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Introduction

Sharing Catherine Booth's confidence in homeopathic and hydropathic remedies, Shepherd Drake Pennick, veteran sergeant at the Clapton Congress Hall and formerly a London police officer, served as duty officer at the local hydro facility. One day, around 1919, he ordered young cadet Fred Couetts out of a scalding hot bath to stand against the wall and receive a prolonged hosing down with a strong jet of ice cold water. 'In theory, I was prepared for this', Couetts remembered, 'but not for the accompanying theological parallel which the sergeant drew between this outward cleansing of the body and the inner sanctification of the spirit.' I trust that as I discuss the doctrine of sanctification held by two much loved and revered Salvationists, I will receive no hosing down, though it is possible that I may end up in some hot water.

Jonathan Raymond has said that modern-day Salvationists fall into three camps: 'First, the Brengle camp of holiness as crisis and second work of grace; second, the Couetts camp of holiness as growth in grace; and third, the largest camp of apathy, where holiness is not an issue at all'.² Alongside these twin themes of crisis and process, one must also set the twin themes of pneumatology and Christology, for in Brengle and Couetts and in the wider holiness movement, entire sanctification has been understood both as a 'baptism of the Holy Spirit' and as 'crucifixion with Christ', as an endowment of power from on high

and as a dying to sin and self with a subsequent rising to a Christlike life.

In each case the result is understood to be the same, though the metaphor may differ—a heart purified from all sin and filled with love for God and neighbour. It would be a tragedy indeed if confusion over differences of emphasis should lead to a loss of any distinctive holiness message being proclaimed. This is, I fear, what we have come to, not only in The Salvation Army, but in other Wesleyan-Holiness churches such as the Church of the Nazarene and the Wesleyan Methodist Church.

In this paper I would like to set the discussion of the different emphases of Brengle and Coutts against the backdrop of the much broader and long standing discussion of which it is a part. I would also like to set out a possible way forward so that these two important and influential holiness teachers might no longer be seen as at odds with one another but as offering complementary views that, when taken together in a conjunctive fashion, bring a balance to Wesleyan-Holiness teaching.

It is well known that Wesleyan theology takes a conjunctive approach. It does not favour the dialectic approach of Lutheran theology whereby opposites are at times allowed to stand over against each other in irreconcilable paradox. Rather, it seeks to hold apparent opposites in creative and fruitful tension—faith alone *and* holy living, law *and* gospel, grace as favour *and* as empowerment, sovereign divine initiative *and* free human response, and—the conjunction most relevant to the focus of this paper—*instantaneous and* progressive sanctification.³

A focus on the instantaneous nature of both justifying and sanctifying grace stresses the divine initiative. For in each case, God must break in and do what we cannot do in our weak and fallen condition. On the other hand, the progressive nature of the process leading toward and beyond justification, as well as the progress toward and beyond sanctification, stress human co-operation. God respects human freedom and identity. He has chosen not to work with disregard for human choosing and willing. Free grace and co-operant grace form a crucial part of the axial theme of Wesley's practical theology.⁴ A truly Wesleyan approach will therefore be conjunctive rather than polarised toward either one or other of these two emphases.

All theology is to some extent autobiographical as we first begin with the direct experience of God's grace and only then do we reflect on that experience and are enabled to undertake the task of dogmatic confession. I turn now, therefore, to a brief biographical sketch of these two important holiness teachers.

1. Samuel Logan Brengle (1860–1936): '[Inter]National Spiritual Special'

Samuel Logan Brengle was born in Fredericksburg, Indiana, in 1860. His father died fighting in the Union Army after having been wounded in the siege of Vicksburg. His mother remarried and he was raised in a church-going home. After his mother died, he enrolled at the age of seventeen at De Pauw University in Greencastle, Indiana, where he excelled in his studies.⁵ After experiencing conversion, he sensed a call to the Methodist ministry and studied at the University of Boston's Theological Seminary where he was tutored under Daniel Steele and became part of his Octagon Club of serious young seekers after holiness. It was during this season that he wrote his oft-quoted words of testimony:

I saw the humility of Jesus and my pride; the meekness of Jesus and my temper; the lowliness of Jesus and my ambition; the purity of Jesus and my unclean heart; the faithfulness of Jesus and the deceitfulness of my heart; the unselfishness of Jesus and my selfishness; the trust and faith of Jesus and my doubts and unbelief; the holiness of Jesus and my unholiness. I got my eyes off everybody but Jesus and myself, and I came to loathe myself.⁶

It was also in Boston that Brengle first heard William Booth speak and he began to admire The Salvation Army, recognising its holiness teaching as essentially the same as he was imbibing from Daniel Steele. Brengle recalled his experience of entire sanctification in a letter to his son George on 9 January 1923:

It was thirty-eight years ago this morning at about nine o'clock that God sanctified my soul [as] I was sitting at my study table in Boston... Out of that experience and from that moment has flowed my worldwide ministry, my teachings, testimonies, articles and books.⁷

Sam, as he was known by those closest to him, became an officer after turning down an opportunity to serve as the pastor of a prestigious Methodist congregation. After publishing *Helps to Holiness* (1895) and *The Soul Winners Secret* (1897), the first of what would become some fourteen bestselling books on holiness, he was named in 1897 'National Spiritual Special' and given a special commission to conduct holiness meetings. Holiness teaching would remain the central activity of his life. The first American-born officer to obtain the rank of Commissioner, Brengle died in 1936, having attained an international standing as The Salvation Army's foremost teacher

of holiness, a reputation he still holds to this day.

