

The Holy Spirit and Sanctification: Refinding the Lost Image of Creation

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We are dispirited. Walking the world in solitary aloofness, we have lost the image of our creation and we live in the midst of people who have lost the image of their creation. There is a malaise within and among us; our spirits have become estranged from the Spirit of God.

To be dispirited is to live with a lack in our humanity; it is to live as incomplete and as allowing for, resigning to, or affirming our incompleteness. To be dispirited is to live with attenuated relationships and with limited realization of corporate possibility. Living in isolation from the Holy Spirit, which creates and succors our spirits, we have lost the image of our creation.

To say these things is not to speak new truth; rather, it is to indicate the persistent tendency toward despoilation of human selfhood. People exist inauthentically, willfully rejecting their most distinctively human qualities, detracting from their freedom to be, to create, and to relate to others. Hence, as we find people on the street, in their homes, at their jobs, in their towns, in their cities, and in their churches, we find them living in truncated condition, lacking the power to express free and full lives.

This condition must be understood for what it is not, and for what it is. It is not relegation to a natural condition as opposed to a supernatural life; it is a deprivation of the fully maturing selfhood which was intended in human creation. To live as dispirited is to realize a less complete personhood than that which God intended; it is not to miss personhood completely; it is not to lack all creative vision and activity; it is not to live totally sundered from community; but it is to live

with less than full realization of any of these possibilities and it is to live with unnecessary malformation. The failure to become fully human, not the failure to become more than human, is the resulting condition of dispirited life. *Gratia perficit naturam, non tollit.*

To understand this condition we need to return to first things, to primary reality. The Spirit of God and the spirit of persons are integrally, inescapably related. The human spirit has its origin in God who has created persons in his own image and with their own integrity. The human spirit has its definition in Jesus Christ who recreates persons and incorporates them into his life. The human spirit has its potential maturity given by the Holy Spirit who projects possibility by his continually nurturing presence.

The doctrine of the Holy Spirit, while immensely rich, is principally interpreted here under the ruling dynamic relationships. The integral community of God with persons and of persons with one another under God is the controlling theme. Throughout, there is reciprocal movement between the finding of selfhood in divine-human relationships and the finding of individual and corporate selfhood in human relationships.

Theological anthropology must take into account this movement from experience of community with God to the experience of community with other persons; and the counterposing move from experience of community with other persons to an experience of community with God. The interaction and interfacing of these two realities always constitutes a difficulty for understanding and interpretation, but the composite reality is integral to our total experience. Our interpretations must include the reality of both aspects of this holistic experience. Community with God in the explicit relationship with Jesus Christ posits the norm by which all other relationships are to be understood, appreciated, and judged. From the per-

spective of this primary relationship with God through Jesus Christ one can recognize the wide-ranging and previous grace which has been present in general human experience. From the experienced meaning found in human relationships there is established the possibility of understanding the meaning of God's relating to us in Jesus Christ. Each relation contributes to the appreciation, evaluation, and projection of the other. Nevertheless, in terms of priority of values, the relationship with God in Jesus Christ functions as the more basic criterion and it is this relationship by which human relationships are ultimately judged, affirmed, annulled, and directed to new possibility.¹

As viewed from the biblical perspective, the human being is brought into the world dependent upon the gracious community of God. In addition, persons progress in meaningful maturation where there is a mutual engagement of their spirits by and with the Spirit of God. Consequently, through God's initiation, continuing presence, and hopeful projection, we are created and challenged into growing selfhood.

In human society we can recognize an extension of this primal relationship in common grace through the created potential for personhood in community. The human child is born dependent upon community. The child remains dependent and can only live and mature if there is care—an attending to his or her needs and possibilities by others. Furthermore, the child can only come to meaningful personhood where there is an affirmation of his or her person and where that selfhood is defined in opposition to and in positive relation with other persons.² This need of relation continues throughout maturation, although its character goes through a variety of permutations. Dependence becomes interdependence, and mutual love, empathy, and support remain essential for meaningful life.

