NOTES ON TRINITY, COMMUNITY AND POWER

Mostly middle class church
employer edifice (white elephants)
not represent
provinces parsonage
concern practical and with people
find alternatives what choices for the
church facing the future: An situation
beyond ideologies, utopias? adapt, survive?
community level empowered by and in
love of Trinity God offers alternative

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1997
NOTES ON TRINITY. COMMUNITY AND POWER

When I first learnt what the theme of the Institute would be, the word power immediately caught my attention. Trinity seemed all right. If you are going to talk about Theology, you are bound to use it -although I must admit that it was not until recently that I discovered there is a world of meaning behind the doctrine of Trinity. Community seemed fine, it has such positive connotations -it is a comforting word. Power, on the other hand, has never been "all right"; power does not seem to have been right ever. One needs but a quick look at the history of humankind to confirm this. In Latin American history in particular, there is probably no other word more threatening and less comforting than power.

ON POWER I

Power is associated with domination and oppression, with greed and riches, privilege and inequality. This is not an arbitrary association, there is an endless list of historical facts which support it. Just think of the terrible effects of dictatorial military or military-controlled governments upon so many Latin American countries in past decades. Recently one of the wealthiest and most influential businessmen in Argentina said he associated "power" with "impunity." Many people reacted against such statement, but everybody knows he was simply describing the present -and past- state of affairs in this country.

There is a kind power which brings about inequality, violence and destruction -power which leads to death. I think right now we are faced with a depredatory version of power, the kind of power that is against life, exploiting human beings and nature alike! We must examine our present world critically and ask ourselves: What kind of power prevails today at national and regional levels, and worldwide?

If we are going to use the word power in the context of Christian experience, we should be careful to define its meaning. As Christians we know that there exists power of a completely different kind: the power of God as revealed in Scripture. We know it exists and we can describe its outstanding features - love, mercy, justice. But this is not enough, for knowledge and description belong to the realm of ideas and ideas have never transformed people's lives, praxis (ideas put into practice) has. As Christians we must be able to point out where and how we see

1. The unscrupulous killing of landless workers' leaders, indians, and forest alike perpetrated by fazendeiros -plantation owners- in Brazil is a painful example of this.
this alternative power at work in the church and in society as a whole. This is what prophets are expected to do: be critical as to what is going on—"what kind of power prevails today?"—and face people with a different option. If we fail to see and experience how this alternative power works in history, our "ideas and beliefs" may differ from those "of the world" but our praxis will be very much the same.

Wesley provided us with good, solid, categories, and with a sound scriptural and theological framework. Now Wesleyan Theology should go one step further: it has to help people identify what kind of power will make fraternity possible and denounce power that is a threat to life.

ON POWER

God, as revealed in Scripture, is a powerful God—God Almighty—but what kind of power is this?

Let us start at the very beginning: creation. After reading Genesis 1 one soon concludes that God as creator acts "according to his own sovereign will" (J. Wesley, "Thoughts upon God's Sovereignty") and is powerful indeed. His word is powerful. However, one immediately realizes that it is a completely different kind of power, whose characteristics we could list as follows:

- God "gives life to the world" (Jn 6.33)
- He provides all that is necessary (Gn 1.29 and 30) to preserve life (Ps 41.2)
- all that He does through this power is good (Gn 1)
- He is willing to "share" his power with his children (Gn 1.26-28). His power is inclusive, not exclusive. He does not want to work alone, he wants his children to join Him in the "incredible, wonderful mission of being co-creators," as Helder Camara puts it.
- He even shares with his creatures his own self, his own image, giving them spiritual life and freedom to make their own decisions (Wesley, "Thoughts upon..."). He does not use his power to dominate his creatures, imposing his will and crushing theirs.

If we agree to become God's partners, we must use power just as He does:
- we must give life (Gn 1.28)

"None are christians but they that have the mind which was in Christ, and walk as he walked. 'Why if these only are christians', said an eminent wit, 'I never saw a christian yet.' I believe it: you never did. ...Though they are called christians, the name does not imply the thing; they are as far from this as hell from heaven." (J. Wesley, Sermon 61, p.467)
• we must take care of it, we are in charge of it
• we must not work on our own, in isolation—it is not good for human beings to live alone, we need suitable companions to work with (Gn 2.18)
• we must respect our companions' freedom just as God respects ours; we must not impose our will on them—no matter how much we love them or how good our intentions are. God certainly loves us and has good intentions, but He never pleads that as his excuse to dominate us.

