency; Notices of the Moral Statistics of its Provinces; Observations on the Character and Condition of the Population; and Arguments in Favour of Augmented Effort for its Evangelization* (London: Hamilton, Adams & Co., 1841), 164.

¹⁶ Frykenberg, *Christianity in India*, 161.

¹⁷ Hudson, *Protestant Origins*, 121-126.

¹⁸ Hephzibah Israel, "Authority, Patronage and Customary Practices: Protestant Devotion and the Development of the Tamil Hymn in Colonial South India," in *Constructing Indian Christianities: Culture, Conversion and Caste*, ed. Chad M. Bauman and Richard Fox Young (London: Routledge, 2014), 97.

received from Schwarz and continue to be used in Tamil churches today.

Methodist Episcopal Missionaries in North India

While the Church in South India grew strong, Pietism did not establish a foothold in North India until the arrival of missionaries from the Methodist Episcopal Church in America. In 1856, William and Clementina Butler came to establish an Indian mission. After consultation with other missionary societies and British officials, they decided to concentrate their efforts in the regions of northern India known as Awadh and Rohilkhand and their leading cities, Lucknow and Bareilly respectively.¹⁹ In 1864, after more missionaries had arrived and churches were formed, the work was organized into an Annual Conference. A key innovation was the receiving of four Indian preachers into the Conference as probationers, theoretically making them “the ecclesiastical peers of the foreign missionaries,” though the reality of this equality would later be questioned by Chandra Bose.²⁰

Isaac Fieldbrave, the son of one those four preachers, grew up in the church, became a pastor in his own right, and made an additional contribution in the field of music. He translated many hymns as well as gospel songs that had gained popularity with the revival meetings of D. L. Moody and Ira Sankey in Britain. More significantly, he composed 110 of his own hymns as well as 75 *ghazals*, a musical form dominant among the North Indian Muslims. A collection of hymns and *ghazals* which he had composed or translated was published by the Methodist Publishing House as *Asmānī Shabnam*, or *Heavenly Dew*.²¹ Whereas during the time

¹⁹ W. Butler, *From Boston to Bareilly and Back* (New York: Phillips & Hunt, 1885), 113-25.

²⁰ J. H. Messmore, *The Life of Edwin Wallace Parker, D.D., Missionary Bishop of South Asia: Forty-One Years a Missionary in India* (New York: Eaton & Mains, 1903), 99.

²¹ Alan Guenther, “Ghazals, Bhajans, and Hymns: Hindustani Christian Music in Nineteenth-Century North India,” *Studies in World Christianity* 25, no. 2

of Vedanayagam Sastri, there was an ambivalence among the missionaries regarding the reception of indigenous musical forms for use in the church, the American Methodists seemed to have had no reservations about including *ghazals* and *bhajans* in their hymn book, the 1890 edition of which Fieldbrave helped to compile and edit.²²

Ram Chandra Bose - Conversion

The preceding history of Pietism in India, particularly its adoption and indigenization by local Christians, provides the context for the life and writings of Chandra Bose which resonate with many of the same issues of indigenization experienced by earlier generations of Indian Pietists. His testimony, which he included as the final chapter of his book, *Hinduism and the Hindu People*, and which he delivered in person to audiences throughout the United States and Britain, is distinctly pietistic in its nature. He was raised in a high caste Hindu home where education was held in higher respect than religious belief or practice. Consequently, he was sent to be educated at the school run by Alexander Duff of the Free Church of Scotland. He writes, “In this college, I was inducted into the mysteries of the English language; and I had not made much progress in the literature and science enshrined in it, ere I completely lost my faith in Hinduism.”²³ While the study of science destroyed his faith in Hinduism, the study of the Bible and books on Christian evidences soon convinced him of the truth of Christianity. But because of the social cost of converting to Christianity and because of what he describes as “a tendency to backslide,” it was some time before he had the courage to follow his convictions.²⁴ He was baptized in 1851 along with his cousin when he was about 15 years of age.

(2019): 150-151, <https://doi.org/10.3366/swc.2019.0254>.

²² Guenther, “Ghazals, Bhajans, and Hymns,” 152.

²³ Ram Chandra Bose, *Hinduism and the Hindu People: Being the Subject of Extempore Addresses* (Boston: Long, 1880), 41.

²⁴ Bose, *Hinduism and the Hindu People*, 43-44.

After completing his education, he went to work in a school run by the London Missionary Society in Varanasi before he became an educational officer for the government in Awadh. His own account of that time makes little mention of his accomplishments but describes it as oscillating “between some sin or other and moments of devotional earnestness.”²⁵ Eventually he was overtaken by the vice of intemperance and lost every vestige of his respectability. It was at that point that he encountered Methodist men and women who worked for his redemption. He wrote, “These missionaries kindly set men to watch me, and after I had given up drinking for a few days, they invited me to their revival meetings; and although I was the first person to step forward when sinners were called to the altar, my want of faith, combined with a latent antagonism to the theory of instantaneous conversion, made my advance fruitless for a time.”²⁶ Eventually, what he failed to find in public revival meetings he found in a private class meeting held at the Ladies’ Mission Home in Lucknow. He found the awakening he sought through the teaching of J. M. Thoburn (1836-1922) and subsequent private prayer which ended with a vision of words of Christ—“Come unto me all ye that labor, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest”—written in large, illuminated characters before him.²⁷

He wrote of those who helped him, “When myself and family were in the lowest depths of degradation, three of the agents of the Woman’s Foreign Missionary Society, Miss Swain, Mrs. Waugh, then Miss Tinsley, and Miss Rowe, one of the sweetest Christians I have ever seen in my lifetime, visited and prayed with us; while Miss Thoburn has been the kindest friend of my family ever since the day of the commencement of my acquaintance with her.”²⁸ Phoebe Rowe (d. 1898) deserves a special mention because she was the first Indian evangelist appointed by the Woman’s Foreign Missionary Society, and because of her gift of compassion and ability to help

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²⁵ Bose, *Hinduism and the Hindu People*, 45. AL PURPOSES.

²⁶ Bose, *Hinduism and the Hindu People*, 45. FREELY AVAILABLE FOR EDUCATIONAL AND RESEARCH USE.

²⁷ Bose, *Hinduism and the Hindu People*, 45–46.

²⁸ Bose, *Hinduism and the Hindu People*, 46.

those who were despairing, particularly in the grip of drunkenness.²⁹ She had arrived in Lucknow in 1870 to teach in a school run by the Methodists, and under the guidance of Isabella Thoburn (1840-1901) and others, she had an experience of sanctification the following year.³⁰ She was appointed to evangelistic work in 1874 and was made a full missionary in 1882.³¹ Like Chandra Bose, she, too, travelled to the United States, speaking and singing in many churches and at many missionary meetings.³²

Upon her return to India, she continued to serve actively as an evangelist until her death in 1898, in many ways mirroring the ministry of Bose. At the start of her ministry in Lucknow, Phoebe Rowe had been instrumental in the spiritual restoration of Bose, resulting in his entry into ministry as an evangelist shortly thereafter. Isabella Thoburn (1840-1901), the biographer of Phoebe Rowe and another influential mentor for Chandra Bose, wrote of him in an obituary, “I have known Mr. Bose ever since the days of revival power in Lucknow, twenty years ago, when he found that the Christ whom he had previously accepted intellectually was his personal Friend and his Saviour from present sin.”³³ Both Thoburn’s testimony and his own account of his spiritual awakening beyond his initial conversion resonate with the Pietist emphasis on personal renewal.³⁴

²⁹ Isabella Thoburn, *Phoebe Rowe* (Cincinnati: Curtis & Jennings, 1899), 25-30.

³⁰ Thoburn, *Phoebe Rowe*, 20-22.

³¹ Thoburn, *Phoebe Rowe*, 37, 41.

³² Thoburn, *Phoebe Rowe*, 51-64.

³³ *Sketches of Indian Christians collected from Different Sources* (London: The Christian Literature Society for India, 1896), 94. On Thoburn, see Anne Sargus Varian, “Isabella Thoburn (1840-1901), Missionary Educator: A Voice of Change,” (PhD diss., University of Akron, 1999).

³⁴ To compare Bose’s spiritual autobiography with that of his contemporary Methodist, Zahur al-Haqq (1833-1896), see Arun Jones, *Missionary Christianity and Local Religion: American Evangelicalism in North India, 1836-1870* (Waco, TX: Baylor, 2017), 139-151.

Ram Chandra Bose – Ministry and Doctrine

A couple of years after this spiritual awakening, Ram Chandra Bose left his lucrative government post and became a lay preacher for the American Methodist Mission while also teaching in several Methodist schools. Although he received a licence to preach, he deliberately chose not to be ordained, valuing the independence that gave him to engage in ministry on his own terms, particularly when he refused a salary for his work as an evangelist. As with Rajanayakkan and Vedanayagam Sastri, his very active ministry as a layman bears witness to the high value the Pietist movement placed on the involvement of lay people and to how effectively this was transmitted to the Indian context. Not receiving a mission salary gave Chandra Bose the opportunity to criticize the missionaries about the salaries they paid to native ministers. From his earliest writings in *The Bengal Magazine*, Bose insisted on the equality of all Christians and opposed what he termed “racial distinctions.”³⁵ The discussion of “race distinctions” between Europeans and Indians became a topic of heated debate after the British colonial government’s introduction of what was termed the Ilbert Bill which was intended to remove every judicial disqualification “based merely on race distinction,” giving native magistrates jurisdiction over Europeans.³⁶ Bose commented on the bill and the antagonism it had created, arguing that the caste pride of the ruling race was the greatest obstacle to the progress of Christianity in India, greater by far than the ancient caste system.

But a Christian people tinged from top to toe with caste feeling, such as peremptorily refuses to raise members of a subject race to a parity of position with them, even when they are obviously fit for it, cannot but be an irrefragable argument against the humanizing power

³⁵ A Hindustani [Ram Chandra Bose], “The Methodist Conference,” *The Bengal Magazine* 4 (Feb. 1877): 300-301.

³⁶ Edwin Hirschmann, *White Mutiny: The Ilbert Bill Crisis in India and Genesis of the Indian National Congress* (Columbia, MO: South Asia Books, 1980), 294-296.

of Christianity; and those writers, who while ready to denounce drunkenness and debauchery are afraid to speak a word against this crystallized monstrosity are straining out a gnat and swallowing a camel.³⁷

A couple of years later he would insist, “If there is one spot in this world, where race distinctions and race disabilities ought to be most thoroughly obliterated and extinguished, where races should meet on equal terms as castes meet within the sacred confines of the great temple of Jaggannath, that spot is the Mission field.”³⁸

For Bose, the evil of race distinctions among Christians was vitally connected to distinctions between what European missionaries and Indian pastors were paid. While mission leaders such as Henry Venn of the Church Missionary Society in England and Rufus Anderson of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions in the States promoted the practice of making indigenous churches self-supporting, self-governing, and self-propagating, Bose exhorted caution and argued that foreign missionary support should not yet be withdrawn from the native church.³⁹ Simply following the pattern of the early Apostles without recognizing that what they had done out of necessity had led to weak churches and serious errors in doctrine and practice, would result in leaving the Indian Church equally vulnerable. The Church needed strong leaders and was not in a position to afford the services of men who could raise the people to a higher form of intelligence and piety.⁴⁰ Once when missionaries suggested weekly prayer meetings to pray for an outpouring of the Holy Spirit, he responded that it was an outpouring of rupees rather than the Holy Spirit which was

³⁷ Ram Chandra, “The New Caste in India,” *The Independent* 36 (Aug. 14, 1884): 1030.

³⁸ Ram Chandra Bose, “Our Lieutenant-Governor’s Book,” *The Indian Evangelical Review* 12, no. 47 (Jan. 1886): 343.

³⁹ R. C. Bose, “Work among English speaking Hindus,” *Report of the Second Decennial Missionary Conference held at Calcutta, 1882-83* (Calcutta: J. W. Thomas, 1883), 274.

⁴⁰ Bose, “Work among English speaking Hindus,” 274-275.

needed to support the ministry.⁴¹ In subsequent years he repeatedly returned to this theme of inadequate and inequitable funding of native pastors. He did not oppose the idea of a self-supporting church but felt that the Church in North India was not yet at that stage of development.

The related issue of missionary self-support became an active discussion in India—especially among the Methodists—with the arrival of the radical holiness preacher William Taylor.⁴² He advocated that not just the native pastors but also the foreign missionaries should forego their salary and live by faith, relying on the churches in India to whom they ministered to support them. Chandra Bose was one of the first Indian Christians to provide a thoughtful and balanced analysis of Taylor’s ministry in India. He praised him for making no distinction between respectable sinners and despicable ones, calling all to repent, but disagreed with his policy of advocating faith missions.⁴³ He pointed out that although Taylor had come with the intention of evangelizing Muslims and Hindus, he had found the nominal Christians in the European communities much more receptive to his preaching of revival, ultimately abandoning efforts to preach to non-Christians.⁴⁴ Chandra Bose agreed that the resulting European Christians, thus revived, would be in a financial position to support their missionary pastor. But in his view, the greater need in India was more missionaries with the express assignment to evangelize Muslims and Hindus, thus

⁴¹ An Unpaid Native Minister, “A Paid Native Ministry,” *The Bengal Magazine* 2 (1874): 511.

⁴² On Taylor, see David Bundy, “Bishop William Taylor and Methodist Mission: A Study in Nineteenth Century Social History,” *Methodist History* 27, no. 4 (Jul. 1989): 197-210; 28, no. 1 (Oct. 1989): 3-21; and Douglas D. Tzan, *William Taylor and the Mapping of the Methodist Missionary Tradition: The World his Parish* (Lanham MD: Lexington Books, 2019).

⁴³ Babu Ram Chandra Basu, “The Rev. William Taylor’s Work and Policy,” *The Indian Evangelical Review* 3, no. 10 (Oct. 1875): 189.

⁴⁴ A Hindustani [Ram Chandra Bose]. “The Methodist Conference,” *The Bengal Magazine* 4 (Feb. 1877): 294.

implying that in self-propagation as well as self-support, the Indian Church was not yet ready to stand on its own.⁴⁵

With regard to Taylor's teaching on holiness and his stated ambition "to surround the country, or to gird it, with what may be called a *belt of holy churches*" in order to remove "the obstacle of scandalous lives of its false professors" and thus drawing all people to these revived churches, Bose stated, "If missionary operations in general were suspended till such churches had been reared, or, in other words, if missionaries were to defer working for the natives till they had presented to them an irrefragable argument in spotless congregations of believing men and believing women, the evangelization of the country would have to be indefinitely postponed, or perhaps thrown beyond the confines of possibility."⁴⁶ Anyway, he wrote somewhat pessimistically, such a Christianity of simplicity, purity, and glory would not be established before the millennium. Bose was not opposing the pursuit and preaching of holiness, only the idea that the evangelization of non-Christians would need to be delayed until the existing Church had become holy.

He, nevertheless, approved of Taylor's revival preaching and was confident it would produce "men of power ready to disentangle gospel truth from the cobwebs of polemical theology and the meshes of gorgeous ritualism, and present it in all its pristine simplicity and purity and otherwise eminently fitted to carry on this work of needed reform."⁴⁷ In this we can hear a strong echo of the Pietist call to place a higher priority on preaching to transform the heart than on preaching to expound theological distinctions. Similarly, when asked to articulate his understanding of the Gospel, he stated,

I have in my preaching insisted on the facts of evangelical history more than on the doctrines

⁴⁵ Basu, "The Rev. William Taylor's Work," 192-194.

⁴⁶ Basu, "The Rev. William Taylor's Work," 191.

⁴⁷ A Hindustani [Ram Chandra Bose]. "A New Party in Missions," *The Bengal Magazine* 4 (Dec. 1875): 219.

associated therewith. The facts, though of a supernatural character, are intelligible to us; but the doctrines are so mysterious that I have no sympathy with a person who has the courage to present his views thereof as absolutely correct. And I confess I lose all patience when a person insists on my adopting a set of doctrines simply because they form the creed of a particular denomination or church.⁴⁸

For him, these “facts” were “the expiatory and sacrificial character of the death of our Lord,” seeing the atoning efficacy of the death of Christ more important than its didactic purposes.⁴⁹ His commitment to the type of pietistic trans-denominationalism practiced by George Whitefield, Jonathan Edwards, and Samuel Davies earlier in the 18th century is evident.

Ram Chandra Bose in America

Until Bose went as a lay delegate to the 1880 General Conference in Cincinnati, his ministry had been entirely in India, consisting of preaching and lecturing primarily to gatherings of educated Hindus in urban centres across North India. His trip to America highlights the reciprocal dynamic noticed in earlier generations of Indian Pietists. Undoubtedly, he learned much from this trip abroad, but the American audiences who heard and saw him were transformed by the encounter in equal measure. He later wrote appreciatively of the enthusiastic reception he had received. “The calling out of my name in General Conference was followed by a cheering, such as was eminently fitted to indicate the missionary fervour which animated that body.”⁵⁰ This was the first General Conference to include foreign delegates, with a total of ten coming

⁴⁸ “What is our Evangel?” *The Indian Evangelical Review*, 4, no. 24 (Aug. 1879): 451.

⁴⁹ “What is our Evangel?” 451.

⁵⁰ Ram Chandra Bose, “Mission Funds,” *The Indian Evangelical Review* 7, no. 28 (Apr. 1881): 404.

from India, China, Liberia, and several European countries.⁵¹ At the close of the Conference where he had—uncharacteristically—spoken very little, he was inundated with invitations to speak, once the people learned he could speak English well. He wrote, “Their determination to bring their people in contact with a living monument of missionary success could not but evoke feelings of admiration and gratitude within the inmost recesses of my heart.”⁵² Bose published reflections on his journey first as a series of articles for *The Bengal Magazine* in 1881 and then as a book entitled *Gossip about America and Europe* in 1883.⁵³ A contemporary of his, Pandita Ramabai (1858-1922), who travelled to the United States on a speaking tour and likewise published the story of her journey, responded to critics who felt she was speaking only good of America by contrasting her account with that of a fellow countryman who had found ample fault with American society, quite possibly referring to Bose’s book.⁵⁴

What profoundly impressed Bose during his visits to Methodist Episcopal churches was the immense enterprise which had been established for raising funds for missions, directed to all ages and classes in the Church.

The teacher goes to the little infants in Sunday Schools, speaks of the stocks and stones worshipped by the poor heathen children, appeals to their generosity, and asks them to contribute. They cordially respond and bring out their cents. The superintendent gathers

⁵¹ Wade Crawford Barclay, *History of Methodist Missions*. Part 2. *The Methodist Episcopal Church, 1845-1939*, vol. 3. *Widening Horizons* (New York: The Board of Missions of the Methodist Church, 1957), 169.

⁵² Bose, “Mission Funds,” 406.

⁵³ Ram Chandra Bose, *Gossip about America and Europe* (Lucknow: C. M. C. Press, 1883).

⁵⁴ Pandita Ramabai, *Pandita Ramabai’s America: Conditions of Life in the United States*, trans. Kshitija Gomes (Grand Rapids MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2003), 56. For more on the life of Pandita Ramabai and her connections to the American Holiness Movement, see Howard A. Snyder, “Holiness Heritage: The Case of Pandita Ramabai,” *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 40, no. 2 (2005): 30-51.

the bigger boys and girls of the school in a large central hall, shows pictures and images of the gods and goddesses worshipped in heathen lands, dwells upon the debasing tendencies of such ignoble worship, and then induces them to contribute to the best of their ability for the Christianization of these lands. ... The learned Doctor of Divinity consumes midnight oil in mastering heathen philosophies and heathen religions, and studying Mission statistics and Mission reports, moves intelligent and refined assemblies to tears by drawing gloomy pictures of the condition of heathen peoples, and then sends round collection boxes for their benefit.⁵⁵

While he found all this commendable, what disturbed Chandra Bose was the discrepancy between the object for which these funds were raised and their actual expenditure. What was communicated to the generous donors was that their offerings were for the evangelization and subsequent elevation of the heathen, yet, as one missionary had told him, “Of every dollar collected in this way sixty-seven per cent is spent in improving the condition of nominal Christians in Christian lands.”⁵⁶ He considered this “an evil of gigantic proportions.” As mentioned earlier, he saw the Indian Church still very much in need of the assistance of the American Church and was immensely grateful for the interest and generosity he had witnessed. However, he was deeply troubled at what he considered the misinformation disbursed by the Committee of Missions and perhaps the missionaries themselves about how the funds were spent and lamented that efforts to evangelize non-Christians were being severely restricted as a result.

When he returned to the States to attend another General Conference four years later, once again as the lay delegate chosen to represent North India, he made a significant contribution to an issue touching the third aspect of the three-self theory that had become

⁵⁵ Bose, “Mission Funds,” 409.

⁵⁶ Bose, “Mission Funds,” 411.

common in missiological circles: self-governing. The question was whether to appoint resident bishops for particular countries or to continue the practice of sending the American bishops for regular visits to the foreign mission fields on a rotating basis. The question was not whether to have *indigenous* bishops—that was still another 50 years away. The missionaries, including E. W. Parker who was also a delegate from India, were pushing for a resident bishop who would be always available and would be better familiar with local problems.⁵⁷ The bishops in America had rejected the proposal saying that it was not yet the right time.⁵⁸ The Mission Committee and the Episcopal Committee, however, had recommended support for the idea.