At the same time, to be a self also implies self-

possession. There is an integration, an integrity by which the individual person is characterized, that is, by which he or she is given character. Selfhood is progressively realized as native potential grouped around a center of value; this is an ongoing, uncompleted, but essential motility of human self-development. Hence interior strength and personal definition are constituents of selfhood and are present where self-identification is found.

In maturing selfhood these two dimensions are always present: relation to others and possession of one's own person. There is a rhythm between, or a symbiosis of, these two elements: a going out from the self and reinforcing in the self; a reaching to the other and an affirmation of one's person. Each requires the other, each induces the other, each enhances the other.

But there is a priority. A child comes into the world dependent upon the approach of others; self-possession is responsive to affirmation by another or others. The quality of that affirmation determines the quality of the possession. The character and range of that affirmation determine the maturing potential of personal development. To be a self is to live in relation, but the person(s) to whom one is related is (are) fundamentally important in terms of the possible selfhood which may be realized. To be a self is to have a center around which life is organized; to be a self is, in that sense, to have a god. But now to take the next and critical step: to possess the possibility for actualizing the full potential for personhood requires that one be related to God; for it is only when we are related to that which calls forth our full humanity and offers the richest affirmation of our person that we have set for us the vision and the possibility of full personhood. It is God in Christ relating to persons through the Holy Spirit who establishes this full potential and

evokes the response which issues in persistent maturation.

We are created *imago Dei*, for full relationship with God, for full possession of our persons. This is our heritage. But we have lost the image of our creation. We are fallen and so fail to realize the selfhood for which we were created. To fall is to be dispirited, to live apart from God's encountering presence, to live in truncated human community, and to be inadequately self-possessed. Because of the fall, there is dehumanization, that is, estrangement from God, and others, and ourselves; further, there is antagonism with ourselves, and others, and God. Hence, there is isolation and deprivation of spirit.

The tragedy of the human condition is located in this failure to realize the gracious possibility for fully maturing life. The hope for human development is located in the gracious possibility for the renewal of the lost image of our full humanity. The conditions of this recrudescence are justification and sanctification. Justification, as the gift of new possibility through forgiveness, reconstitutes the grounds for, even as it expresses the origination of, positive relationship. Sanctification, as the gift of new possibility through maturation, actualizes continuously enriching, challenging, fulfilling relationship. It is upon this possibility as given in sanctification that we shall now concentrate.

I. Sanctification: the Idea as Received

Sanctification is a theological notion long neglected— even by those who are in the Wesleyan tradition. The reasons for this neglect are complex and need exploration, and we shall touch upon this. But it is obvious that Methodists tend to look upon the doctrine with some uncertainty and with not a little embarrassment. It is like an heirloom which is presumed to have some value—how much no one knows and whom to ask no

one is sure. We keep the doctrine, but with a degree of uncomfortableness, and are quite often relieved to have it hidden in an ecclesiastical lock-box.

I shall attempt to interpret sanctification as the re-finding of our lost human image. This interest is not located in an effort to reclaim an archaic word, "sanctification," although the word is significant; rather, the effort is to emphasize a dimension of experience which is a part of full-orbed Christian life and therefore requires theological interpretation. This dimension we need to keep before our attention and verify in our experience. But before we can undertake a fresh interpretation we need to look at the reasons why this doctrine has eroded.⁴ First, however, let us begin with John Wesley and his definition of sanctification which was for him the chief concern. It was the primary mission of the church to spread "scriptural holiness over the land." There were three major emphases which Wesley made: (a) purity of intention, dedication of all life to God; (b) possessing the mind of Christ enabling us to walk as Christ walked; and (c) loving God with all our heart and our neighbors as ourselves. In all of these definitions the primal emphasis was upon the affections—upon the love of God—but in each case there was also a resulting moral style of life.⁴

Already in his time, Wesley was pressed to defend this position and attempted to say what he did not mean as well as what he meant.⁵ But the doctrine was nurtured in uncertainty and continued in controversy.