According to Brengle's biographer, David Rightmire, "The inter-penetration of transatlantic holiness theologies as mediated through the ministry and message of Samuel Logan Brengle helped centre Salvation Army holiness theology in the tradition of Wesley, maintaining a balanced tension between active faith and patient waiting in the experience of entire sanctification."⁸

I find I can only go so far in subscribing to Rightmire's judgement on this point. It is true that Brengle helped steer the Army away from Phoebe Palmer's altar theology by insisting in a more Wesleyan fashion on the need for a direct witness of the Spirit to entire sanctification, an element missing from Mrs Palmer's approach, as often noted by her principle Methodist detractors such as Nathan Bangs.⁹ This means that it is an error, as Rightmire makes clear, to place Brengle's work alongside of Phoebe Palmer's over against Wesley's as if Brengle and Palmer represent the American holiness movement's view of unhindered free human agency, over against Wesley's more classical view of grace-enabled human freedom.

Yet there are also notable discontinuities between Wesley and Brengle. Rightmire himself identifies some of these, including the following:

Brengle is silent...on the corporate nature of holiness, except as it is impinged upon by the holiness of its members. In this he is unlike John Wesley, who emphasized the social ramifications of the individual's experience, and he is unlike Booth, who emphasized the corporate character of the experience (i.e. that it properly fits the sanctified for service, which is an essential reason for their being saved at all). Brengle here reflects the Holiness Movement's characteristically individualistic understanding of the experience of entire sanctification.¹⁰

It should not be thought that because Brengle employed pneumatological language in his exposition of holiness, that he did not also understand the profoundly Christological features of the doctrine. For him, the Spirit's work was to bring about a vital union with Christ that would result in Christlike character and conduct.¹¹

God and man must work together, both to save and to sanctify... To get the priceless gift of the Holy Spirit—a clean heart, we must work together with God. On God's side, all things are ready, and so He waits and longs to give the blessing; but before He can do so, we must do our part, which is very simple, and easily within our power to do.¹²

It is hard not read this last quote as Pelagian or at least semi-Pelagian. It seems to bear the impress of Charles Finney's theology and it certainly stands in contrast to Wesley who, in 1777, made the following important distinction:

To say every man can believe to justification or sanctification *when* he will is contrary to plain matter of fact. Everyone can confute it by his own experience. And yet, if you deny that anyone can believe if he will, you run into absolute decrees. How will you untie this knot? I apprehend very easily. That every man can believe if he will I earnestly maintain, and yet that he can believe when he will I totally deny. But there will always be something in the matter which we cannot well comprehend or explain.¹³

Here is another difference between the nineteenth century view of Brengle and the eighteenth century view of Wesley. The former seems informed by a view of human agency as entirely free. One may simply exercise the power within oneself to accept God's gift of a clean heart. Nothing hinders appropriation but human unwillingness. Wesley, however, insists that the very ability to believe for entire sanctification (or indeed for justification) is a grace-empowered ability. Human agency is a subset of divine grace and not merely a natural ability completely at the control of the individual's will.

II. Frederick Coutts (1899–1986): “Highly Polite Suggestions.”

Frederick Coutts was born in Scotland to Salvation Army officer-parents. After serving as a flying officer in the Royal Air Force, he became a Salvation Army officer in 1920. In 1957 he became territorial commander of the Australian Eastern Territory until he was elected 8th General in 1963, serving in that role until 1969. He received an honorary Doctor of Divinity degree from the University of Aberdeen in 1981 and died in 1986 at 86 years of age. A scholarly, self-effacing man, Coutts was the model of courtesy whose thoughtful arguments were often phrased as highly polite suggestions.¹⁴

In contrast to Brengle—who could precisely date both his conversion and entire sanctification, in the case of the latter to the very time of day—Coutts does not bear witness to any instantaneous experience of either the new birth or entire sanctification. When remembering his commissioning as a probationary lieutenant at Blackpool in 1920, he wrote, "No bright light ever shone on my Damascus road, but

I was slowly unlearning the tawdry values acquired during the previous two years [in the Royal Air Force]. It might not be inaccurate to describe this slow turnaround as my "conversion", though "not sudden in a minute" was all accomplished.¹⁵

Another difference between Brengle and Coutts was that where Brengle reflects the pre-critical view of the Bible, typical of the revivalism of the nineteenth century world, Coutts embraced a more modern approach. I hesitate to use the label 'liberal-evangelical' in reference to Coutts (not least because the word 'liberal' is so easily misunderstood in conservative circles as meaning 'everything bad in theology') but his approach to the Bible seems to have much in common with views shared by many liberal-evangelical Methodists in the early twentieth century. They remained passionate about evangelism and held out the old fashioned Gospel to sinners, while being little phased by controversy over the higher criticism of the Bible.¹⁶ The young Coutts was eager to learn from any biblical scholar regardless of with which label they were pinned. 'I had heard some praised as fundamentalist and others damned as modernist. I did not wish to wear either of those question-begging labels. The only "ist" by which I wanted to be known was Salvationist.'¹⁷