Somewhat surprisingly, Chandra Bose arose to speak passionately in support of the bishops' rejection of the proposal, saying that the Indian Christians wanted continued, direct supervision from the States because the visiting bishops could be more impartial, especially in dealing with tensions between missionaries and native Christian leaders. "The Bishops, when they come, look at pending questions with American eyes; that is with eyes not jaundiced by local traditions and prejudices. In the Indian Mission field there are varied interests and conflicting claims and rights to be reconciled, and a man above local traditions is needed to sit in judgment on them."⁵⁹ He spoke approvingly of the recent visit of Bishop Randolph Sinks Foster, possibly because Foster had spoken up against the neglect of ministry to natives in South India and the evident poverty of Indian Christians – two things which Bose also highlighted regularly.⁶⁰ While his articulate objections may have helped to persuade the 1884 General Conference not to proceed with appointing a missionary bishop for India, the issue returned for discussion four years later at the next General Conference with

⁵⁷ On the conflicting reports by Parker and Bose, see: Messmore, *The Life of Edwin Wallace Parker*, 198-199.

⁵⁸ Barclay, *Widening Horizons*, 174.

⁵⁹ "General Conference Proceedings," *The Daily Christian Advocate* (May 13, 1884): 82.

⁶⁰ Barclay, *Widening Horizons*, 540.

the result that J. M. Thoburn, a missionary Bose greatly admired and by whom he had been mentored, was appointed the first Missionary Bishop of Southern Asia.⁶¹

Ram Chandra Bose – Final years

Upon his return to India after the 1884 conference, Ram Chandra Bose resumed his busy ministry of lecturing and preaching, his name appearing regularly in the annual missionary reports. With the opening of a Christian college in Lucknow in 1888, he began conducting the Bible teaching there as well.⁶² Bose also became an advocate of technical education, consistent with his work for the social advance of Indian Christians. As a delegate to the 1888 Allahabad meeting of the burgeoning Indian Congress movement, he spoke passionately in support for a resolution calling on the British Indian government to facilitate technical education, arguing that “technical education involves a social reform or revolution of gigantic proportions,” particularly by spreading correct notions about the dignity of labour.⁶³ While recognizing that the Congress was established to address political questions, he insisted that the lines of distinction between political, social, and moral life were arbitrarily drawn and that progress in political life could not be achieved without progress in social and moral aspects of life as well. This echoes his earlier writings in which he argued that spiritual renewal must necessarily involve social uplift. Bose had participated in the 1887 Congress meeting in Chennai and the 1889 meeting in

⁶¹ W. F. Oldham, *Thoburn – Called of God* (New York: The Methodist Book Concern, 1918), 144. On Thoburn’s life and interpretation of sanctification, see Luther Jeremiah Oconer, “‘Keswickified’ Methodism: Holiness Revivalism in Indian Methodism, 1870-1910,” *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 49, no. 2 (2014): 122-143.

⁶² “North India – Oudh District: Lucknow Christian College.” *Seventieth Annual Report of the Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church for the year 1888* (New York: Printed for the Society, 1889), 164.

⁶³ *Indian National Congress, Proceedings of the Fo[u]rth Indian National Congress held at Allahabad on December 1888* (n.p.: n.p., 1888), 49.

Mumbai.⁶⁴ For Bose and other Christians who were actively taking part in this new movement, their active engagement with those of other religious communities in political endeavours did not preclude their continued commitment to evangelism. One British observer of the 1889 meeting reported that Sunday evening had been devoted by the Christians to gathering where Bose and others “delivered some of the finest addresses I ever listened to, setting for the claims of Christ and Christianity before 700 men of the Hindu and Parsee persuasions.”⁶⁵

Likewise, for Ram Chandra Bose the preaching of the Gospel did not—indeed, must not—exclude social engagement. In a series of criticisms of Methodist missionary practices in 1877, he stated that missionaries had overlooked what he termed “the attractive power of modern civilization.”⁶⁶ While missionaries as a body had a correct estimate of the grandeur of the work before them in its spiritual and moral aspects, they had failed to appreciate its material and social consequences. “They have been trying to christianize the country as the Apostles tried to christianize the world, without giving due prominence to the eighteen centuries of material and social progress intimately and inseparably associated with it.”⁶⁷ In an article for the *Christian Advocate* after his first visit to America, he explained his opposition to the idea that missionaries were to be evangelists and not pastors, that is, they were to devote their time to evangelizing the heathen rather than to improving native churches.⁶⁸ He wrote, “A more dangerous opinion has never been uttered by human lips in this sinful world. A missionary’s work is to make converts, and quietly see them demoralized! I have no hesitation in saying to the missionary what I have so often said to the Churches here, that if he cannot develop and improve his converts, both socially and morally,

⁶⁴ “Missionary Gleanings,” *The Methodist Times* (28 Feb. 1889): 197; Frederick Sessions, “Indian Gleanings: Letter No. VI,” *Gloucester Journal* (Jan. 25, 1890): 6.

⁶⁵ Sessions, “Indian Gleanings,” 6.

⁶⁶ A Hindustani, “The Methodist Conference,” 291.

⁶⁷ A Hindustani, “The Methodist Conference,” 291.

⁶⁸ Ram Chandra Bose, “The Indian Native Church,” *Christian Advocate* (Sept. 9, 1880): 579.

he had better leave them in the arms of heathenism.”⁶⁹ In this emphasis, Bose was recapturing the original Pietist vision of social activism and seeking to implement it in India.

After his second visit to America in 1884, he wrote a series of three provocative articles for the *Zion's Herald* newspaper on “Indian Native Preachers,” in which he linked this vision of social progress to his earlier opposition to the push towards self-supporting native churches and his advocacy of higher pay for native pastors. “Is it desirable, or proper, to cause independent churches to grow by snatching from the laborer the hire or bread to which he is entitled? Will the Lord bless an attempt to raise such churches based on a glaring departure from a principle sanctioned by Scripture and recognized by common-sense?”⁷⁰ He refuted the idea that a pay system demoralized a pastor by making him more concerned for his security and comforts rather than for his spiritual calling to serve God sacrificially, pointing to the example of the foreign missionaries who were receiving thirty times what was being paid to native agents. “If a proper longing for comfortable quarters, wholesome diet, decent clothing, and a respectable position in society, unfits a man for evangelistic work, the best thing the missionary can do is to return to his native land.”⁷¹ For Bose, the progress of Western civilization was evidence of the power of the Gospel to raise the social standard of a society; and he wanted the Gospel to do the same for India and its churches.

Ram Chandra Bose was afflicted by “years of bodily suffering and growing feebleness” beginning in 1885, leading to a presentiment of the end of his life and work.⁷² As he reviewed his life, he felt he had been “guilty of introducing discussions on mission matters where

⁶⁹ Bose, “The Indian Native Church,” 579.

⁷⁰ Ram Chandra Bose, “The Indian Native Preachers,” *Zion's Herald* 61, no. 38 (Sept. 17, 1884): 298.

⁷¹ Bose, “The Indian Native Preachers,” 298.

⁷² Ram Chandra Bose, Lucknow, to William Xavier Ninde, North India, 5 Jan. 1887, contained in W. X. Ninde, “Ram Chandra Bose,” *Zion's Herald* 64, no. 18 (May 4, 1887): 137.

they were out of place, at times, if not invariably, and of conducting the same in an outrageous manner.”⁷³ Accordingly, he wrote Bishop W. N. Ninde who was in India as a visiting bishop, requesting him to pass on his unqualified apology to the assembled missionaries and to have the apology published in the Zion’s Herald newspaper. He recalled the kindnesses of those who had rescued him fifteen years earlier from the “pit of vice” into which he had fallen and the patience with which they had walked with him.⁷⁴ He now felt that his criticisms at times had been impudent and imprudent, forgetful of their kindness, and requested their pardon. While his critique of missionary theories and practices had been sharp and overstated at times to bring to light faulty thinking and inequities, the fact that he was the most eloquent, prolific, and consistent Indian Methodist critic makes him an indispensable source for a multi-faceted view of reception and transformation of the Pietist heritage in North India.

Despite his illness, he continued his active ministry of lecturing and writing for the next five years before his death in 1892. One noticeable change in his scholarship was a shift in focus from analyzing the various expressions of Indian Hinduism to a deepening exploration of Christian theology and early church history. He wrote seven substantial articles for the Anglican *Indian Church Quarterly Review* between 1889 and 1892, as well as additional articles for the *Indian Evangelical Review* and the *Calcutta Review*. Possibly because of these studies, he chose to resign from the Methodist Church and join the Church of England. His obituary in the *Indian Church Quarterly Review* stated that while early in his career he had not felt the need to study questions of church polity, towards the end Bose had focused upon more ecclesiastical questions. “His earnest study of the history and constitution of the Church, from best available sources, so convinced him of the unsoundness of his position and the claims of Episcopacy, that he could not but make up his mind, at considerable cost and sacrifice, to renounce his former connection

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⁷³ Ninde, “Ram Chandra Bose,” 137.

⁷⁴ Ninde, “Ram Chandra Bose,” 137.

and join the Church of England.”⁷⁵ He then worked in connection with the Church Missionary Society in Allahabad. While this step could be seen as a repudiation of his Pietist heritage, his successive association throughout his life with the Free Church of Scotland mission, the London Missionary Society, the American Methodist mission, and the Church Missionary Society could better be interpreted as illustrating the ecumenical characteristic of Pietism. His desire was to see native preachers “freed from the meshes of denominational exclusiveness and dogmatic lore,” holding out “the right hand of fellowship to all who gather around the essential facts and doctrines of Christianity.”⁷⁶

Isabelle Thornton who had known him since the days of revival in Lucknow in the early 1870s was with him as his death neared. When she went to say good-bye, she found him “not thinking of heaven, of how or when he would live again but only of seeing and adoring the King in His beauty. ‘All my odd notions are gone,’ he said with emotion, ‘and I am only a poor sinner clinging to Christ.’”⁷⁷

In his *Introduction to German Pietism*, Douglas Shantz lists the practices by which he defines the Pietism movement: the encouragement of personal renewal and new birth, conventicle gatherings for Bible study and mutual encouragement, social activism and postmillennialism, and ecumenical cooperation. He also states the cultural legacy of Pietism included reforms in caring for the poor and the orphan, new Bible translations, new social networks, experiential literature such as the autobiography and memoir, and worldwide mission.⁷⁸ Aside from perhaps the postmillennialism and Bible translation, these practices are amply demonstrated in the ministry and writings of Ram Chandra Bose throughout his life. Additionally, he developed other aspects of

⁷⁵ B. C. Ghosh, “Ram Chandra Bose: In Memoriam,” *The Indian Church Quarterly Review* 5, no. 3 (Jul. 1892): 412.

⁷⁶ Ram Chandra Bose, “The Indian Native Preachers: Third Paper,” *Zion’s Herald* 61, no. 40 (Oct. 1, 1884): 314.

⁷⁷ *Sketches of Indian Christians*, 94-95.

⁷⁸ Shantz, *Introduction to German Pietism*, 7.

the Pietist heritage such as the importance of lay ministry and reciprocal impact of the missional encounter. As a worthy heir of the Pietist tradition, Bose, in turn, left a remarkable legacy of writings comprising a profound development and critique of that heritage for subsequent generations.



First Fruits

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Anna Mow: Reinvigorating Pietist Witness For Brethren And Beyond

Denise D. Kettering-Lane

The seventeenth-century poet Joachim Feller defined a Pietist as one “who studies the Word of God, and leads also a holy life according to it.”¹ This definition of a Pietist surely fits the twentieth-century Church of the Brethren missionary, teacher, pastor, and author, Anna Mow (1893-1985). Amid these various roles, Mow helped to reinvigorate the Pietist witness that had become subdued in the Church of the Brethren during the early twentieth century. In that period, early histories of the Schwarzenau Brethren movement emphasized Brethren connections to Anabaptism, rather than Pietism, a link further reinforced by the nonresistant position assumed by the Church of the Brethren during two World Wars.² Mow inspired later theologians like Dale Brown, causing a renewed interest in Pietism among Brethren in the mid-twentieth century.

This article will explore how various Pietist emphases became manifest in the life and writings of Anna Mow, one of the

¹ Quoted and translated in Egon W. Gerdes, “Pietism: Classical and Modern: A Comparison of Two Representative Descriptions,” *Concordia Theological Monthly* 34 (April 1968): 258–59.

² For an example of this attitude, see Martin Grove Brumbaugh, *A History of the German Baptist Brethren in Europe and America* (Mount Morris, IL: Brethren Publishing House, 1899), (10-11). Brumbaugh states, “Enough has been cited to prove that Pietism, as Gerard Croese, a contemporary, understood it had few of the elements that the founders of the church of the German Baptist Brethren accepted...the new congregation at Schwarzenau studied all denominations, knew all shades of faith, and then turned from Ecclesiasticism and Pietism alike to carve out a new and distinct order of faith and practice.”

most popular Brethren figures and authors of the twentieth century. It will argue that Mow's awareness of traditional Pietist themes mediated through her experiences within the Church of the Brethren influenced her most popular writings and helped to strengthen Pietist witness in Brethren circles. Perhaps more importantly, her writings also spoke to American Christians across a broad spectrum. Ultimately, her embrace of Pietist values extended far beyond the Brethren by encouraging devotional patterns and attentiveness to the work of the Holy Spirit for Christians across denominational and spiritual lines.

Brethren and Pietism in the Twentieth Century

Anna Mow's interest in Pietism sprang both from her study of and familiarity with the Brethren past as well as from her own spiritual experiences and engagement with Christians around the world. In her milieu, Mow was familiar with the contemporary critiques being levelled at Pietists regarding the experiential rather than revelatory nature of Pietism, the concern that Pietism always threatened to become a sort of quietism in the face of injustice, and the sense that Pietists were essentially people who thought a bit too much of their own spiritual authority and used this assumed superiority to look down their noses at others, making them essentially hypocrites.³ Other scholars and churches attempted to counter these characterizations of Pietism by returning to the historical roots of the movement, drawing on the original propositions of Philip Jakob Spener's *Pia Desideria* and other early German Pietist texts.⁴ Indeed, in the 1960s, Theodore Tappert's

³ Karl Barth notably stated, "Better with the Church in hell than with Pietists, of higher or lower type—in a heaven which does not exist." Karl Barth, quoted in Donald F. Durnbaugh, *The Believers' Church: The History and Character of Radical Protestantism*. 2nd ed. (Scottsdale: Herald Press, 1985), 118. For a fuller treatment of this dynamic, see Gerdes, "Pietism: Classical and Modern," 257-268.

⁴ Perhaps the most notable of these defenses in the English language came from F. Ernest Stoeffler, *The Rise of Evangelical Pietism* (Leiden, E. J. Brill, 1965); German Pietism in the Eighteenth Century (Leiden, E. J. Brill, 1973);

popular translation of the *Pia Desideria* was completed, making this text that many considered the initiation point of Pietism accessible to a wider audience and spurring renewed interest in the origins of the Pietist movement.⁵

In the *Pia Desideria*, Philipp Spener, often referred to as the “Father of Pietism,” offered both an honest appraisal of the “corrupt conditions of the church” at the time and some practical remedies for the various problems that he identified among the rulers, laity, and, most specifically, the clergy. His proposals for creating reform and renewal included more emphasis on the Bible through family Bible reading, Bible reading services, and *collegia pietatis*, or small group meetings, the engagement of the spiritual priesthood of all believers, living out the Christian life through daily moral and ethical actions, better handling of theological controversies, and improved training for pastors.⁶ Many of these proposals became central to the Pietist movement and gave shape and form to later generations seeking to reform the church in their own time. Even contemporary considerations, such as the recent book, *The Pietist Option*, echo back to Spener’s propositions as a way of defining what we mean by Pietism and how we might adopt Pietist principles in contemporary congregations.⁷

Given the profusion of attempts to define Pietism since the time of Spener, it has become difficult at times to identify a single core of beliefs held by all the various figures and movements that came to be identified with Pietism.⁸ The Schwarzenau Brethren,

Continental Pietism and Early American Christianity (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1976).

⁵ Philip Jacob Spener, *Pia Desideria*, trans. Theodore G. Tappert (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1964). Dale Brown, *Understanding Pietism: Revised Edition*, (Nappanee: Evangel Publishing House, 1996), 11–14.

⁶ Spener, *Pia Desideria*.

⁷ Christopher Gehrz and Mark Pattie III, *The Pietist Option: The Hope for the Renewal of Christianity* (Downers Grove: Intervarsity Press, 2017).

⁸ For discussions of the difficulty of defining Pietism, see Horst Weigelt, “Interpretations of Pietism in the Research of Contemporary German Church Historians,” *Church History* 39:2 (Jun. 1970): 236–241; W.R. Ward, “Bibliographical

from whom the Church of the Brethren eventually descended, stemmed from a more radical branch of the Pietist tree, but in many ways continued to emphasize some of Spener's core ideas of reform, albeit in a somewhat altered form. Dale Brown, drawing on the writings of Spener and Francke, identified several key elements of Pietism that consistently also appear in Brethren thought and writings. These appear prominently in the writings of Anna Mow, as well.

While Mow shared several themes in common with the Pietist Brethren, two are most notable. First, Brethren tended to draw a balanced notion of the inner and outer word, or the importance of experiences of the Holy Spirit existing in harmony with the Bible. Pietists, both ecclesial and radical, emphasized the experiences of repentance, new birth, and conversion, connected to a revitalized interest in the work of the Holy Spirit.⁹ Experiences turned knowledge of the faith into lived faith. These experiences must also be tempered, however, for Spener and the early Brethren, by Scripture. Visions, dreams, and other mystical forms of knowledge always had to be tested against the revelation of Scripture. This tension between the inner word—natural knowledge from God, and the outer word—revealed Scripture, remained a central point of disagreement among the radical Pietists. Some proclaimed that new experiences of the Holy Spirit had primacy over the Bible and others, like the Schwarzenau Brethren, wanted to hold a more traditional balance between the two. Ultimately, it was believed, both the inner and outer word should lead to a deeper relationship with God and other believers.¹⁰ This emphasis did leave the door open to concerns

Survey: German Pietism, 1670-1750," *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 44:3 (July 1993): 476-505; F. Ernest Stoeffler, "Pietism," in Mircea Eliade, ed., *Encyclopedia of Religion* (New York: MacMillan Publishing Company, 1987), 324-325; Roger E. Olson, "Pietism: Myths and Realities," in *The Pietist Impulse in Christianity, Princeton Theological Monograph Series 155* (Eugene: Pickwick Publications, 2011), 3-6.

⁹ Brown, *Understanding Pietism*, 22. FOR COMMERCIAL PURPOSES.

¹⁰ Brenda Colijn, "Word and Spirit in Brethren Spirituality," in James E. Miller, ed., *Brethren Spirituality: How Brethren Conceive of and Practice the Spiritual Life. Proceedings of the Fifth Brethren World Assembly* (Philadelphia, PA: Brethren

about emotionalism, something that both Spenser and the Brethren largely rejected and that Mow would wrestle with repeatedly in her writings amid the rise of the charismatic movement.¹¹ Thus, Pietists struggled with the call to more fully incorporate experience into the Christian life, while at the same time attempting to temper extremes of emotionalism and new revelation with the biblical text.

The second area to highlight from early Pietism that became central to Brethren conceptions of Pietism, and that appears prominently in Mow's writings, is the importance of regeneration and sanctification as part of the Christian life. Orthopraxy—right living, and sanctification must accompany faith. Rather than focusing solely on the event of justification, Brethren stressed that faith involves an active, lifelong process of sanctification. Pietism placed emphasis on the lived Christian life.¹² For the early Brethren, the connection between the discipleship of the Anabaptists and the lived godliness emphasized by the Pietists was a significant place of synergy.

While there are other emphases found within Pietism that Mow stressed in her writing, these two: the intersection of experience and the Bible, and the ongoing life of faith as part of sanctification will compose the remainder of this article.¹³ With these Pietist theological themes in mind, we will now turn to Anna Mow's life, focusing on the ways that her biographical narrative shaped her interest in Pietist beliefs and practices.

Encyclopedia, Inc., 2015), 83-102; Richard Gardner, "Brethren and the Bible," *Brethren Life and Thought* 28:1 (Winter 1983): 7-14.

¹¹ Brown, *Understanding Pietism*, 70-72.

¹² Brown, *Understanding Pietism*, 22.

¹³ Other themes that merit further consideration elsewhere would include the importance of mission work, an emphasis on individual spiritual devotion, the spiritual priesthood of all believers, and the role of eschatology. Unfortunately, space limits the discussion that can be offered here.

Anna Mow's Life

Anna Beahm Mow was born on July 31, 1893, in Daleville, Virginia. Her father was a respected Brethren elder and educator, Isaac Henry Newton Beahm, and her mother was Mary Bucher Beahm. At age six, the family moved to Elizabethtown, Pennsylvania, so that her father could assume the presidency of the newly established Brethren college, Elizabethtown College. Anna excelled as a student and received an opportunity to attend Bethany Bible School, located in Chicago, in 1914. She hoped to enter the mission field, but the president of the school suggested that she would be a better teacher and helped her to secure a full scholarship to Manchester College, a Brethren college located in Indiana. After she completed her education degree in 1918, she returned to Bethany for further training.¹⁴ Upon her return, she met and married Baxter M. Mow, a former Rhodes scholar with language training and degrees from the University of Idaho, Bethany Bible School, and the University of Chicago.¹⁵ In these early years, Anna Mow was immersed in Brethren belief, practice, and culture through both her own family life as the daughter of a Brethren elder and through the various Brethren institutions of higher education she attended.