A general examination reveals four major reasons why the teaching on sanctification declined into general disuse and often explicit rejection. First, the word "perfection" caused difficulty. Perfection seemed to imply a static, achieved state and in this it seemed to be an excessive claim. Perhaps modern psychology was the chief agent of this challenge. The psychological understanding of processes of growth and the continu-

ing character of maturation made questionable any state which seemed static even though Wesley explicitly said this was not so. Perhaps Wesley lacked clear conceptualization or accessible illustrations to make his point, "perfect and growing in perfection," clear. I assume that he had in mind something like a person who is entirely sensitive—if this were possible—to the needs of another person but who constantly grows in capacity to be sensitive and continues to be entirely sensitive—now in expanded capacity—to the needs of the other person. I assume something like this is what Wesley had in mind, but again good illustrations are difficult to find. In addition, the development of depth psychology called into question undue reliance upon the constancy and significance of our conscious awareness (which is what Wesley stressed). The vagrancy of the unconscious, the deception of our conscious thoughts, and the sense of dynamic growth all worked to discredit the possibility of perfection. And perhaps a proper Christian humility also worked to discount the notion when it was falsely interpreted so as to engender pride. In any case, the very use of the word "perfection" limited the acceptance of the doctrine.

Second, there was a tendency to moralize the idea of sanctification in such a way as to unbalance the fact that sanctification was first of all a gospel and then a life. Both grace and responsibility should be present in creative tension. But the good person was often judged to be so by his overt moral virtue. The emphasis on moral qualities was transferred from a subordinate, although necessary, role to the central role and, consequently, perfection was distorted. Rules and law—and these often of a most parochial type—became the norm by which sanctity was assessed. The primacy of religious affection was lost and such a tendency toward moralism led to a demise of the doctrine.

Third, there was a tendency—at least in the United

States—to identify sanctification with a special form of Spirit-possession, namely, *glossalalia*. The manifest form of the second blessing or the second work of grace was speaking in tongues. But such ecstasy has always been confined to a minor proportion of Christians. Hence, when the experience of *glossalalia* was recognized as limited in the number of participants or as being eccentric to the mainstream of many persons' Christian development, interest in the entire doctrine waned.

Fourth, the doctrine of sanctification as taught by Wesley (although not lived by Wesley) and his followers was excessively individualistic in its form. Sanctification was thought of in private terms and therefore was separated from the experience of community as a community. Indeed, the notion of the "one, holy . . . church" seems to be shifted to the "one, holy" person. Such an emphasis was congenial, for instance, to the solitary character of the American frontier and modern American society, and possibly of western European life, but it did not speak to the need of community or to the possibility for church life. And this led to decline at least among those who had interest in the social character of life.

The idea of sanctification as received has, for the reasons indicated, become generally uncertain in meaning and unapplied in Christian living. Increasingly, the doctrine has become non-functional as a theological issue and as a moral force. Nevertheless, it continues to elicit some historical interest and, perhaps, solicits examination to determine its present value and applicability. It is the effort of this chapter to explore the possibility of new vitality for this theological concern.

II. Sanctification: the Idea as Reconceived

As already indicated, I want to speak of sanctification as the refinding of the lost image of creation. This

means that sanctification is to be understood as the process of maturation through which persons progressively realize their potential for human growth as individuals and as participants in community with others and with God. Just as there is a wholeness in the action of God, there is a wholeness in Christian experience which, while it allows us to distinguish between such doctrines as creation, justification, and sanctification, always emphasizes the completeness of God's relation to persons and persons' relation to God. This is the fullness of redemption.

Let me illustrate the interrelated and complex wholeness.

God as Father is our creator; our life begins in him.

God in Christ is our justification; our justification is our dying and rising with Christ.

God as Holy Spirit is our sanctification. Our sanctification is the continuous interaction of the Holy Spirit with our spirits.