Coutts is often viewed as having introduced a departure from the accepted holiness theology inherited from Brengle. Major Geoff Webb, for example, sees Coutts' influence as 'symptomatic of the start of a departure from mainstream Wesleyan-holiness teaching'.¹⁸ According to this view, Coutts sought a balance between crisis and process, but those who followed stressed process almost exclusively, so that a distinctive holiness message was all too often completely lost to the movement. Those who followed Coutts—such as Chick Yull—developed what Webb calls a 'neo-Couttsian' approach which essentially adopted a more Reformed views of holiness—as almost entirely positional—an awkward and unworkable fit for a tradition birthed from Wesleyanism.¹⁹

In his own lifetime, Coutts' teaching was also sometimes misunderstood as a betrayal of Army principles and was the cause of some personal pain. With his work in the Literary Department at International Headquarters from 1935 came many opportunities to speak publicly and far a-field.

I...purposed in my heart to speak of the experience of holiness as honestly and as intelligently as God should help me. As with most resolves of that sort, the results were mixed. In every company there are those who are at ease only with the familiar. To hear some well-remembered phrase is to be assured that the speaker is 'sound'. Old wine does not taste the same from a new bottle. The chalice could be

poisoned.²⁰

Perhaps most notoriously, Coutts is credited with having introduced a change to the Army's official statement on sanctification. Coutts was critical of George Raitton and William Garner who added the language of 'roots of bitterness' to Article 10 on sanctification.²¹

We believe that after conversion there remain in the heart of a believer inclinations to evil or roots of bitterness, which, unless overpowered by divine grace, produce actual sin, but that these evil tendencies can be entirely taken away by the Spirit of God, and the whole heart thus cleansed from everything contrary to the will of God, or entirely sanctified, will then produce the fruits of the Spirit only. And we believe that persons thus sanctified may by the power of God be kept unblamable and unreprouvable before Him.²²

Ian Barr sees Raitton and Garner's definition as a 'statement of Salvation Army orthodoxy on the doctrine of sanctification for the first seventy years of its existence'.²³ Coutts was undoubtedly correct in pointing out that the language was drawn from a context quite foreign to the purpose it served in Article 10. It is language drawn from Deut 29:14-v18, where Moses is calling the people to be faithful to Yahweh. Any turning to other gods would be a 'root of bitterness' springing up to destroy the covenantal unity of the people with their God. The writer to the Hebrews draws on the same language in addressing Christians in Hebrews 12:14-15. Yet Raitton and Garner used it as a synonym for 'inbred sin', or the 'carnal nature' which was to be destroyed at entire sanctification, a meaning unintended in either of these passages.

It is perhaps understandable that Brengle and Coutts should come to be seen as representing opposite poles, since there are significant differences between the two writers. However it would be a mistake to think there was any animosity one toward the other. Dying in 1936, when Coutts was early in his career, Brengle had no 'right of reply' to Coutts, but Coutts was profoundly moved by Brengle's teaching and writing and every reference to Brengle that I found in Coutts' autobiography *No Continued City* is a positive and admiring one.

I now want to turn to the setting of this discussion in a broader context, making it clear that the differences between Brengle and Coutts are not confined to an in-house discussion peculiar to The Salvation Army but reflect a wider conversation across the Wesleyan-Holiness movement.²⁴

III. Setting Brenngle and Coutts in the Context of a Broader Discussion

In the middle 1970s, a discussion emerged in the Wesleyan Theological Society over the use of pneumatological and pentecostal language in reference to entire sanctification. The 'first shot was fired'²⁵ from Scotland when the Nazarene Herbert McGonigle pointed out that Wesley used the phrase 'baptized with the Holy Spirit' in reference to justifying grace, rather than to entire sanctification.²⁶ With this, 'the theology hit the fan' and after much going back and forth the debate came to a head in 1977 and 1978 before 'subsiding without any clear resolution.'²⁷ Even earlier than McGonigle's 'first shot', George Allen Turner had stated, in 1965, that John and Charles Wesley said or wrote little about the baptism in the Holy Spirit. This emphasis is relatively recent. It is not easy to find Wesleyan writers devoting much space to it or associating it with entire sanctification and evangelical perfection.²⁸

Perhaps the most sustained defence of the inappropriateness of 'baptism with the Spirit' language in reference to entire sanctification, from the standpoint of biblical studies, came from Asbury Theological Seminary professor Robert W. Lyon.²⁹ 'From Pentecost on, all believers receive at conversion the Holy Spirit as promised—in His fullness. No biblical basis exists for a distinction between receiving the Spirit and being baptized in, or filled with, the Spirit.'³⁰ Much of the argument revolved around Wesley's use of language, since all recognised, in the founder of Methodism, the wellspring of their particular type of holiness teaching. It has now become a commonplace observation that the thought of Wesley's contemporary, the sainted John Fletcher shaped the American holiness movement in ways that at crucial points differed from Wesley's approach, most conspicuously his use of pneumatological and pentecostal language in reference to entire sanctification. Though Fletcher's terminology is significantly different from Wesley's at certain points, the teaching of the former clearly gained the explicit imprimatur of the latter.³¹ Wesley, in fact equated Christian perfection with being 'filled with the Holy Ghost' in a letter to Joseph Benson.³² George Allen Turner concludes that a sharp disjoining of Wesley's and Fletcher's teaching as if they were at odds with each other would be a mistake.

