

STUDY 1

AN INTRODUCTORY ESSAY TO THE THEME OF HOLINESS

‘WORSHIP THE LORD IN HOLY ARRAY’

At least five times in the Old Testament, Israel is bidden to ‘worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness’.¹ This attractive statement has been stamped into our minds by the lovely hymn written by J. S. B. Monsell, its first line being these very words: ‘Oh worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness!’ In the RSV the words are, each time, translated, ‘Worship the LORD in holy array’. The worship of the Lord in Israel was a beautiful thing, much beloved by the people who adored their Yahweh. We are not saying that many of the congregation (*qahal*) did not, from time to time, depart from this prescribed worship norm: sadly enough they did. Even so, the Psalms show us how rich was their worship and their formulations tell us that such worship was never haphazard but followed a formulated pattern, being led by the Levites from whom were chosen gifted musicians and a choir. We can gather something of its order from Solomon’s service of dedication of the temple he had built to the Lord. Of course, it was a special service but the basic principles of worship shine through it. We read of it in II Chronicles 5:11—14:

Now when the priests came out of the holy place (for all the priests who were present had sanctified themselves, without regard to their divisions; and all the Levitical singers, Asaph, Heman, and Jeduthun, their sons and kinsmen, arrayed in fine linen, with cymbals, harps, and lyres, stood east of the altar with a hundred and twenty priests who were trumpeters; and it was the duty of the trumpeters and singers to make themselves heard in unison in praise and thanksgiving to me LORD), and when the song was raised, with trumpets and cymbals and other musical instruments, in praise to the LORD,
‘For he is good,
for his steadfast love endures for ever,’

the house, the house of the LORD, was filled with a cloud, so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud; for the glory of the LORD filled the house of God.

Paul urged the Corinthians that in their worship all things should be done ‘decently and in order’. This is the idea of ‘the splendour of holiness’ which can also be translated, ‘in holy array’. It is easy for us to imagine that magnificent worship in Solomon’s temple, and the ‘holy array’ in which all worshipped. In Psalm 29:1—2 the Psalmist invokes the ‘heavenly beings’, that is, the glorious celestial beings, to

¹ See I Chronicles 16:29; II Chronicles 20:21; Psalms 29:2; 96:9; 110:3.

‘Ascribe to the LORD, O heavenly beings, ascribe to the LORD glory and strength. Ascribe to the LORD the glory of his name; worship the LORD in holy array’. In Psalm 96:7—9 it is the ‘families of the peoples’ who are exhorted to ‘worship the LORD in holy array’. In Psalm 110:3 the idea is present in older versions which render the RSV’s ‘on the day you lead your host upon the holy mountains’, as ‘in the beauties of holiness, from the womb of the morning’, and ‘on the day you lead your host in holy array’.

There is, then, a holy array on earth and a holy array in heaven. All creatures are worshipping; all are sharing the holiness of God. That is why we have chosen the title for our book to be *Everything in Beautiful Array*. If we could see heaven and earth as having such an order, it would be a lovely picture of creatures living in true holiness in a holy creation. At an even deeper level, there is the question of a human being’s ‘holy array’; that is, that a person in himself or herself is one who has the harmony and security of ‘a holy array’. Confusion, dysfunction and distortion are missing: all is in harmony and balance within the person.

We have to keep in mind all the time that the term ‘holy’ is often unattractive to some readers, is too demanding for others, and for some it is even frightening. Even so, there are others who are wonderfully attracted by the idea of ‘everything being in beautiful array’. As we have noted, it speaks of order, security, peace and pleasure. There is something aesthetically attractive. It may even speak of the lovely forms the Greeks used in their literature, art and music, but for the true worshippers in Israel the ‘holy array’ transcended all that is just aesthetically beautiful. It was the dynamic—and yet restful—relationship they had with the Lord God Most High. It spoke to them of union with their Creator and Redeemer. They lived in awe of Him but they loved Him with every part of their beings.

If we could grasp something of biblical holiness—that known by the people of Israel and the new people who sprang into life on the day of Pentecost—then we would not find holiness distasteful, but attractive. It might be a matter of awe, but not of slavish dread. The idea of spirituality being born of unrealistic self—denial, mortification of one’s created being, and a grim mode of living—because to enjoy anything is unspiritual!—is enough to turn people from what they understand, though wrongly, to be the way of holiness. True living in holiness would not be a matter of severe, righteous living, but of gracious living, that is, living under grace. To have a keen, clear and clean mind would be invigorating. To be out of constant conflict with one’s conscience would be beautifully restful.² To be children of the Holy Father would be to be holy children by response to that loving Father.

So we could continue to speak of the beauty of holiness. We really do need to know what it is and this chapter aims to be a simple introduction to the whole subject.

THE HISTORY OF HOLINESS

Whilst the remainder of our book traces the action of the Holy God in the life of the creation and of Man, it is good to have a quick bird’s—eye view of the history God both plans and wills to execute. It is this, in effect, that God planned to have Man share in

² 1 am not suggesting that holiness acts as a sedative for the conscience. Far from it, for ‘they who fain would serve thee best, are conscious most of wrong within’. What we are saying is that when through the work of the Cross, reconciliation is made with God, then the conscience is brought to peace, and the person to spiritual worship of God. The conscience may well be confronted by accusation and real life situations where there is failure, but the essential peace of God does reign in the heart because the conscience has been ‘purified from dead works to serve the living God’ (Heb. 9:14).

partnership with Him, so that he might fulfil His plan. The plan is seen in Genesis 1:28 with which God addressed the primal couple:, ‘Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth’. There are many interpretations of this command or mandate or franchise—whichever term we prefer—but general interpretation is that because Man is made in the image of God who is King over all creation, Man is a kind of regent; on the one hand showing the nature of the King, and on the other acting for Him in His royal plan. The mandate points to some sort of an end, namely the filling up of the earth. A look at Genesis chapters 1 and 2 shows that there are two accounts of the creation of Man which differ somewhat, but are generally complementary. If the two pictures be transparencies and are placed one on the other, we come close to having a full picture. For example, we have the first couple as male and female in chapter 1, and then the woman’s origin in the next chapter, so that the couple become ‘one flesh’. The creation of animals is mentioned in the first chapter and the ‘naming’ of them by Adam in the second. This naming is a sign of authority and part of the working out of the mandate of 1:28.

That this beginning must have an end in sight seems to be a reasonable conclusion. From the moment of creation there is born an eschatology, a view of the goal to which all things lead, and in which they have their fulfilment. In the third chapter of this present book we discover that at least two things were created holy, one being the seventh day and its rest, and the other the garden of Eden, since in it was the Presence of God. God’s Presence is one criterion for holiness, and this is accompanied by worship of the Holy One, the Creator—King.

One interpretation of Genesis 1:28 is that Man, who had been placed in Eden following the act of his being created outside that paradise, was to fill up the earth with the kind of life and kind of humanity which lived in Eden. Eden—so to speak—was to be expanded until it filled up the whole earth. This would mean the whole earth would be holy if it had not already been created so. Humanity would be a reflection of God its Creator—King, and when it had completed its given task, then history would wait upon the God who had commissioned it.

If this reasoning is valid then we can say—looking at all things from one point of view—that God’s goal was to bring the creation to a holy end, that is, He had in view the sanctification of all creation. We will see that when all things were created God pronounced them ‘good’, and we understand by this ‘functionally good’ and ‘morally good’. If we ask, ‘Does “good” mean the same as “holy”?’ then we are not really given an answer, apart from the fact that God specifically sanctified the seventh day, but nothing else is mentioned specifically as being sanctified. Here the word ‘sanctified’ means ‘to categorise as being holy, as separated to God, to his service and to his worship’. Whilst nothing else is categorised as holy we think it right to assume this to be the case with the garden of Eden, which, whilst undoubtedly created and related to the rest of creation, appears to be the place of the holy Presence of God. At this juncture we cannot claim more.

The heading to this section is ‘The History of Holiness’ and yet we have spoken only of the beginning of this history. What we are probing to find is the meaning of history and its goal, or *telos* as the Greek word is for ‘goal’. If, for the moment, we can be content with seeing that *telos* as the sanctification of all creation, then we will begin to understand the problems that arose from Man’s having a commission from God which in some way involved holiness, and the troubled nature of all history because Man refused to carry out that commission on the terms God had laid down.

A TEMPORARY CONCLUSION

Should we say ‘a limited conclusion’? We mean that the bias many hold against the very idea of holiness may arise from our early beginnings in history. If we can come to understand holiness, then we might realise that a ‘holy array’ in human living and worship of God may be the deepest and richest need of the human heart. To break into this dimension of holiness may bring an understanding to human thinking that nothing else can bring. It may bring us into such depths of human living as we had not dreamed could exist. Whatever the case, it will be good for us to pursue the idea of holiness or sanctification, so far as it concerns God and so far as it concerns Man.

STUDY 2

HOLY! HOLY! HOLY!

HUMAN IDEAS AND THE SCRIPTURAL IDEA OF HOLINESS

A down—to—earth Pastor, or Elder, or Layperson might think of the doctrine of Holiness as a spiritual or pietistic ‘extra’ to congregational life, and that it belongs to the *bene esse* of the church and not its *esse*.¹ Hebrews 12:14, ‘Strive for peace with all men, and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord makes it clear that holiness is essential to complete salvation. II Peter 1:3—4 states:

His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, that through these you may escape from the corruption that is in the world because of passion, and become partakers of the divine nature.

From this passage we gather that (i) nothing is lacking in God’s ‘full spiritual blessing’ (Eph. 1:3) that is needed for ‘life and godliness’; (ii) for ‘escape from lust’; and (iii) for ‘participation² in the divine nature’. Purity through the blood of Christ is part of the sanctification the Cross brings us to.