Human beings, on the other hand, have often resorted to this perverse logic—"I love you → I want the best for you → I know what is best for you"—to legitimize oppression. The Military in Argentina, for example, always made it clear that their actions sprang from a will to free the country from political and social chaos, and to bring back order and prosperity. In order to preserve democracy, they did away with democracy. Orthodox economic doctrine is another interesting example: in the name of economic growth—indispensable for development and poverty reduction according to experts—governments implement structural adjustment programmes which have proved extremely burdensome for the poor and highly beneficial for big corporations and the wealthy.3 In order to fight poverty, they foster concentration of wealth in the hands of the wealthy. Unfortunately, the Church has not been immune to this logic. In our continent the Spanish conqueror and the Spanish Catholic missionary worked together, the sword and the cross became partners: one secured riches for the King, the other secured souls for God. In order to teach American aborigenes to serve the true God and offer them eternal life, the christian civilization deceived them, enslaved them and killed them.4 Protestant missions were not immune to this logic either. In his book *The Churches and Rapid Social Change*, Paul Abrecht says:

3. "Economic growth is the cornerstone of successful development and poverty reduction. The precondition for restoring growth in many countries is structural adjustment. In fact, the poor benefit from restructuring." Barber Conable, World Bank President, 1990 (In *Eclof: Fifty years of fair credit*, The Ecumenical Centre, Geneva, 1996). There has been no economic growth, and poverty, far from being reduced, has been greatly increased.

4. "The [Roman Catholic] Church accompanied the conquerors, attended them in their legitimate aspirations and helped them to educate and civilize. However, the conquered peoples were her main concern." These words were pronounced by the Cardinal of the Catholic Church in Santiago, Chile, 1974 (In *Las armas ideológicas de la muerte*, Franz Hinkelammert, Sigüeme, Salamanca, 1978).
An Anglican missionary scholar has said of missions in relation to Africa. "There is not the slightest doubt that the great missionaries of the mid-nineteenth century had a profound conviction that colonial empire and Christianity were fully compatible" (J.V. Taylor, Christianity and Politics in Africa)... they saw that Western-sponsored change was inevitable, and they believed that in general it was desirable and for the good of the people.

The best of intentions, "for the good of the people". But how did "those people" feel?

"Does the white man understand our custom about the land? How can he when he does not even speak our tongue? But he says that our customs are bad; and our own brothers who have taken up his religion also say that our customs are bad. ... [The white man] came quietly and peaceably with his religion. We were amused at his foolishness and allowed him to stay. Now he has won our brothers, and our clan can no longer act like one. He has put a knife on the things that held us together and we have fallen apart." 6

However good missionaries' intentions were, however hard they tried to soften the impact of colonialism, domination and oppression were, and will always be, definitely incompatible with Christianity.

When we examine our goals and actions in the light of God's word, we soon discover that there is no such thing as "God's Kingdom being the end, any course of action is justified". "THE CHARACTER OF GOD AS CREATOR NEVER INTERFERES WITH GOD AS GOVERNOR, WHEREIN HE NO LONGER ACTS ACCORDING TO HIS OWN MERE SOVEREIGN WILL, BUT ACCORDING TO THE INVARIAVE RULES BOTH OF JUSTICE AND MERCY." (Wesley, "Thts upon ...")

Going back to the theme of the Institute Trinity, Community, and Power..., one concludes that those three words were not placed in random order. The sequence is meaningful. Power comes last because it must always be subject to love and mercy. We must not think, however, that we are asked to renounce power and become submissive; rather, we are asked to seek power of a different kind. God himself promised that his people would have power -they would be empowered-. The texts that follow will help us define what kind of power this is:

1. "Anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing, and even greater things than these." "The Father will give you a Counselor to be with you forever -the Spirit of truth... he will be in you" (Jn 14.12,14 and 17)

2. "...you will rejoice and noone will take away your joy. My

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Father will give you whatever you ask in my name."(Jn 16.22-23)

•"...they will drive out demons, speak in new tongues, pick up snakes with their hands, deadly poison will not hurt them; they will place their hands on the sick and they will recover" (Mark 16.17-18)

•"...the Spirit helps us in our weakness....the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express....And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him...If God is for us, who can be against us?...Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword separate us from the love of Christ?...No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us..." (Romans 8.26-39)

This is the kind of power the world does not understand, the power of the gospel -"the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes" (Ro 1.16) -. It may sound foolish to the world (1 Co 1.18-31), but we know that we are powerful because we do not need money and property to feel safe, because we are not afraid to show our weakness, because we really enjoy giving a lot more than taking and grasping; we are powerful because we do not have to pay or lie in order to be accepted and loved, we are powerful because we dare "believe in hope against hope"(Ro 4.18).