The one God acts to create and to promise full humanity. God as creator originates human life; Jesus Christ as justifier recreates human life; the Holy Spirit as sanctifier fulfills human life. Thus Christian experience extends from creation through justification to sanctification; and human maturation is the process of moving toward the full realization of personhood under the aegis of the encompassing grace of God as expressed in Christ Jesus through the Holy Spirit.⁶

We have spoken already of maturation. Now we should define the notion. The process of maturation is a continuous centering of life upon one prime object of affection. To will one thing, to love God only, is the chief end of persons. And Christian growth may be defined as the continual re-envisioning of that goal and the progressive integration of life around that center. To be a developing person is to be drawn by and to draw more and more of life under the aegis of a

supreme object of devotion. To be developing as a community is to be drawn by and to draw more and more of life under the aegis of the supreme object of worship. Life for individuals and communities is established around a sacred center, around a constellation of values.⁷ Throughout experience there is necessary reciprocation of individuals and community as a center is shared and historically conveyed. In Christian faith this center is God: God as he is disclosed in Jesus Christ, God as he is present in the Holy Spirit. To love God without measure and without demand, to love God in and for himself—this is authentic relationship and it is spirited life. To love our neighbor in unrestrained caring, this is authentic relationship and it is spirited life.

Human life becomes increasingly human—human life is sanctified—by this focused love; and in this way fullness of human life is dependent upon a transcendent point of reference. There is a sequence of relationships. The Holy Spirit confronts us soliciting our response in the ordinary events of creation, but we are willfully blind. The Holy Spirit meets us soliciting our response in Jesus Christ and in faith graciously given our eyes are opened. The Holy Spirit confronts us soliciting our response to his presence and in love our sight is intensified and extended.⁸ God in his fullness is present to us throughout the ordinary and the special moments of revelation. But we speak of Spirit-presence as having that place in the ecology of spiritual life where attention and devotion come to clear focus and life is drawn around that nucleus and toward maturity. Sanctification is the continuous consent of life to the lordship of Jesus Christ as he is made present through the Holy Spirit.

Now I want to add a comment. There is an incongruity with our usual experience when we speak of holiness. Sanctification is not to be understood or ex-

pected as a result of a review—even of the most careful sort—of the lower levels of experience. Rather, it represents a fresh and original integration of the given clues into a new configuration. An analysis of all of the ingredient factors which go into explaining this condition will not yield the new synthesis. It comes as a new vision of possibility which draws previous understandings into a new form, fulfilling their potential in unexpected ways. As a clock cannot be explained by an examination of all of the physical or chemical laws which are employed in its working, but in terms of its intended function, so sanctification is a new quality of life which results from a new vision for life. As a poetic achievement is not to be understood by an analysis of each word used, syntactical systems, and grammatical conventions, but in terms of its whole and unique character, so sanctification is a distinctive style of life established by a distinctive understanding of life. Holiness of life is not a natural, expected next step. It comes as unexpected discovery of a new integration of living with new dimensionality. Here the vision of Christian community establishes its own distinctive possibility.

Through this dynamic-of-focused-existence, life is released for expansiveness. There is a development of the rich possibility of personhood. Persons are emancipated to realize who they are and who they may become, and all of this in community. Sanctification means a new self understanding and realization; it means well-being. Sanctification means to be fully born and to be growing, to have a new capacity for others, for sympathy and love, for joy and sadness, for caring and sharing.

The order of priorities should be clear in this rhythm of being found and self-finding. The love of God initiates the response of persons. The holy life is built upon the gospel of prevent, and continuing, judg-

ment and grace. Holy living is holy precisely because it continually responds to the captivating power of that grace. The holy life is drawn from the shores of shallow security into the ocean where duty becomes freedom and moral responsibility becomes the pulsation of a life lived in trustful relation to God. The effect of the relationship enacted in Jesus Christ is the opening up of the whole, tangled, many-dimensioned creature to the continuous presence and power of the Holy Spirit and the resulting fructification as enriched maturation.

Sanctification is expressed as morality and, as such, has implications for corporate life. We shall argue shortly that sanctification as reinterpreted must become more conscious of its embodiment as community. The relation of spiritual righteousness to morality must be carefully stated, however, for there is a direct bearing upon theological assumptions as well as upon strategic implementation.