After she completed her Bachelor of Divinity degree, A. C. Wieand, one of the founders of Bethany Bible School, tried to recruit Mow to the faculty. However, the Mows wanted to serve as missionaries to India and so she turned down the offer to teach. There were no openings in the mission field at that time, so the couple instead served as home missionaries in the Blue Ridge Mountains, living on a stipend of \$23 a month and traveling predominantly on foot.


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¹⁴ Dorothy Garst Murray, *Sister Anna: God's Captive to Set Others Free* (Elgin, IL: Brethren Press, 1983), 30–33.
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¹⁵ J. Kenneth Kreider, “Anna Beahm Mow: A Fount of Inspiration,” in *A Dunker Guide to Brethren History* (Elgin, IL: Brethren Press, 2010), III–14.

In 1923, the couple received the news that there was an opening for them in India. They served there for seventeen years, experiencing much of the struggle of the Indian people to overthrow British colonial rule.¹⁶ They worked as educators and relief workers, and performed various ministerial tasks during their time in India. The couple befriended the Indian people with whom they worked daily and began to see the church as something more expansive than the Brethren movement. This newly forming ecumenical and global mindset led to a gradual deepening of Anna's interest in some of the Pietist themes in Brethren thought, as she saw these as more compatible with her new ways of thinking than some of the narrower forms of sectarian Brethren life she had known previously. While in India, the Mows also became close friends with Madame Pandit, the sister of Prime Minister Nehru.¹⁷

When the Indian government refused to renew their visas, they returned to the US where Anna Mow served as a professor at Bethany Biblical Seminary from 1940 to 1958, teaching classes in Christian education, missions, and biblical studies.¹⁸ She also earned additional Masters degrees in Religious Education (1941) and Theology (1943).¹⁹ In completing both these degrees, her writing projects focused on questions around the Holy Spirit, again reinforcing Pietist themes in her life and work. She not only taught classes, but she also led the "Quest for God Hour," a weekly time of reflection and prayer for students that encouraged the development of the spiritual life and echoed back to Pietist conventicles.²⁰

During the period of work at Bethany, she also participated in the National Council of Churches, the Christian Ashram movement, and worked with various missionary organizations. She helped Chinese immigrants in Chicago, and assisted with education

¹⁶ Murray, *Sister Anna*, 39–40.

¹⁷ Murray, *Sister Anna*, 42.

¹⁸ Kreider, "Anna Beahm Mow." USED FOR COMMERCIAL PURPOSES.

¹⁹ Murray, *Sister Anna*, 79. FREELY AVAILABLE FOR EDUCATIONAL AND RESEARCH USE.

²⁰ William Kostlevy, *Bethany Theological Seminary: A Centennial History* (Richmond: Bethany Theological Seminary, 2005), 92.

in a Japanese internment camp during World War II. She portrayed these activities as an extension of her work as a seminary professor.²¹

Following her retirement from Bethany, at the age of sixty-five, Zondervan Publishing approached Anna Mow about writing a book on living the Christian life. Her first book, *Say Yes to Life!* sold over 50,000 copies, leading to opportunities to write nine other books. While these books were popular among Brethren, importantly, only one was actually published by Brethren Press, leading to an expansion of her influence and thought beyond the Brethren world.²² She said that she never really had a desire to write books, but publishing houses, such as Zondervan, J. B. Lippincott, and Harper and Row, requested her to write books and convinced her that she had “some things that were worth printing.”²³ Several of her books were translated into other languages, including German, Afrikaans, and Spanish.²⁴ Her writing style tended to be conversational in tone, full of anecdotes, and grounded in the scriptural narrative. Her remarkable work led to honorary doctorates from Bethany Theological Seminary, Elizabethtown College, and Manchester College.²⁵

Ordained on September 18, 1960, Mow was one of the first women ordained in the Church of the Brethren, although her ministry never involved pastoring a congregation. She frequently served as a preacher and evangelist in both Brethren and non-Brethren circles.²⁶ She also served on the General Board (the Church of the Brethren’s main governing board) and on Annual Conference committees. A much sought-after speaker, she regularly spoke at events, retreats, camps, and training sessions, particularly working

²¹ Murray, *Sister Anna*, 71–72.

²² Kreider, “Anna Beahm Mow,” 111–14.

²³ Murray, *Sister Anna*, 126.

²⁴ Murray, *Sister Anna*, 128.

²⁵ She received a D.D. in 1976 from Bethany, a D. L. from Elizabethtown College in 1975 and a D. D. from Manchester College in 1976. Murray, 79.

²⁶ Murray, *Sister Anna*, 111.

with youth and young adults.²⁷ She was known for her infectious laugh or “cackle” as it was sometimes called, and for diffusing conflict. For example, she notably stood with a young man who, during the Vietnam War, decided to burn his draft card on the floor of Annual Conference. While she did not necessarily agree that this was the best way to protest the war, she provided support and her presence provided legitimacy for his actions.²⁸

Anna Mow died on July 7, 1985, after having suffered a stroke that impacted her speech and mobility.²⁹ Her memory still lives and has been popularized through a variety of means among Brethren. For example in 2004, a children’s book, *The Something Else Lady*, by Earle Fike Jr., introduced a new generation of readers to Mow’s life of faith and devotion.³⁰ There was even a song, “Sister Anna, Beauty Queen,” written by Andy and Terry Murray that commemorated Mow’s many contributions and her “beautiful” attitude towards life.³¹ While these expressions in her honor may have had limited inroads beyond Brethren circles, Mow’s own writings successfully impacted the broader Christian community by providing a compelling Pietist witness.

Reinvigorating Pietist Witness

The Brethren mission movement in the first half of the twentieth century had reinforced an interest in personal devotion as a way of sustaining missionaries as well as spreading the Gospel in foreign lands. As William Kostlevy has observed, part of this emphasis came through the integration of the Keswick or Higher

²⁷ Murray, *Sister Anna*, 122–23.

²⁸ Kostlevy, *Bethany Theological Seminary*, 110–111.

²⁹ Kreider, “Anna Beahm Mow.” *Anna Mow, Two or Ninety-Two: For Youngsters and Oldsters and Those Who Care for Them* (Elgin, IL: Brethren Press, 1997), 7.

³⁰ Earle Fike, Jr., *The Something Else Lady* (Richmond, IN: Bethany Theological Seminary, 2004).

³¹ Andy and Terry Murray, “Sister Anna, Beauty Queen,” Murray Music Company, Huntingdon, PA.

Life movement. This movement became a central part of Protestant mission activities. It promoted the view that “the ‘sanctified’ or higher Christian life was a state of grace that enabled Christians to live a life of victory over sin without the elimination of the sinful nature.”³² Brethren engaged fully in this thought, largely mediated at first through one of the founders of Bethany Theological Seminary, A. C. Wieand. Anna Mow was one of Wieand’s prize pupils and she picked up on this Keswick emphasis that held echoes of earlier concerns about sanctification and the Christian life expressed in Pietist circles. She expressed these ideas frequently in her calls to surrender and commit to God. Through this surrender and commitment, Mow maintained, other spiritual disciplines and good works might flow. As she noted, “The surrender must be to God as revealed in Jesus Christ, our Lord. It is not a commitment to a cause or an institution, it is a commitment to a Person, the divine Person, first of all.”³³

In the two decades following World War II, Brethren found themselves increasingly adrift in their identity. Having abandoned many of their traditional identity markers in practice, if not always in policy—plain dress, nonresistance to military service, congregational discipline, to name a few—they were moving away from some of their Anabaptist communal markers. The 1958 Annual Conference dealt a further blow to this identity by eliminating the membership requirement of rebaptism, allowing bread and cup communion without the full love feast, and approving the ordination of women.³⁴ At the same time, Brethren began to engage in the Consultation on Church Union, exploring the possibility of deepening roots in

³² Kostlevy, *Bethany Theological Seminary*, 17.

³³ Anna B. Mow, “The Surrendered Life,” *Gospel Messenger* (October 7, 1950): 13.

³⁴ In Brethren practice, typically communion or the Eucharist was part of a larger service called the love feast, which includes a service of preparation, feet washing, and an agape meal prior to receiving communion. Licensure to the ministry had been available to women beginning in 1922, but not full ordination.

Protestantism and perhaps abandoning Brethren identity altogether in the hopes of joining with a larger, ecumenical Protestant vision.

It was amid this internal conflict that Anna Mow began her writing career. In her works, by drawing on aforementioned Pietist themes of Christian experience coupled with Scripture and commitment to orthopraxy, she demonstrated to Brethren that they could both maintain Brethren identity and engage in broader ecumenical belief, practice, and thought. Simultaneously, she connected a broader Christian audience to these traditionally Pietist themes. She proclaimed, “The heart of the Pietist movement was deeper than one tenet.”³⁵ In her books, she expanded on a variety of tenets: reliance on scripture, the importance of religious experience, and living a sanctified life. Writing during the growing charismatic movement, her books frequently wrestled with issues around speaking in tongues and religious emotion, wanting to honor experience, but also critiquing what happens when experience decenters other sources for Christian theology and life.

This dynamic is perhaps most evident in her book, *Your Experience and the Bible*. In this survey of the biblical text, she traced the encounters of various biblical characters with God and the results of those encounters. She examined Abraham, numerous prophets, Jesus, Paul, and members of the early church communities to determine what were essential and common elements of their experiences with God. Here we see a combination of the biblical foundation and sense of “inner word” that Spener, Francke, and the early Brethren addressed as the root of an experience of God. She stressed that the individual Christian should not attempt to have a spiritual experience of her own volition. She wrote, “In that upper room [the disciples] waited *without* striving for any personal religious experience; they were not thinking about themselves at all, but about their Lord.”³⁶ In other words, individuals did not spark

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³⁵ Quoted in Murray, *Sister Anna*, 57.

³⁶ Anna B. Mow, *Your Experience and the Bible* (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1973), 52.

their own religious experience or seek it out for themselves, but the experience was initiated by God. In this way, she tempered religious experience by insisting on an orientation that was not self-centered. But she continued to maintain the important role that experience plays: “When a person begins with an experience of God it is one thing; but when he begins with theology *without an experience of God* it is quite another matter. The person who *experiences God* grows in godlikeness, but the person who knows only *about God* usually becomes hard and vindictive.”³⁷ The importance of this experience remained central, but it was always determined by the Bible and the experiences described by the Bible, which should lead away from a self-centered form of spirituality and emotionalism.

In part, Mow insisted on the primacy of religious experience because she had such an experience herself. She described how after a period of spiritual struggle she woke up one morning and suddenly felt the presence of Christ with her. She stated, “I had never conceived the possibility of what was happening to me right then. Hearing a voice and seeing that divine Light there was not the outstanding thing—the most wonderful was the consciousness of the coming into my heart of a Presence. I am at an entire loss to describe what happened.”³⁸ Her own experience reshaped the dimensions of her ministry and caused her to orient more fully towards a Pietist emphasis on the importance of religious experience. She saw this as a turning point in her spiritual life. She never actually wrote about this experience in her books or spoke about it in her speeches,³⁹ and only revealed it to her biographer. However, she identified the experience as the background for how she understood the importance of spiritual experiences and why she emphasized experience as an element, even in how she understood and wrote about the scriptural narrative, which she often portrayed as a series of religious encounters between biblical characters and God. Yet, she remained skeptical about the holiness movement’s

³⁷ Mow, *Your Experience and the Bible*, 71.

³⁸ Quoted in Murray, *Sister Anna*, 48.

³⁹ Murray, *Sister Anna*, 50.

emotionalism, which is why she always coupled experience with the biblical text and an ongoing experience of sanctification.⁴⁰

Beyond spiritual experiences, Mow also addressed how to negotiate daily life experiences as people of faith. She portrayed even the most mundane moments of life as opportunities to encounter God or to live out one's life of faith in a powerful way. Her books on marriage and child-rearing were some of her most popular books because of this everyday approach to spirituality.⁴¹ In her book, *The Secret of Married Love*, for example, she carried the notion of not getting seduced by emotionalism into married relationships. She warned against letting the emotional experience of falling in love become the guiding notion of what love should look like. Instead, providing an interpretation of Ephesians 5, in which women are called to submit to their husbands and men are called to love their wives, she reminded readers that the type of love called for in this passage is agape love, a self-giving love. She warned readers not to let the experience become the guide without the leading of Scripture.⁴²

One way to guard against the extremes of religious experience that she discussed repeatedly was participation in small groups for prayer and Bible study.⁴³ Drawing, perhaps inadvertently, on one of the foundational ideas in the *Pia Desideria*, Spener's *collegia pietatis*, she urged engagement in retreats to study the Bible together with other believers so that people could better understand the nature of Christian religious experience. She lived out this commitment through her engagement with the Christian Ashram movement started under the leadership of Methodist E. Stanley Jones. She participated in retreats that generally lasted from five to ten days in order to pray, study the Bible, and work together. This movement attempted to eliminate barriers of separation between people—

⁴⁰ Murray, *Sister Anna*, 51.

⁴¹ See Anna B. Mow, *Your Child from Birth to Rebirth: How to Educate a Child to be Ready for Life with God* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1963).

⁴² Anna B. Mow, *The Secret of Married Love: A Christian Approach* (St. Meinrad, IN: Abbey Press, 1971), 1–23.

⁴³ Mow, *Your Experience and the Bible*, 46.

age, denomination, professional lives, race, class, and so forth—by referring to one another only by first names and everyone having assigned, shared work in the Ashram. Mow participated regularly in these Ashrams from four to six times a year, providing leadership.⁴⁴ She saw these as an extension of the sort of small group conventicle advocated by earlier Pietists. These also correlated to the times for prayer and Bible study that she led as a professor at Bethany Bible School.

Finally, another key theme in her writing was the importance of living a daily Christian life with a community of believers. Mow's first book, *Say 'Yes' to Life*, focused on the theme of growth in the Christian life towards a daily experience of God. In it, she addressed the development of virtue, dangers to the spiritual life, and the importance of living out the Christian life with others. She emphasized that "It always was and still is a temptation to separate the religious from the social, professional, and political affairs of life. Long before Jesus came, the prophets saw that 'spirituality' divorced from daily life is no longer an authentic experience of God."⁴⁵ She stressed the need for the daily living out of faith, just as earlier generations of Pietists stressed the process of sanctification. She even stated that Jesus' own incarnation was "not only a theological idea, it was a practical daily experience...."⁴⁶ The living of the Christian life and the constant theme of orthopraxy, right living, was always in the forefront of her writing.

Mow extended the theme of the Christian life into very real circumstances of family life in many of her books. Living in community required living in a Christlike manner amid daily chores, like doing the dishes or the laundry.⁴⁷ She told stories about how she hated doing dishes so she would sing while doing the dishes to make the task more pleasant. Her husband interpreted this as a deep love for doing the dishes and so he intentionally avoided that household

⁴⁴ Murray, *Sister Anna*, 112–15.

⁴⁵ Mow, *Your Experience and the Bible*, 28.

⁴⁶ Mow, *Your Experience and the Bible*, 42.

⁴⁷ Mow, *The Secret of Married Love*, 56–57.

task and left it to her, until she finally revealed the truth. Yet, in the process, she described how the issues with the dishes cultivated in her a more Christlike attitude. In such circumstances, she urged readers to “Be subject to one another *out of reverence for Christ*.”⁴⁸ She stressed that the lived experience of faith was not only about the so-called spiritual tasks, but also in the commonplace. In fact, it was through these ordinary tasks that Christian sanctification took place. This realistic outlook, combined with her Pietistic sensibilities, appealed to many Christians trying to negotiate changing norms of marriage and family life in the 1960s and 1970s.

In her final book, Mow, having experienced a stroke and now in the care of her family, dictated a variety of instructions, and compared her condition of being cared for to that of a child. Even in this book, full of short reflections on her own condition and final thoughts she had about caring for children, she expressed some of the fundamental themes that ran throughout her writing and remained essentially Pietist in nature: the importance of experiencing God as more than a feeling, continuing to live out the Christian life daily, and continuing to study the Word of God. For example, she reminded readers, “A Christian prepares for his future by living every day of his life in a way to be pleasing to God.”⁴⁹

These ideas and emphases led to her popularity within evangelical groups and her frequent speaking engagements as a “revival” or evangelistic speaker. She averaged ten such engagements by the mid-1960s.⁵⁰ In part, her attitude was that “Being conservative or liberal is not the important matter at all. The question is always, ‘What is Christ-like?’”⁵¹ This perspective provided a sense of inclusion and calm during a tumultuous time in society and within the ecumenical church circles in which she interacted. She engaged with Pietist emphases in a way that spoke to readers in the mid-

⁴⁸ Mow, *The Secret of Married Love*, 80.

⁴⁹ Anna Mow, *Two or Ninety-Two*, 29.

⁵⁰ Kostlevy, *Bethany Theological Seminary*, 110.

⁵¹ Anna B. Mow, “A Relevant Answer to this World’s Needs,” *Messenger* (July 18, 1968): 25-26.

twentieth century across an ecumenical Christian audience, while also working to reignite interest among Brethren in Pietist roots to the movement.

There has been lasting appeal in her writings, although some of her perspectives on marriage and family life have become dated. Despite that, even a cursory glance at library holdings shows that hundreds of libraries still hold her books in their collections. Several have also been more recently distributed in eBook editions.⁵²

Conclusion

Anna Mow is not a name that is necessarily familiar to many Christians today or even among Brethren. She may be less well-known than she once was or be seen primarily as a loving, pie-baking, grandmotherly figure who may not have much to say to us today. However, her work as a missionary, professor, preacher, and author helped to refocus generations of Brethren on important Pietist themes. Further, her many books, directed to popular, ecumenical, Christian audiences, helped to communicate key Pietist ideas. Her motivation stemmed from her Pietist commitments that led her to recognize that the Holy Spirit is not limited to a particular Christian tradition or denomination. Thus, she introduced and reinforced many of the Pietist ideas that were historically valued within American Christianity, such as the importance of having an experience of God, the centrality of scripture for understanding the nature of God, and how to live out the Christian life on a daily basis. Mow's reformulation of these ideas, drawing on Pietist inspiration within the Brethren tradition, offered a way for all Christian readers to embrace the values and influence of Pietism.

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⁵² Worldcat Search, accessed July 31, 2022. <https://www.worldcat.org/search?q=au%3A+Anna+Mow>.

“I Perceive You Have Your Own Brand Of Existentialism:” Mildred Bangs Wynkoop As An Heir Of Pietism

Steven Hoskins

Mildred Bangs Wynkoop (1905-1997) is a Wesleyan Holiness legend. She was a leading voice in the revolutionary, theological recovery of John Wesley in the late twentieth century, and the one whose theological marksmanship navigated us through and beyond the credibility gap between the arid, propositional fundamentalism that dominated holiness preaching and theology in the late nineteenth and first half of the twentieth century; and the dynamic holiness of a living, Christo-centric, socially conscious faith of the modern Wesleyan movement. She was called “truly a pioneer” in tribute at the end of her career by her colleague, Hubert Ray Dunning; the “Nazarene Georgia Harkness” by no less than Jacob Kenneth Grider; and was significant enough to have her own entry in Bill Kostlevy’s, *The A to Z of the Holiness Movement*. She is considered the patron saint of women in ministry by Wesleyans around the world, though she was never interested in feminism or feminist theology as that was too segregating. She was a sawdust trail evangelist with her husband, Ralph, and a published Christian magician who performed Bible magic tricks to evangelize the kids in her meetings. She convinced Paul Peddicord to hire her as the first woman to teach at Western Evangelical Seminary (hereafter, WES), was the founder and first president of Japan Nazarene College, and the cornerstone of the famed “Trevecca Connection” along with William Greathouse and H. Ray Dunning, who together thoroughly and often bitterly Wesleyanized the Church of the Nazarene and

returned it to its Methodist roots.¹ Her significance and her story are well known throughout Wesleyan circles. She is memed by holiness folks everywhere and even has her own bobblehead.² But Wynkoop the Pietist? Well, “Yes” with a capital “Y” (at least conceptually) and “perhaps” with a small, pietist “p,” resulting from an inquisitive and narrowing interpretation of John Wesley and some linguistic and personal wrangling with the twentieth century psycho-theological philosophy of existentialism that she maintained all her career. Hidden underneath her monumental, foundational theology of holiness existentialism, *A Theology of Love*, lies a connection to Pietism and some striking similarities to “Pietist hallmarks” that deserve consideration at a conference committed to studying the heirs of that tradition, and a story that needs to be told.