Wesley did not object to linking the baptism with the Holy Spirit with entire sanctification and sometimes he made the link himself. He only objected, on scriptural grounds, to the statement that Christians do not receive the Holy Spirit at conversion, and he heartily endorsed Fletcher's last 'check' in which the baptism of the Holy Spirit was seen as a 'second work of grace.'³³

Wesley, at least in his earlier writings, does seem to take a more Christological approach to the doctrine of entire sanctification than Fletcher. He stresses, for example, the 'circumcision of the heart' defined as 'the being ended with those virtues which were also in Christ Jesus.'³⁴ It is interesting to note that of the thirty texts identified as those most often quoted by Wesley in his treatment of entire sanctification, none of them has any direct reference to the Holy Spirit or to Pentecost.³⁵ When Wesley does use language drawn from the day of Pentecost, he seems to do so in reference to the new birth, rather than to a second work of grace.

And yet, Wesley did in a few places equate entire sanctification with being 'full of His Spirit.'³⁶ Larry Wood's research onto Wesley and Fletcher is an indication of the fact that the discussion over the agreement or otherwise between Wesley and Fletcher is far from over.³⁷ Wood documents 'the extensive use of Pentecostal phrases as encoded nomenclature for Christian perfection which were universally used by the early Methodists, including Wesley, his leading preachers and assistants.'³⁸ Wood cites Albert Outler's judgment that the latter years of Wesley's thought are those most neglected by Wesleyan scholarship. It was this Wesley, whom Wood calls 'the Pentecostal Wesley' who was understood by the early Methodists right through to the end of the nineteenth century. One must not simply rely on the *Standard Sermons* for a full understanding of Wesley's theology of holiness but also survey the later sermons, *The Arminian Magazine* which did not begin publication until 1778, and the writings of John Fletcher which were published in 1771.

The close personal partnership between Wesley and Fletcher—in forming the ideas of their preachers as they travelled and preached together at Methodist preaching houses and in the annual conferences, and the preaching and writings of his key preachers and assistants—must all be brought together into a single puzzle if a true picture of Methodism is to be seen.³⁹

Indeed, Wood goes so far as to elevate Fletcher's writings to a kind of theological standard with his proposal of a threefold canon consisting of 'John Wesley's sermons, Charles Wesley's hymns, and John Fletcher's theology' as having shaped 'the matrix of early Methodism.'⁴⁰

I remain somewhat unconvinced by Fletcher's argument. Wesley wrote to Fletcher's close associate, Joseph Benson in the midst of a controversy at the Countess of Huntingdon's Trevecca College, taking exception to their use of the term 'receiving the Spirit.' He maintained that the Methodists 'can sufficiently prove our whole Doctrine, without laying stress on those metaphorical Expressions' such as 'the

baptism with the Holy Ghost' referring to this 'sentiment' as being 'utterly new.'" But Wood maintains that Wesley had misunderstood their use of these expressions. He feared that Fletcher and Benson were saying that only the fully sanctified received the 'witness of the Spirit; Wesley used the phrase 'receiving the Spirit' in reference to the witness of the Spirit. He tells Benson on 9 March, 1771, that he is to reread the *Minutes of the Conference* and see whether you can conform thereto...Mr Fletcher's late discovery...[a view which] would [only] create huge debate and confusion' among the Methodists.⁴²

That Wesley may have been confused about the precise nature of what he termed 'Mr Fletcher's late discovery' is indicated in a letter dated 6 March, 1771, in which he himself uses the phrase 'filled with the Holy Spirit' as a synonym for being 'perfected in love.'⁴³ According to Wood, this letter shows that Wesley and his associates, Fletcher and Benson, were in fact, in spite of Wesley's misunderstanding over their use of terms, in full agreement on equating entire sanctification with the fullness of the Spirit.⁴⁴

It is in Wesley's genuine love for Fletcher, his view of him as the saintliest of Methodists, his desire that he succeed him as leader of the Methodists (which must surely rank as one of the silliest ideas Mr Wesley ever had), that we find the true reasons for Wesley's reticence to shut down Fletcher's approach. As late as 1775, Wesley wrote to Fletcher, stating that their respective views on 'receiving the Spirit' differed somewhat:

It seems our views of Christian perfection are a little different, though not opposite. It is certain every babe in Christ has received the Holy Ghost, and the Spirit witnesses with his spirit that he is a child of God. But he has not obtained Christian perfection. Perhaps you have not considered St. John's three-fold distinction of Christian believers: little children, young men, and fathers. All of these had received the Holy Ghost, but only the fathers were perfected in love.⁴⁵

In a much discussed correspondence with Joseph Benson in 1770, John Wesley relegates the phrase 'receiving the Holy Ghost' in reference to entire sanctification to the status of *adiaphora* (a thing indifferent).