Theologically and experientially we have to deal with a persistent tendency to substitute moralistic externalization of life for spiritual depth and range. When persons become dispirited and live in solitary separation they tend to relate to other people through the establishment of functional power bases by which they can affect their social context. When this political interest issues from moral commitment it is, for the dispirited person, often an expression of what Michael Polanyi has called "moral inversion." That is, it is a condition which represents a loss of authoritative ground in transcendent moral obligation and the affirmation of an emotive morality of individual interests. Such private convictions are often generalized, then absolutized and imposed on others. These "homeless moral passions" seek their dwelling place in centers of power which can effect the will of the morally inspired person upon a wider society. Several matters are crucial in this situation: the loss of a basic ground upon which communal

moral consent can be built, the substitution of pragmatic political power operations for more basic moral authority, and the subsequent destruction of authentic community as such.

The loss of transcendent grounding for morality is symptomatic of the loss of spiritual rootage in life. The isolated individual who has been sundered from primary partnership with God attempts to claim self-determined moral sovereignty—as an act of *hubris*—and to impose his or her moral convictions upon their context. Always involved in moral inversion is a hybrid of skepticism and perfectionism which leads to what may be called a "skeptico-fanaticism," that is, a skepticism about the source of moral life in any transcendent reality and a fanatical desire to impose privately conceived moral tenets or actions upon other people. What is at stake here is the basic loss of the relationship between God and persons at the ontological and axiological levels and a substitution of an individual's relation to his or her own self which is extended into imposed relations upon others.

The substitution of newly found centers of political power for the unself-claiming *diakonia* of Jesus represents a repudiation of the Protestant claim of justification by grace alone with a forthright effort to claim righteousness through moral exertion and with negative effect upon community life. This may be described as a pathological moral excess because it grows out of a sense of guilt over the loss of transcendent grounding and a sense of responsibility to serve and save the world. Such inauthentic rootage, however, always brings forth poisonous fruit; one cannot gather figs from thistles.

To claim that holiness is first of all a gospel, and then a resulting morality, is to lay hold upon the first principles of the Christian message. It is to claim that the foundation upon which Christian life is built is the

redemptive work of God in Jesus Christ and it is to claim that the moral life which is built upon that foundation is the extension of God's redemptive activity as that grace is refracted through faithful discipleship.

III. Sanctification: the Presence of the Holy Spirit as Community

To speak of persons being focused upon God is to say that they are in living vital relation with the Holy Spirit. The focused life is the specifically related life; maturation means growth in and through specific relationships. Sanctification is the process of drawing together the disconnected strands of life by means of a central relationship. Throughout this discussion I have attempted to define personhood in terms of positively enacted relationships. To be a person is to be in relationship. To possess selfhood is to live in community with other selves. Hence, Wesley's notion of synergism is not to be eschewed. While it has always been difficult theologically to develop synergism without compromising God's sovereignty, it is necessary to insist that God in his creation of persons has limited his freedom by the gift of human freedom and has consequently made relationship more prominent than unilateral, omnipotent sovereignty. In his creation of persons for fellowship, God has, at the same time, limited himself and increased the free potential for responsible maturation of persons in community.¹⁰ Forced relation is not love, for love requires fresh and free giving of each to the other.

Several times we have mentioned the word "freedom," and this notion is essential to sanctification. "For freedom Christ has set us free." (Galatians 5:1) Holy living is expressed through the liberation of persons who are becoming the persons God envisioned in their creation. The distinctive character of sanctity

is best captured in the freedom of the human spirit as opposed to the atrophied life of bondage. Redeemed persons are those who are set free by God for their human fulfillment. But individual freedom is bound with communal freedom. Christianity, Charles Gore has said, "came into the world as a life to be lived by a community."¹¹ The single focus of worship draws the church as Christian community to God, and thence to freedom, and endorses the congregation as a liberated and liberating community. The sharing of freedom within and beyond the church is an essential element in the experience of liberation and is an authentic expression of sanctification. Again, we are not speaking of an achieved moral condition or a static state of community; rather, we are speaking of a community which matures toward its goal through responsive love (worship).