In 1958, the greatest of Nazarene theologians, H. Orton Wiley (1877-1961), one of the two great Nazarenes along with Paul Bassett (1935-2022), received a manuscript from his student, Mildred Bangs Wynkoop, who was teaching at WES in Portland, Oregon. Wynkoop had taken what was a short chapel address given at WES in 1955

¹ “The Trevecca Connection” was a backhanded insult to the group of Trevecca theologians (William Greathouse, H. Ray Dunning, and Mildred Bangs Wynkoop) who championed a revision of the Church of the Nazarene’s understanding of its cardinal doctrine, Entire Sanctification. The Trevecca Connection argued a corrective for understanding the doctrine or Entire Sanctification toward a more classic Wesleyan formulation of holiness as the “testimonium spiritus sancti” and away from a fundamentalist reading of Scripture and a necessary two-trips to the altar to experience God’s sanctifying grace. The Trevecca Connection argued for holiness that demanded a plenary understanding of Scripture and the allowance for gradual growth in grace in the experience of sanctification. The Trevecca Connection’s critics, led by Donald Metz, Dean of the faculty at Mid-America Nazarene University, bestowed the moniker on the Trevecca group and they wore it as a badge of theological honor.

² See my paper with Brent Peterson, “Assessing Significance: The Legendary Life and Influence of Mildred Bangs Wynkoop,” *Wesleyan Theological Journal*, Fall 2022, 87-103.

entitled, “An Existential Interpretation of the Doctrine of Holiness,” that had proved very “popular with students,” popular enough to be printed and widely promoted by WES in an 8-page pamphlet with her picture, and within three years produced a 307-page manuscript with the same title that sought her mentor’s approval and helpful criticisms. Wiley replied to Wynkoop with a message of reserved approval along with comments and suggestions, mostly about basic questions of theology, such as the image of God, free will, and God’s grace. He began with these words: “I was impressed by the fact that you have your own private brand of existentialism, certainly not in line with the ordinary brand, but more in line with the truth.”³

Truth be told, the manuscript was the beginning of a two-decade journey that would change Wynkoop’s life, make her legendary, and create a “revolution” (her word) of Wesleyanism in the Church of the Nazarene and the Holiness Movement.⁴ Eventually, and after a number of revisions, name changes, and off-shoot works like “A Theology of Depth” and “Wesleyan Theology and Human Development,” that manuscript became *A Theology of Love*. Ironically, it was this controversial work about holy “love” that incited a revolution and produced an ugly, at times vicious debate, sometimes about whether or not sanctification was a crisis or a process or both, as she believed, but mostly about that “ugly beast” named fundamentalism. It tied her evermore to the theology of John Wesley that she had learned under Wiley’s tutelage and changed the language of Wesleyanism into “Love,” a modified modern term

³ H. Orton Wiley, Response to Wynkoop’s manuscript, “An Existential Interpretation of the Doctrine of Holiness,” October 1958, Point Loma Nazarene University Archives.

⁴ Mildred Bangs Wynkoop, “An Existential Interpretation of the Doctrine of Holiness,” a message presented in Chapel Service, Western Evangelical Seminary, Portland, OR, November 3, 1955. The message was printed and bound into an eight-page pamphlet by the seminary that was widely circulated in the student body. A printed copy can be found in the library at Asbury Theological Seminary, Wilmore, KY and online at the George Fox Seminary archives, “An Existential Interpretation of the Doctrine of Holiness” by Wynkoop B. Wynkoop (georgefox.edu).

wrought through the categories of religious existentialism with an emphasis on human development.

Everywhere she could, Wynkoop changed the game and the language. She reduced the emphasis on crisis and process and made the word “holiness” read “moral development” in which the two could be explained as different in intellectual debate, but they occurred simultaneously in life. John Wesley’s “view of man” became existentialism. The word “dynamic” became code for the Holy Spirit. Her goal was to bring holiness up to date in 1958 for the “young’uns” and provide “a more effective and dynamic presentation of the holiness message to this generation.”⁵ Wynkoop believed that the problems raised by the preaching of holiness should be faced squarely through a fresh examination of the Scriptures and that through such an analysis of holiness, given the constructive theological approach of existentialism, “some of the most serious questions will find a satisfactory answer.”⁶ Her reaction was against the cold, arid doctrine and two-trip to the altar method that sanctified holiness had become in Wesleyan and Nazarene circles: “When Wesleyanism becomes merely a formula, however precise, and the formula is equated with ‘holiness,’ as it so often is, holiness, the central theme of the gospel, takes on a cold, rigid, forbidding image which never, somehow, gets into the nooks and crannies of the world’s life where it can do its reconciling, antiseptic, and healing work.”⁷

⁵ Wynkoop, “An Existential Interpretation of the Doctrine of Holiness,” Western Evangelical Seminary, Portland, OR, 1958. Online at https://digitalcommons.olivet.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1002&context=arch_wesleybk. The manuscript copy of her thesis, typed by Wynkoop, sent to Wiley remains in the archives at Point Loma Nazarene University, formerly Pasadena College, where he was president. The copy is virtually unmarked and matched with Wiley’s type-written comments to Wynkoop in the Point Loma archives.

⁶ Wynkoop, “An Existential Interpretation,” 1958, 2.

⁷ Wynkoop, “John Wesley: Mentor or Guru,” *Wesleyan Theological Journal*, v. 10, Spring 1975, 8.

It is that reaction and those answers with which this paper is concerned, answers that first appeared under the thin veneer of a well-nuanced religious existentialism and eventually under the umbrella of the dynamic Theology of Love that qualifies, under close consideration as at least conceptually if not as an actual form of Pietist thinking, with all the Holy Spirit with a capital “HS,” she could work in.

With all the forthrightness the young theologian could muster, Wynkoop claimed that “Jesus was the first real religious existentialist” and that “religious existentialism is a reaction against hollow orthodoxy...that demands a thorough transformation of a man’s everyday life.”⁸ Wynkoop’s own private brand of existentialism offered a “full and satisfactory expression of the faith in daily living situations.”⁹ Existentialism as holiness, she argued, must be re-presented in “the verbal expression of the doctrine as Biblically presented by means of which a strict account may be kept of our stewardship;” with “attention to an adequate life expression of that doctrine in terms of a personal moral transformation.”¹⁰ This theme stayed with her throughout her career. In a lecture at Asbury Theological Seminary in 1974, she stated: “Holiness [is] not for the quiet cloister, but for the rough and tumble. For the searing reality of what it means in the fullest sense to be a human person.”¹¹ Substitute “Pietism” for “Existentialism” and you can clearly see that Pietist, with a capital “P,” conceptual undertones hovered over, through, in, with, around, and under Wynkoop’s work like Jesus at a Lutheran eucharist.

As the next two decades ensued, Wynkoop honed her work to do two things. First, to tie it directly to John Wesley’s dynamic view of sanctification, which she eventually called a “Theology of Love.”

⁸ Wynkoop, “An Existential Interpretation,” 1955, 1,2.

⁹ Wynkoop “An Existential Interpretation, I.”

¹⁰ Wynkoop, “An Existential Interpretation, 7.”

¹¹ Mildred Bangs Wynkoop, Asbury Recording, “Life in the Spirit: The Existential Dimension,” Asbury Theological Seminary, Spiritual Emphasis Conference, 1974.

In this, Wesley became for her *the* hermeneutical methodology for a contemporary holiness theology of existential development: an experience of God's grace in which the believer becomes fully human. Wynkoop crafted and recrafted her work to show that Wesley as hermeneutic, and not propositionally oriented theological experience, was the theological method that would lead the way out of the wilderness and through the credibility gap. "The problem is method," she wrote in a paper published in the *Wesleyan Theological Journal* the year before *A Theology Of Love* came out. "[My] theology is not Wesleyan in the sense that it is assumed that Wesley is its final authority."¹² Rather, she used Wesley's dynamic, his way of thinking and approaching the Christian faith as a "psycho-logic" key that urged her understanding of religious existentialism.¹³ It was an . . .

openness to the future which urged [Wesley] on into creative insights and which urges us on into further discoveries in the same spirit. Only in the sense of Wesley's openness to the depths of truth do we consider this to be Wesleyan, though we do share in the dynamic insights which we understand were his... In a word, we seek a hermeneutic which will fairly interpret all Wesley taught."¹⁴

This approach to Wesley grew so great in her that by the 1970's Wesleyanism was all she could talk about. Someone once approached her after a talk to pastors' wives and said, "Excuse me, you said you were a Wesleyan? It seems to be some sort of a disease?" And indeed, it appeared so.¹⁵

Second, and just as important, Wynkoop honed her broad way of thinking about Wesley, and her writing style, into a "list

¹² Mildred Bangs Wynkoop, "A Hermeneutical Approach to John Wesley," *Wesleyan Theological Journal*, Spring 1971, v. 6, 13.

¹³ Wynkoop, "Mentor," 8.

¹⁴ Wynkoop, "Mentor," 13-14.

¹⁵ Mildred Bangs Wynkoop, Personal Notes, Nazarene Archives, Lenexa, KS.

format theology.” In some measure this was due to the florid way she talked and wrote but mostly because of her desire to get beyond controversy and to her points. The lists abound throughout her work in the 1970s. One could, she said, “produce an Aristotelian Wesley, A Platonic Wesley, a Schleiermacherian Wesley, a Whiteheadian Wesley, a Social Gospel Wesley, a Second Blessing Wesley, or any number of other kinds of theology termed Wesleyanism....” One supposes, given all we have heard at this conference, the same could be said for a Pietistic Wesley alongside all the “brands” of Pietism that scholarship has produced: a Kierkegaardian Pietism, a Social Gospel Pietism, A Second Blessing Pietism, one could go on.¹⁶

Wynkoop’s lists could be constructive as well. She wrote: “Wesley’s concept of holiness lay between what he understood about God (His creatorship and governorship) and His grace, and what he postulated about man and his humanness (created in God’s image, yet made of dust). Man as a person is (1) historical, (2) personal, (3) dynamic, (4) paradoxical-fallible, very human and often irrational and neurotic, and (5) social.”¹⁷

In all of these lists her latent and perhaps qualified Pietism, or at least a reasonable facsimile thereof, shines through. If one considers the “hallmarks of Pietism” advocated by Roger Olson and Christian Collins Winn in their 2015 book, *Reclaiming Pietism*, and the many lists of qualifying Pietists from the scholars they consider, Wynkoop as an heir to Pietism via the “hallmarks” argument comes through generally enough to be included as an heir, and particularly in two lists she created.¹⁸ First, she used her Wesleyan hermeneutic to add a fifth classical mark of the Church that conceptually rings of Pietist thought. To the list of the four classical marks of the Church: “One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church,” Wynkoop added

¹⁶ Wynkoop, “A Hermeneutical,” 13.

¹⁷ Wynkoop, “A Hermeneutical,” 17.

¹⁸ For the ‘lists’ of the characteristics of Pietism, see Olson, Roger E., and Winn, Christian T. Collins, *Reclaiming Pietism: Retrieving an Evangelical Tradition* (Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2015), Chapter 4, “Hallmarks of Pietism.”

that of Mission with a capital “M.”¹⁹ Second, and more fully, her summary of the hallmarks of being truly Wesleyan in her Wesleyan Theological Society Presidential address of 1974, following the publication of *Theology of Love*, showed clear Pietist leanings.

Among the things which being truly Wesleyan means are the following: 1. To be captured by the Word of God. To be Wesleyan is to be committed to the gospel, which will not be bound by any man’s interpretation of it but which stands in perpetual judgment over men’s interpretation. 2. To be a churchman, not sectarian in spirit. Denominations are not in themselves wrong, but the gospel Wesley leads us to transcends divisions and establishes oneness with all “the larger Body of Christ.” 3. To be Christ-centered rather than creed-bound. Wesley made Christ the meaning of holiness—the very heart of holiness. Theology took a seat lower than his Lord...4. To identify holiness as love. He called it “perfect love” but explained carefully and at great length that “perfect” meant unalloyed, not unimprovable, love...5. To live “on the boundary” between the solid past and the growing edge of the world coming to be—to live fully and eagerly in the vitality of the Spirit’s presence... 6. To be profoundly involved with social concerns. Perfection of love includes “following the Lord of the Church in the open ways where men are found...”²⁰

The “hallmarks of Pietism” approach concerning Wynkoop is certainly persuasive in qualifying her as an heir to the movement, but there are some caveats. Persuasive is that Wynkoop is definitely tied

¹⁹ Wynkoop, “John Wesley: Mentor or Guru,” *Wesleyan Theological Journal*, v. 10, Spring 1975, 7. See also her conclusion to “A Hermeneutical Approach:” “These are some of the insights regarding man’s nature under grace which made it possible for Wesley to ‘Preach holiness,’ and thereby to make the mark on the Church and in his world which has transcended his own denomination and age, and which continues to challenge the Church to explore the deeper depths of the possibilities of grace and, in this new day of renewal, to lead the way to a valid theology of mission.” 21.

²⁰ Wynkoop, “John Wesley: Mentor,” 11.

to a Christo-centric approach to the Christian faith: Holiness is “not so much something that happens to us as it is Someone who unites himself to us.”²¹ As Pietists have done, so Wynkoop also embraced the classical Reformation doctrine of justification by grace thru faith alone, but included the inward transforming experience of the new birth as the norm for conversion, which she borrowed from both Wesley and Wiley. There are clear hallmarks of commitment to orthodox Christianity, ecumenicity, a plenary understanding of Scriptural authority, and Pietism’s living Christianity in her writing as noted above, as well.²²

Wynkoop was more a “Classical” than “Radical” Pietist in her understanding of the Church as the galvanizing force of grace that tied all this together. However, her idea of Church was clearly committed to life in the world. The Church and warm-hearted Christian conversion/living (all one word for Wynkoop) in engagement with the world and care for people were both products of God’s grace “It (grace, the power of the Holy Spirit in the life of the Christian) put the individual believer into the Church—the corporate fellowship. It put the Church in the midst of society with a task to do in transforming the world in which men find themselves.”²³ Wynkoop even made room for a *collegia pietatis* within her understanding of Church in the colleges and universities which taught theology, like the Trevecca Connection of which she was so famously a founding member, and also in learned societies like the Wesleyan Theological Society. The same applied to schools of discipleship training and, given the identities of schools within our holiness movement and the exclusivist history of the Wesleyan Theological Society, perhaps there were little Pietist leaning, boutique “churches within the church,” as well.

²¹ Wynkoop, *Theology of Love* (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press, 1972), 182.

²² Olson and Winn, *Reclaiming Pietism*, Chapter 4.

²³ Wynkoop, “Hermeneutical Approach,” 14. Wynkoop did much work toward creating a doctrine of the Church for the Nazarenes prior to the adoption of the article of faith on Church, but none of it was included in the final rendering of the article by the Nazarene General Assembly in 1980. See her papers in the Church of the Nazarene Archives, Lenexa, KS.

However, it is in using the word “dynamic” to describe her theology of John Wesley that the greatest challenge of understanding Wynkoop as an heir of Pietism occurs. “Love is the dynamic of theology and experience. Love, structured by holiness, links all we know of [humanity]. Love is the end of the law. It is the goal of every step in grace and the norm of the Christian life in this world.”²⁴ In using “dynamic,” Wynkoop was consciously criticizing any “feelings” approach to one’s relationship with God.

The freedom of the Spirit is not always, or only, emotional hilarity, shouting, weeping, unconventionalities in public worship. Freedom may well be courage in battle, a life of quiet dedication to Christ in unrewarded service, the prophetic voice in a hostile wilderness without self-defensiveness, anguished hours—and years—in the scholar’s study thrashing out answers to human problems too complex for shallow and pious platitudes. Freedom of the Spirit is the power to withstand impossible pressures in life and remain true and gracious and forgiving. It is meeting misunderstanding and rejection without bitterness. It is to love where self-vindication was once the spoiler.”²⁵

Rejecting emotionalism and all that goes with it, Wynkoop argued instead that dynamic love was the hermeneutical key to understanding sanctification as religious existentialism. As H. Ray Dunning stated in his tribute to Wynkoop when she retired as the Theologian in Residence at Nazarene Theological Seminary: “Love is the dynamic of Wesleyanism and from this perspective she discovers that holiness as love makes it personal rather than impersonal; dynamic rather than static; relational rather than substantial; ethical rather than magical; historical rather than unhistorical; and social rather than individualistic. In this, she was truly a pioneer.” But was she? Perhaps she was a pioneer for the Nazarenes, but in

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²⁴ Wynkoop, *Theology of Love*, 269.

²⁵ Wynkoop, “Mentor,” II.

terms of the wells from which she drew, there is more to the story, and therein lies her connection to Pietism.

Unfortunately, there is no smoking gun, no pointed end of the stick, or personal “Aha” moment in her life or work to tie Wynkoop directly to Pietism. And yet, her work clearly bears the marks, both linguistically and conceptually, of the “hallmarks of Pietism,” that is, in her own private brand of religious existentialism-*cum*-dynamic Wesleyanism hermeneutic. So where does all this existentially religious Pietism come from? Well certainly from John Wesley and the great debt of the Methodism he founded to Pietist influences. As Julian Pace argued in his 2020 article, “JW’s Pietist Credentials,” and Olson and Winn quoting Stoeffler: “Wesleyan Methodism could not have come into being in the form that it did without Pietism, which was mediated to it primarily by Spangenberg and Böhler.”²⁶ That influence shows up throughout and all over Wynkoop’s work from beginning to end, from foundational theology to papers about the effects of human development theory on Wesleyan theology.

Given Wynkoop’s ties to H. Orton Wiley, her mentor and the one to whom she submitted the first draft of her manuscript, however, the source of Wynkoop’s Pietism, even an explanation of that Pietism as conceptual and virtually hidden, may be more immediate in her own story and place the “conceptual,” Pietist commitments and ideas in her work directly within a Pietist and Brethren framework. Wynkoop owed her education and her career to H. Orton Wiley. In her schooling she followed him from Northwest Nazarene College to Pasadena College and served as his amanuensis while he was finishing the twenty-year project that was the writing of his monumental, three volume work with over one thousand pages, *Christian Theology*, the official theology of the Church of the Nazarene from its publication in 1940 until 1988. Wiley would type the lectures that became *Christian Theology* and Wynkoop would sit in class and write notes on those lectures as Wiley gave them. In the evenings, she and Wiley would go over the lectures and make

²⁶ Olson and Winn, *Reclaiming Pietism*, 95.

corrections and proofs for publication. She was so enamored with Wiley's work that she taught it five times in her first five years at WES, often to mixed results with her students. Having reached a point where she perceived that Wiley's incredible grasp of Church history and the history of Christian theology put much of what he wrote beyond the reach of the average reader, she said to him in desperation, "You need to write a book to explain what's behind all this stuff to your readers." Wiley quietly laughed and looked at her and said, "You write that book." She did, and that book is the "John Wesley as existential hermeneutic," *A Theology of Love*.

What Wynkoop called "existentialism," Wiley had called "personalism" following his teacher at Berkely Philosophical Union in California, John Wright Buckham.²⁷ There are clear ties to Pietism that could be explored in these seminal writings. However, the Pietist impulse in Wiley and Wynkoop is more curious and more obscure in that H. Orton Wiley grew up under the tutelage and influence of his step-grandfather, John W. Ward, an Evangelical United Brethren [hereafter EUB] minister from Nebraska.²⁸ "J. W. Ward's influence upon Wiley could be compared to the ridgepole of a sod house. Without Ward's influence, much of Wiley's life might have been considerably different. Wiley would probably not have moved to northern California and Oregon, interacted with folks interested in Christian holiness fueled by social concern and personal piety, or been so willing to enter the ministry in the conservative, EUB Church."²⁹ Wiley was so given to the EUB Church in his early life that he studied theology and philosophy at Berkely preparing for a career as an EUB minister and was ordained by the EUB church

²⁷ Buckham was a colleague of Edgar S. Brightman during his education, and both were students of Borden Parker Bowne who is considered the father of Personalism as a philosophical movement. See J. Matthew Price, *We Teach Holiness: The Life and Work of H. Orton Wiley*, Holiness Data Ministry, Digital Edition, 2006. Available online at Microsoft Word - HDM2607.doc (psu.edu)

²⁸ According to Price, *We Teach Holiness*, Ward married Wiley's maternal and widowed grandmother Elizabeth Johnson, and the two families shared a home and a history, moving from Nebraska to California and eventually to Oregon, where John Ward was ordained minister in the EUB church. 14.

²⁹ Price, *We Teach Holiness*, 14.

in California in 1902. Four short years later, he met the founder of what would become the Church of the Nazarene, Phineas Bresee, who in 1906 gave him a teaching post at the fledgling Pasadena College [now Point Loma Nazarene University] and ordained him in the Church of the Nazarene in Los Angeles, CA. Further, Wynkoop taught at WES, the western stronghold of the EUB Church and of its president, Paul Peddicord. She was at home with the ethos of WES, though her time there was often difficult.

With all this background in Pietism from Wesley and through Wiley and eventually WES, why didn't Wynkoop use the term or give the Pietists at least some credit for their obvious ties to her thinking? At this point, the historian is given to speculation and surmise, an uncomfortable dilemma. To add to the dilemma, Wynkoop's writing oeuvre was one of general explanations for the pastor and layperson alike and she was never one to explain her work with sources, neither those she used to construct her work nor those she was arguing against, and this leaves the historian with the difficulty of options.³⁰

Given the evidence, it could be that Wynkoop saw the way things were going for the Pietist movement in America during her time at WES and like her mentor, Wiley, whom she viewed as a pro-Christian and an anti-controversialist thinker, she avoided Pietism which was, at least partially if not thoroughly, involved in the controversy. Like her mentor, Wiley, she chose the path of lesser resistance by avoiding Pietism and chose contemporary theological categories in which to present her work.