You allow the whole thing that I contend for, an entire deliverance from sin, a recovery of the whole image of God, the loving God with all our heart, soul and strength. And you believe God is able to give you this; yea, to give it to you in an instant... If they like to call this

'receiving the Holy Ghost' they may: Only the phrase, in that sense, is not scriptural, and not quite proper; for they all 'received the Holy Ghost' when they were justified.⁴⁶

The special role given to the Holy Spirit in Brengle's doctrine of entire sanctification does seem to owe more to Fletcher than to Wesley. This is not say, of course, that Brengle's theology is not Wesleyan at all. But it demonstrates that the different emphases in Brengle and Coutts regarding the role of the Spirit in sanctification and whether (as well as the related question of whether sanctification should be seen as instantaneous or gradual) have a much longer history than their own lifetimes.

The historian Paul Merritt Bassett maintains that two systematic theologies have shaped the theology of the holiness movement in the twentieth century, at least as reflected in the formal statements of holiness movement denominations. In spite of their general agreement on the doctrine of Christian perfection these are 'essentially different in methodology and in certain ranges of presuppositions.'⁴⁷ The first of these is derived from A.M. Hills' 'New School Congregationalism', which placed human free agency at its centre, with holiness ancillary to it. Hills' doctrine of holiness leaves the Spirit as acting almost unilaterally, divorced from solid Trinitarian moorings. According to Bassett, 'For Hills, the Holy Spirit is the agent and animator of the life of holiness...no care at all is taken...to anchor the Christian life in the continuing presence of Jesus Christ, with the Spirit serving as Christ's Spirit. The Spirit is seen as an independent being with an independent work.'⁴⁸ It is easy to see how the popular holiness movement and Pentecostal idea of the Holy Spirit as a gift given, not with the new birth, but at some later time, might grow from this sort of thinking. The influence of this way of thinking is certainly found in Brengle.

The Nazarene theologian H. Orton Wiley, on the other hand, exhibits a more Christocentric approach, the second of the two systematic theologies that Bassett sees as having shaped the holiness movement in the twentieth century. '[T]he Holy Spirit supernaturally extends to men, the redemptive work of Christ... Christ communicates to the membership of [his] body, the quickening and sanctifying offices of the Holy Spirit.'⁴⁹

On its Methodist side, then, the holiness movement has developed a deeply Christocentric ethic which is utterly dependent upon Christ's historic and continuing presence and upon his example. But side by side with this ethic is a pneumatological one in which Christ's role is unclear. Rather, the emphasis is upon some sort of spiritual power.⁵⁰

Donald Dayton seems to agree with those who identify two converging (or competing?) visions within the holiness movement:

We are a movement with two generating movements...one in the Wesleyanism of the eighteenth century and one in the holiness movement of the nineteenth century. These are not entirely congruent, and our struggle with these differences may help free us to face the challenges of articulating the Wesleyan message into the twentieth and twenty first centuries. We cannot meet these challenges by repeating the clichés of the eighteenth or nineteenth centuries.⁵¹

I. Crichton Mitchell expressed something of the weariness felt by some over this debate when he declared, in 1981, that the question of John Wesley's relating (or otherwise) of Pentecost with entire sanctification seemed to him to be 'merely academic, of small profit, and rather boring.'⁵² Yet, if the tradition is to move forward it cannot do so by sidestepping this important discussion. If it turns out to be the case that Pentecostal language in reference to entire sanctification is demonstrated to be inadequate, one has to ask, as Melvin Dieter does, 'What other terminology can express equally well the fullness of life in the Spirit as the Pentecost motif? What motif can better represent the dynamic for genuine holy living which is at the heart of the Wesleyan tradition?'⁵³ I am convinced that the answer to that question lies in the articulation of a thoroughly *Trinitarian* theology of Christian perfection.

If we continue to polarize toward either a Christological or a pneumatological pole, we will only perpetuate an imbalance that is part of our historic legacy, and which needs addressing and rectifying.⁵⁴ To explore this Trinitarian project more fully lies beyond the scope of this paper but if The Salvation Army is to play its part in contributing to that conversation it will need to find away to overcome the polarisation of the Brengle and Coutts traditions, integrating both into a more fully conjunctive approach.

Some Concluding Thoughts

Why Brengle? Why Coutts? Why not? Indeed, why not both? Firstly, why Brengle? There are dangers in stressing the progressive pole to the exclusion of its accompanying theme of instantaneousness. It is characteristic of both Reformed and Lutheran theology to stress the objective, positional nature of sanctification, such that no place is found for any defining experience(s) of God beyond justification. The Reformed tradition, especially in the piety of the Puritans, stresses holiness as growth in grace but has a tendency to minimise or even at times deny the possibility of the

powers of heaven breaking in upon a person's life in any defining way.

One reason for the phenomenal growth of Pentecostalism is that movement's belief in a God who is powerfully present in the believer's life and in their understanding of Christian experience as radically supernaturalised. The Holy Spirit is seen as the active agent of the empowering grace that flows from the Father made available through the Son's atoning work. This is not an exclusively Pentecostal specialty, but the dynamic emphasis of the Wesleyan-Holiness tradition. It is something that Samuel Logan Brengle expounded well, even if we would not agree with every single one of his expressions or findings. It would be a tragedy to lose this emphasis from our tradition.