Unfortunately, some see sanctification as severe legalism, painful asceticism and a list of ‘do this’ and ‘don’t do that’. For some it is Pharisaism revived, a joyless and gloomy life. This is not how life in Christ is depicted in the New Testament. Many who recoil from God’s free sanctification of His people, and the pursuit of active holiness, fail to see it is ‘sanctification from creation to the ultimate new creation’, and is a matter for great joy and glory. As we saw, the oft—repeated injunction in the Old Testament is, ‘Worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness’. Holiness and true worship are inseparable.

The Use Of Verbs, Nouns And Adjectives In The Old And New Testaments

The Hebrew *qadas* is ‘to set apart, consecrate, hallow, sanctify, treat as holy’. The noun is *qodes* and the adjective, *qodos*. The idea of these is to separate, be separated. The Greek verb *hag&zō* carries much the same idea. The noun *hagiasmos* is used in contexts which speak of sanctification as a work of God for man, and in other contexts is applied to the way of life of the sanctified person. The adjective *hagios* is used in similar contexts. All these words in Hebrew and Greek speak of separation from the worship and culture of those who are not Israelites or Christians.³

¹ The *bene esse* is something which is good to have, but not essential, whilst the *esse* is something without which the church is not the church.

² Note that we *share* in God’s holiness (Heb. 12:10). Sharing is different from ‘appropriating’. It is participation in what has already been given.

³ For a more extensive explanation and use of the words, see *Possessed by God*, by David Peterson (Apollos, Leicester, 1995, pp. 139-142).

Words Known in and by Their Context

When we want to understand the meaning of a biblical word, we generally seek to find the meaning of it as verbs and substantives in the Old Testament and the New Testament, and we will first try the method of examining some of its uses in their contexts. For example, in Hebrews 12:8—10 the writer says that human fathers discipline us as they see fit. God, the writer says, disciplines us ‘that we may *share* his holiness’. Note that we do not obtain holiness, even as a gift, but we can share in it.⁴ The Scriptures speak of God’s attributes such as goodness, truth and righteousness, these being part of His nature.⁵ Even so, holiness and love are His very Person. ‘God is light’ and ‘God is love’ are two distinct descriptions of Him. We may be sanctified by God, that is, declared holy, and He may assist us to live in a holy manner, by first cleansing us from impurity and guilt, but without His aid we cannot live a holy life. Once accepting the biblical fact ‘God alone is holy’, we will not think of our sanctification as a gift we receive and develop by utilising it, but as a category declared of us by God, and His aid in helping us to live the life of holiness. Our sanctification and sanctity lie in God and in this sense they come to us gift—wise.⁶

OLD TESTAMENT IDEAS OF HOLINESS

Under the heading below, ‘Things Holy, Common, Clean and Unclean’, we see the meaning of ‘sanctification’ and ‘holiness’ in Israel under the Sinaitic covenant. This may lead us to think all things are unclean until consecrated by the word of God and prayer (cf. I Tim. 4:4—5). In this case ‘consecrated’ (sanctified) simply means ‘dedicated to the service of; that is, food is now eaten to the glory of God (cf. I Cor. 10:26, 31). In I Timothy 4:1—5, Paul warns against the teaching of demons that God’s created things are unholy, for example, marriage and foods. He says, ‘For everything created by God is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving; for then it is consecrated by the word of God and prayer’.

Things Holy, Common, Clean and Unclean

In Leviticus 10: 10, Aaron was told, ‘You are to distinguish between the holy and the common, and between the unclean and the clean’. G. J. Wenham comments:

⁴ 11 Peter 1:3-4 says:

His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, that through these you may escape from the corruption that is in the world because of passion, and become partakers of the divine nature.

Here we are participators (sharers) in the Divine Nature, but we do not *have* what is God’s nature itself. We cannot be creators when He *is* Creator. It is always in dependence that we receive from Him. Of ourselves, we are not holy, love, etc.

⁵ 5 Herbert W. Richardson, in *Theology For a New World* (SCM, London, 1968, pp. 132-33), says:

For, as we have previously argued, the distinguishing characteristic of God is a property not of his nature but of His person, viz., holiness. Someone can know things about God by knowing characteristics of His nature (e.g., truth or love or happiness). But one can only know God Himself, i.e., know God insofar as He is God, by experiencing the holiness that is the distinguishing property of His existence. Since holiness is inseparable from the person of God, we can only know God in Christ by experiencing Jesus of Nazareth as the Holy One in person.

⁶ See Deuteronomy 28:2 where blessings are said to ‘come upon you and overtake you’ where there is covenantal obedience, and 28:15 where cursings shall ‘come upon you and overtake you’ where there is covenantal disobedience.

Everything that is not holy is common. Common things divide into two groups, the clean and the unclean. Clean things become holy, when they are sanctified. But unclean objects cannot be sanctified. Clean things can be made unclean, if they are polluted. Finally, holy items may be defiled and become common, even polluted, and therefore unclean.⁷

Israel was made to be a holy people in line with God's covenantal promises to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. The tabernacle, its furniture and worship objects, including its priests and Levites, all had to be sanctified by the use of blood. Likewise, the altar sanctified the offerings made upon it, whether animal or vegetable. On the Day of Atonement all things of the sanctuary had to be cleansed by blood and thus were kept in the category of things sanctified. No less, the priests had first to be purified by blood before they could carry out their holy office of sacrifice and worship.

In Ezekiel 44:23 this charge is repeated for the Levites in the new temple of which the prophet wrote. In 22:26, God, in speaking of the old temple, has said:

Her priests have done violence to my law and have profaned my holy things; they have made no distinction between the holy and the common, neither have they taught the difference between the clean and the unclean, and they have disregarded my sabbaths, so that I am profaned among them.

Many times in Ezekiel are the people of Israel said to have 'profaned my holy name', a quite serious matter.

'Unclean' seems to represent that which was clean but has become unclean, or that which was pronounced as unclean by God in the cultus of Israelite life and worship. 'Profane' seems to represent that which is in opposition to what is holy so that it profanes it. The state of cleanness seems to be the common, normal state of all things until they are pronounced holy, or unclean by God.

ISAIAH 6:1—13: THE PROPHET AND GOD'S HOLINESS IN ISRAEL— 'HOLY! HOLY! HOLY!'

In Isaiah 6 we have a wonderful chapter which partly explains the idea of holiness. The prophet Isaiah was technically a sanctified person because he was a member of the holy people, Israel.⁸ It is only when he has a vision of God in His holiness that he realises his own impurity and profanation as well as the impurity and profanation of Israel. Uzziah, the king who died in this year of Isaiah's vision, had been made a leper because of his attempt to offer sacrificial worship, which was alone a priestly function. The state of Israel was shocking, but had not been essentially recognised by Isaiah. Now he saw the Lord in His holiness in the temple at Jerusalem, but it was in fact a hall, a royal palace,⁹ doubtless commencing in the temple but transcending it. He sat upon a throne, which showed His Kingship of the whole universe and which transcended the earthly temple. The celestial seraphim showed their worship of Yahweh by their powerful crying, 'Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory'.¹⁰ This could also be translated, 'The whole earth is the fullness of his glory'.

⁷ G. J. Wenham, *The Book of Leviticus*, The New International Commentary on the Old Testament, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1979, pp. 18-25. John Kleinig's *Sharing in God's Holiness* (self-published, 1984) is an excellent treatment on holiness.

⁸ See Deuteronomy 7:6, 14:1-2, Exodus 19:5-6, and Leviticus 11:44, where Israel is named as a holy people and commanded to live consonant with its calling.

⁹ See Psalms 11:4, 18:6, and 29:9.

¹⁰ A correct translation would be, 'The whole earth is the fullness of his glory,' and this must mean on Motyer's statement-'Holiness is God's hidden glory, glory is God's all-present holiness'-that the creation is the fullness of His

The outcome of this sight of holiness was that the prophet cried that he was lost, that he was a man of unclean lips and dwelt in the midst of a people of unclean lips. God, the ‘holy One of Israel’ is often called ‘Your Redeemer’. So here, at the Lord’s bidding, Isaiah is purified by a live coal from the altar of sacrifice, and is told, ‘Behold, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away, and your sin forgiven’ (Isa. 6:7). Isaiah would have had, otherwise, to go through cleansing sacrifices at the altar¹¹ in order to be personally purified, or, perhaps we should say, ‘to be brought back to be consonant with his sanctification as an Israelite’.¹²

REVELATION 4:6—11: ‘HOLY! HOLY! HOLY!’ FOR GOD’S BEING AS CREATOR

Isaiah chapter 6 and the uttered *trisagion* is significant for the Presence of God in the whole earth, and this in the light of Israel’s being in a state of sinfulness which needed it to be spoken to in terms of judgment. The *trisagion* of Revelation 4 is a pure expression of celestial worship which speaks of God as Creator and His hand on all history and history’s *telos*. Some see the repetition in this cry as trinitarian, and others as an intensifier, expressing God’s innate holiness in its strongest form.

CONCLUSION: HOLINESS IS RELATED TO WHAT WAS AND IS AND IS TO COME

Holiness, far from being impractical, is the primary matter to which we give attention as God’s people and His intention for His creation. This will come through powerfully in our whole set of studies. In following studies we will see that the sanctification of the world is in God’s mind and that Israel is the means and medium by which He will accomplish that:

holiness (Alex Motyer, *The Prophecy of Isaiah, IVP*, London, 1993, p. 77). Herbert W. Richardson in his *Theology for a New World* (SCM, London, 1968, pp. 119f.) has a valuable section titled ‘Holiness, the Glory of God’. This raises questions in regard to the creation, or the correctness of Motyer’s statement. See also Numbers 14:21, Psalm 19:1, 72:19, Habakkuk 2:14, and Psalm 19:1.