Though she was at WES in the nineteen fifties, Wynkoop recognized that with Peddicord, the storm clouds were already on the horizon that would lead to the eventual merger between the EUBs and the Methodists, something Peddicord never accepted. Peddicord led WES into a status of "its own church" after the 1968

³⁰ Indeed, there are only eighty-two footnotes in the three hundred pages of *A Theology of Love* with twenty-seven of those in but one chapter.

merger, a merger that Steve O'Malley, among the last class of EUB ordinands in 1967, said saw the death of a church that began in a barn in Pennsylvania and died on a ballroom dance floor in Dallas, Texas at the hands of the Methodists. In the 1950s, Peddicord built what Paul Merritt Basset called a "fortress of solitude" for the true heirs of Pietism at WES. Wynkoop, always the non-sectarian ecumenist (a Pietist hallmark) who attempted, mostly unsuccessfully, to avoid controversy, was just not wired for what Peddicord was doing. Her time at WES left a bitter taste in her mouth when she left for missionary service in Japan in 1960 after five years with Peddicord at WES.

It could also be that, given the evidence, Wynkoop didn't use the term, "Pietist," simply because Wiley did not. Though brought up and ordained by the EUB church, Wiley only referred to the Pietist tradition twice in the three volumes of his *Christian Theology*: once to note the Pietists as having had a good effect on Wesley and once to note the history of discord, controversy, and division throughout the long history of Pietism. Given what is argued for in this paper and by Wynkoop in her "bringing sanctification up to date for this generation," in her 1955 chapel address where all her work started, one could make a similar argument about the work of Wiley. This would involve simply substituting his contemporary category of personalism in regard to his understanding of God, the same way Wynkoop worked her understanding of sanctification out using a more contemporary idealism of "dynamic love" or existentialism.

More probable is a third option to consider: Wynkoop didn't acknowledge her debt to Pietism because she wanted to do the two things she did: (1) hone her thoughts around John Wesley as the hermeneutical principal by which a proper and healthy view of sanctification could be understood and (2) sharpen her theology of love through the dynamic, up-to-date, contemporary idealism of religious existentialism and full human development. Eventually the two became one in the work of what her mentor, Wiley, called "her own private brand of existentialism."

At the end of a paper such as this, the historian must face the sanctified music of his subject and answer the only historical question that matters: So, what? It seems that what the story of Wynkoop and her own private brand of existentialism offers us is some “food for thought” as we consider our work and more importantly the moral imperative that comes with it, especially for us “sanctified folk.” First, language matters and must be argued for and over. Is Pietism an impetus, an impulse, a catalyst, or a tradition? Does a 1950s phrase like “religious existentialism,” that is more in line with the truth, convey what it needs to, to qualify one as an acceptable heir to Pietism? If Wynkoop is indeed an “heir of Pietism” then her story offers us plenty to consider.

Second, Wynkoop and her working out of her thoughts offers us the opportunity to consider another seminal question: Who does qualify as an heir of Pietism and why? Given the very many, and really too many, lists of Pietist hallmarks and the characteristics of true Pietism, who qualifies? This becomes a difficult question to answer. Only the EUBs? Only those who wrote in the heavenly language of German? Given the list-making penchant of Pietist scholarship, it might be easier to write a book entitled “Disqualified Pietists: A Short, but very Important List.” You know: Luther, Calvin, all the fundamentalists. But the point needs to be made, especially given the work of important folks on the “nice” list, like Wynkoop. It is argued here that Wynkoop’s language, theological commitments, list-making style of writing, and her commitment to a grace-created, fully human version of the doctrine of sanctification reveals her as an heir to Pietism.

Third, and related to the first two, we need those heirs to show our real commitment to a truly ecumenical approach to our theology *and* our history over time. Do we really believe that the primitive church has much to offer us, as Wesley and the original Pietists did? The Roman Catholic mystics of the Middle Ages? And what will we do as we face in the coming days churches splitting and lay people leaving for the easier and less contentious confines

of other pastures? Wesleyanism considered as an impetus, impulse, catalyst, or tradition has experienced the same challenges as Pietism in determining who are the true Wesleyans. Wynkoop, who was admired, feted, and given a platform to present her thoughts with a warm reception by the likes of the Free Methodists (who, by the way, never banned her books as did many Nazarene District Superintendents) and Asbury Seminary, which invited her to lecture and preach on several occasions. Yet she experienced theological bigotry at the hands of her own people.

Reflecting back at the end of her career, Wynkoop said: “Greathouse and others are calling us back to Wesley at a time when the general movement is away from Wesley. Here is the problem: How do we remain open—ecumenical or catholic in spirit—to the broader Christian tradition and the other holiness traditions and still maintain distinctives.”³¹ She noted that given all she had been through she was left wondering if there was room for a John Wesley type of Wesleyan in the Church at all? Given all we have heard and given our theological commitment to the sanctified life, we need to recognize that choosing heirs of Pietism means something, perhaps something big, and for the way forward we need to recognize those qualified guides from our past and make room at the table for those from our past, the living dead among us, who can serve as our guides as we, hopefully, face a grace-enabled future.

Identifying those who qualify as heirs of Pietism might just be the catalyst that will give us the criteria and inspiration to name those guides. Wynkoop and others can give us examples to recognize and inspire those who are yet to come, who will be as committed to this theology and its idealisms as Wynkoop was, save in the contemporary language of their day. Like Wynkoop, they may be game changers committed to that awful task of bringing sanctification and all its wonderful historical baggage up to date

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³¹ Stan Ingersol quoting Wynkoop from classes she taught at Nazarene Theological Seminary, “Introduction,” Nazarene Theological Seminary Breakfast Club honoring Wynkoop, 1992.

with concepts and commitments in contemporary language with true, real Pietist hallmarks. The dynamic understanding of God's sanctifying work which qualifies Wynkoop as a Pietist is one we need to keep our eye on as we educate students to live into "True Christianity." The question as we consider Wynkoop is do we want to go through all that again? Is it worth it? Given her legacy and work, the answer would seem to be yes.

If we can make of Pietism the living tradition of dynamic sanctification and the theological expressions attending it, then maybe we will actually have a chance to save our heritage in all of its Pietistic fullness and maybe even to Christianize Christianity, to borrow a phrase, to taste again the sweetness of what life is like when we make it our goal to spread scriptural holiness throughout the land and live into the dynamic of love—God's gracious work of living fully human lives. Perhaps, God helping us, this may also save us from ourselves and show us to be true heirs of a great heritage.



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“Dry-Eyed Pietists:” Twentieth Century Church Of The Brethren Scholars, Religious Experience, And Brethren Identity

William C. Kostlevy

“The writing of intellectual history is like trying to nail jelly to the wall,” William B. Hesseltine, the impious and colorful University of Wisconsin historian observed in 1945. As someone who has ignored the intrinsic logic of this wise advice for over three decades and, at times against my better judgment, has spent my academic career exploring the ideas of folks not noted for intellectual depth, I am keenly aware of the problematic nature of any exploration of a religious tradition that has generally insisted that deeds take preference to thoughts; and that authentic worship, if there is such a thing, consists in a literalistic replication of practices of early Christianity as reconstructed by the radical Pietist, Gottfried Arnold. Pietism, invented as a term of derision, has always been a murky concept that, like similar historical catch-all terms such as populist, progressive, and evangelical, is as likely to confuse as it is to enlighten. To make matters worse, outside of meetings of academics who generally make no claim to being its adherents, Pietism has never existed as an organized movement. There has never been a World Fellowship of Pietists. Efforts to ban such words, as my friend the late Don Dayton discovered regarding “evangelical,” are sadly doomed to failure. But scholars who study such things seriously have an obligation to clear away as much fog as possible.

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The story began in 1708 when Alexander Mack, a Palatine miller, his wife, and six other separatist Pietists turned their backs on

a state supported, corrupt church and, following their understanding of Scripture and the practice of early Christians, reinstated authentic, apostolic adult believer's baptism. Not content with the simple reintroduction of adult believer's baptism, early Brethren or Dunkers, as they were derisively known, insisted that the mode of baptism was as important as the practice itself. They insisted further that an authentic Christian community would, to the extent of available knowledge, restore not only apostolic teaching but worship and discipline, including the implementation of the ban upon recalcitrant members of the faith community. In the influential interpretation of historian Donald Durnbaugh, these disciples of the radical Pietist preacher, Hochmann von Hochenau, were in fact leaving Pietism for Mennonite-like Anabaptism. Durnbaugh, whose formative religious experience was working with Mennonites rebuilding war-torn Austria, observed that Mack and the other Brethren were in the process of creating an actual movement, not a disembodied abstraction such as Pietism. In an influential 1976 essay Durnbaugh would even state that "inclusion of a chapter on the Brethren in a book on Pietism is not self-evident." In fairness, recent research into that abstraction (i.e., Pietism) has demonstrated that considerable Pietist baggage became institutionalized among the Dunkers and their descendants. This point had earlier been made by Progressive Era American Brethren who had waited nearly two centuries before beginning a serious attempt at writing a history of their movement.¹

¹ The standard history of the Dunkers is Donald F. Durnbaugh, *Fruit of the Vine: A History of the Brethren, 1708-1995* (Elgin, IL: Brethren Press, 1997). The quotation is from Donald F. Durnbaugh, "The Brethren in Early American Church Life," in F. Earnest Stoeffler, ed. *Continental Pietism and Early American Christianity* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1976), 222. In the words of historian Marcus Meier, "The essential feature of the Brethren position, the close bond between what is outward and what is inward, was not fundamentally alien to radical Pietism." From Marcus Meier, *The Origin of the Schwarzenau Brethren* (Philadelphia: Brethren Encyclopedia, 2008), 102.

Between Restorationism and Evangelicalism: Nineteenth Century Brethren Refocus Their Faith

As a largely agrarian people, Brethren have seldom been confused with Presbyterians, Lutherans or even Methodists and Friends. The writings of their founder filled a slim volume and were largely given to a defense of practices that offended their early critics. Early records are sparse and when they became more common seemed concerned with issues that appear parochial to many of their spiritual descendants. Like all who have sought to return to the faith of the early church, Brethren sought to escape history and return to an idealized, first century faith.

As I have argued elsewhere, by the fourth decade of the nineteenth century new spiritual forces associated with the Second Great Awakening were gradually turning many Dunkers into American Protestants. But despite mass defections of migrating Brethren in Kentucky and Southern Indiana to the in many ways anti-pietistic restorationism of the Stone-Campbell Movement, many Dunkers were embracing an evangelically oriented faith and the accompanying institutions of a revivalist-friendly evangelicalism.²

If Durnbaugh and earlier interpreters of early Dunker experience sought to distance the heirs of Alexander Mack from the taint of Pietism's experientialism, there is strong evidence that the inner devotional life of early Brethren remained indebted to the

² Restorationism including the important writings of nineteenth century leader Peter Nead and the defenses of Brethren practice by James Quinter and in the writings of *Gospel Messenger* editor J. H. Moore continued to shape Church of the Brethren thought and practice and found expression in the continued relationship with Disciples of Christ that continues today. For the hesitancy to consider the Stone-Campbell followers as evangelicals, see Robert Baird, *Religion in America*, edited by Henry Warner Bowden (New York: Harper and Row, 1970), xviii, 243-244. Baird listed Dunkers, not inappropriately, under Baptists. On the effect of the Second Great Awakening on Brethren, see William Kostlevy, "In the Lap of Delilah: Brethren and the Lure of Evangelicalism," *Brethren Life and Thought* 61 (Supplement 2016), 11-20.

subjective religiosity of continental Pietism. As Hedda Durnbaugh has argued, “spirited singing” in the tradition of Pietism remained a feature of Brethren worship, and Pietist impulses permeated the surviving poetry that was written by such key eighteenth century Brethren as Christopher Sauer II and the founder’s son, Sander Mack. If Brethren did not commonly provide detailed accounts of their personal conversion experiences, we now know that this reticence was more common in Pietism than traditionally assumed. Still, as the *Ephrata Chronicle* amply documents, the younger Mack, at least according to his compatriot, Stephen Koch, testified to spiritual anguish culminating in a late 1730s awakening of many of the young people in the Germantown congregation.³

The story of evangelical cultural penetration of the Dunker community is the central theme of Carl Bowman’s landmark, *Brethren Society*. In his account the spread of such evangelical practices as prayer meetings, Sunday schools, and revival meetings, along with growth of institutions of higher education and the establishment of a mission board, constituted a turning away from the ancient order of the Brethren. For Bowman, the Old Order German Baptist Brethren represented the true continuation of the spiritual vision of Alexander Mack and the early Brethren.⁴

³ On the continuing Pietist impulse among eighteenth century Dunkers see Stephen Longenecker, *Piety and Tolerance: Pennsylvania German Religion, 1750-1850* (Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1994), 47-50 and Hedwig T. Durnbaugh, “Anabaptism, Pietism, and the Religious Poetry of Alexander Mack Jr.” *Brethren Life and Thought* 58 (Spring 2013), 47-58. Durnbaugh concludes that Anabaptist hymnology was not a formative influence among the early Brethren. See also, Dale Stoffer, “Alexander Mack Jr.: The Pilgrim of Love and Light,” *Brethren Thought and Life* 58 (Spring 2013), 8-24. On conversion experiences among Brethren see, Denise D. Kettering-Lane, “Evangelical from the Start? Brethren Origins and Evangelicalism,” *Brethren Life and Thought* 61 (supplement 2016), 7 and the intriguing discussion of the entire question of conversion narratives in Pietism in Jonathan Strom, *German Pietism and the Problem of Conversion* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2018).

⁴ Carl Bowman, *Brethren Society: The Cultural Transformation of a Peculiar People* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995). For a differing perspective that I largely share, see Dale W. Brown, “Developing Thought and

Acculturation is of course a tricky and subjective enterprise. Scholars more attune to doctrinal consistency than sociological purity have hinted that the very concept of the “ancient order of the Brethren” represented reified vision of one of the most important nineteenth century Dunker preachers, Peter Nead (1796-1877). Known as the “English” preacher, Nead, a convert from Methodism, had turned his back on the fastest growing evangelical denomination of the early nineteenth century and had little enthusiasm for experiential Christianity. As the author of one of the first and most important English defenses of the ancient order of the Brethren, Nead, like many of his Dunker co-religionists, seemed especially attuned to the logic of the rapidly growing restorationism of Alexander Campbell and Barton Stone. A critic of the so-called “new converting means” of the evangelical revival, Nead attacked preachers whose sole concern seemed, at least to him, to be “the feelings of the audience.” For Nead, Brethren were not to “make a public song” of their conversion experience. While denying that baptism alone qualified one for citizenship in the Kingdom of God, Nead did insist, in the common language of the Stone-Campbell tradition, that “baptism was for the remission of sin.” In effect, unlike experientially oriented evangelical denominations, such as Methodists or River Brethren, salvation was not the result of a subjective, new birth experience that preceded baptism and entrance into the community of faith. Like the Stone-Campbell tradition, and unlike the emotionally charged settings of revival and camp meetings, which were the principal instruments of Methodist growth, Brethren skillfully exploited public debates as a primary tool for numerical expansion. A former schoolteacher, Nead excelled in such settings and his writings epitomized a thoughtful, rational defense of the Dunker faith.⁵

Theology of the Brethren-1785-1860,” *Ashland Theological Journal* 8 (Spring 1975), 61-74.

⁵ On the “objectification” of the salvation process among nineteenth century Brethren, see Dale Stoffer, *Background and Development of Brethren Doctrines, 1650-2015* (Philadelphia: Brethren Encyclopedia, 2018), 114. One of the best discussions of mutual interaction of Stone-Campbell tradition and the Brethren is found in Roger Sappington, “How the Brethren Were Influencing

In order not to be misunderstood, this rational, Biblically-based defense of the faith was hardly the invention of Nead. Alexander Mack, himself, had insisted that “the outward and inward law retained the same meaning.” From the beginning Brethren had been deeply attached to literal text of Scripture, especially the actual teachings of Jesus. But Nead, unlike Mack, was more explicitly anti-experiential. The Bible was an objective measuring tool. Nead insisted that the very idea of testing right and wrong by “feeling and conscience” had caused “boundless human misery.” As a champion of an anti-experiential, objective restorationism of the New Testament church, Nead joined a movement that as recently as 1820 had explicitly and by name rejected the experientialism of Methodism and the River Brethren. Coming at a time when many Brethren in Southern Indiana were joining the restorationism of the Stone-Campbell Movement, Nead’s defense of traditional Dunker understandings of the ordinances, separation from the world, and even universal restitution provided a justification for the continuation of a distinctive Dunker Movement in the bitterly contested religious landscape of antebellum America. Unlike the restorationism of the Disciples of Christ tradition and in opposition to the celebration of the expansion of white male suffrage in the age of Andrew Jackson, Nead rejected Campbell’s glorification of the American experience of democratic government and the optimistic post-millennial eschatology that accompanied it.⁶

Other Denominations, between 1785 and 1860,” *Ashland Theological Journal* 8 (Spring 1975), 82-85. Another similarity between the Stone-Campbell tradition and Brethren was a common Biblical rejection of creeds. See the helpful discussion in Robert W. Caldwell III, *Theologies of the American Revivalists from Whitefield to Finney* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Press, 2017), 206-219. For Nead’s critique of evangelical conversion experiences, see Longenecker, *Piety and Tolerance*, 126. The other quotations are found in Peter Nead, *Theological Writings on Various Subjects, or a Vindication of Primitive Christianity* (Poland, OH: Dunker Reprints, 1997), 59, 247.

⁶ The Alexander Mack quotation is from Donald F. Durnbaugh, ed., *European Origins of the Brethren* (Elgin, IL: Brethren Press, 1958), 386. The Nead quotation is from Nead, *Theological Writings*, 361. *Minutes of the Annual Meetings of the Church of the Brethren: Containing All Available Minutes from 1778 to 1909.* (Elgin, IL: Brethren Publishing House, 1909), 43-44.

Beginning in the 1830s as the threat from the Stone-Campbell Movement eased, the cultural inroads of the Second Great Awakening were increasingly troubling to Dunker tranquility. While Nead attacked the employment of women preachers who seemed particularly adept at emotional manipulation, some Brethren were already embracing elements of the “new measures” revivalism commonly associated with the famed evangelist Charles G. Finney. In the spirit of Finney, some Dunker women even preached, organized promiscuous prayer meetings, and joined in crusades against the liquor traffic and slavery. By the late 1850s, Brethren had affirmed the legitimacy of protracted evangelistic meetings and were active participants in the so-called businessmen’s revival of 1858. As Annual Meeting records document, some even employed the distinctive vocabulary of the famed Holiness evangelist, Phoebe Palmer, which urged Brethren to receive “the present baptism of the Holy Ghost.” As elements of the new revivalism began engulfing Dunker communities, Nead found himself on the defensive. In response to his critics, he insisted that he supported “experiential religion, a change of heart,” but with the stipulation “that the best evidence of being Christians, or regenerated is when we are meek, lowly minded, love God, and keep His commandments.”⁷

If Nead remained less than enthusiastic about popular American expressions of experiential religion, Brethren sympathetic to a more subjective piety continued to champion the traditional religious rites of the Dunkers. As a convert of one of the first revivals held among the Brethren, James Quinter (1816-1888) would both in debate and with his pen defend trine immersion and Dunker polity,

⁷ On the impact of new measures revivalism in one important Brethren congregation, see Kostlevy, “In the Lap of Delilah,” 12 and on the businessmen’s revival see Stephen Longenecker, “Brethren Evangelical Relationships in the Era of Charles Finney,” in *Brethren Intersections: History, Identity, Crosscurrents*, edited by Jared Burkholder (Philadelphia: Brethren Encyclopedia, 2020), 86. As Stephen Longenecker discovered, some Brethren including James Quinter signed abolitionist petitions to Congress. See Longenecker, *Piety and Tolerance*, 161. The baptism of the Holy Ghost discussion is from *Annual Conference Minutes*, 175. The final quotation is from Peter Nead, *The Wisdom and Power of God, as Displayed in Creation and Redemption* (Cincinnati: By the Author, 1866), 251-252.

including not voting in political elections, along with championing such innovations as revivals, prayer meetings, Sunday schools, world mission, and institutions of higher education. As a skilled, evangelistic preacher, Quinter insisted that emotional responses to gospel preaching met real human need. “The heart of the sinner must be broken and subdued,” Quinter reasoned, “and this work is accompanied at times with strong emotions of distress, which are frequently followed by emotions of unspeakable joy.”⁸

In 1881, frustrated followers of Nead, centered in southern Ohio’s Miami Valley and now under the leadership of Nead’s son-in-law, Samuel Kinsey, separated from the larger German Baptist Brethren body, forming the Old German Baptist Brethren. The immediate cause of the separation was the refusal of the dominate group to return to the “ancient principles of our church.” In rejecting the plea of Nead’s followers, the main body affirmed its intent of adopting “principles most efficient in promoting the reformation of the world, the edification of the world, and the glory of God.” For Quinter, despite his real dedication to the unity of the church and his continued defense of its traditional ordinances, the servants of God were primarily called to remove the causes of evil and promote the spread of Christian principles. As Nead defended the anti-experientialism and separatism of the movement he had joined in the 1820s, Quinter defended “the prudential power of the church to a certain extent to adapt...to render it efficient in accomplishing its mission both in opposing evil and promoting whatever is good.” Fittingly, Nead focused on escaping from the corrupting influences of fad-driven, popular evangelicalism while Quinter actively championed the causes of abolition and temperance. It seemed only natural that Nead’s son-in-law would become one of the principal leaders of the Old German Baptist Brethren and Quinter’s son-in-law, J. T. Meyers, would attend the Lutheran Theological Seminary in Philadelphia and urge Brethren to engage in more systematic Biblical studies. To an historian what seems odd is not the 1881

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⁸James Quinter, “Our Journey to Miami County-An Interesting Revival,” *Gospel Visitor* (April 1866), 123.

division, but the length of time it took to occur. Interestingly, neither group understood themselves as heirs of the eighteenth-century renewal movement that had inspired the first Dunkers, Pietism.⁹

Becoming Pietists

By the early twentieth century, contradictions and inconsistencies remained, nowhere more in evidence than among the founders of Bethany Bible School in Chicago. As odd as it may seem the two principal founders of the school were close friends, with Christian commitments that seemed to embody contradictory responses to personal religious experience. Albert Cassel Wieand, a champion of the evangelically oriented faith, was a revivalist, whose decisive religious experiences included physical healing and an abiding enthusiasm for the writings of Keswick-oriented devotional writers such as Hannah Whital Smith and Andrew Murray. Fittingly, some of his experiences occurred while he was attending classes at Moody Bible Institute in Chicago while, without any sense of contradiction, earning a degree from the Divinity School of the University of Chicago. In the interpretation of his principal friendly critic and former student, the University of Chicago trained Floyd Mallott, Wieand and early Bethany embodied the naïve simplistic faith of the era of evangelist D. L. Moody.¹⁰

⁹ On the division, see Durnbaugh, *Fruit of the Vine*, 291-301 and Bowman, *Brethren Society*, 126-131. The Quinter quotation is found in Bowman, *Brethren Society*, 131. On Quinter's views on the mission of "servants of God," see William Kostlevy, "A Persistent Sectarian Community: James Quinter and the Nineteenth Century Reformulation of Brethren Identity" in Stephen L. Longenecker, ed., *The Dilemma of Anabaptist Piety* (Bridgewater, VA: Penobscot Press, 1997), 89. See also Mary Quinter's introduction to her edited work, *Life and sermons of Elder James Quinter* (Mt Morris, IL: Brethren Publishing House, 1891), 55, 209-212. On J. T. Meyers, see Stoffer, *Background and Development*, 169, 338. It should be noted that Nead did baptize the first Brethren African American minister, Samuel Weir.