The cardinal issue is that in the present day it is a fundamental falsification to think of sanctification in radically individualistic terms. Holiness is to be found in and through Christian community. To be sanctified is to belong to the company of saints; it is to be in lively Christian comradeship; it is to make Christian community the agent of emancipated living in human society.¹²

The Holy Spirit is the *esprit de corps*; it is the Spirit which proffers community, which binds life together in community, and which extends the reach of community to those who are at present alien. The distinctive factor, however, is not that there is simply togetherness but rather the quality of the life which is experienced in community. Sanctification carries a connotation and a denotation of freedom, of openness, of fellow-affirmation, of concern for love and justice. Sanctification is the communal embodiment of crucifixion and resurrection; it is forgiveness, and new beginning, and renewed vision. Sanctification is life in the Spirit, among spirited

persons; life grouped by the Spirit to extend and enhance the spirited possibilities of all persons.

In the New Testament, *hagios* designates all members of the congregation, not simply as a sum total of individuals but in virtue of their common life in Christ. Therefore, sanctification should apply to the common life of the congregation. Separated individualism is modified as the community realizes its own distinctive character and reinforces the distinctive character of each of its members. The church communicates to persons the assurance of their corporate—incorporated—reality in contrast to the isolated living which is typical of the present world. Ambiguity in the realization of this goal is ingredient to the life of the church, but within the community of the Holy Spirit the ambiguity is recognized and struggled with although it is never completely removed.¹³

Traditionally, creedal theology has started its description of the church as "one, holy . . . church." The oneness of the church is to be found in the singularity of its love. The church is the community of those who are in community with Jesus Christ. The congregation is convoked by the grace of God; it is continued by that grace; and it is commissioned for mission by that grace. The church is maturing where it responds to grace with understanding, trust, and obedience.

The holiness of the church has carried two meanings. Sanctity has often meant to be set apart, to be separated, to be drawn out of the world for special relationship. The prophetic critique in the Old Testament transformed the notion of sanctity so that it came also to mean righteousness, that is, the realization of meaning through faithful love of, and service for, God. It is this dimension which must, once again, be firmly grasped and faithfully pursued.

Here the theme of eschatology becomes important. Caught within the polarity of the kingdom present and

the kingdom coming, the Christian community lives upon the realized fullness of life in Christ even as it moves toward the further and continuous realization of the intended image of creation. Hence, the church can represent in her own life and order a model of the ultimate destiny of persons in the kingdom of God. Sanctity, as found within a community whose historical existence makes our existence meaningful, also points toward a community whose full actualization always lies ahead. The presence of God as Holy Spirit creates our meaningful present; the promise of God as Holy Spirit creates our hope of meaningful future.

There is sanctification in church life. Once again, such holiness exists upon the base of the gospel and lives with eschatological fulfillment and expectation. Sanctification is the embodiment of the realized and coming kingdom of God. The configuration of the congregation which lives with the presence and power of the Holy Spirit takes distinctive shape as persons become free in community and as community seeks to free persons in the surrounding society. Both of these dimensions—living a free and maturing life and enlarging the context for freedom and growth—are important for the full and responsible life of Christian persons who constitute the Body of Christ.

It is the task of the church to witness to, even as it partially embodies, freedom and justice. Christian communities must become the place of free space among persons in which people share God's power as they live openly with one another and as they attempt to extend the character of the kingdom of God into the larger common life.

The meaning of human life, we have claimed, is relational and such meaning is progressively realized as there is mutual acceptance, affirmation, and acclamation. But a more fundamental point must be re-emphasized: human community is established upon

the ground of divine-human relationship, and this theme is found expressed at the nexus of the biblical tradition in the covenant. It is the covenanting of God which creates community—with himself and among persons—and by perpetuation through community provides the possibility for authentic personhood.

Conclusion

If this proposed reinterpretation possesses significance, then it does respond as an answer to the major causes for the decline of the doctrine of sanctification, and may point a direction for a revivification of the doctrine within the Wesleyan tradition. Holiness, as we have defined it, is not a realized state of being or a condition of affairs; it is, rather, a continuously realized and a continuous challenge to realization of the gracious presence of the Holy Spirit: sanctification becomes a process of maturation in which life undergoes constant reshaping through the primacy of the commanding relationship with God. The notion of perfection is released from a narrow moralization and is clearly built upon the gospel of redemption which undergirds the innovative possibilities for discipleship. The notion of perfection can no longer be interpreted in radically individualistic terms, rather it is now understood in terms of community for only in such a context may persons actualize their freedom to be and their struggle for the freedom of others. And in all of this the freedom of the Holy Spirit is also honored.