Why Coutts? Because one danger in an exclusive stress on the instantaneous aspect of entire sanctification is that it throws in to shadow the progressive work leading up to and following on from it. I recently heard a preacher declare that 'entire sanctification is not the end of a process; it is just the start of progressive sanctification.' He quickly realised his error and corrected himself mid-sentence, but this is an example of how we can trip ourselves up if we focus exclusively on instantaneousness. We must never forget that holiness does not begin at entire sanctification. It begins with the new birth. There is a very real victory over sin from the moment we are born again. When Charles Wesley wrote, 'He breaks the power of cancelled sin; he sets the prisoner free, he was speaking not of entire sanctification but of the new birth. Let us not minimise the very real nature of initial and progressive sanctification in our teaching of a second work of grace. If entire sanctification is not a beginning point, neither is it an end point. For Christian perfection is not a static absoluteness but a perfection which is always being perfected, a dynamic movement toward the full *telos* of our being in God.'

Nor need the dispute over terminology paralyse us into saying precisely nothing about holiness. Some Salvationists are not comfortable with the language of 'baptism of the Holy Spirit.' Others feel that terms such as 'entire sanctification' and 'Christian perfection' are so misleading that they need to be superannuated. Let them use other terms if they like, but let them not be silent. (The Wesleyan Methodist Church has initiated a national campaign to renew holiness teaching in contemporary language under the banner, 'An Undivided Heart!') What Salvationist—or any other kind of Wesleyan—could balk at calling upon believers to love God with the whole heart, soul, mind, and strength? What preacher would dare draw a line in the sand and say, 'But you can only love God this much and no further?' Wesleyans have never majored on telling Christians what God's grace does not make possible. We have left that to other traditions. Let us not change our tune now at a time when our emphasis is perhaps

most especially needed. It is true that our theology involves a pessimism regarding human nature: we are not Pelagians or semi-Pelagians (though we sometimes talk as if we are). But that pessimism of nature is offset by an optimism of grace. It is the true genius of Wesleyan thought to refuse to place limits on the degree to which God's love may be made perfect in the human heart in this life.

Tom Noble reminded us, during his recent visit, that entire sanctification is not something to be sought for its own sake, not an end in itself but the means to the end of perfect love. Wesley's focus was on the result rather than the means, whereas the nineteenth-century holiness movement tended to focus on the means (the 'moment' or 'instant' of entire sanctification). Wesley never used the word 'crisis' in reference to entire sanctification (that is a nineteenth-century term), though he did speak of the 'instantaneousness' of the gift. Nor did he ever use 'experience' as a noun, that is, he never spoke of 'getting the experience' of entire sanctification. Instead he spoke of loving God more and more until God was loved perfectly.⁵⁵

There is a key here to our contemporary discourse about holiness: disputes among theologians on the nature of entire sanctification can lead to stagnation so that our holiness message dies the death of a thousand qualifications and preachers are at a loss as to what to say. Yet Christian proclamation is a type of discourse where *something definite must be said*. Here are some definite things which in my view must be said from our pulpits if we are to reverse the downward trend in holiness preaching and teaching:

1. God has made you holy when he forgave your sins, by giving you a new nature in Christ.
2. God calls and enables you to grow in the holiness he has implanted in you until you reach the fullness of Christlike character.
3. The nature of holiness is love. We need to love God and our neighbour with a pure heart; then we will live lives free of love's opposite, sin.
4. Everything we receive from God we receive in response to faith-filled, heart-felt prayer. Ask God daily to empower you to love Father, Son and Holy Spirit with an undivided heart and to love your neighbour as yourself.
5. Believe that what you ask from God will be given in God's own time and way, and never stop asking for more and more of the love of God until it is made perfect in you.

Who knows what God would do if such prayer were our daily pursuit?

John Wesley often concluded his sermons with a direct exhortation to the reader, concerned lest people read his thoughts out of mere intellectual curiosity. Let me conclude with such an exhortation from one of his lesser known sermons, 'On Patience':

[I]n what manner does God work this entire, this universal change in the soul of the believer? This strange work, which so many will not believe, though we declare it unto them? Does he work it gradually, by slow degrees? Or instantaneously, in a moment?... The Scriptures are silent upon the subject; because the point is not determined, at least in express terms, in any part of the oracles of God. Every man may therefore abound in his own sense, provided he will allow the same liberty to his neighbour... Permit me... to add one thing more, see that you never rest till it is wrought in your soul...⁵⁶

Discussion questions

1. Share any memories, thoughts or impression you may have of Frederick Courts and/or Samuel Logan Brengle. They have been important in Salvation Army history. Are they important to you personally in any way?
2. Consider the following statement: 'All theology is to some extent autobiographical as we first begin with the direct experience of God's grace and only then do we reflect on that experience...' Do you agree with this statement? Why or why not?
3. What are the benefits of stressing the experience of sanctifying grace as an instantaneous gift? What are the benefits of stressing the experience of sanctifying grace as a progressive work? Are these complementary views or mutually exclusive ones?
4. Do you agree with T. Crichton Mitchell that the question of John Wesley's relating (or otherwise) of Pentecost with entire sanctification is 'merely academic, of small profit, and rather boring'? Or do you agree with the author of this paper that 'if the [Wesleyan-Holiness] tradition is to move forward it cannot do so by sidestepping this important discussion'?