¹¹ Later we will see that all God’s people-Israel and the church-have first to be sanctified; that is, included in the holy community, and that when elements of unsanctification arise, they need the sacrifice of the blood to restore to personal purity. See the Levitical sacrifices and I John 1:8-9.

¹² Note that Isaiah’s restoration to the sanctification, which had always been his as an Israelite and a prophet, was in order that he might take God’s prophetic word to the nation-the message of judgment, and of the remnant, the holy seed. The passage is of immense importance in the New Testament.

STUDY 3

HOLY SABBATH, HOLY EDEN

ALL THINGS SANCTIFIED

From our previous chapter we can gather that all things fall into any of the following categories; holy, common, clean, unclean and profane. From pages 6—7, we quote:

In Leviticus 10: 10 Aaron was told, ‘You are to distinguish between the holy and the common, and between the unclean and the clean’. G. J. Wenham comments:

Everything that is not holy is common. Common things divide into two groups, the clean and the unclean. Clean things become holy, when they are sanctified. But unclean objects cannot be sanctified. Clean things can be made unclean, if they are polluted. Finally, holy items may be defiled and become common, even polluted, and therefore unclean.¹

Israel was made to be a holy people in line with God’s covenantal promises to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. The tabernacle, its furniture and worship objects, including its priests and Levites, all had to be sanctified by the use of blood. Likewise the altar sanctified the offerings made upon it, whether animal or vegetable. On the Day of Atonement all things of the sanctuary had to be cleansed by blood and thus were kept in the category of things sanctified. No less, the priests had first to be purified by blood before they could carry out their holy office of sacrifice and worship.

I think it is reasonable to gather that anything that is holy is that which is devoted to the worship and service of God, and *nothing else*.

Created Things at ‘the Beginning’ Which Are/Were Holy

It is clear that, at least from Sinai onwards, Israelites viewed holy things as we have in the section above. Was not, then, the whole creation holy? The answer must be that the only thing actually explicitly hallowed by God was the Sabbath. All things without exception—were ‘very good’ (Gen. 1:3 1). All things may have been holy, but are not said to be so. They certainly were all clean, since they came from God’s hand. The seventh day rest of God must have been clean, but was said to have been hallowed only on the day (Gen. 2:1—3). When we note in Genesis 2:7 that God made Man outside Eden, then created Eden, and then placed Man in it, we assume Eden—on a number of grounds—would have been holy. God was present in it with Man; the woman was created in it, and in fact the mandate of 1:28 must then have happened in it; the man and the woman were joined as ‘one flesh’, the rest of the Sabbath must have been theirs. We assume they worshipped God in His Presence. According to these details—including participation in the Sabbath—we seem almost compelled to say unfallen Man was sanctified, especially on the principle Jesus quoted that the gifts is sanctified by the altar.²

¹ G. J. Wenham, *The Book of Leviticus*, p. 19. John Kleinig’s *Sharing in God’s Holiness* (self published, 1984) is an excellent treatment on holiness. See, also, Ezekiel 44:23.

² Matthew 23:19; Exodus 29:37.

God *blessed* in three categories: (i) the birds and sea creatures; (ii) the man and the woman together; and (iii) the seventh day. Even so, only the seventh day—of all things

—was said to be sanctified, but He explicitly hallowed one—the Sabbath. We look now at the Sabbath.

The Seventh Day, the Blessed, Sanctified Day of God’s Rest

Genesis 2:1—3 states:

Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God finished his work which he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had done. So God blessed the seventh day and hallowed it, because on it God rested from all his work which he had done in creation.

Note that ‘And on the seventh day God finished his work which he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had done’. His work was not completed until the seventh day. The following quotes give us something of the significance and power of that day. William Dumbrell comments:

The account of creation finds its conclusion and climax in the activity of the seventh day (Gen. 2:1—4a). God declares his work complete and, by implication, invites human beings to enter into the special situation of rest which the seventh day has brought into being. We are left with the distinct impression that the account of the seventh day leaves the continuity of Genesis I and enters a more open—ended situation. The seventh day is not an ordinary day. Unlike the other days, no mention is made of a morning or an evening. Though the noun *Sabbath* does not occur in this section, the verb from which it derived occurs twice, and Exodus 20:8—11 points to the creation account as the warrant for Sabbath observance. God blesses the day (i.e., endows it with the potential to be the day which God had intended for human experience) and then hallows it (i.e., makes it his own day). The links that Exodus 20:8—11 forges encourages us to see in the episode of the seventh day in Genesis 2 a model of what the later Sabbath was to represent. **Humankind in direct fellowship with God in an unbroken relationship, living in harmony with the earth from which they were drawn and with the animate world with which they are placed in direction relationship, is the message of Genesis 2.**³

Ezekiel 20:12 confirms what Dumbrell has just said, namely:

Humankind in direct fellowship with God in an unbroken relationship, living in harmony with the earth from which they were drawn and with the animate world with which they are placed in direction relationship, is the message of Genesis 2.

because in Ezekiel 20:12 God says, ‘Moreover I gave them [Israel] my sabbaths, as a sign between me and them, that *they might know that I the LORD sanctify them*’. If God gives Israel the sabbaths and then sanctifies the people, then it—is reasonable to argue that the Sabbath *of* creation sanctifies all *of* the human race, that is, *all who participate in it*. It is true that for Israel the Sabbath has first its creational significance and secondly its redemptive significance, but redemption simply restores to what was/is creational.

If God’s seventh day *of* rest is the supreme and final point *of* the creation in the first creation story, and so is the starting point for all that follows, then that makes the seventh day eschatological. It is at once protological and eschatological, and so figures throughout the history *of* creation and mankind as essential to its true being and action. Gerhard Hasel also shows this significance:

The ‘seventh day’ sabbath is ‘blessed’ as no other day and thereby imbued with a power unique to this day. God made this day ‘holy’ by separating it from all other days. Rest—day holiness is

³ William J. Dumbrell, *The Faith of Israel, Apollos*, Leicester, 1992, pp. 18-19.

something which God bestowed onto the seventh day. God manifested himself in refraining from work and in rest as the divine Exemplar for humankind. The sequence of 'six workingdays' and a 'seventh [sabbath] rest—day', indicates universally that every human being is to engage in an *imitatio Dei*, 'imitation of God,' by resting on the 'seventh day.' 'Man' (*adam*), made in the *imago Dei*, 'image of God,' (Gen. 1:26—28) is invited to follow the Exemplar in an *imitatio Dei*, participating in God's rest by enjoying the divine gift of freedom from the labors of human existence and thus acknowledging God as his Creator.⁴

Speaking of the sabbath ordinance as being a sign of the covenant with Israel, he adds:

Its 'sign' signification is *commemorative* of God as Creator and Redeemer where the sabbathkeeping community confesses its continuing relationship to its covenant Lord; it is also *prospective* in signification in that it is a 'sign' of the covenant history moving forward to its appointed goal; it is at the same time a 'sign' signifying the believer's *present* posture vis—a—vis God with physical, mental, and spiritual renewal taking place in each sabbath celebration.⁵

The thesis of Herbert W. Richardson in his book is given as:

The goal of my undertaking, therefore, is to show that God's end in creation is the sanctification, or spiritualisation of the world.⁶

He then adds:

Now, in fact, keeping of the Sabbath holy is nothing other than the way man lives to the glory of God. For *Sabbath holiness and the glory of God are one and the same thing.*⁷

Having argued that holiness and glory are the one thing he asserts:

Since, therefore, God created the world for Sabbath holiness, He must personally enter the world and dwell therein. There mere time and space of the Sabbath is the formal and material precondition for God's personal coming. By his personal coming God sanctifies the Sabbath. *The Sabbath is, so to say, the world's aptitude for the incarnation* [my emphases].⁸

Whilst the last sentence of our quote is pre—empting much we need to see regarding the sanctification of the world, it does indicate that the incarnation of Christ is linked with the redemptive and eschatological view of the Sabbath. We may surely draw the conclusion that for created Man to live in God's sabbath as given in creation was to be sanctified. Not to live in that holiness was to profane the Sabbath rest and so to profane God in whose image Man was made and for whom the Sabbath was to mean *participation in God!* Man's fall in Eden cancelled any holiness Man may have known.

A study of the matter of keeping the Sabbath in Israel is such that it is linked with the telos or climax which is coming to all creation.

THE HOLY PLACE, EDEN

When then we pass to the matter of Eden we are to recognise it as the given sanctuary of God, the place of his presence, the place in which Man was placed that he might tend and keep it. The word 'till' (*abad*) has worship connotation, whilst 'keep' (*shamar*) has guardian connotation—as Genesis 3:24, 'to guard [keep] the way to the tree of life',

⁴ Gerhard F. Hasel, 'Sabbath', in *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, vol. 5, Doubleday, New York, 1992, p. 851.

⁵ Hasel, *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, p. 852.

⁶ Herbert W. Richardson, *Theology for a New World*, p. 112.

⁷ Richardson, *Theology for a New World*, p. 119.