Now we return to our original theme. Through the experience of sanctification, dispirited persons find new spirit as the Holy Spirit meets our spirits in nurturing engagement. Spirit-with-spirit we mature in those special ways which are given to each Christian person and every Christian community. In engagement by and with the Holy Spirit we recover the lost image of our creation.

Notes

1. This approach is differentiated from that of some other theologians. For instance, Paul Tillich in *Systematic Theology* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1963), III, 22, writes: "Without knowing what spirit is, one cannot know what Spirit is." We are provided with a more succinct statement of this position by Wolfhart Pannenberg in an article, "The Working of The Spirit in the Creation and in the People of God," *Spirit, Faith, and Church* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1970), pages indicated. Pannenberg argues, "... we have to deal with the universal meaning in the origin of all life before turning to the particular presence of the Spirit in the Christian community." (14) The ecstatic element in life is denominated "spirit." (18) This ecstatic element does not belong to "the natural equipment of men" even though it is ubiquitously present as a possibility for persons. (22) The divine spirit is the divine power that makes persons alive and which draws persons into ecstatic self-transcending experiences, some of which may be perverse and others fulfilling of the self in its relation to God and other persons. (22) On the basis of this general presence of spirit it is possible for Pannenberg to characterize the special form of spiritual presence in the Christian community: "The Christian community lives on the basis of the message of a new life, which is no longer separated from the spiritual origin of all life." (23)

My reasons for preferring to move in the other direction are (1) that the experience of the spirit is retrospectively recognized after the dominant clarification effected by the experience of the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of Jesus Christ; (2) the view of human nature and its condition as fallen I take to be more radically perverting than Tillich or Pannenberg; (3) I do not believe that the human spirit is given its full integrity when it is defined as participant in, but not possessor of, spirit, as Pannenberg seems to indicate. Because of these reasons, it seems truer to Christian experience and theologically more adequate to begin with the special characterization of the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of Jesus Christ and then move to the implications of this revelation for the general presence of spirit in human life.

Tillich, it should be noted, differs from Pannenberg in that he emphasizes that human self-transcendence must be met by revelation to actualize its full potential (*Systematic Theology*, III, 112); this is a dynamic interaction with which I agree and which I think is basically significant. But I have reversed the weight of the dynamic interaction. There is a universal spirit-presence and human beings are continuously engaged by this spirit; however,

even this experience is known for what it is only after there is the dominant definition by the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of Jesus Christ.

2. "We are not organisms, but persons. The nexus of relations which unites us in a human society is not organic but personal . . . The baby . . . is made to be cared for. He is born into a love relationship which is inherently personal . . . he depends for his existence . . . upon intelligent understanding, upon rational foresight . . . He can live only through other people and in dynamic relation with them. In virtue of this fact he is a person, for the personal is constituted by the relation of persons. His rationality is already present, though only germinally, in the fact that he lives and can only live by communication." John MacMurray, *Persons In Relation* (New York: Harper Brothers, 1961), pp. 46, 48, 51. Also, ". . . children are born potentially human, that is all; they are smiled and talked into being actually so." Austin Farrar, *Faith and Speculation* (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1967), p. 6.
3. Two assessments of the development of the doctrine of sanctification are of enough interest to mention. R.W. Dale remarked, "There was one doctrine of John Wesley's—the doctrine of perfect sanctification—which ought to have led to a great and original ethical development; but the doctrine has not grown, it seems to remain where John Wesley left it. There has been a want of genius or the courage to attempt the solution of the immense practical questions which the doctrine suggests." (Quoted by Thomas Jackson, *Wesley Bicentennial 1703-1903* [Middleton, Conn.: Wesleyan University, 1904], pp. 72-73.) John Kent has more recently commented, "The point about Methodism, as has become clearer with the passage of time, was that so far from being raised up to spread scriptural holiness throughout the land, it might be said with more truth to have been raised up in order to show that scriptural holiness could not be spread throughout the land." (Martin E. Marty and Dean G. Pearman, editors, "Problems of a Protestant Spirituality," *New Theology*, No. 4, [New York: Macmillan, 1967], p. 215.) Each of these assessments is partial and therefore of limited truth, but they point to generalizations which must be taken seriously.
4. Edward H. Sugden, editor, *Wesley's Standard Sermons* (London: Epworth, 1921), II, 148. See also "Christian Perfection" and "The Scripture Way of Salvation," *Ibid.*, pp. 147-177, 442-460; also, "A Plain Account of Christian Perfection," Thomas Jackson, editor, *Wesley's Works*, Third Edition (London: John Mason, 1830), XI, 366-445. It may be helpful to quote a statement to clarify the character of sanctification in Wesley's thought. Justifi-