ON TRINITY

Why should Trinity come first?

This doctrine expresses the relationship between God and his people as revealed in Scripture: God as Father, God as Creator, who gives and preserves life, and is willing to make a covenant with his children so that they may achieve their full human potential -"God for us", or "God before us", as Juan Luis Segundo puts it. But that seemed not enough, "God loved the world so much" that he became a human being and lived with us, he set up his tent among us, Jesus is "God living with us". And when he was no longer with us in this world, he went one step further: since Pentecost the church has been able to experience the strength, comfort, and joy of "God living in us" -"For in him we live and move and have our being" (Acts 17.28).

According to Miguez Bonino, J.L. Segundo was the first among Latin American theologians who tried to recover an old tradition of the Greek fathers which claimed that Trinity meant basically and fundamentally "the community of the three persons". Miguez himself affirms that God's own self is a permanent conversation, God is a community of love acting jointly with identical purpose:
Father, Son and Holy Spirit. We were created in that image, in that likeness; there is a call for human beings to be "transcripts of the Trinity" (Wesley). In God we see that life is communion, i.e. it is by opening to the others—not withdrawing from them—that we affirm/assert our identity. This is the model after which we should build up our relationships inside and outside the church. This is the model the church should follow in mission.

When christians fail to see God as a Trinitarian God, they end up with a distorted, fragmentary vision of God, which brings about division among christians and this, in turn, becomes a serious hindrance to mission. Very often christians have thought that they can decide which aspect of the revelation is more important. In Argentina in the seventies—a time of great social and political upheaval—young Baptists said that they believed in Christ, the Saviour, while young Methodists said we believed in Jesus, the radical. So much so that at University, leftists would accept "my Methodist version" of God, but they strongly rejected the Baptist's. Right-wing groups, on the other hand, said Baptists were true christians whereas we, methodists, were communists in christian disguise. Pentecost youth—rarely seen at college in those days—would tell us that our christian commitment meant nothing because we had not been empowered by the Holy Spirit. It goes without saying that serving a fragmentary God led to division among christians. There were bitter accusations: "You do not have the Holy Spirit!" "And you lack christian praxis!"

We thought that the revelation "belonged" to the Church and that it was for us to decide what is more important: discipleship vs. empowerment by the Holy Spirit, the prophets vs. Paul's teachings, the New vs. the Old Testament, etc. We thought that we could set up the priorities in the mission of the church, but after "dividing" God and the church, we were left with a very poor understanding of our mission.

We can now answer the question: Trinity comes first because if we believe that we were created in the image of a Trinitarian God who is a community of love, our personal and social relationships, inside and outside the church, will be governed by love, mercy and justice—in that order—and that will make it


8. Ibid.

"...it is true, that, in some cases, mercy rejoices over justice; although severity never does. ...[God's] mercy may [act] on particular occasions, over and above what justice requires..." (Wesley, Thoughts upon God's Sovereignty, p.36)

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possible for us to live with -not over or against- our neighbour. Trinity comes first because if there is no community of love, no openness to the others, the disciple community cannot become a missionary community.

ON POWER, COMMUNITY AND CONNECTIONALITY

In what way do power, community and connectionality relate to each other?

When Paul described the church as a body -the body of Christ (1 Co. 12)- he was very careful to explain in what way christians should relate to each other within the church. He makes it clear that there are no hierarchies, no privileges whatsoever, among the parts that form the body. The apostle seems particularly concerned to ensure that (1) "the weaker" members are treated with as much consideration as the more "honourable" members and (2) greater honour is given precisely to the members that lack it. So that all members "should have equal concern for each other."

This applies to relationships within the local church and also to inter-church relationships. It is no mere coincidence that this text is followed by the description of the greatest gift: love. Power governed by love and mercy is not foolishness or an illusion. I believe this is what Wesley was thinking of when he proposed a connectional organisation. Connectionality shows in what way power and mercy are to be combined within the church.