⁸ Richardson, *Theology for a New World*, p. 126. We have yet to examine the necessity for the incarnation of the Son of God, not only for the redemption of the world, but, even more, for its sanctification, since without him there is no sanctification of Man (cf. I Cor. 1:30; 6:11; Eph. 1:3ff.).

makes clear. The second account of the creation in Genesis 2 is in some sense preempted by Genesis 1:26—3 1, in that Adam was created and then Eve, and both were given the mandate, which means that mandate must have come to them in the Garden of Eden. It is clear from 2:8—9 that Adam was created outside of the garden and then placed in the garden, and the events which then took place were all in this sanctuary garden. There can be no question that Eden was holy, sanctified of God by his presence, nor can it be questioned that within it the primal couple participated in the seventh day sabbath rest. Thus Herman Hoeksema observes:

... creation is an image of recreation or of the regeneration of all things. The earthly is image of the heavenly. The temporal is image of the eternal. The first man, who is of the earth, earthy, is indeed the lord of the earthly creation under God, servant of the Lord, His covenant friend: prophet, to know Him and proclaim His virtues, to declare and glorify His name; priest, in order to love Him from the heart and with all His powers; and king, in order to rule over all creatures in His name and under Him. But he is also an image of Him that was to come, of the Lord out of heaven, through Whom man, recreated in Him, will presently rule in heavenly glory. *The first paradise is image of the eternal paradise of God that will presently be revealed in the new heavens and the new earth. And the tree of life in the first paradise is an image of the eternal tree of life that is in the midst of the paradise of God. Thus the whole creation is a revelation of God ... but ... it also points to the final accomplishment of the counsel of God in eternal glory* [emphasis mine].⁹

He later adds,

‘The malefactor on the cross receives the promise that he shall be with Christ in paradise that very day, which is quite different from a promise that he should fall asleep’.¹⁰

Gordon J. Wenham, in his commentary on Genesis 2 has the following to say:

So it seems likely that this description of ‘the garden of Eden in the east’ is symbolic of a place where God dwells. Indeed, there are many other features of the garden that suggest it is seen as an archetypal sanctuary, prefiguring the later tabernacle and temples. But the mention of the rivers and their location in vv 10—14 suggests that the final editor of Gen 2 thought of Eden also as a real place, even if it is beyond the wit of modern writers to locate.¹¹

Graeme Goldsworthy sees Eden as the Kingdom of God:

We first see the Kingdom of God in the Garden of Eden. Here Adam and Eve live in willing obedience to the word of God and to God’s rule. In this setting, the Kingdom is destroyed by the sin of man—and the rest of the Bible is about the restoration of a people to be the willing subjects of the perfect rule of God.¹²

Goldsworthy sees this limited Eden as the Kingdom and paradise to be extended to the ends of the earth. The ‘be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth’ of Genesis 1:28 is seen to be the expansion—so to speak—of the Kingdom to the end of the earth. Goldsworthy takes the Fall as the great impediment and so the covenant with Abraham is really the beginning of that expansion, going on as it does through Israel, the covenant with David for his kingdom, which is then fulfilled by Christ—‘great David’s greater son’—and ultimately in the eschaton by Christ’s Messianic Kingship which shall establish the Paradise and Kingdom of God as universal. Mark Strom follows much the same idea:

⁹ Herman Hoeksema, *Reformed Dogmatics*, Reformed Free Publishing Association, Grand Rapids, 1976, pp. 174-75.

¹⁰ Hoeksema, *Reformed Dogmatics*, p. 199.

¹¹ Gordon J. Wenham, *Genesis 1-15, vol. 1*, Word Biblical Commentary, Word, Waco, 1987, pp. 6 If.

¹² Graeme Goldsworthy, *Gospel and Kingdom*, Crossroad, Rydalmere, 1994, p. 47.

At first, the vision seemed hazy and incomplete, and was built mainly around analogies like Canaan as a bigger but imperfect Eden. This is certainly how the Israelites understood what God had done for them in the Exodus from Egypt. They believed that the Lord had created them as his new people and that he was leading them into a new land which would be a sanctuary like Eden had been for Adam and Eve (see, e.g., Deuteronomy 8:6—9).¹³

William J. Dumbrell views Eden from the point of view of covenant, but also with the connotation of God's Kingship and Man's vice—regency of that Kingship:

Here we note that it seems to be the intention of the writer in 2:8 to indicate that man was created outside of Eden and then placed within the garden. The garden is presented as a centre of world blessing. In it arose the world river which divided outside the garden into four systems. The garden also operates as a divine sanctuary, the point where the immediacy of the divine presence was encountered and enjoyed. In short, created in the world with dominion over it, man is immediately abstracted from the world and placed directly in the divine presence. What is being said in all this is surely how the dominion mandate was to be exercised. What is stressed is that the command of Gen. 1:28 can function only within the set of divine/human relationships . . . Thus in Gen. 2 we are offered a model of how man thereafter is to regulate the world over which he has been set. Man's abstraction from the general world does not thus vitiate 1:28; rather it makes [its] implementation possible. The complete congruity between man and his garden environment (cf. 2:19) as well as the idyllic male/female relationships to which the latter half of the chapter points, function as illustrations of the manner in which dominion over ordered nature was to proceed.¹⁴

He [man] is placed in the garden which God had made, and in this setting God is experienced directly. It seems to follow that humans will exercise dominion and authority over their world only when they are directly and centrally related to God. The first man is appointed to 'till' and to 'keep' the garden (v. 15). The verb till later occurs frequently in the technical sense of worship. This usage, together with the priestly and royal allusions to original man in Ezekiel 28:11—19, encourages us to see man in the garden as a royal figure exercising also a priestly function. This dual and interconnected role strikingly anticipates the call offered to all Israel in Exodus 19:3—6. It also implies that the garden is a world sanctuary. Indeed, the presence of God there in the manner depicted in the account would make it so. The notion of a world center from which all revelation emanates and to which all the world defers is a concept running through the fabric of the whole Bible. It plays a prominent role in Israel's prophetic hopes concerning Jerusalem and is the theme upon which the Bible concludes (see Rev. 21:9—22:5, the so-called Jerusalem appendix.... The remainder of the account in 2:18—25 establishes an order ... The chapter concludes with an aside by the author indicating that it is within the marriage relationship that the expectation of fellowship between man and woman is supremely met and experienced (vv. 24—25).¹⁵

Hoeksema sees Eden as an image of the eschatological paradise, and Goldsworthy, Strom and Dumbrell see it is the beginning of the end, as they see the fulfilment as the end of the beginning. N. T. Wright concentrates on Israel as God's Adam. Like the other writers he sees the fulfilment of God's purposes coming through the Abrahamic covenant, but his emphasis is on the final people of God being the true Israel, or as Dumbrell would call it, 'the New Israel'. He refers to the extra-biblical writing of the intertestamental period as pointing strongly to Israel being Adam. He says, 'For them, Adam has become embodied already in Israel, the people of the Torah, and in her future hope'.¹⁶ His view, then, is as follows:

¹³ Mark Strom, *Days Are Coming: Exploring Biblical Patterns*, Hodder and Stoughton, London, 1989, p. 28.

¹⁴ William J. Dumbrell, *Covenant and Creation: An Old Testament Covenantal Theology*, Paternoster, Exeter, 1984, pp-35-36

¹⁵ William J. Dumbrell, *The Faith of Israel: Its Expression in the Books of the Old Testament*, Apollos, Leicester, 1992, pp. 19-20.

¹⁶ N. T. Wright, *The Climax of the Covenant*, Fortress, Minneapolis, 1993, p. 25.

What God intended for Adam will be given to the seed of Abraham. They will inherit the second Eden, the restored primeval glory. If there is a 'last Adam' in the relevant Jewish literature, he is not an individual, whether messianic or otherwise. He is the whole eschatological people of God. If we take the 'Adam' language out of this context we do not merely distort it; we empty it of its basic content. And if we are to use this material at all for understanding Paul—as I believe we must—we cannot ignore its emphases, or imagine that Paul ignored them, but must ask what he did with them . . .

In this section, then, I shall suggest that Adam—theology, where it occurs in the Old Testament and intertestamental writings, fulfils a specific purpose. It either advances, or develops, a claim about the place of Israel in the purposes of God. It is another way of saying that the world was made for the sake of Israel, or that Israel is, or is to become, God's intended true humanity.¹⁷

Thus at key moments—Abraham's call, his circumcision, the offering of Isaac, the transitions from Abraham to Isaac and from Isaac to Jacob, and in the sojourn in Egypt—the narrative quietly makes the point that Abraham and his family inherit, in a measure, the role of Adam and Eve . . . Except for 35.1 If., echoed in 43.3f., the command ('be fruitful . . .') has turned into a promise ('I will make you fruitful. . .'). The word 'exceedingly' is added in ch. 17. And, most importantly, possession of the land of Canaan, and supremacy over enemies, has taken the place of the dominion over nature given in 1.28. We could sum up this aspect of Genesis by saying: Abraham's children are God's true humanity, and their homeland is the new Eden.¹⁸

The Significance of Creation, Eden and the Seventh Day Rest in the Light of God's Sanctification

Whilst nothing is said of the sanctification of the primal couple, yet their being in the sanctuary of Eden gives us indications of holy living. We know little of 'that ancient serpent the devil' who is the serpent, who is more subtle (wily) than any beast of the field. He was able to be in this Eden. We do know the Fall brought separation so that any 'sharing in the holiness of God' was now ended. In some sense we can only speculate about the worship by Man of God from that point onwards.

Cain and Abel, as we have seen, worship with knowledge of the nature of worship. Cain's offering is an impure and God—profaning one, whilst Abel's is by faith. It is acceptable. 'If you do well shall you not be accepted?' God asks Cain, which Wenham translates, 'Shall you not be forgiven?', implying that there was a strong propitiatory element in that sacrifice of Abel which was accepted. The human race needed to offer acceptable sacrifice. Would those sacrifices cleanse them? Undoubtedly.¹⁹ Was their offering place not a sanctuary of God? Presumably. At the cessation of the Flood, Noah's sacrifice was wholly acceptable to God, and a new era began. Idolatry quickly manifested itself, Abraham being an idolater in Mesopotamia. God's showing of His own glory made Abraham His covenant friend, and Abraham offered acceptable sacrifice to God. The story of Melchizedek speaks of a holy king—priest, and a holy sacrifice offered by him. Later we find much the same in relation to Jethro the priest of Midian and Moses' father—in—law. Moses and Aaron were virtually blessed by Jethro, as was Abraham by Melchizedek. Yet, in all this there was no indication of

¹⁷ Wright, *The Climax of the Covenant*, p. 21.