5. The author lists five things that 'must be said from our pulpits if we are to reverse the downward trend in holiness preaching and teaching'. What would you include on your own list of 'things that must be said'?

59. See William Booth, "the Millennium: or, the Ultimate Triumph of Salvation Army Principles," *All the World* 6 (August, 1890), pp. 337-343. See also William Booth, "My Idea of the Millennium," *The Review of Reviews* 2 (July-December, 1890), p. 130, and William Booth, "All things New: A New Year's Message from the New World, *All The World* 15:1 (January 1895), pp. 3-7.
60. John Coutts, *The Salvationists* (London: A. R. Mowbray and Company, Ltd., 1978), p. 142.
61. Owen Chadwick, *The Victorian Church*, 2 Vols. (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1987) 2:297.
62. Macquiban, "Soup and Salvation: Social Service as an Emerging Motif for the British Methodist Response to Poverty in the Late 19th Century," pp. 35-36. See also K. S. Inglis, *Churches and the Working Classes in Victorian England* (London: Routledge, Kegan and Paul, 1963), p. 211; and Norris Magnuson, *Salvation in the Slums: Evangelical Social Work 1865-1920* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1977), p. 173.
63. Begbie, *The Life of General William Booth*, 2:84.
64. Ervine, *God's Soldier: General William Booth*, 2:784.
65. "New General Et His Plans," *Daily News and Leader* (October 1912), p. 1.

Why Brengle? Why Coutts? Why Not?

1. Frederick Coutts, *No Continuing City* (London: Salvationist Publishing and Supplies, 1978), 26.
2. Jonathan Raymond, cited in Geoff Webb with Kalie Webb, *Authentic Fair Dinkum Holiness for Ordinary Christians* (Salvation Army Australia Southern Territory, 2007), 205.
3. Kenneth J. Collins, *The Theology of John Wesley: Holy Love and the Shape of Grace* (Nashville: Abingdon, 2007), 3-16.
4. Collins, 6.
5. Formerly "Indiana Asbury University," it changed its name in 1882. R. David Rightmire, "Samuel Brengle and the Development of the Pneumatology of the Salvation Army," *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 27:1 (1992), 110.
6. "Samuel Logan Brengle: Soldier and Servant," excerpt from E. F. and L. Harvey and E. Hay, *They Knew Their God*, vol. 1 <http://www.kingsleypress.com/samuel-logan-brengle.html> accessed 2 September 2009. The best biography of Brengle is probably R. David Rightmire, *Sanctified Solitude: The Life and Teaching of Samuel Logan Brengle* (Alexandria, VA: Crest Books, Salvation Army National Publications, 2003).
7. Letter from Champaign, IL, 9 January 1923, in William Clark, ed., *Dearest Lily: A Selection of the Brengle Correspondence* (London: The Salvation Army, 1985), 142-43.
8. R. David Rightmire, "Samuel Brengle and the Development of the Pneumatology of the Salvation Army," *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 27:1 (1992), 121-22.
9. Timothy Smith, *Revivalism and Social Reform in Mid-Nineteenth Century America* (New York: Abingdon Press, 1957), 127. See also Charles Edward White, "Phoebe Palmer and the Development of Pentecostal Pneumatology," *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 23: 1 and 2 (Spring-Fall 1988), 198-212 the subsequent influence of Palmer's ideas on Pentecostalism.
10. Rightmire, "Samuel Brengle and the Development of the Pneumatology of the Salvation Army," 117.
11. Rightmire, "Samuel Brengle and the Development of the Pneumatology of the Salvation Army," 116-18.
12. Samuel Logan Brengle, *The Way of Holiness* (New York: Salvation Army Printing and Publishing House, 1902), 18-19.
13. John Telford, ed., *The Letters of the Rev John Wesley, A.M. Sometime Fellow of Lincoln College, Oxford* (London: The Epworth Press, 1960), 6: 287.
14. http://www.salvationarmy.org.au/SALVSTANDARD/PC_60862.html accessed 2 September 2009.