What kind of connectionality do Methodists have at present at local, national, and world level?

Have we had christian connection with each other in its deepest sense or have we reduced connectionality to some kind of ecclesiastical/administrative organisation?

As regards connectionality I have many more questions than answers (or rather I decided to list the questions to avoid including a whole set of negative statements): Have we really cared to watch over each others' souls (Wesley, "The Late Work of God in North America")?

As regards money and resources, these should be shared and distributed according to each person's need within the local church, or according to the needs of each disciple community in the case of inter-church relationships. There is a dynamic behind this: we share what we have and we get what we need and do not have. This dynamic works well when it is supported by great

10. Acts 2.45; 4.34 and 35. See also J.Wesley, Un informe claro sobre el pueblo llamado metodista, Obras de Wesley, Tomo V, p.240 y 241.
generosity at one end and great responsibility at the other. Now, have we been generous enough to give as much as we can? Have we been responsible enough to ask for as little as possible, and not to ask for what we did not really need?

Have we eagerly prayed and worked for a truly scriptural alternative to the rich/poor, developed/underdeveloped, north/south type of relationship? Have we been bold enough to challenge the political and economic models of the present world? Have we seen connectionality as a true alternative, or have we modelled it after the prevailing socio-economic theories?

I believe our ability or inability to present a live and powerful alternative to "the standards of the world" (Ro 12.2) is a crucial issue. There are countless texts in Scripture which support the view that the Lord calls his people to reject the ways of the world and live holy lives. True enough, his people have always found this extremely demanding and have systematically, though unsuccessfully, tried to strike a happy medium between "two masters". But this is not possible; it is either one or the other. We have to decide whether we are going to serve God or Money, to act in the power of the world or in the power of the Holy Spirit, to follow the commandment of God or the commandments of men; all in all, we have to choose between life and death.

We must come up with an alternative, for if Christians have nothing different to offer, just like the salt that has lost its saltiness, we are no longer good for anything. Power subject to love and mercy, money and goods distributed as people have need—not as people deserve—all this must be verified in the kind of Christian connection we have with each other at local, national...

11. I owe this idea to Raúl Sosa, Apuntes para una eclesiología misionera, manuscript, 1995.

12. Mt 5.13-16; Mt 13.33; 1 P 2.9-12; etc.

13. The people of Israel, for example, asked Samuel to give them a king because they wanted to be "like all other nations" (1 S. 8). They thought that "conforming themselves to the standards of the world" would be easier and more convenient than "letting God transform them inwardly and change their minds" (Ro 12.2). It did not take them long to learn how burdensome standard monarchy can be.


and international level. Every sphere, every decision, every event has to be put to the test. For example, have our mission programmes -home and abroad- always been an alternative to the prevailing social, economic and political system? Have our schools been an alternative to the typical middle-class, bilingual, private school? As regards our assemblies, boards, councils, have we been able to work out alternative ways in terms of participation and decision-making? We should even consider if the organization of the Oxford Institute has been thoroughly connectional.

Connectionality: an old treasure

The differences between our present world and the world in Wesley’s day bewilder us in many respects. However, the introductory comment to Sermon 50 (Bicentennial Edition) reveals some striking coincidences: accumulation of wealth, a shocking contrast between the ostentation of the rich and the grinding misery of the poor, and people from rural areas who are forced to migrate and huddle in and around the cities. Even the term ‘plutocracy’, which could be resisted as old fashioned, seems most appropriate to refer to the many underdeveloped countries ruled by their wealthy elites (Grupo de los 8 in Argentina, for example) allied with the powerful corporations of the developed countries.

Striving to live in strict accordance with Jesus’ teachings and faced with the needs of the poor in his day, Wesley came up with an alternative: connectionality. Methodists have many treasures, old and new. I believe connectionality is an “old treasure which we should take out of our storeroom;” a true connectionality is a powerful alternative.

On reading Wesley’s works, one soon discovers many old treasures that were kept hidden for a very long time

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17. This group is formed by the presidents of the eight biggest corporations in Argentina. They meet periodically and their warnings and recommendations never go unheeded.

18. John Wesley, Un informe claro sobre el pueblo llamado metodista, Las primeras sociedades metodistas, Obras de Wesley, Tomo V, p.240-246; 248-250.