¹⁸ Wright, *The Climax of the Covenant*, pp. 22-23.

¹⁹ There is an interesting statement in Ezekiel 11:16:

Though I removed them far off among the nations, and though I scattered them among the countries, yet I have been a sanctuary to them for a while [in small measure] in the countries where they have gone.

This appears to indicate that no matter where God's people are, there He is present and is their sanctuary.

Eden, no Kingdom of God expanding to the ends of the earth, filling it up, and no Eden doing the same, making this world the true Paradise of God.

Israel and Sanctification

Here we see the gifts of God which Paul later named, ‘the sonship, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the worship, and the promises’, and these in the context of ‘the patriarchs, and of their race, according to the flesh, is the Christ’. In other chapters we have seen that everything in Israel was ‘holy to the Lord’, that is, the people, the tabernacle and its furniture, the priests and Levites, the sacrifices, and the prophets. They were God’s Kingdom and His holy sanctuary. They were Eden. As a priest—nation they were to be the holy nation among all the nations, and intended to witness to them of God. All provisions for the unclean being made clean, and the clean being sanctified, were present. They were to be no less than sanctified. Sacrifices properly offered brought cleansing, but cleansing was but the restoring of them to their sanctification already given by God. The gifts we have named above were all indispensable, each to all others. When the law was flouted and the sacrifices polluted, God’s holy prophets, ‘which have been since the world began’, were there to bring to them the truth of covenant, kingdom, holiness and worship. They were to live consistent with their Edenic calling, mandate and the purpose of Yahweh, their covenant making King.

Israel’s Failure to Be a Holy Nation Leading to the Sanctification of the Whole World²⁰

The election of Israel was no safe cover for their rebellion, their idolatry and their uncleanness. They were to come under judgment. Hence the dire warnings of the prophets, the dreadful judgments that came to the land, and the judgments of exile, and the loss of their Edenic holy land. If we do not understand Israel’s high calling to promote God’s plan, and to be the priest—nation among all the nations, then God’s warnings of judgment, and His execution of judgments, cannot be understood.

The prophets knew that decimation of the nations would be the end of Israel, and they perceived that the land of Canaan, with Mount Sion as its worship centre, was a figure and icon of the Eden and eternal ‘Paradise yet to come. The Kingdom of David was to be greater than David or Solomon had known. It was to be a kingdom which would cover the earth. The glory of the Lord, and also the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, was to cover the earth as the waters cover the sea.²¹

The temple of Sion was to be universal, ‘the house of prayer for all nations’. So we have prophecies regarding covenant, kingdom and the Eden of the ‘new heavens and the new earth’. With them would come a universal experience of God’s sabbath

²⁰ By necessity of time and space, this ultimate sanctification of all things which is by Christ’s incarnation, atonement and ascension cannot here be considered

²¹ If here we were to take A. J. Motyer’s statement, ‘Holiness is God’s hidden glory; glory is God’s all present holiness’, then God’s glory covering the earth would be the total revelation of God’s holiness. All the world would be sanctified. Dumbrell, Strom and Goldsworthy see Eden as that which Man has to extend and expand until it fills the whole earth, as God’s Kingdom and God’s Paradise. Because of the Fall, Man—the first Adam—was unable to accomplish this mandate and the creation was ‘subjected to futility’, yes, but ‘futility in hope’, so with deliverance from bondage to corruption, all things participate in ‘the liberty of the glory of the children of God’. Then is the Kingdom co-extensive with all God’s creation, and likewise Eden as the ‘new’ Eden.

rest. The following prophecies are but a little of what the prophets say about the glorious future.

In Christ both the Kingdom of God and the Paradise of God are secured. That is to say, the New Covenant is fulfilled. The application of the prophetic teaching of the sanctification of Israel as God's people and the inclusion of the Gentiles in that one people of God can be seen in passages such as Isaiah 25:6—9; 56:6—8; 58:11—4; 65:17-25; 66:22—23. Note how references are to both the Sabbath and the new Eden.

STUDY 4

HOLY TRINITY

Before seeking to see God as Trinity and as holy Trinity, we must see Him as holy prior to the New Testament revelation. We would expect to see Him as holy in the Old Testament before we see Him as Triune in the New Testament. Once we see He is holy from the Old Testament we may then proceed to wed this idea with His trinitarian being in the New Testament.

GOD ALONE IS HOLY

The *trisagion* of Isaiah 6:3 and Revelation 4:8 are really saying ‘God alone is holy’. The ‘Holy, holy, holy’ is not so much trinitarian as an intensification of the term ‘holiness’—the holiness which is Yahweh Himself. When we ask what ‘holy’ means we realise that the term ‘holy’ is used with regard to deities, idols and customs. For a thing to be ‘holy’ means it is *tabu*; it is forbidden. It belongs to the deity or place to which it is dedicated. In Israel there was horror at the thought that any other than Yahweh could be deemed to be holy. Only God is holy. Moses was told that the ground on which he was standing was holy and he quickly assumed the worship mode. Isaiah in the temple or hall heard the powerful—even terrible—*trisagion* of the seraphim. Psalm 99:1 says, ‘He sits enthroned upon the cherubim’. In fact Hans Joachim Kraus says:

Yahweh is a God of justice and not a deity of being. The holiness of Israel’s God is the power that makes justice and righteousness prevail. It is not an attribute of a numen [a deity], but the signature of a name (Ps. 99:3), that establishes justice.’¹

This is a good statement which shows us there are no deities and Yahweh is not just a deity but *the* One who shows Himself by what He does.

Psalm 99, therefore, is a psalm profitable to be read. It shows God’s exaltation over the nations, and, as such, is holy. He is Mighty King, lover of justice, has established equity, has executed justice and righteousness in Israel, hence we should worship Him for He is holy. Verses 6—8 speak further of His work in Israel and rightly conclude with the words, ‘Extol the LORD our God, and worship at His holy mountain; for *the LORD* our God is holy!’² We conclude, then, that God is holy and acts, and that in His action is His *holiness*. *Exodus* 15: 11 bears this out, for the people of Israel sing at the deliverance of the Red Sea:

¹ Hans-Joachim Kraus, *Theology of the Psalms*, Augsburg, Minneapolis, 1986, p. 42.

² The idea here is that God *alone* is holy. The ‘holiness’ accorded to other (so-called) deities must be false, since they cannot do the deeds which are the expression of holiness. See also *Exodus* 19:10-25; *Isaiah* 6:1-3.

Who is like thee, O LORD, among the gods?
 Who is like thee, majestic in holiness,
 terrible in glorious deeds, doing wonders?³

‘Majestic in holiness’, ‘glorious deeds’ and ‘doing wonders’ is God’s holiness. It is His majesty pervading the whole earth, such as seen in the cry ‘Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory’. Glory is God’s all—present holiness.⁴ It may sound naive to say that God is holy before He creates, but it is His holiness which is His majesty, out of which He creates the earth and steadfastly maintains His ruling majesty. Man as created in the image of God was intended to communicate in his acts the holiness of God since he was created ‘after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness’.⁵ Isaiah 57:15 shows that the transcendent holiness of God is also a holiness which dwells in the heart of the right—minded (humble) person, with a view to reviving it. Holiness is, then, active power which manifests itself in deeds, and not only in purity of being.

We can sum up a description of God as the Holy One in the words of P. Bonnard:

Firstly, Yahweh is holy in the sense that he stands utterly above the created world; He is the wholly other, the incomprehensible, the un—analysable, the unfathomable. This insight is already expressed in certain ancient narrative passages (Gen. 28:16ff.; 1 Sam. 6:19ff.; 2 Sam. 6:6ff.; Josh. 24:19) and culminates in the declarations of the prophets (Isa. 6; 57:15; Hos. 11:9; 12: 1; Ezek. 1; 28:25; 36:22; 38:23: ‘I will show my greatness and my holiness and make myself known in the eyes of many nations; then they will know that I am the Lord’). In this first sense the ideas of holiness and of the glory of Yahweh are often equivalent. But on the other hand Yahweh is holy inasmuch as He imparts Himself, inasmuch as He wishes men to share in His own divine life as He brings them within the scope of His judgment and mercy. His holiness is dynamic, exacting; it confronts man to pour out upon him a new life.⁶

We need to be clear that God is ineffable in His being by nature of the case, but once He creates He is never apart from His creation, albeit He is neither locked into it or out of it. Far from showing Man He is ineffable,⁷ He communicates by numerous media who He is and what He is about.⁸ When, in rebellion, Man refuses to know Him, then God, as holy, acts towards Man in His (God’s) holiness, and in this lies the mystery of election. Whatever the case, the Old Testament speaks of God’s holiness in so many ways.⁹ It is on these that we now build to present the theme of ‘The Holy Trinity’.

THE MATTER OF THE HOLY TRINITY

We have two ways by which we can pursue the theme of the Holy Trinity: (i) we can assume the reality of the Trinity and then proceed to prove that each member of the

³ The multitudinous ‘gods’ produce exactly nothing, and if by reason of psychic and occultic acts, then nothing that is holy.

⁴ J. A. Motyer, *The Prophecy of Isaiah* (IVP, Leicester, 1993, p. 77), says, ‘Holiness is God’s hidden glory; glory is God’s all-present holiness’.

⁵ This verse of Ephesians 4:24, refers in fact to the renewal of fallen but now redeemed Man. Even so, it shows the nature of the original *imago dei*.

⁶ P. Bonnard, in J.-J. von Allmen’s *Vocabulary of the Bible* (Lutterworth, London, 1966), p. 166.