fication "is not the being made actually just and righteous. This is *sanctification*; which is indeed, in some degree, the immediate fruit of justification, but, nevertheless, is a distinct gift of God, and of a totally different nature. The one (justification) implies, what God does for us through his Son; the other (sanctification) what he works in us by his Spirit . . . in general use, they are sufficiently distinguished from each other . . ." *Wesley's Works*, V, p. 56.

5. For instance, see Wesley's sermon, "Christian Perfection," *op. cit.*, pp. 150-174. See James M. Gustafson, *Christ and the Moral Life* (New York: Harper and Row, 1968), pp. 61-115, for the best recent study of sanctification.
6. "The thought is not that the Father alone is the Creator, the Son alone Redeemer and the Holy Spirit alone Sanctifier. The creation and preservation of the universe, the atonement for sin and its forgiveness, resurrection from the dead and the gift of eternal life—all these are the operations of the one Divine majesty as such. Yet the Father is especially emphasized in the work of creation which proceeds originally from him as the first person; the Son is emphasized in the redemption he has accomplished in his own person; and the Holy Spirit in the peculiar work of sanctification, which is both his mission and revelation. Such distinction is made for the purpose of affording Christians the unqualified assurance that there is but one God and yet three persons in the one divine essence—truths the sainted fathers have faithfully gathered from the writings of Moses, the prophets and the apostles, and which they have maintained against all heretics." Martin Luther, *Epistle Sermon, Trinity Sunday* (Lenker Edition), Vol. IX, nos. 16-23.
7. Edward Shils has written, "Society has a centre . . . This central zone impinges in various ways on those who live within the ecological domain in which the society exists . . .
 "The centre, or the central zone, is the phenomenon of the realm of values and beliefs. It is the centre of the order of symbols, of values and beliefs, which govern the society. It is the centre because it is the ultimate and irreducible; and it is felt to be such by many who cannot give explicit articulation to its irreducibility . . .
 "The centre is also a phenomenon of the realm of action. It is a structure of activities, of roles, of persons, within the network of institutions. It is in these roles that the values and beliefs which are central are embodied and propounded." "Centre and Periphery," *The Logic of Personal Knowledge: Essays Presented to Michael Polanyi* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1961), p. 117.
8. Albert C. Outler has offered a definition of sanctification: "Holiness, therefore, is humanity raised to its highest

- power by the Holy Spirit," "The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit," *New Theology*, p. 207.
9. See *The Tacit Dimension* (New York: Doubleday, 1966), pp. 57ff.
 10. John Oman, *Grace and Personality* (London: Collins, 1960), second edition. This is a theological treatise of unusual importance and especially in its sensitive and meaningful exploration of the themes of dependence and independence in persons' relation to God. See especially chapters VII-XI. Oman does not, however, develop the communal aspects in an adequate fashion.
 11. *The Philosophy of The Good Life* (London: John Murray, 1930), p. 198.
 12. Colin Williams attempts a "reconstruction" of sanctification following the lead of Walter G. Muelder by stressing its social implications for ethical responsibility (cf., Colin W. Williams, *John Wesley's Theology Today*. New York: Abingdon, 1960, pp. 182, 189-90). The difference I am attempting to express goes beyond the isolated individual who then relates to society, to a re-understanding of Christians as necessarily a part of a community which possesses unique potential for the fulfillment of life.
 13. Cf., Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology*, III, p. 173.