15. Coutts, *No Continuing City*, 28-29.
16. For a study of one example of this approach see Glen O'Brien, "Reading Wesley's Sermons in Edwardian Melbourne," in Renate Howe, ed., *The Master: The Life and Work of Edward H. Sugden* (Melbourne: Uniting Academic Press, 2009), 109-124.
17. Coutts, *No Continuing City*, 50.
18. Webb, 209.
19. Webb, 212.
20. Coutts, *No Continuing City*, 60.
21. Coutts, *No Continuing City*, 58.
22. Cited in *No Continuing City*, 57-58. The statement has an interesting and varied history. From 1881 to 1922 it was part of the text of the Army's official doctrinal statement. In 1922 it was placed in small print and then in 1935 hidden away in a footnote in the *Handbook of Doctrine*. Finally it was omitted altogether under Coutts' influence after a sitting of the Doctrine Council in 1969.
23. Ian Barr, "Is the Salvation Army Still a Holiness Movement?" Published as a Super Club address on *The Rubicon* 27 April 2007 http://therubicon.org/wp-content/full_text/supercub3_barr.pdf accessed 3 September 2009.
24. It should be noted that the following discussion is by no means an attempt to deal with biblical exegesis. It is rather an historical discussion from which are derived some theological conclusions. I am convinced that the doctrine of entire sanctification must have a sound basis in exegesis but am not attempting that task here.
25. Donald W. Dayton, "Wesleyan Theological Society: The Second Decade," *Wesleyan Theological Journal* [herein after referred to as WTJ] 30:1 (Spring 1995), 224.
26. Herbert McGonigle, "Pneumatological Nomenclature in Early Methodism," in WTJ 81 (Spring 1973), 62.
27. Dayton, WTJ 30:1, 224. The issue reappeared again in the devotion of an entire issue of the *Asbury Theological Journal* (53:1 Spring 1988) to previously unpublished writings of John Fletcher.
28. George Allen Turner, *The Vision Which Transforms* (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press, 1965), 149.
29. Robert W. Lyon, "Baptism and Spirit Baptism in the New Testament," in WTJ 14:1 (Spring, 1979).
30. Lyon is not arguing against entire sanctification, only against it being seen as a "baptism of the Holy Spirit." "Were someone to ask me," he writes, "where we begin in establishing the biblical roots of Wesley's doctrine of perfection in love, one of the powerful warrants I would offer would be [the] biblical account of conversion. The dynamic of conversion to Jesus Christ is such that perfection in love is the mandatory follow-up."
31. Cp. McGonigle, WTJ, 8 (1973), 68.
32. Lawrence Wood, "Exegetical Reflections on the Baptism with the Holy Spirit," in WTJ 14:1 (Spring, 1979).
33. George Allan Turner, "The Baptism of the Holy Spirit in the Wesleyan Tradition," in WTJ 14:1 (Spring 1979), 68.
34. Sugden, ed., *Wesley's Standard Sermons*, 1:176.
35. See "The Thirty Texts of Wesley" in *The Wesley Study Bible* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1990.) Sangster deals with the textual basis of Wesley's doctrine in *The Path to Perfection* (London: Epworth, 1943), 37-52.
36. John Wesley, *A Plain Account of Christian Perfection* (London: Epworth, 1952), 55, 61, 78-9; John Telford, ed., *The Letters of John Wesley* (London: Epworth, 1921), 5:229.
37. Lawrence W. Wood, "John Fletcher and the Rediscovery of Pentecost in Methodism," *The Asbury Theological Journal* 53:1 Spring 1988; "Purity and Power: The Pentecostal Experience According to John Wesley and Joseph Fletcher," paper presented at the 27th Annual Meeting of the Society for Pentecostal Studies, in special session with the Wesleyan Theological Society, March 12-14, 1988, Church of God Theological Seminary, Cleveland, Tennessee.

38. Wood, "Purity and Power," 20.
39. Wood, "Purity and Power," 25.
40. Wood, "Purity and Power," 25.
41. Wood, "Purity and Power," 6.
42. Wood, "Purity and Power," 9.
43. Wood, "Purity and Power," 11.
44. Wood, "Purity and Power," 11.
45. Wesley, letter to John Fletcher, 22 March, 1775. Letters 6:146. Cited in Paul M. Bassett and William M. Greathouse, *Exploring Christian Holiness: Vol. 2. The Historical Development*. (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press, 1985), 246.
46. John Wesley, "Letter to Joseph Benson," December 28, 1770, in Works XII: 416.
47. Paul Merrit Bassett, "The Interplay of Christology and Ecclesiology in the Theology of the Holiness Movement," in *WTJ* 16:2 (Fall, 1981), 80.
48. Bassett, *WTJ* 16:2, 87.
49. H. Orton Wiley, *Christian Theology* (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press, 1942), 3:103.
50. Bassett, *WTJ* 16:2, 88-9.
51. Donald W. Dayton, *WTJ* 30:1 (Spring 1995), 225.
52. T. Crichton Mitchell, "Response to Dr. Timothy Smith on the Wesley's Hymns," in *WTJ* 16:2 (Fall, 1981), 49.
53. Melvin E. Dieter, "Presidential Address: Musings," in *WTJ* 14:1 (Spring, 1979), 10.
54. This was Coutts' concern about Bengles's more Pneumatological approach. "To invoke the Holy Spirit, supposing that He can do more for us than the other two Persons in the Godhead is bad theology. We know but one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, who share every act of thought, will and feeling." Frederick L. Coutts, *The Call to Holiness* (London: Salvationist Publishing and Supplies, n.d.), 15.
55. This is a summary of one part of Dr. Noble's lecture series given at Booth College 23-24 July 2009, drawn from <http://glenobrien.blogspot.com/2009/07/booth-seminar-with-tom-noble.html> accessed 21 September 2009.
56. John Wesley, Sermon 83, "On Patience," *BF* 3:176f.