⁷ In fact He does show He is ineffable, for He asks, time and again, ‘To whom [or, to what] will you liken me?’ By this He shows that His revelation of Himself is from Himself, and it is not from human reasoning that Man can know Him. Man’s fallenness, so to speak, makes it impossible for Man to know God.

⁸ Media such as creation, theophanies, the prophets, the covenants, the law, the Scriptures, the acts of the living God, the incarnate Son, the Holy Spirit, the Church. See my *The Knowledge of God* (NCPI, 1985).

⁹ See articles in various Bible and Theological Dictionaries and Encyclopedia. Outstanding is David Peterson’s *Possessed by God*, already quoted. See also my Monday Pastors’ papers on ‘The Gift of Holiness’, July and August, 1996.

Trinity is holy, or (ii) we can see the Trinity is a holy unity in the sense that it derives its unity from holiness.

We scarcely have time and space here to go into the doctrine of the Trinity, as such, but we have vast materials available on the matter and constitution of the Triune Godhead. The last two decades have seen a useful revival of Trinitarian theology. From our reading of the Scriptures, and especially of the New Testament, we see that unitarian and binitarian views of the Godhead are insufficient. In short, we cannot deny deity to the Son or the Holy Spirit, although this lack has been strongly argued over the history of the Christian Church. Our design is to show that God, as known and set forth in the Old Testament, is holy and so the Three Persons of that Godhead are necessarily holy.

The Triune Godhead

We would be foolish to reject Christian historical theology which has put forth the doctrine of the Trinity from the first few centuries. Faith comes from revealed truth, and explication of the truth which is then set forth is intended to strengthen faith. Simply using texts to prove a doctrine is not sufficient. Each doctrine or truth has its overall, contextual substance in the entirety and unity of the Scriptures which verifies it as being biblical. The Creeds undoubtedly constitute dogmatic statements which the doctors of the Church have hammered out in Councils and Conferences, but they were understood innately and generally by the Church as it faced the world in which it lived. It would be inevitable that explications of the truth could vary, but the truths themselves could not vary.

It emerged in early Christianity that the man Jesus was to be seen as God incarnate, and this he could not be if he were less than Man, or were more than human but **less than God**. Likewise the Holy Spirit could not be rightly called 'Holy Spirit' if he were not a member of the Godhead, and thus lacked deity. The acceptance of 'the Father' as God was not difficult, for it was seen that He was other than the Son and other than the Spirit. It certainly took centuries to try to develop suitable ideas to describe what was hitherto unknown to Man, namely the being of Three who were of the one 'substance', each being or having a hypostasis and each coming to be known as a Person in His own being, yet, at the same time, the Three constituting an indivisible unity. In history, the Church has had valuable explications which enable us to understand the tri—unity of the Godhead, especially one such as 'the perichoresis'; this explication of Biblical materials of the Three Persons being so unified that they can be said to have coinherence, intra—subjectivity, each flowing out to the others their particularities which effect the complementarity of the whole Godhead. They are so much the One that they can be said to have the same mind and so complementarity of action in their works. Thus the Three as One effect creation, redemption and the ultimate renewal of all things. This latter is not just an idea, but a truth explicitly stated throughout Scripture.

The Fountain of Godhead and Its Flowing

Trinitarian theologians have described God as *fons divinitatis*. I am sure a quote on this score from Herman Hoeksema would be helpful. In his book he says:

. . . theologians have always distinguished between the works of God which are purely immanent, in Himself, and the works of God which have reference to the creature, the opera ad

intra and the opera ad extra; or, according to others, the opera immanentia and the opera exeuntia. The opera immanentia are distinguished between the opera immanentia per se and the opera immanentia donec exeunt. The former are the opera personalia, which include the generation of the Son by the Father, the being generated of the Son by the Father, and the procession of the Holy Spirit; while the latter are the opera essentialia, that is, the works of the Triune God which are immanent in God, but are destined to be revealed and to be realized in the works of creation and providence and redemption. To these works of God immanentia donec exeunt belongs the counsel of God ... the counsel as such is nevertheless immanent in God Himself.¹⁰

Only two things are predicated of God the Father: (i) that He is love, and (ii) that He is holy.¹¹ In the New Testament, and especially in I John 4:7—21, it is stated that ‘God is love’. Love is not an attribute. God does not *have* love, He is love. In this context the Father as love sends his Son into the world, whom Paul calls ‘the Son of his Love’ (Col. 1: 13), and ‘By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us *of his own Spirit* [emphasis mine]’ (I John 4:13). Thus we see the eternal and continuing generation of the Son by the Father, and the eternal procession of the Spirit from the Father, and the Son. John in this selfsame Epistle makes the statement ‘God is light and in him is no darkness at all’, a statement of His holiness expounded in regard to our actions, as to whether they are holy or unholy. To walk in light is to walk in love, arising from having fellowship with the Father and with His Son, Jesus Christ.

The Holy Three Members

The Father is Holy

The most powerful assertion and revelation of the Father’s holiness is Christ’s address to Him in John 17:11 as ‘Holy Father!’ (cf. 17:25, ‘righteous Father’). Mary says of the Father, in her Magnificat, ‘and holy is his name’, which is a repeating of the Old Testament doctrine of God’s Holy Name being an equivalent for His Holy Self.¹² Jesus teaches His disciples to pray, ‘Holy be thy name’, but then the whole of the New Testament which generally uses the word ‘God’ for ‘Father’ resonates with the understanding of God being holy. To profane God’s Holy Name is to profane God.

The Son is Holy

In some fourteen passages in the New Testament, Christ is called holy. These mentions are in Mark 1:24 and Luke 4:34, the demon calling him ‘the Holy One of God’; Luke 1:35 where Gabriel tells Mary ‘the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God’; John 6:69, Peter saying, ‘you are the Holy One of God’; Acts 3:14 where Peter speaks of the ‘Holy and Righteous One of God’; Acts 2:27 (cf. 13:35) where Peter speaks of Jesus before the Father in the hour of death in terms of Psalm 16; Acts 4:27, 30 where the people speak to God of ‘thy holy servant Jesus’; in Hebrews 7:26 he is spoken of as ‘a high priest, holy, blameless, unstained, separated from sinners, exalted above the heavens’; I John 2:20 says, ‘you have been anointed by the Holy One’; Revelation 3:7 refers to Christ in saying ‘the holy one, the true one’, referring to the vision of the risen Christ in chapter 1. The word ‘holy’ is the adjective *hagios* in all cases but Acts 2:27, 13:35 and Hebrews 7:26, where it is *hosios*.

¹⁰ Herman Hoeksema, *Reformed Dogmatics*, Reformed Free Publishing Association, Augsburg, 1966, p. 154.

¹¹ It is difficult to say God is holiness for some see this as an attribute, but we have to stress that He is holy, just as He is love. Neither holiness or love are attributes of God but His very being.

¹² See Peterson, p. 17.

Of Christ's holiness we do not only say that he refrained from any form of evil, but that he did the works of holiness which were those of righteousness. As in Psalm 99 God is shown to be holy by His powerful acts, so in Isaiah 5:16 we read, 'But the Lord of hosts is exalted in justice, and the Holy God shows himself holy in righteousness'. Likewise Christ shows himself holy in justice and righteousness for '[he] loved righteousness and hated lawlessness' (Heb. 1:9). Jesus spoke of himself as the one 'whom the Father consecrated and sent into the world', for the task of redeeming and sanctifying his elect. Likewise he consecrated himself for this task (John 17:19). In him the whole creation is ultimately sanctified.

The Spirit Is Holy

In the Old Testament the Spirit is only three times referred to as 'Holy', but in the New Testament ninety—nine times. In addition he is referred to also as 'the Spirit', 'the Spirit of the Lord', 'the Spirit of God', 'the Spirit of his Son' and 'the Spirit of Jesus'. All these references link him intimately with the Father and the Son. Jesus' listeners are warned against ascribing to the evil spirit Beelzebul the works which the Holy Spirit does. In the same breath they are told that this blasphemy is unforgivable—so holy is the Spirit. The passage of John 16:7—15 is quite remarkable, as it speaks of the work of the Spirit, part of which is to glorify the Father and the Son, whose works are one. In Acts 1:8 Jesus tells the apostles that they will receive power after the Holy Spirit has come upon them, and they will witness to Christ throughout the world. This witnessing carries with it the works which we have already seen to be part of the action of holiness. These works commenced at Pentecost and have never ceased.

CONCLUSION: THE HOLY TRINITY AND THE WORKS

In John 14:15—23 the Three Persons are said to come and dwell in the obedient believers in Jesus. In I John all dwell in God and God in them, which is the same as saying they dwell in love and love dwells in them.¹³ This means they dwell in holiness and love, and holiness and love dwell in them. In John 10:38 Jesus says he dwells in the Father and the Father in him, and in the same context says the Father is greater than him, and yet they are both one.¹⁴

The immense reality of the Triune God being holy and working the works of holiness which redeem humanity and sanctify the world impress on us awefully that all holiness we know and experience comes from the holiness of the Godhead. The pastoral power of this truth calls us to recognise the indispensability not only of the doctrine of the Trinity, but also of the work of the Trinity in us as the holy *ecclesia*, the holy Bride of the Holy Bridegroom.

¹³ See I John 3:24 and 4:13 where the Holy Spirit informs the believer regarding the mutual indwelling of Christ and the believer.

¹⁴ See my **All Things Are Yours** (NCPI, 1996) where the whole matter of Triune unity, superordination and subordination is fully treated.