¹⁰ On the Keswick Movement and its impact upon the Brethren, see William Kostlevy, "A. C. Wieand, Keswick Spirituality, and the continuing Legacy Brethren Beliefs in the Twentieth," in Steve Longenecker and Jeff Bach, eds., *Lines, Places, and Heritage: Essays Commemorating the 300th Anniversary of the*

Wieand's co-founder, Emanuel B. Hoff, was of a different bent. Raised in the important Brethren South Waterloo, Iowa community, Hoff came to reject the contentious revivalism that had led to the formation of the Brethren Church, with most of the extended Hoff family having departed with the insurgents. Instead of turning to evangelical devotional literature that had so inspired Wieand, Hoff turned to actual text of the Bible. Instead of the piety of the age of Moody, he affirmed the Biblical scholarship of William Rainey Harper of the recently established University of Chicago. Never entering a degree program, Hoff took only classes that appealed to his fancy. Suspicious of emotionally charged religious experience, he had after all been subjected to the preaching of Brethren Church pioneer evangelist Stephen Bashor. Hoff led intensive Bible institutes instead of revival meetings. Far more than a uniquely Brethren phenomenon, Bible institutes were an important, institutional expression of popular Fundamentalism. Under the leadership of the hardly Fundamentalist Hoff, however, Brethren Bible institutes introduced their largely rural audiences to the emerging Biblical scholarship of William Raney Harper, Dewitt Burton, and other pioneers of the critical study of the Biblical text.¹¹

In the classroom many of the most academically inclined, early Bethany students would become disciples of Hoff, not Wieand. Three generations of Bethany Bible instructors would, following Hoff, teach their courses from the Greek New Testament read in the light of the ethical monotheism of the great Hebrew prophets. But beyond Biblical studies the real spirit of Hoff found expression in the teaching of Bethany's most beloved--by students not administrators--teacher, Floyd Mallott. Trained at the University of Chicago by William Warren Sweet, Mallott identified the early Dunkers as non-ecstatic Pietists who sought to recover the authentic faith of the first Christians. When a visiting evangelist introduced his home

Church of the Brethren (Bridgewater, VA: Penobscot Press, 2008), 223-232. See also, Kostlevy, *Bethany Theological Seminary*, 17-29.

¹¹ Kostlevy, *Bethany Theological Seminary*, 25-26. On Bible institutes, see Ernest R. Sandeen, *The Roots of Fundamentalism: British and American Millenarianism, 1800-1930* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970), 241.

congregation in Ohio to tongues speaking, Mallott, in the spirit of E. B. Hoff, wrote an extended, three-part exegetical study rejecting the phenomenon. A lover of the institutional church and a critic of both evangelical and ecumenical expressions of Protestantism, in 1963 the recently retired Mallott joined the Old Order German Baptist Brethren.¹²

Never a serious student of Pietism, Mallott did write the first actual study of Pietism by a Brethren author. In his 1921, Bethany B.D. thesis, Mallott argued that the early Brethren were protesting both the “dead formalism” of institutional Christianity and Pietism’s undervaluing of “church ordinances.” But as Mallott insisted, so much of “Pietistic thought” remained central to the Brethren ethos that the Brethren were appropriately described as being “an outgrowth of the Pietistic Movement.” As an illustration, Mallott noted that many of the practices of primitive Christianity described by Gottfried Arnold, including trine immersion, baptism of adults, anointing, and non-resistance, were retained by the descendants of the Schwarzenau Brethren.¹³

In his mature thought Mallott taught that the early Brethren had three basic characteristics. They were New Testament Christians. They were imitators of primitive Christianity, and finally they were devoted to the teachings of the Sermon on the Mount. “The pietistic spirit was evident in the fact...that for them regeneration ...must bear fruit in conduct.” Brethren were, Mallott insisted, a “Dry-eyed moralistic kind of pietists.” Mallott linked Pietism and Anabaptism, locating the origins of Brethren ideology in the piety of Bernard of Clairvaux and Francis of Assisi in the process, and affirming the conclusions of Albrecht Ritschl. The early Brethren had been called “New Baptists,” Mallott insisted for a reason. They were “truly Anabaptist.” As Dale Brown remembered, “I had been taught that the history of our denomination was a cross between

¹² F. E. Mallott, “Speaking in Tongues,” *Gospel Messenger* 2 March, 1929, 9 March 1929, and 16 March 1929 and Kostlevy, *Bethany Theological Seminary*, 49.

¹³ F. E. Mallott, “The Pietistic Movement,” B.D. thesis Bethany Bible School, 1921, 62.

the older Anabaptism movement of the sixteenth century and the later Pietist movement led by Jacob Spener and August Francke of the seventeenth century.” In effect, Floyd Mallott had arrived at an interpretation much like the one later developed with actual historical evidence by Donald F. Durnbaugh. In other words, it was the anti-experiential Floyd Mallott, who, in the tradition of E. B. Hoff rather than the many evangelical-friendly Brethren, would call attention to the actual, historical antecedents of the Dunker movement in Pietism.¹⁴

Dale Brown and the Formation of Brethren Pietist Identity

In 1962 one of Mallott’s most enthusiastic disciples moved into his old office on the Van Buren street campus of Bethany Biblical Seminary, which was still decorated as Mallott had left it with a wall chart depicting all the Popes. Thirty years later, the wall chart would accompany Dale Brown into retirement. Inspired by Mallott, Brown had initially planned to study radical Pietism. An initial reading of the writings of radical Pietists convinced him that the odds of successfully completing a doctoral program increase if the sources you are studying make sense to you. Turning to Spener and Francke, Brown completed a dissertation exploring subjectivism in churchly Pietism. It would take Brown nearly two decades to find a publisher for such an esoteric topic.

¹⁴ In January of 1942, Mallott described the Dunkers as being “Pietistic Mystics,” who affirmed Scripture and were one of the three historic peace churches. See Floyd Mallott, “An Historical Society,” *Schwarzenau* 3 (January 1942). The quotation is from Floyd E. Mallott, *Studies in Brethren History* (Elgin, IL: Brethren Publishing House, 1954), 13-16. The reference to “dry-eyed” pietists is found in Martin H. Schrag, “The Impact on Pietism upon the Mennonites in Early American Christianity,” in Stoeffler, ed., *Continental Pietism and Early American Christianity*, 99. On Ritschl see, Albrecht Ritschl, *Three Essays, translated with an Introduction by Philip Hefner* (Philadelphia: Fortress 1972), 70-83. The Dale Brown quotation is from a student paper of Brown’s at Garrett Evangelical Divinity School. See Dale W. Brown Papers, Box 15, Folder 8, Brethren Historical Library and Archives, Elgin, IL.

More than his mentor, Mallott, and his colleague and friend, Donald F. Durnbaugh, Dale Brown was an actual, practicing Pietist. Also, as a dialectical theologian, he was keenly aware that there were elements of truth in the popular stereotypes of Pietism. As a Dunker from Kansas, Brown exuded moral earnestness. A favorite story among his critics at Bethany had Brown and the Bethany students hurriedly fleeing the Chicago Consortium of Theological Seminaries annual picnic when the less pious Lutherans brought out the beer. As a native Kansan, an ecumenical Protestant utopia that during the 1920s banned the showing of the racist film *Birth of a Nation* along with liquor, Brown remembered attending a mass meeting featuring Methodist evangelist E. Stanley Jones, whose recent book on Gandhi had deeply impressed Brown. Jones was fittingly speaking in Wichita as part of a statewide and successful effort to keep Kansas dry. At the end of the service, Brown followed many other attendees to the front of the auditorium, hoping to speak with the evangelist about Gandhi. As he recounted the story, others were coming forward for a different reason. They were intent on receiving the Baptism of the Holy Spirit. This was at a time when the Church of the Brethren periodical was publishing the names of young people who promised not to drink, smoke, and as a seeming afterthought, more positively “commit one’s life to Jesus Christ and His Way of Life.” The Brethren who had once universally asked candidates for baptism to promise never to participate in war were now fighting a rear-guard action in a different cultural war.¹⁵

In the spring of 1948, Brown received an “A-” from Mallott for a paper he wrote on “the Life and Work of August Herman Francke.” It was the beginning of a life-long fascination with Pietism and its principal figures, Spener, Francke, and the more radical Gottfried Arnold. In good pietistic fashion, from the beginning Brown’s writings on Pietism contained frequent references to his

¹⁵ On Brown and E. Stanley Jones, see Dale W. Brown, “The Wesleyan Revival from a Pietist Perspective,” *Wesleyan-Theological Journal* 24 (1989), 7. On the Kansas of the 1920s to the 1960s, see Robert Bader Smith, *Hayseeds, Moralizers, and Methodists: the Twentieth Century Image of Kansas* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1988), 72-113.

own subjective interests in Pietism and its role in the origins of the Brethren. “As a Church of the Brethren member I had been taught,” Brown wrote in a paper on Pietism and Methodism that he wrote at Garrett Evangelical Divinity School, “that the history of our denomination is a cross between the older Anabaptist movement ...and the later Pietist movement led by Jacob Spener and August Francke.” Pietism, Brown argued, was a movement that had much in common with Quakerism, Puritanism and Methodism. As he saw it, Quakerism emphasized the mystical, Methodism the subjective, and Pietism the ethical. For him, as for Mallott, Pietism remained a largely ethical movement best illustrated by one of his favorite quotations from Spener. “True belief,” Brown quoted Spener in 1968, “is not so much felt emotionally as known by its fruits of love and obedience.”¹⁶

As Brown remembered, he had been drawn to the study of Pietism for three reasons. They included a fascination with the radical Pietist historian, Gottfried Arnold, whose historical reconstructions had played such a significant role in the ongoing life of the Church of the Brethren. Secondly, Brown desired a fuller understanding of the meaning of a term that was “so recklessly used by so many people.” And finally, Brown acknowledged that the example and inspiration of Mallott had drawn him to Pietist studies. On another occasion, he noted that the lure of Pietism for him owed much to his desire to gain a greater understanding of Gottfried Arnold; his frustration with the fact that such kindred movements as Quakerism and Anabaptism were so much better known in the Anglophone world; and the frequent use of the word “Pietist” as a virtual “swear word.”¹⁷

The imprint of Floyd Mallott never left Brown. Readily acknowledging that he was one of Mallott’s “spiritual” sons, Brown, in a moving tribute to Mallott that could just as easily be applied

¹⁶ The paper on Francke is found in Box 15, Folder 8 in the Brown Papers. For the Spener quotation see Brown’s presentation at the Evangelical Covenant Minister’s Ashram, January 1968. See Box 17, folder 12 of the Brown Papers.

¹⁷ See Brown Papers, Box 41, Folder 9.

to himself, identified four central emphases of his beloved teacher. First, Mallott's "love for the church was contagious" and he had the ability to help his students gain insight into past Christian experience. As an illustration, Brown shared one of his many favorite Mallott quotations: "The social ideal of the twentieth century is the millionaire. The social ideal of the Middle Ages was to become a saint." Secondly, like Brown, Mallott had a strong, personal empathy for Anabaptism while insisting that the Brethren emerged at the historical intersection of Anabaptism with the Pietist reformation. As Brown saw it, Mallott's identification with the Old Order German Baptist Brethren was consistent with his identification with "left-wing or radical Christianity." Thirdly, Mallott emphasized that the Christian is one who identifies with Christ. This "ethical humanitarian concern" led one to the Jesus of the Sermon on the Mount. Brethren were people who truly attempted to live the uncompromising message of Jesus. Finally, Mallott, like Brown, rejected all forms of 'civil religion.'" In this Brown noted "Mallott was thoroughly Anabaptist." The old historian who had once observed that the modern church was "just a pile of bricks" feared institutionalization, the loss of fraternity, and the all-too-common equating of Christianity with Americanism. Given Mallott's imprint upon Brown, it is hardly surprising that Brown would become an unapologetic champion of the emerging neo-Anabaptist Movement in the Church of the Brethren.¹⁸

In 1958, Brown taught the first course ever offered on the history of Pietism at a Church of the Brethren school. As he observed in notes that have survived from the course, "many of the ideas come very near to the heart of my own belief." It was, he observed, "A theology course in which I expound what is a part of me." In a typically honest Brown assessment, he noted that the course was "desperately" needed. "Of all the groups, to which we are akin, we [Brethren] are the weakest scholastically." For Brown these groups included Mennonites, Quakers, and Moravians. This was amply

¹⁸ Dale W. Brown, "Floyd Mallott: An Interpretative Essay about the Teacher and His Work," *Brethren Life and Thought* 25 (Spring 1980), 97-105 and Kostlevy, *Bethany Theological Seminary*, 147-150.

documented in the Bethany library that had only one item in English on Brethren and Pietism, a B.D. thesis by Floyd Mallott that was, as fate would have it, missing. In vintage Brown fashion students were asked to write a 4–6-page paper with either a critique of Pietism, a discussion of the fallacies of Pietism, a discussion of why they were a Pietist or not a Pietist, or finally to answer the disputed question of whether the Church of the Brethren was an heir to Pietism. Fittingly, the outline concluded with a lengthy list of the critics of Pietism. These included an actual lecture at Bethany given by Alan Walker, and work of Robert Friedman, the Mennonite author whose widely circulated attack of the corrupting influences of Pietism upon Anabaptism was only too well known among Brethren.¹⁹

Like other Brethren scholars of his generation, including his Bethany colleague Donald E. Miller, Brown was especially drawn to the work of Gottfried Arnold. It was his desire to understand Arnold more fully that had initially led to his interest in radical Pietism. But, as Brown frequently noted throughout his career, his lack of fluency in German, the paucity of English translations of most of the Arnold corpus, and the esoteric and obscure character of radical Pietist writings proved too much for him to overcome. Nevertheless, as Brown's surviving notes make clear, Arnold would remain an important figure for him. Brown highlighted Arnold's ties to Spener, and his frustration, shared by Brown, with the undue pride of academics. Brown demonstrated this by an apt quotation of Spener, "for the sake of others, we [scholars] have to place our souls in danger." Arnold's tragic death in the wake of Prussian army officers seizing young men for military who were present on Easter Sunday, 1714, remained a favorite illustration of the true spirit of authentic Pietism for deeply pacifistic Brown. As he noted, many scholars had little regard for Arnold's history, insisting it "was not impartial, favored heretics and interpreted history through mystical experience." As Brown concluded, Brethren were torn by the "tension in radical Pietism between spiritualistic doctrine and

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¹⁹ See "Seminar-Pietism," in Brown Papers, Box 41, Folder 10. The missing Mallott thesis has been recovered.

the restorationism of [Alexander] Mack.” Brown’s critical reaction to the work of Carl Bowman made it clear he favored the pietistic impulses of missionary-minded nineteenth century Brethren over the restorationism of Peter Nead and the Old Order German Baptist Brethren.²⁰

Dale Brown and the Anabaptist/Pietist Dialectic

In 1962 Brown successfully defended his doctrinal thesis, left the righteous land of Kansas for Chicago, and was asked to lead Bible studies at the church’s National Youth Conference. In a story that he loved to tell, Brown proposed that the youth explore the role of the Holy Spirit in the life of the church. As one would expect, church leaders were surprised and somewhat bewildered by such a topic. After much discussion and with the support of the youth on the committee, Brown’s plan was adopted and *Flamed by the Spirit* became the theme of the conference. In 1972, he would bring the same theme back for the 186th Annual Conference of the Church of the Brethren. In 1978 even as the Charismatic Movement was affecting many Brethren congregations, and fittingly the year a revised version of his dissertation was being published as *Understanding Pietism*, Brethren Press would publish his mature reflections in *Flamed By the Spirit: Biblical Definitions of the Holy: A Brethren Perspective*. Both books were dedicated to Floyd Mallott, whom Brown noted had “first engendered my interest in experiential theology.” Brown also expressed his indebtedness to “Charismatics who had helped the doctrine come alive in new ways for my life and thought.”²¹

Written in the spirit of Mallott and E. B. Hoff and designed for use in small groups and Sunday school classes, *Flamed by the Spirit*

²⁰ “Gottfried Arnold,” Brown Papers, Box 41, Folder 10. Among my sources is Dale Brown’s richly annotated copy of Peter C. Erb, ed., *Pietists: Selected Writings* (New York: Paulist Press, 1983) and his review of Bowman’s *Brethren Society in Mennonite Life*, December 1995.

²¹ Dale W. Brown, *Understanding Pietism* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1978), and Dale W. Brown *Flamed by the Spirit: Biblical Definitions: A Brethren Perspective* (Elgin, IL: Brethren Press, 1978), 7.

was a serious Biblical, theological, and historical study that aimed at bridging the different perspectives on the Holy Spirit held within the Church of the Brethren. The study identified the commonalities between Brethren Charismatics and their critics in the church. For Brown, these included a high view of Scripture, a strong emphasis on the visible church, and a common commitment to use the gifts of the Spirit to meet human need.

Brown's *Understanding Pietism* had much in common with *Flamed by the Spirit*. Beginning with a brief chapter defining Pietism and concluding with a contemporary critique, in vintage Brown fashion, the heart of his work was a dialogue evaluating some of the standard critiques of Pietism. As framed by Brown, the crucial questions related to Pietism's alleged individualism, literalism, doctrinal indifference, subjectivism, and kill-joy moralism. With much of the text written during the height of decidedly anti-pietistic neo-orthodoxy ascendancy of the 1950s, the book's primary goal was a serious attempt to rehabilitate Pietism itself.