19. Mt 13.52.
(inadvertently, perhaps; unwisely, for sure). Wesley's works had not been translated into Spanish, that is a fact, but bearing in mind the amount of English-speaking missionaries in Latin American churches, I find it hard to believe that language was a serious impediment.

COMMUNITY AND CONNECTIONALITY WILL NOT BE POSSIBLE UNLESS WE RESIST THE MYSTERY OF INIQUITY THROUGH THE SANCTIFYING WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Wesley's sermon "The Mystery of Iniquity" is another old treasure. One cannot but admire his perceptive and clever analysis of the way in which the "money-discrimination-power" dynamic played havoc with the first Christian church. Unfortunately, it still does, and not only within the church but with human society at large. I daresay that on close analysis Latin American history reveals that every miserable social condition can be traced to this sinful "money-discrimination-power" dynamic: underdevelopment, poverty, chronic economic dependence, violations of human rights, irresponsible administration of natural resources, and many other evils, all have their roots in the dynamic mentioned above.

The love of money impedes community and connectionality

"The first plague which infected the Christian church" and went on infecting all generations "is the love of money". No one can serve two masters, one cannot serve both God and Money for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

The number of sermons Wesley preached against the love of money and surplus accumulation, reveals that he considered it a major problem. At the beginning, his views were given within the context of discipleship: they were meant to help people see what Christian discipleship and stewardship imply. Later, it was the voice of the prophet warning his people against the dangers ahead of them. Wesley saw that "methodists were decreasing in grace in

20 Our knowledge of the Wesleys was somehow limited to a collection of stories or anecdotes: John's childhood in Epworth; the role played by his mother, Susanna; the fire at the rectory, etc. We never got the gist of the thing.

21 Albert Outler says that Methodists have revered Wesley, but they have not studied him in depth. (A. Outler, Theology in the Wesleyan Spirit, chapter 1)

22 J. Wesley, The Mystery of Iniquity, Sermon 61, p.456.

23 Mt. 6.24 and 21.
the same proportion as they were increasing in wealth", 24 the
richer they became, the more they "looked at earth", not "at
heaven", 25 regarding their ambitions, personal and social
relationships, work, etc. Wesley was well aware that this going
up in the social scale was a threat to the revival movement 26
Methodism was meant to be.

In this respect, I am afraid I do not agree with the
interpretation suggested in the Bicentennial Edition. I do not
see in Wesley’s words the "lament of an aging hero no longer in
control of his own hero-cult" 27 but the clever and vehement
admonition of a prophet who suffers and is distressed not because
he is getting old and has lost his strength, not because he is no
longer in control of his own hero-cult, but because he sees his
people succumbing to "the mystery of iniquity."

Wesley did not "complain" because "his warnings were going unheeded"; 28 it was
not Wesley’s but Jesus’ teachings that were going unheeded.
Discipleship was at stake, Christian community was at stake. As a
methodist I would not like to end up supporting the idea that
Wesley overdid things, that he was too much of a radical, just as
the critics in his day used to think.

As far as I know, History proved him right. Miguez Bonino says
that by 1800 issues such as poverty, slavery, and Great Britain’s
colonial policy had been silenced in the English Methodist
Church, and members who belonged to the working-class movement
had been expelled from its ranks. During the industrial
revolution, Methodists, who were once poor and uneducated, were
incorporated to a new class, the middle class. As they went up in
the social scale, they adopted the bourgeois view of life. With
reference to Protestant churches in Latin America, Miguez Bonino
says that as their members rose to occupy higher positions in

24. J. Wesley, Causes of the Inefficacy of Christianity, Sermon
122, p. 95.

25. Col. 3.2. See Wesley’s appeal in Sermon 125.

26. I have used the word revival following Wesley. Lately the
term has been used to describe such a wide range of events that
it has become rather vague and imprecise.

27. Sermon 122, Causes of the Inefficacy of Christianity, p. 93,
footnote 37, Bicentennial Edition.

28. Sermon 50, The Use of Money, An Introductory Comment, p. 263,
Bicentennial Edition.

29. J. Miguez Bonino, Rostros del protestantismo latinoamericano,
society, growth in membership declined —I would say that in many cases it virtually came to a halt.

**Discrimination impedes community and connectionality**

"The second plague that broke in upon the Christian church [was] partiality": the greek widows were being "overlooked in the daily distribution of food". Food was not distributed as people had need, but according to some arbitrary criterion—nationality, cultural background, social status, etc. Wesley saw here a breach of brotherly love and a sin both against justice and mercy. If church members do not show equal concern for each other, community is impossible; if food, resources, whatever, are not justly distributed, community is threatened.