STUDY 5

THE HOLY COVENANT

THE COVENANT IS A HOLY ONE

The term ‘holy covenant’¹ is not found very often in this explicit form in the Scriptures. In the Old Testament it is found three times in Daniel 11:28—32. In this passage a successor to ‘the king of the north’—thought by some commentators to be Antiochus Epiphanes—receives a partial setback and returns to his own land, having anger⁴ against the holy covenant’. Somewhat later—‘at the time appointed’—he returns to Palestine to ‘take action against the holy covenant’. Traitors to Israel’s cause—‘those who forsake the holy covenant’—advise him and so is set up ‘the abomination that makes desolate’—the ravaging of the treasures of the temple, and the defilement of its altar, the holy place and the holy of holies. In this section the term ‘holy covenant’ means the covenant made at Sinai and relates to the people of God and their ‘continual burnt offering’, that is, the constant worship of their covenant God, Yahweh.

The second mention of the term ‘holy covenant’ is in Luke 1:72, and it is made by Zechariah the father of John the Baptist. We include part of the context:

Blessed be the Lord God of Israel,
for he has visited and redeemed his people,
and has raised up a horn of salvation for us
in the house of his servant David,
as he spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets from of old,
that we should be saved from our enemies,
and from the hand of all who hate us;
to perform the mercy promised to our fathers,
and to remember his holy covenant,
the oath which he swore to our father Abraham, to grant us
that we, being delivered from the hand of our enemies,
might serve him without fear,
in holiness and righteousness before him all the days of our life.

When Zechariah used the term ‘holy covenant’ he may have had a memory of Daniel’s use of it, but probably he was generalising about the covenant. He would know it to be holy for reasons we will later give, but in general all that had to do with Israel was holy. Of course the ruler from the north was unclean—all nations were thus because of their idolatry. Only Israel was holy as God had spoken to her in Exodus 19:5—6, ‘You shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation’. The Lord was holy, and the covenant made in a ritual of blood was holy. The tabernacle, and later the temple, were holy. The furniture of the temple was holy. The land was holy, and the people of the covenant were holy. The conclusion the true Israelite would have in mind

¹ For a comprehensive treatment of the whole subject of covenant see my book *Love’s Most Glorious Covenant* (Redeemer Press, Castle Hill, Sydney, 1997).

was that all of these things were of the covenant and were holy, so the covenant could not but be holy. Zechariah, in the verses above, first says the covenant is holy, that it is the covenant made to Abraham, and that when enacted afresh by the one whom John, his son, will precede and announce, then ‘we, being delivered from the hands of our enemies, might serve him without fear, in *holiness* and righteousness before him all the days of our life’.

We are free, now, to conclude that the term ‘holy covenant’ may rightfully be applied to God’s ancient covenant made with Abraham, and later reiterated to Moses in Egypt and then cut afresh with Israel at Sinai. Two passages which remind us of the perpetual nature of God’s dealings with His covenant people are Psalm 105:7—11² and 106:40—46. These are worth studying:

He is the LORD our God;
his judgments are in all the earth.
*He is mindful of his covenant for ever,
of the word that he commanded, for a thousand generations,
the covenant which he made with Abraham,
his sworn promise to Isaac,
which he confirmed to Jacob as a statute,
to Israel as an everlasting covenant,
saying, ‘To you I will give the land of Canaan
as your portion for an inheritance.’*

Then the anger of the LORD was kindled against his people,
and he abhorred his heritage;
he gave them into the hand of the nations,
so that those who hated them ruled over them.
Their enemies oppressed them,
and they were brought into subjection under their power.
Many times he delivered them,
but they were rebellious in their purposes,
and were brought low through their iniquity.
Nevertheless he regarded their distress,
when he heard their cry.
*He remembered for their sake his covenant,
and relented according to the abundance of his steadfast love.
He caused them to be pitied
by all those who held them captive [emphases mine].*

The promise of the covenant with Abraham is ever with Yahweh, including a ‘thousand generations’. This is really a term for ‘everlasting’.

THE COVENANT IS AN EVERLASTING ONE

The Old Testament and the Everlasting Covenant

Leaving aside for a moment the possibility of a covenant being existent before Man was created, and proceeding to the covenant with Noah, we see that this covenant was made not only with Man, but with all the world. In Genesis 9:17 God said to Noah, when speaking of the rainbow, ‘This is the sign of the covenant which I have established between me and all flesh that is upon the earth’. In verse 16 he called it ‘the

² Verses 7-11 are also found in I Chronicles 16:14-18.

everlasting covenant'. The term 'everlasting covenant' next applies to the Abrahamic covenant, and references to it are many, commencing with those in Genesis chapter 17. We saw in Psalm 105:9—10 that the everlasting nature of this covenant was confirmed to both Isaac and Jacob. In Exodus 2:23—25 Israel's suffering in Egypt is seen and heard by God who remembers His covenant with Abraham and brings them forth from Egypt and takes them—in fulfilment of that covenant—to the promised land of Canaan. In I Chronicles 16:15—18 the covenant made with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob is again called 'everlastingly'. The covenant at Sinai is not, anywhere, directly called 'everlasting', but since I Chronicles 16:17 says it is 'an everlasting covenant to Israel', then the Sinaitic covenant must surely be encapsulated within it. Even so, the covenant at Sinai was to be superseded by the Davidic and New covenants, though doubtless it would have its historic continuity in them. This is seen in Jeremiah 33:17—22 where there is a mention of a covenant God makes with the Levitical priesthood, which is really that under David the Levitical priesthood would still be operating, so that in this sense the Davidic covenant is one with the Sinaitic. We could perhaps say it would have its theological continuity in them, but it seems significant that the word 'everlasting' is not directly applied. It is interesting and essential to note that in the Book of the Revelation the ark of the covenant is seen within the temple of God. This seeming atavism must have rich significance and warns against us too quickly dispensing with the Sinaitic covenant.

If we move on to the Davidic covenant then we see it is called 'everlasting'. II Samuel 7:8—17 is the classical passage which speaks of God making the covenant with David, 'He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom for ever', a point repeated in II Chronicles 7:16. In II Samuel 23:5 David says, 'he has made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and secure'. Isaiah 55:3 speaks of 'an everlasting covenant, my steadfast, sure love for David', a thought reappearing in Acts 13:34. The thought of the Davidic covenant as unbreakable and everlasting is made in Jeremiah 33:17—22. This reference is the more interesting because it is Jeremiah who speaks of the new covenant in Jeremiah 32:40—calling it an everlasting covenant, and in 31:31—34 where he shows that there is a disjunction between the Sinaitic covenant and the new covenant. It is interesting to note that in Jeremiah 50:5 the prophet speaks of Israel as they return from exile, 'They shall ask the way to Zion with faces turned towards it, saying, "Come let us join ourselves to the LORD in an everlasting covenant which will never be forgotten".'

Among the prophets who deal with the matter of covenant are Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Amos, Zechariah, and Malachi, but the material is far too vast and detailed for us to deal with it here. The two facts we are researching are the holiness and the everlasting nature of God's covenant, and the prophets have much to say on both these scores.

The New Testament and the Everlasting Covenant

When we come to the new covenant itself we are on more familiar New Testament ground. It is a truth and doctrine taken for granted because of the treatment of it by the writer of the Book of Hebrews, and by Paul in his discussion concerning it in Galatians and II Corinthians. Paul certainly takes the Sinaitic covenant into consideration, has a view of the Davidic covenant, and majors on the New covenant which he sees as 'the dispensation of grace'. One has to search out the elements of both covenants as Paul deals with them, since he is thinking in terms of law and grace. The writer of Hebrews has a somewhat different approach. He examines and compares both the Sinaitic

covenant with all its rituals, and the New covenant and the high—priesthood of Christ. Twice he quotes from Jeremiah 31:31—34, but it is his statement in 7:12 which is a key to his thesis, ‘For when there is a change in the priesthood, there is necessarily a change in the law as well’. Israel never had a high priest who could make a ‘once—for— all’ sacrifice and bring in everlasting forgiveness and open up the inner sanctuary of the holy of holies to sanctified worshippers. The writer has a doctrine of the efficacy of Christ’s blood—‘the blood of the everlasting covenant’.

Paul’s contrast of the two eras or dispensations, the first being of death and condemnation and the second of life and grace, contains within it all the Pauline material of justification and sanctification by faith and the hope of glory. His emphasis on the fact of justifying faith being effective before the cutting of the Sinaitic covenant dispenses with the necessity of law for the justification of both Jew and Gentile. This is really New covenant teaching in the spirit of Jeremiah 31:31—34.

Whilst these few short paragraphs seem far too quickly to deal with the New covenant, yet the aim of this chapter is not to exhaust the matter of covenant in general but with the fact that *covenant is always holy*. To do this we need the general background we have used. In this section on covenant there remains only one further thing to cover, and that is what we might call ‘the covenant of God’, or ‘the covenant of Creation’.

THE COVENANT OF GOD: THE COVENANT OF CREATION

The term ‘everlasting’ can be shown to mean ‘without beginning and without end’, but this might be seen as playing with words. Even so, there must be enough truth in it to say that God’s covenant existed before time, exists in time, and will culminate on time, and somehow be extant in eternity. In Jeremiah 33:25 we read, ‘Thus says the **LORD**; If I have not established my covenant with day and night and the ordinances of heaven and earth . . .’ This seems to have somewhat the same ring as the covenant established with Noah in Genesis 9:8—17, where the covenant is made not only with Noah and his family but with ‘every living creature that is with you for all future generations ... and all flesh that is upon the earth’. Linked with this, I believe, is the passage of Isaiah 24:4—6 where the scene is of the primal desolation—as we would see it. In this case it is the breaking of the everlasting covenant—that is, profaning it— which brings desolation, and in one sense the creation reverts to its original *tohu wa bohu*—the ‘without form and void’:

The earth mourns and withers,
 the world languishes and withers;
 the heavens languish together with the earth. The earth lies polluted
 under its inhabitants;
 for they have transgressed the laws, violated the statutes,
 broken the everlasting covenant. Therefore a curse devours the earth,
 and its inhabitants suffer for their guilt; therefore the inhabitants of the earth are scorched,
 and few men are left.