Interestingly, Brown argued for a narrow definition to Pietism as a late seventeenth-through early eighteenth-century German Protestant movement. He noted that important movements like Methodism and the Anglo-American Awakenings emerged from the same milieu but were different enough from classical Pietism "to be cousins rather than brothers or sisters." As an ambivalent Pietist, Brown was critical of its tendency to use individualistic personal pronouns while acknowledging that in his popular class on the thought of Luther, Calvin, and Wesley, his own views were more in line with the founder of Methodism than with the magisterial reformers.²²

As Donald F. Durnbaugh and Brown matured as scholars, their take on Brethren origins seemed to converge. For Durnbaugh it meant a far greater appreciation for the continued role of Pietist

²² Dale W. Brown, *Understanding Pietism*, revised edition (Nappanee, IN: Evangelical Publishing House, 1996), 14-15.

themes in early Brethren history. In a moving tribute to his friend and colleague, Brown noted that Durnbaugh's views of Brethren origins had evolved over time. For a scholar who had once written, "In summary it may be said that the genius of the early Brethren lies in their conscious adaptation of the Anabaptist tradition," he had increasingly highlighted not only the continued Pietist impulse in early Brethren experience but Pietism's key role in Brethren origins as well. Brown's own way of articulating the relationship between Anabaptism and Pietism was to highlight an interpretative model proposed by University of La Verne Professor Vernard Eller. Eller had written, "The epitome of Brethrenism lies not in a monistic influence or orientation but precisely in the dialectical tension between the two orientations, Radical Pietism and Anabaptism." Eller, Brown noted, argued that the two traditions, far from being contradictory, were self-correcting. As Brown argued in this 2005 Brethren theology, at its best Anabaptist objectivism was a correction for Brethren tempted to slide into Pietist mystical subjectivism, and Pietism was a corrective for Christians tempted by legalistic literalism and works righteousness. Brown noted that Eller's dialectic of Anabaptist and Pietist influences was not all that different from Carl Bowman's insistence that for early Brethren the two traditions "were mutually reinforcing."²³

For Brown, the continued legacy of the "Anabaptist-Pietist Dialectic" was found in the two movements' complementary views concerning soteriology and discipleship. As Brown, in the spirit of Floyd Mallott noted, the "Pietist and Wesleyan" emphasis on personal salvation needed the corrective of Anabaptism's emphasis on a life

²³ The Durnbaugh quotation is from Donald F. Durnbaugh, "The Origins of the Brethren," *Mennonite Quarterly Review* 36 (April 1962), 170. Brown's interpretation of Durnbaugh's evolution as a scholar of Pietism is from Dale W. Brown, "Donald F. Durnbaugh: Contributions to Brethren Historiography," *From Age to Age: Historians and the Modern Church: A Festschrift for Donald F. Durnbaugh* (Richmond, IN: Brethren Journal Association, 1997), 251-253. The quotation from Eller is from Vernard Eller, "On Epitomizing the Brethren: A New Approach to an Old Problem" *Brethren Life and Thought* 6 (Autumn 1961), 47-52. Brown discusses the converging views of Eller and Bowman in Dale W. Brown, *Another Way of Believing: A Brethren Theology* (Elgin, IL: Brethren Press, 2005), 18-23.

lived in conformity to Christ. But in many ways Brown's emphasis was less dialectical than it was conjunctive. "In experiencing the direct witness of the Spirit," Brown wrote, "you know you are loved and accepted, a forgiven sinner." But following John Wesley, Brown argued even more importantly there was an "indirect witness of the Spirit" that found expression through a life that gave evidence through such fruit of the Spirit as love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, gentleness, and self-control. In a similar manner, Brown noted that Alexander Mack, in radical Pietist fashion, was open "to believers receiving the inner words in their hearts written by the Holy Spirit." But Mack insisted this inner word was "identical" with the outer word recorded in Scripture. In effect Mack combined Pietist openness to new spiritual truth with Anabaptist concern that such manifestations be tested by the community of faith. In conclusion Brown reminded Brethren and other Christians that Christianity was not a "mystery cult but a religion of historical redemption." Its goal was not to meet the Savior "in the garden alone" but it was a call "to join brothers and sisters in participating in Christ's saving activity in the world."²⁴

For Brown, as with his mentor, Floyd Mallott, the Pietism of the early Brethren remained ethical and primarily non-emotional. Willingly acknowledging his affinity for the ethically earnest theology of John Wesley and respectful of the more emotional piety of Pentecostalism and the Charismatic Movement, Brown never unreservedly urged Brethren to embrace even the Pietism of the early eighteenth century. While acknowledging late in his academic career that even as his friend Donald Durnbaugh had become more willing to see an ongoing Pietist impulse among early Brethren, he believed Brethren were at their best when they held the Anabaptist and the Pietist dimensions of their heritage in dialectical tension. As a life-long champion of neo-Anabaptist renewal among Brethren, Brown worked closely with members of the Society of Friends,

²⁴ This paragraph draws on two important unpublished essays by Brown. The first is "Anabaptism and Pietism: Points of Convergence and Divergence," Brown Papers, Box 17, Folder 10 and "Soteriology and Discipleship: Continuing Legacies of the Anabaptist-Pietist Dialectic." Box 38, Folder 3.

Mennonites, avowed liberals, and even radicalized evangelicals in the movements for peace and social justice. In this he embodied the ethical earnestness of his Kansas and Plains Brethren heritage. In effect Brown's vision had remarkable continuity with that of his nineteenth century Brethren forbearers. The words of James Quinter that Brethren should be committed to "opposing evil and promoting whatever is good" resonated in the life and thought of the much beloved Bethany faculty member.²⁵

Conclusion: The Compelling Vision of Post WW II Brethren Liberalism

If Dale Brown insisted the Anabaptist/Pietist dialectic helped curb the legalistic and individualistic tendencies all too common among "awakened" Christians, many social gospel-oriented Church of the Brethren leaders seemed truly indifferent to any expression of personal religious experience. A poem written by the remarkable founder of Heifer Project, Dan West, captured the sentiment of many Brethren leaders in the three decades following World War II.

Dear Lord, my cross is heavy. The weight of it—With other things—is bending down my head. My knees are weak. My back and arms are sore. Do I have to carry it anymore? Couldn't I just worship yours instead?²⁶

Suspicious of conventional worship, religious symbols (West often reminded folks that for many people in the world, the cross was a symbol of oppression, not piety), elaborate houses of worship, the founder of a relief agency dedicated to ending war by providing

²⁵ On Brown's views about his affinity with Wesley, see his student paper from 1956 at Garrett Evangelical Divinity School, "Pietism and Methodism," in Brown Papers, Box 15, Folder 8, and Brown, "The Wesleyan Revival." Dale W. Brown, "Brethren: Radical Pietists?" *Brethren Life and Thought* 43 (Winter and Spring, 1998), 36-46. For his observation on Durnbaugh, see Dale W. Brown, "Donald F. Durnbaugh," 251-253.

²⁶ See the quotation in William Kostlevy and Jay Wittmeyer, eds. *Hoosier Prophet: Selected Writings of Dan West* (Elgin, IL: Brethren Press, 2021), 4.

the rural poor with chickens, pigs, heifers, and my personal favorite, Water Buffalo, exuded suspicion of experientially oriented Christianity. What counted for West was living in deeds, not words or experiences. Interestingly one can find similar ideas among a wide variety of Christian leaders. As Ernest Stoeffler observed, Gottfried Arnold's aim "was not the reformation of theology, or mystical union, but the amendment of life, both corporate and private." This is why, in Protestantism, the discovery of ethics began with Pietism, and why the shared antinomianism of the current American political right and left endangers not only public health, the physical environment, and our common life together; but more importantly, the spiritual foundations of the common good itself.²⁷



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²⁷ F. Ernest Stoeffler, *German Pietism during the Eighteenth Century* (Leiden, E. J. Brill, 1973), 178, 53.

German Pietism, Neo-Evangelicalism, And Subtle Polemics In Harold O. J. Brown's *Heresies*

Peter James Yoder

“Without Pietism, Protestantism might never have survived the eighteenth century, but with Pietism, it may ultimately cease to be Protestantism.”¹ With such a dramatic flourish, evangelical theologian and historian Harold O. J. Brown (1933-2007) closed his chapter “Pietism and Heresy” and left his readers in a Spannungsfeld of sorts, having to reckon with whether the religious renewal movement originating in the late seventeenth century was something to be praised or something to be condemned. Brown’s own spiritual journey would seem to explain his personal interest in Pietism. In 1953, while studying as a Fulbright Scholar in Marburg, Brown encountered a young lady on a train who suggested his “intellectual acceptance of Luther’s teachings did not equate to a necessary saving faith.” She directed him to seek out a particular man in Marburg who, according to the young Fulbright scholar, “talked to [him] about a personal relationship with Christ [...]” Brown later claimed, “I now know that he had led me to the Lord.”² After his conversion, he switched his studies from medicine to theology and

¹ Harold O. J. Brown, *Heresies: The Image of Christ in the Mirror of Heresy and Orthodoxy from the Apostles to the Present* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Co., 1984), 393.

² Matthew S. Miller, “‘No diga mentiras’: The Pivotal Role of Harold O.J. Brown in the Emergence of the Evangelical Pro-Life Movement,” ThM Thesis (Erskine Theological Seminary, 2015) 18-19. Miller’s thesis represents the sole academic work on Brown’s life and thought. The author is especially grateful to Dr. Miller for his insights into the life and thought of Brown during the revising of this contribution.

came under the tutelage of Ernst Benz in Marburg. Brown then went on to complete his doctoral work under George Huntston Williams.³ Both men expressed academic interests in Pietism or movements associated with Pietism and may have influenced the young Brown during his formative years.⁴

Nevertheless, Brown's conversion narrative and his later academic studies alone do not sufficiently explain why he would dedicate a whole chapter to Pietism in his major work of church history published in 1984, *Heresies: The Image of Christ in the Mirror of Heresy and Orthodoxy*. In Anglophone scholarship of the 1980s, German Pietism had received little attention, especially in introductions to church history. Notable works during this period that include discussions of the renewal movement are Carter Lindberg's *The Third Reformation*, Justo Gonzalez's *The Story of Christianity*, and Jaroslav Pelikan's *The Christian Tradition*, the latter of which includes a small smattering of references to churchly Pietism.⁵ "Pietism and Heresy" therefore not only represents one of the few accounts of Pietism published in North America during the second-half of the twentieth century, but it is one of the only evaluations of the movement offered by a Reformed historian and theologian.

The following analysis contends that, beyond Brown's personal conversion and academic studies, evangelical theological

³ Miller, "No diga mentiras," 18-25.

⁴ Before encountering Brown as a student, Ernst Benz had published *Der Prophet Jakob Boehme: eine Studie über den Typus nachreformatorischen Prophetentums* (Wiesbaden: F. Steiner, 1959) and "Ecumenical Relations between Boston Puritanism and German Pietism: Cotton Mather and August Hermann Francke," *The Harvard Theological Review* 54:3 (July 1961), 159-193. When Brown began his doctoral work under George Huntston Williams, the latter had already published *The Radical Reformation* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1962).

⁵ Carter Lindberg, *The Third Reformation* (Macon: Mercer University Press, 1983), 131-78; Justo L. Gonzalez, *The Story of Christianity: Volume 2: The Reformation to the Present Day* (Revised; New York: HarperOne, 2010), 259-264; Jaroslav Pelikan, *The Christian Tradition: A History of the Development of Doctrine*, Volume 5 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), 53-56.

controversies of the 1970s and early 1980s provided the framework and impetus for his inclusion of the chapter “Pietism and Heresy” in *Heresies*. Brown implements a subtle polemic in his discussion of Pietism to argue that positions on biblical authority held by groups like the Moral Majority and the International Council on Biblical Inerrancy could be traced back to the early modern renewal movement and its adherence to post-Reformation “fundamentals.” In support of his argument, Brown incorporated important advances in Pietism scholarship made by Johannes Wallmann and applied modern, anachronistic language of biblical inspiration to Pietist theologies. Nevertheless, Brown’s subtle polemic caused him to pass over theological complexities in Pietism, creating tensions within his argumentation. This critical examination of Harold O. J. Brown’s chapter on Pietism offers helpful insight into the range of neo-evangelical evaluations of Pietism and the ways in which scholars used historical retrieval as a means of furthering late-twentieth century theological debates.

Steven P. Miller notes that in the 1970s there was an “evangelical boom ... [of] born-again Christianity,” during which an emerging evangelical movement held a new-found political sway.⁶ Brown found himself a rising public intellectual in the midst of this religious boom. In the two decades after his conversion, Brown benefited from the intellectual company of neo-evangelical leaders like Francis Schaeffer (1912-1984) and Carl F. H. Henry (1913-2003); the former helped Brown learn to “engage the culture around him” while the latter was directly involved in Brown securing an editorial position at *Christianity Today* in the winter of 1971.⁷ During these same years, Brown published two notable works on Christianity and culture, but his later historical work, *Heresies*, represents his *magnum*

⁶ David R. Swartz, *Moral Minority: The Evangelical Left in an Age of Conservatism* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012), 13-25.

⁷ Barry Hankins, *Francis Schaeffer and the Shaping of Evangelical America* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2008), 65; cited in Miller, “No diga mentiras,” 32. For Brown’s relationship with Henry, see Miller, “No diga mentiras,” 38-44.

opus.⁸ As is reflected in the full title of the work, Brown structures *Heresies* around the church's constant challenge to maintain an orthodox understanding of the person of Christ. In many ways, the book's theme corresponds to his own previous "protests" about what he considered the weakening of biblical authority in American Christianity, which he closely associated with a loss of orthodox Christology.⁹

In his chapter on German Pietism, Brown equates this weakening of orthodox Protestant teachings with what he calls "theological liberalism," and Pietism serves as an important theological interlocutor between the Protestant Reformation and theological liberalism that blossomed in the nineteenth century.¹⁰ Modern, liberal Protestants have made the Bible into an object and not come under its authority, asserts Brown, who in a later article defends his theologically conservative position using the words of Württemberg Pietist Johann Albrecht Bengel (1687-1752): "*cor facit theologum* (the heart makes the theologian)."¹¹ According to Brown, the liberal theologian adopts "pagan" thought and comes under "bondage to a world where God is a philosophical fiction."¹² This is, in Brown's estimation, a form of secularizing Christian theology. While it is not uncommon for an evangelical intellectual like Brown to use this type of language to express frustration or concern

⁸ These earlier works are *The Protest of a Troubled Protestant* (New Rochelle, NY: Arlington House, 1969) and *Christianity and the Class Struggle* (New Rochelle, NY: Arlington House, 1970).

⁹ Harold O. J. Brown, *Protest of a Troubled Protestant*, II, 188-194.

¹⁰ Brown, *Heresies*, 361. Later, Brown states, "Strictly speaking, what we know as liberal Christianity began during the eighteenth century and continued unchecked until World War I," *Heresies*, 396.

¹¹ Harold O. J. Brown, "On Method and Means in Theology," in *Doing Theology in Today's World*, eds. John D. Woodbridge and Thomas Edward McComisky (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1991), 152, 155-158. In similar words as Bengel, Pietist August Hermann Francke claims, "the study of theology is the cultivation of the heart." See Peter James Yoder, *Pietism and the Sacraments: The Life and Theology of August Hermann Francke* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2021), 36.

¹² Brown, *Protest of a Troubled Protestant*, 176.

toward modern Protestantism, it is surprising to see Brown state in the introduction to his chapter on Pietism, “In North America, by contrast, Pietism, its descendants, and its allies are taking the offensive against secularism in movements such as the Moral Majority and the International Council on Biblical Inerrancy.”¹³ In certain aspects, argues Brown, the Pietists and later conservatives have remained faithful to orthodox Christian teachings against the rising tide of theological liberalism and secularism.

Brown’s unexpected contextualization of Pietism with the Moral Majority and debates over biblical inerrancy reveals a possible underlying impetus for including a chapter dedicated to the German renewal movement in his work on church history, and it sheds light on the interpretive lens by which he examines the movement. He embraces what may be described as a subtle polemic, in which a matter of historical interest is used to establish a case regarding contemporary issues with which the historian finds herself enmeshed. Aryeh Kasher defines polemics as “a method of argument or collision of ideas, adopted, whether verbally or in writing, by persons convinced [or ...] confident in their knowledge on the subjects being debated and sure of their rhetorical ability to persuade their audience.”¹⁴ In subtle polemics, the subjects of the argument are not the focus of the debate; rather the polemicist uses a narrative or the history of an individual or group to platform argumentation directed towards a contemporary concern. The debate, therefore, is not immediately over the appropriateness of the individual, group, or system of thought being analyzed, and the historical subject involved in communicating this subtle polemic becomes a means to supporting or rejecting a later historical

¹³ Brown, *Heresies*, 362. Elsewhere Brown juxtaposes liberal theology and Pietism: “[Martin Voigt] carefully sets forth [modern theology’s] attractive features, and minimizes its affronts to the conservatives, whom the Germans usually call ‘pietists,’” Brown, *Protest of a Troubled Protestant*, 168.

¹⁴ Aryeh Kasher, “Polemic and Apologetic Methods of Writing in *Contra Apionem*,” in *Josephus’ Contra Apionem. Studies in its Character and Context with a Latin Concordance to the Portion Missing in Greek*, eds. Louis H. Feldman and John R. Levison (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 143.

development. Consequently, the historian's narrative is at moments shaped by the subtle polemic instead of the historical reality as she may encounter it via artifacts. Oftentimes the imposition of anachronistic categories, phrases, or terms reveal the author's subtle attempt to relate historical movements to present, pressing concerns. In Brown's case, Pietism becomes a subtle polemic against later challenges to biblical authority in American Protestantism, and this can be seen in the structure of his chapter on Pietism, in the defining features he assigns Pietism, and in the language he applies to the renewal movement.

"Pietism and Heresy" rests between chapters on post-Reformation Protestant Orthodoxy and the Enlightenment and forms a sequence of theological development which culminates in a form of nineteenth-century Protestantism that rejected biblical authority. To emphasize this progression, he structures the chapter devoted to Pietism not primarily around the history of the religious movement, but around sixteenth and seventeenth century developments regarding the church's approach to Scripture.¹⁵ We see this immediately in the length of the discussion devoted to Pietism and in the divisions of the chapter. In the thirty-two pages of "Pietism and Heresy," only ten are devoted specifically to discussing German Pietism. The rest, which comprise five of the six chapter subdivisions, focus on early modern syncretism (e.g., irenicism), polemics, and what he calls "the fundamentals." The structure and progression of the chapter does not lead the reader to assume or expect a final section on Pietism. Rather, the initial sections covering post-Reformation history are set forth to establish what Brown calls the "quest for the fundamentals [of the faith]."¹⁶ Nevertheless, his concern lay not primarily in what these fundamentals were,

¹⁵ Brown, *Heresies*, 400-407. "By dispensing with the formal structures of the church and church government and the traditional emphasis on dogma and theology, Pietism prepared the way for the day in which an increasing number of religious leaders would abandon external guidance of Scripture and orthodox doctrine as the Pietists themselves had abandoned the external structure of ecclesiastical institutions," *Heresies*, 398.

¹⁶ Brown, *Heresies*, 364.

but rather how various late-sixteenth and seventeenth century Protestant and Roman Catholic groups approached Scripture in order to substantiate their “fundamental” beliefs.¹⁷ Brown also does not attempt to make significant historical connections between the late-sixteenth and seventeenth century irenicists (Arminians and Socinians), whom he introduces earlier in the chapter, and Pietism. Instead, he leaves it to the reader to assume they are related to each other on account of similar theological features, especially in the ways they identify Scripture with key doctrines.

Brown’s willingness to rely on common theological features to connect German Pietism with earlier Protestant groups may reflect the influence of German church historian Johannes Wallmann’s work on Pietism. Wallmann’s biography on Philipp Jakob Spener (1635-1705), a work of symbolic significance in later debates over the definition of Pietism, was published a little over a decade before Brown’s *Heresies*. In what should be seen as innovative in an Anglophone academic context, Brown relies on Wallmann’s description of Pietism.¹⁸ For Wallmann, the German renewal movement expressed itself in three primary characteristics: conventicles, personal bible reading, and chiliasm.¹⁹ The significance of Brown’s incorporation of Wallmann is twofold. First, by doing so he associates himself with a group of scholars who hold what Jonathan Strom would later call the “narrow

¹⁷ Brown’s emphasis on the “how” and not the “what” of fundamentals is seen in that he spends only two paragraphs on the nature of justification and avoids in-depth analysis of Arminian and Socinian beliefs. He instead focuses on how each group approached Scripture in their rejection or acceptance of tradition and doctrine.

¹⁸ Johannes Wallmann, *Philipp Jakob Spener und die Anfänge des Pietismus* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1970). Brown references Wallmann’s in his selected biography at the end of the chapter; *Heresies*, 394. Interestingly, Dale Brown’s *Understanding Pietism* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978), which Harold O. J. Brown appreciated to such an extent that he assigned it to seminarians taking his church history course almost two decades after its publication, does not reference Wallmann’s work.

¹⁹ Johannes Wallmann, “Was ist Pietismus?” *Pietismus und Neuzeit* 20 (1994), 22-27; idem, *Der Pietismus* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2005), 85.

sense” of Pietism.²⁰ These scholars claim Pietism originates from the work of Spener and his early associate Johann Jacob Schütz (1640-1690) in Frankfurt.²¹ Brown’s turn toward Wallmann’s portrayal of Pietism sets him in contrast with the work of F. Ernest Stoeffler and Martin Brecht, who place German Pietism in the historical context of broader *Frömmigkeitsbewegungen* found on the Continent and England.²² Furthermore, Brown rejects Albrecht Ritschl’s reductionist view of German Pietism as a return of late-medieval mysticism.²³ Against these, Brown focuses on three generations of Pietists: Spener, August Hermann Francke (1663-1727), and Count Nikolaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf (1700-1760). Each of these men had a spiritual influence on the other, with Spener serving as Francke’s “spiritual father” and Zinzendorf studying in the school system of Francke’s institutes in Halle.²⁴ Beyond Brown’s analysis, it also should be noted that they represent a transition in German Pietism from confessionalism to denominationalism.