**Power that is not subject to love and mercy impedes community and connectionality**

When Emperor Constantine in 4th c. A.D., poured in a flood of riches, honours and power upon the christians, more especially upon the clergy, the whole essence of true religion was forever affected. It was probably in those days, when wealth, power and honour replaced self-denial, discipleship and persecution, that "nominal christians" came into existence. People who had not the slightest idea of what christian discipleship implied, now wanted to be "christians just like the Emperor." Clever Constantine—"if you cannot beat them, join them", I suppose was his motto—, he made christians believe the Empire would become Christian, but the problem is empires and Christianity have never been compatible: the Empire was not converted to Christianity, Christianity became imperialistic which is an altogether different thing.

In 2 Thessalonians 1-17 Paul associates the "mystery of iniquity" with idolatry, a scriptural concept which implies a lot more than worshipping wooden or metal figures—otherwise it would be fairly easy to get rid of it. Paul tells us that idols oppose and put themselves above the real God, that they even get into His temple, take His seat and claim to be God (v.4). Idols are essentially deceitful: "...they deceive those that are perishing. They perish because they refused to love the truth and so be saved."(v.10)

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33. op.cit. p.462-464.
Almost anything can replace God and become an idol—money, power, race, etc.—but on closer analysis one discovers that these idols are nothing but one’s own self occupying the highest, most privileged position above everybody and everything else. What actually happens is that the person becomes her/his own and only parameter, accepting no outside norms. It is the individual who decides who for and what for he/she is going to live—fame, money, a country or nation (patriotism), a political system, cultural heritage and tradition. The person’s own self being the only norm, relationships with “the other” are determined by one’s own beliefs and interests; everything is seen in the light of one’s own self, the others do not count—the self-absorbed person does not care, and does not care to care. The more one ignores the others, the more self-absorbed one becomes, and as this goes on, the person gets trapped in a kind of vicious circle where fraternity is almost, if not completely, impossible.

This is why Jesus was so categorical about self-denial.34 (Unfortunately, there has been a great deal of misunderstanding in connection with this. Monastic life, self-inflicted suffering and pain, declaring sinful anything that is pleasant and enjoyable, etc. were bitter examples of human misrepresentations of Jesus’ words which more often than not led to new forms of phariseeism.35) If we are not ready to do away with our idols, if we do not agree to live according to principles of love, mercy and justice, if we are not ready to love the Lord with all our heart and our neighbour as ourselves, we are not fit for discipleship. In his letter to the church in Philippi, Paul calls all christians to imitate Christ’s disposition to renounce all selfish ambitions, all privilege, and humble themselves to the point of becoming nothing (kenosis—emptying). The only way to fight the mystery of iniquity is to live a permanent kenosis.

How can we get rid of our idols? How can we experience kenosis? “...through the sanctifying work of the Spirit and through belief in the truth” (v.13).

No wonder sanctification is a major issue in Wesleyan theology: sanctification through the work of the Spirit makes kenosis possible and kenosis prevents us from putting our own self above the real God. If the real God is above all, we will be able to oppose the “mystery of godliness” and the “mystery of faith”36 to the “mystery of iniquity”, and once the “mystery of iniquity”—the money-discrimination-power dynamic—has been

34. Mt. 10.34-39; 16.24-25; Lk 14.25-33. See also Wesley, Causes of the Inefficacy of Christianity, Sermon 122, p.93.
36. 1 Ti 3.14-16.
defeated, community, connectionality, and power that is subject to mercy and justice become possible.

Now we would have to ask ourselves: Have we endeavoured to achieve that "godliness without which no man shall see the Lord", or did we come up with a "lighter", less compromising version of it (a "cheaper" version using Bonhoeffer's terminology)?

What happened when we moved from "revival and reform" to "revival" or "reform"? I do not think we can have one without the other. Just as we cannot "divide" the Trinitarian God and decide which aspect of the revelation is more important, we cannot choose between personal and social sanctification, between revival and reform. On trying to get one without the other, we pervert the essence of sanctification. Personal sanctification without social sanctification does not mean fifty per cent of the same process, but a different kind of process altogether.

However, these questions will remain unanswered, for they would lead us into the question of sanctification which rightfully deserves a whole volume on its own.

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