Brown’s incorporation of Wallmann’s definition is also significant because it afforded him the opportunity to weave his subtle polemic regarding biblical authority into an historical narrative of Pietism. Brown corresponds the Pietist emphasis on personal bible reading, especially in its association with the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers, with later forms of conservative Protestant evangelicalism, manifested for Brown in the Moral Majority and the International Council on Biblical Inerrancy. Thus

²⁰ Jonathan Strom, “Problems and Promises of Pietism Research,” *Church History* 71:3 (Sept 2002), 539-540.

²¹ Andreas Deppermann, *Johann Jakob Schütz und die Anfänge des Pietismus* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2002), 352.

²² F. Ernest Stoeffler, *The Rise of Evangelical Pietism* (Leiden: Brill, 1965); Martin Brecht, “Einleitung,” in Martin Brecht (ed.), *Geschichte des Pietismus, Band 1: Der Pietismus vom siebzehnten bis zum frühen achtzehnten Jahrhundert* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1993), 3-7.

²³ Brown, *Heresies*, 384-385; Albrecht Ritschl, *Three Essays* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1972), 53-139.

²⁴ Yoder, *Pietism and the Sacraments*, 17; Otto Teigler, *Zinzendorf als Schüler in Halle 1710-1716. Persönliches Ergehen und Präformation eines Axioms* (Halle: Verlag der Franckeschen Stiftungen, 2017).

in Brown's characterization, the "accomplishments" of Pietism were to "make faith, devotion, and knowledge of the Bible accessible to ordinary people." Furthermore, "Its emphasis on the priesthood of all believers and the necessity for faith to be active in love tapped tremendous reservoirs of spiritual energy and accomplished enduring achievements in the areas of Christian education, social work, and home and foreign missions."²⁵ Access to Scripture and a faithful reading of it act as organizing categories for Brown's description of Pietism, and the Pietist disposition towards Scripture and personal interpretation encouraged them "to concentrate on practical, social needs." Thus, as Pietist biblicism fostered social reform, it "gained the appreciation of the secular world," and this same Pietist emphasis on the Bible enabled Protestantism to survive the Enlightenment and – Brown's audience is left to assume – survive the culture wars of the 1980s.²⁶

But grouping Pietism around the theme of biblical authority led Brown unwittingly to flatten the multifaceted expression of German Pietism. His depiction of the importance of the ministries associated with Francke's *Hallesche Waisenhaus* serves as a vivid example. Under Francke's leadership, the orphanage became an outpost of reform, where theological education, medical care, global mission, and manufacturing would embody Francke's efforts to, as Brown rightly notes, "reform society through the church."²⁷ Nevertheless, Brown's brief summation of the *Hallesche Waisenhaus*, formed by his subtle polemic, focuses solely on the Bible institute, which was established in 1710 by Carl Hildebrand von Canstein (1667-1719) with the goal of making the Scriptures accessible to the broader population.²⁸ To be sure, the particular turn to the Bible

²⁵ Brown, *Heresies*, 393. Brown also mentions rescuing "Protestantism from the dominance of the academic profession" as one of Pietism's accomplishments.

²⁶ Brown, *Heresies*, 389.

²⁷ Brown, *Heresies*, 391.

²⁸ Brown, *Heresies*, 389-90. On the life of Canstein, see Peter Schicketanz, *Carl Hildebrand Freiherr von Canstein. Leben und Denken in Quellendarstellungen* (Halle: Verlag der Franckeschen Stiftungen, 2002).

made in Pietist circles factors prominently in understanding the movement as a whole, but late-seventeenth century Protestant groups overwhelmingly valued the Bible as authoritative. The reform-mindedness of Pietism arose from a particular biblical interpretation that appears prominently in Wallmann's definition: chiliasm. The chiliastic "hope for better times" animated much of the Pietist impetus for social reform, especially as it pushed off the Lutheran belief of God's impending judgment.²⁹ This may explain Brown's passing connection between Pietism and the Moral Majority. Just as the reforming ideals of Pietism were rooted for Brown in biblical authority, so too the culture wars carried out by the Moral Majority expressed an assumed fidelity to Scripture that oftentimes evidenced itself in premillennialist teachings. Oddly, in order for the Moral Majority to overcome separatist tendencies common among many of its premillennialist adherents, it betrayed its underlying eschatological outlook, and in so doing, it spoke with a chiliastic voice much like the Pietists.³⁰ Yet the premillennial biblical literalism of the Moral Majority that laid the foundation for its political activity represented a similar form of biblical authority that Brown associated with Pietism.

Brown's subtle polemic centered on biblical authority also causes him to offer what appear to be contradictory assessments of

²⁹ Wolfgang Breul, "'Hoffnung besserer Zeiten.' Der Wandel der 'Endzeit' im Lutherischen Pietismus um 1700," in Achim Landwehr (ed.), *Frühe Neue Zeiten. Zeitwissen Zwischen Reformation und Revolution* (Bielefeld: transcript, 2012), 261-82.

³⁰ Clyde Wilcox, Sharon Linzey, and Ted G. Jelen remark, "How can we account for a movement of political reform among those whose doctrine implies that such a reform is doomed to historical defeat? [...] [I]t is possible that the doctrine of pre-millennialism is associated with other beliefs and attitudes that increase support for political action," in, "Reluctant Warriors: Premillennialism and Politics in the Moral Majority," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 30:3 (Sept. 1991), 246. The study chooses to focus on a premillennial teaching of conflict with Satan as the reason for involvement, but it overlooks the more fundamental reason for social involvement by fundamentalists, who see the eventual destruction of the world: a biblical literalism as the source of religious authority.

Pietism. In addition to adopting Wallmann's three characteristics, Brown incorporates into his definition of Pietism some of the six suggestions for reform found in Spener's *Pia Desideria* (1675). Among these suggestions is Spener's call to reform theological disputations. Spener writes,

[I]f there is any prospect of a union of most of the confessions among Christians, the primary way of achieving it [...] would perhaps be this, that we do not stake everything on argumentation, for the present disposition of men's minds, which are filled by as much fleshly as spiritual zeal, makes disputation fruitless. [...] Disputation has in fact become so distasteful that an unseemly loathing of it has developed, and what is the fault of its abuse tends to be ascribed to disputation. [...] If the glory of God is to be properly advanced, disputation must be directed toward the goal of converting opponents.³¹

Brown introduces the topic of polemics earlier in the chapter with an eye to this aspect of Pietism. He roots the importance of theological disputations in post-Reformation Protestant Orthodoxy and its drive to distinguish biblical from unbiblical doctrine. This form of disputation devolved under Protestant Scholasticism so that, according to Brown, "Theological formulations came to be developed to meet the needs of the polemical situation, not primarily to edify and instruct Christians. The result was a theology that was far more suited to the debating hall than to the sanctuary." As a result, Brown claims Pietism's "reluctance to engage in theological controversy and polemics was certainly refreshing after a century and a half of acrimonious quarrels [...]."³² This anti-polemical spirit of Pietism, oftentimes attached to an assumed irenicism in the movement, develops what Brown calls a "nondogmatic Christianity."³³

³¹ Philipp Jacob Spener, *Pia Desideria*, trans. Theodore G. Tappert (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1964) 99, 101.

³² Brown, *Heresies*, 368, 391.

³³ The claim of Pietist irenicism requires further nuance. See Benjamin Marschke, "Wir Halenser': The Understanding Of Insiders And Outsiders

Pietist compromise of doctrine, argues Brown, arose from its emphasis on individual faith in connection to the reintroduction of the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers, personal Bible reading, and – in some cases – an emphasis on personal conversion.³⁴ Brown notes, “By making religion increasingly individualistic and by being relatively unconcerned about doctrine, the Pietists helped to make the old distinction between orthodoxy and heresy seem artificial and irrelevant to those who came after them.”³⁵ It should be noted that those theological leaders Brown associated with Pietism – Spener, Francke, and Zinzendorf – were quite concerned with doctrine, but in the case of *Heresies*, Brown is committed to offering an historically and theologically rich view of the church that promotes orthodoxy and orthopraxy.³⁶ Pietism, for Brown, compromises the former for the latter. What makes Brown’s argumentation complex, is that at one moment he is praising Pietism as that which has provided the groundwork for twentieth-century conservative, biblical Christianity, and at another point he critiques the movement as doctrinally weak, claiming it paved the way for the Enlightenment and Protestant liberalism.

This seeming contradiction can be explained by recognizing Brown’s subtle polemic regarding biblical authority. In order to communicate an historical narrative based upon his theological concern, Brown applies the framework of “fundamentals of the faith” to Pietism. Inasmuch as the renewal movement maintained

Among Halle Pietists In Prussia Under King Frederick William I (1713–1740),” in Jonathan Strom (ed.), *Pietism and Community in Europe and North America, 1650-1850* (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 81-93.

³⁴ Regarding the priesthood of all believers, see Jonathan Strom and Hartmut Lehmann, “Early Modern Pietism,” in Ulrich I. Lehner, Richard A. Muller, and A.G. Roeber (eds), *The Oxford Handbook of Early Modern Theology, 1600-1800* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016) 404.

³⁵ Brown, *Heresies*, 389.

³⁶ Cf. Yoder, *Pietism and the Sacraments*; idem, “Rendered ‘Odious’ as Pietists: Anton Wilhelm Böhme’s Conception of Pietism and the Possibilities of Prototype Theory,” in Christian T. Collins-Winn, Christopher Gehrz, G. William Carlson, and Eric Holst (eds.), *The Pietist Impulse in Christianity* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2011), 25-26.

what he labels “fundamentals,” it is to be commended, and where it compromised these, it is to be critiqued. Brown derives this language of fundamentals from the work of post-Reformation polemicists and irenicists.³⁷ “Both the syncretists and the polemicists were,” argues Brown, “trying to establish and define the *fundamentals of the faith*, the polemicists in order to defend them against the assaults of the heretics, the syncretists in order to use them as a basis for agreement [...]”³⁸ Brown offers a genealogy of Lutheran theologians who shaped doctrinal systems around these fundamentals, paying special attention to the work of Nicolaus Hunnius (1585-1643). Hunnius, according to Robert D. Preus, set forth “fundamental articles, secondary articles, and nonfundamental articles” in light of polemics against Reformed theologians.³⁹ In a similar way, Brown contextualizes “fundamentals” in his narrative by juxtaposing it to phrases like “secondary matters” or “trivial” points of dispute (what some Lutheran and Reformed theologians call *adiaphora*). But by using the early modern language of fundamentals to frame his historical narrative of Pietism, Brown constrains Pietist theologies to Protestant scholastic language, which to many figures in the renewal movement represented a dead orthodoxy enmeshed in theological quarreling. In the absence of the language of fundamentals, Brown appears to assume Pietists were theologically deficient or shallow. This may have led him to pass over common Pietist forms of doctrinal expression, like catechisms, collections of sermons, and treatises on church reform. Furthermore, he adopts a theological term that carried with it certain connotations for his audience in the 1980s, and it would seem unlikely—in light of his role as a public theologian—that he was unaware of this. As a neo-evangelical, Brown would not have labeled himself a “fundamentalist” in its

³⁷ Martin I. Klauber notes, “The term [fundamentals] is used in a technical sense by virtually all the major theologians of the [post-Reformation] period,” in, “The Drive Toward Protestant Union in Early Eighteenth-Century Geneva: Jean-Alphonse Turretini on the ‘Fundamental Articles’ of the Faith,” *Church History* 61:3 (1992), 334-35, n. 3.

³⁸ Brown, *Heresies*, 364.

³⁹ Robert D. Preus, *The Theology of Post-Reformation Lutheranism. A Study of Theological Prolegomena* (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1970), 144-145.

modern, American sense.⁴⁰ He nevertheless stood within a Reformed tradition that continued to be embroiled in the fundamentalist-modernist controversy associated with Presbyterianism in the early twentieth century. Prominent Reformed theologians like Princeton's B. B. Warfield and J. Gresham Machen vigorously defended five doctrines labeled as "fundamental": Christ's virgin birth, substitutionary atonement, miraculous ministry, bodily resurrection and the inerrancy of Scripture.⁴¹ These fundamentals, as they reflect orthodox Christology, form the basis for the overarching narrative of *Heresies*, and the fundamental of the inerrancy of Scripture takes center stage in his discussion of Pietism.⁴²

Under the subheading "The Quest for the Fundamentals," Brown notes, "Protestant emphasis on plenary, verbal inspiration made every statement of Scripture the Word of God, and Roman Catholics promptly told them that therefore everything in the Bible must be held as equally important and equally fundamental."⁴³ To

⁴⁰ Miller notes, "In unpublished reflections, Brown remembers fondly how Florovsky frequently said of his experience of the Harvard Divinity School faculty: 'Around here they call me a fundamentalist because I believe in God.' Brown adds, 'That helped me not flee in horror when I am labeled a fundamentalist. (Of course I am not a fundamentalist in the historic sense, but most critics don't have a fine nose for such distinctions.)'" Miller, "No diga mentiras," 26.

⁴¹ Bradley J. Longfield, "Presbyterianism in the United States and Canada in the Twentieth and Twenty-First Centuries," in Gary Scott Smith and P. C. Kemeny (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Presbyterianism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), 76-77.

⁴² Brown states, "In recent Protestant history, those who insist on inerrancy are the 'fundamentalists'; they stress a limited number of 'fundamentals,' one of which, the inerrancy of Scripture, is precisely the doctrine that logically ought to make everything the Bible asserts equally fundamental. In practice no one believes this or lives by it, but it is difficult to settle on a biblical principle for treating parts of the Bible as less fundamental than others," *Heresies*, 466 n. 15.

⁴³ Brown, *Heresies*, 369. J. I. Packer, who signed the Chicago Statement on Inerrancy states, "When biblical inspiration is said to be plenary (as opposed to partial) and verbal (as opposed to the idea that God gives only inklings and insights, without determining in what words they should be expressed), this does not imply a Koranic view of inspiration, whereby translations of the original are precisely not the Holy Book. [...] The point that plenary and verbal make is

the degree that Brown frames his chapter on Pietism around the theme of biblical authority and applies anachronistic terms like “plenary verbal inspiration” to post-Reformation theologians, he offers a glimpse into his subtle polemic regarding the importance of the doctrine of inerrancy in modern Protestant debates. For Brown, “[early modern] Orthodox Lutheranism promised the believer assurance on the basis of the *infallible* Word of God,” and Pietists, with their emphasis on personal bible study, allowed Christians to “resist skepticism” associated with the Enlightenment.⁴⁴ Thus, Pietism and those individuals and groups associated with its rise, have a more immediate service to offer on the battlefield of modern evangelical polemics. They offer an unexpected source of armament: an historical apologetic regarding the importance of biblical authority in American Christianity. As noted above, Brown believed that in manifestations like the International Council on Biblical Inerrancy, which produced the “Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy” in 1978, Pietism was taking the offensive against secularism.⁴⁵

Nevertheless, this subtle polemic appears to have led Brown to overlook an issue within his argumentation. Though Brown ordered his chapter so as to convince his audience of the high regard for inspiration and infallibility in Pietism, he appears to be more concerned with *interpretation* than *inspiration*. After claiming post-Reformation Protestants held to plenary verbal inspiration, he offers a three-fold typology regarding “determining the fundamentals” in early modern Christianity: traditionalists, liberals, and positivists. Traditionalists derived fundamentals from established creeds of the church; the “liberal approach [...] limited the articles of faith to those things Scripture expressly requires”; and positivists begin with

that biblical words themselves (in Hebrew, Aramaic, or Greek) are to be seen as God-given,” “The Adequacy of Human Language,” in Norman L. Geisler (ed.), *Inerrancy* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1980), 210-211.

⁴⁴ Brown, *Heresies*, 391-392 [emphasis mine].

⁴⁵ George M. Marsden, *Reforming Fundamentalism: Fuller Seminary and the New Evangelicalism* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1987), 285; John D. Hannah, *Invitation to Church History: American* (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 2019), 310-311.

Scripture and apply reason and logic to determine fundamentals.⁴⁶ Though these three types of approaches differ in how to apply Scripture to doctrinal issues, none of them question the inspiration or authority of Scripture. Rather, those within these groups who differ on the relationship between doctrine and the Bible, the positivists and liberals, argue over how to interpret passages. In the context of Pietism, August Hermann Francke is a good example of this disposition toward the Bible. Francke assumed the divine inspiration and authoritative nature of Scripture and set out to convince his students and congregants of what he believed to be the most faithful way of engaging the Bible.⁴⁷ Brown, by structuring his discussion according to a three-fold typology in the beginning of his chapter, concentrates on different interpretations between confessions, but this typology appears to fall by the wayside in his discussion of Pietism. It reappears indirectly in his final critique of Pietism. Brown argues Pietists expressed an initial integrity with regard to the fundamentals, but its individualism, subjectivism, and legalism, stressing “life rather than truth,” cultivated a disposition “that dogmas were not worth defending.”⁴⁸ At this point Brown again evidences the tension within his subtle polemic: modern, conservative positions on biblical inerrancy trace their lineage to Pietism, but Pietists have also sacrificed truth on the altar of experience.

Despite his critique, Brown’s willingness to offer positive appraisals of Pietism throughout “Pietism and Heresy” should be a surprise. It was the exception to the rule to find a nuanced chapter devoted to Pietism in a Reformed neo-evangelical work on church history. There is a long tradition within Reformed circles to confine Pietism to certain theological evils that developed out of early modern Protestantism. Karl Barth (1886-1968) and Francis Schaeffer (1912-1984) exemplify the Reformed critique of Pietist individualism. In Barth’s commentary on Romans, he provocatively remarks, “I would rather be in hell with the world church than in heaven with

⁴⁶ Brown, *Heresies*, 370.

⁴⁷ Yoder, *Pietism and the Sacraments*, 38.

⁴⁸ Brown, *Heresies*, 391.

Pietism, be it of a lower or higher order, of an older or more modern observance. In this case Christ is with us in hell.”⁴⁹ Though Barth’s critique is aimed at individualism and self-righteousness found in radical forms of Pietism, he also includes confessional Pietists like Spener and Francke.⁵⁰ Francis Schaeffer turns his critique toward a “platonic spirituality” he believes forms within Pietism.

It was platonic in the sense that Pietism made a sharp division between the “spiritual” and the “material” world—giving little, or no, importance to the “material” world. The totality of human existence was not afforded a proper place. In particular it neglected the intellectual dimension of Christianity.⁵¹

In offering these critiques, both Barth and Schaeffer ignore the complexity of Pietism, which leads them either to overlook the words and deeds of confessional Pietists or to contradict their own arguments. While at moments Brown finds himself entangled in similar types of critiques – in fact he notes the criticisms of Barth and Schaeffer in his chapter, his subtle polemic regarding the importance of biblical authority in Christological arguments allows him to hold a more refined tension in his evaluation of Pietism. The echoes of this tension can be found in broader, twentieth-century Reformed churches: in some instances Reformed communities unwittingly adopt Pietist models for church renewal and individual engagement of the Bible, and in other instances they bemoan an individualism and legalism they impute to Pietist theologies. Brown claims, “Although hardly anyone calls himself a Pietist today, most independent Protestant churches and many small Protestant

⁴⁹ Eberhard Busch, *Karl Barth and the Pietists: The Young Karl Barth’s Critique of Pietism and Its Response*, trans. Daneil W. Bloesch (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2004), 43.

⁵⁰ Busch, *Karl Barth and the Pietists*, 24-25. Individualism and religious self-righteousness go hand-in-hand in Barth’s critique of Pietism. See Karl Barth, *The Epistle to the Romans*, trans. Edwyn C. Hoskyns (6th ed.; Oxford: Oxford University Press), 100, 109.

⁵¹ Francis A. Schaeffer, *A Christian Manifesto* (Westchester: Crossway, 1981), 18-19.

denominations are essentially Pietistic in spirit.”⁵² John Bolt argues that the *Afscheiding* (Secession) in the Netherlands that formed the Christian Reformed Church in the nineteenth century and the theology of one of its most important churchmen, Herman Bavinck (1854-1921), have clear links to Pietism.⁵³ In many ways, the love-hate relationship between Reformed communities and German Pietism confirm Brown’s own claim that Pietism is “the most important theological phenomenon between the Protestant Reformation and theological liberalism [...]”.⁵⁴

Brown’s tempered Reformed appraisal approaches Pietism seeking to acknowledge its benefit to the development of conservative Protestant theology while pointing out the theological deficiencies that developed out of the reform movement. His subtle polemic uses Pietism to turn his audience’s attention toward “fundamentals” – especially the authority of Scripture – shared between post-Reformation theologians, Pietists groups, and twentieth century evangelicals. Though his argumentation is at points muddled by the historical complexity of Pietism, the renewal movement serves to warn his contemporaries that modern Protestantism was in a battle to defend orthodoxy, and only a sure foundation built upon the authority of Scripture would hold.

⁵² Brown notes, “Although hardly anyone calls himself a Pietist today, most independent Protestant churches and many small Protestant denominations are essentially Pietistic in spirit.” *Heresies*, 363.

⁵³ John Bolt, *A Theological Analysis of Herman Bavinck’s Two Essays on the Imitatio Christi: Between Pietism and Modernism* (Lewiston: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2013), 49-51. For a discussion of *Afscheiding* see, Herman J. Selderhuis (ed.), *Handbook of Dutch Church History* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2015), 460-62.

⁵⁴ Brown, *Heresies*, 361.

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