The key to the passage is ‘broken the everlasting covenant’. It would seem fairly obvious that the first covenant which is mentioned in the Scriptures is the Noahic one.

Some scholars,³ however, deny the idea that God made a new covenant with Noah. They insist that according to the Hebrew wording God simply was establishing a covenant already made with mankind, inherent in creation. They argue that the term *heqim berith* in Genesis 6:17—18 and 9:8f.—‘to establish a covenant’—is not the same as *karat berith* which is ‘to cut a covenant’, such as God did with Abraham and later with Israel at Mount Sinai.⁴

There are, then, theological arguments for the one, creational and everlasting covenant which arise from the nature of God. God being One, and yet being Triune, His nature is necessarily covenantal, since the bonding of the Three Persons is relational. Thus creation being relational—God making Man to be His image, and the man and the woman being ‘one flesh’ in relationship with God and one another—was inherently, and necessarily covenantal. The covenant, by nature of the case, was unilateral and not bilateral.

Whatever may be the situation, it seems obvious that such a covenant which we call ‘creational’ was holy, and that its outcome—its climax or telos—would be to do with the matter of sanctification.

THE COVENANT HAS TO DO WITH HOLINESS

Holiness in the Old Testament

This is not the place to go afresh into the derivations of the verbs and nouns which have to do with holiness or sanctification. What is quite clear is that the trisagion of Isaiah 6:3 and Revelation 4:8 tells us God is not just holy but very holiness Himself. ‘Thou who art of purer eyes than to behold evil and canst not look on wrong’ (Hab. 1: 13) must mean that He has no regard for these things but will judge them and bring them to an end. In Isaiah almost always ‘The Holy One of Israel’ is called ‘your Redeemer’. His holiness is redemptive. We have made much of this earlier in this book: that the creation—the covenant with God—had three elements to it, namely vocation, the profound mystery of marriage and the Sabbath rest of the seventh day. We argued that Eden was a holy place, just as the seventh day was holy.

So far as the relationship of the covenant members with God is concerned, it had to be one of righteousness. Where God met them was holy ground, and where they worshipped they made altars consecrated to such places of meeting. Perhaps each was an echo of the original Eden connection. When we come to the Sinaitic covenant then we have plentiful material as to the nature and praxis of this ‘holy nation’. They were holy and other nations were not. The camp was holy, since in the midst of it God was present. Its tabernacle—and later temple—were holy. All the furniture and materials used were holy. Initially such furniture had to be sanctified by blood. Likewise the priesthood had to be sanctified by blood and oil. No less important was the hygiene and sanitation, and the constant moral cleansing of the worshipper through the sacrifices. This covenant spelled out the sanctification by God of the people and their possessions, and all in unmistakable detail. Outwardly, as they faced the nations, their

³ The commentators are W. J. Dumbrell, (*Covenant and Creation*, Paternoster Press, Exeter, 1984) and G. J. Wenham, (*Genesis 1-15*).

⁴ It is even argued by some that all covenants, Noahic, Abrahamic, Sinaitic, Davidic and New are not so much various covenants that are ‘cut’, but the one covenant—the creational one—established, or, as we would say, confirmed, on each occasion of their ‘making’.

being holy would sanctify God in the eyes of those who looked at Israel. We assume that the same

principles of holiness would be present in all covenants, namely that on the one hand God would sanctify His people, and on the other that the people would live consonant with His sanctification of them and would use the means of grace to keep up the life of holiness.

HOLINESS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

We can see that the New covenant could not be less holy than the old and indeed, if we take the New Testament to cover the whole matter of the New covenant, then sanctification of the people by God, and the living out of life consonant with that sanctification, occupies a considerable part of the New Testament. Many of the chapters of this present book cover such material, and so we will not seek to show that the New covenant gave holiness as a sanctifying act of grace, and also encouraged holiness of living by giving guidance and injunctions. We will briefly discuss the principles by which sanctification was established and holiness of life worked out.

The Sanctifying Act of Grace

This can only be understood as the proclamation of the gospel, the response to it of repentance and faith, and effects wrought in the hearers by the word of grace as ministered by the Spirit of grace. On hearing the gospel and then responding, believing people were then forgiven their sins, and were justified by God before the law, as being those to whom righteousness was imputed in a dynamic way with dynamic results, from which holiness of life ensued. We mean that disastrous and damning guilt was removed through the work of Christ in the gospel, and believers were purified in their consciences from ‘dead works’. These things were effected in them by the Holy Spirit. No human power could help to effect this outcome. At the same time the believers were sanctified. This working event—with all its results—is set out in strong terms in I Corinthians 6:9—11.

Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither the immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor sexual perverts, nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor robbers will inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God.

‘Sanctified’ here means ‘consecrated’ and is related to being included in the **holy people** of God—‘the Israel of God’, the *ecclesia*, the Church. This seems to be the idea in Acts 26:17—18:

... delivering you from the people and from the Gentiles—to whom I send you to open their eyes, that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among *those who are sanctified by faith in me* [emphasis mine].

This has affinity in meaning with Paul’s words in Acts 20:32, ‘And now I commend you to God and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified’. The writer of Hebrews may use his terms in a slightly different way from Paul, but Hebrews 10: 10—14 amounts to much the same thing, namely the work of the Cross does not only bring forgiveness and justification but brings believers into the category of sanctification:

And by that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. And every priest stands daily at his service, offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. But when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for

sins, he sat down at the right hand of God, then to wait until his enemies should be made a stool for his feet. For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are sanctified.

Holiness of the Life of the Believer Is an Expectation and a Work of Grace

The principle of God's word to Israel regarding active holiness following God's sanctification of her is contained in a number of injunctions such as, 'For I am the LORD your God; consecrate yourselves therefore, and be holy, for I am holy'; 'For you are a people holy to the LORD your God, and the LORD has chosen you to be a people for his own possession, out of all the peoples that are on the face of the earth'⁵ I Peter 1: 14—16 contains a similar injunction:

As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, but as he who called you is holy, be holy yourselves in all your conduct; since it is written, 'You shall be holy, for I am holy.'

The Father is to be seen as holy in the eyes of His children, and so as His children they are to live holy lives. We know that Christ was 'the Holy One of God', and is called by Peter 'his holy servant [or, child]'. We know that had he not been holy, he could not have offered up himself as a sacrifice for the sins of the people. He was the holy Son of the holy Father, and prayed, often, in that vein. In him dwelled the Holy Spirit of God, and he sent the same Spirit to his people. The Spirit within is the cause of the law being written in our hearts and inner parts, and as the Spirit of holiness he leads us in holiness, aiding us to live in a holy manner. It is the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus who aids us to fulfil the righteous demand of the law. The two covenant passages of Ezekiel 36:24—28 and Jeremiah 31:31—34 combine to tell us the new Spirit placed within us motivates and enables us to know and obey the law as it comes newly to our hearts. Romans 8:1—4, 9—15 seems to gather up in substance these two prophecies.

The two classical passages for what the Puritans called 'experimental holiness' are Romans chapter 6 and Colossians chapter 3. We do not here have time and space to exegete these, but study of them will show (i) holiness of living follows the act of a realised crucifixion with Christ, burial in his death and being raised with him in his resurrection; (ii) holiness of living requires the surrender of everything to Christ and the determination to use all one has in his service and by the enablement of Christ, God working in the believer, and the believer working and walking in and by the Holy Spirit; and (iii) the believer is not just a passive object worked on by God, but is one seeking actively to live in and to do the will of God as enabled by Him.

CONCLUSION TO THE MATTER OF THE COVENANT BEING HOLY

Throughout this present book we need to have in mind all the time that God works in the principles of covenant and kingdom. If the Covenant is 'everlasting' so is the Kingdom of God. Both are holy. The goal of both covenant and kingdom is to bring forth 'a kingdom of priests' or a royal, priestly kingdom. The holy and worshipful service of the 'sons of the covenant' and 'sons of the kingdom' is what is in mind. God's people are to be 'priests unto God' and 'to reign for ever on the earth'. This will

⁵ Leviticus 11:44; Deuteronomy 14:2; see also Exodus 19:5-6.

be seen in the climax of the covenant. Even so, the fact of God's people becoming 'a kingdom of priests' or 'a priestly kingdom' means they have been sanctified. This is God's plan from the first Adam who failed to be a true high priest to creation, to the Last Adam who is the true high priest of creation. He is the King—High Priest 'after the order of Melchizedek', whose ministry is ultimately to sanctify all things—not only elect humanity, but also the whole of creation. That is why the Holy City is really the gathering of God's holy people in one community, why the Holy Bride is pure for her Husband, the Second Adam, and why the Holy Temple is ultimately God Himself. Through Kingdom and Covenant the holy telos is achieved.

STUDY 6

UNHOLY HUMANITY

INTRODUCTION: MAN IN 'HOLY ARRAY'

As we have already seen, the passages of I Chronicles 16:29, 11 Chronicles 20:21, Psalm 29:2, and Psalm 96:9 all speak of God's people worshipping him 'in the beauty of holiness' which also means 'in holy array'. 'Holy array' means, 'in the right order', or, the 'array being correct and fitting for the worship, of the Lord'. It would refer to the form and order and spirit of the corporate worship, something like Paul's 'done decently and in order'; that is, in order with true doctrine, according to what is true and fitting. Man, as created male—female was also to worship God, he having within himself 'a holy array'. Created by God, he had a clean, though as yet untested heart, but through the Fall he came into a disarray of mind and spirit. Psalm 24:4 shows the necessity of a proper purity and heart—attitude in order to worship God—'He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who does not lift up his soul to what is false, and does not swear deceitfully'.

If we look at Man created and under the creational covenant, then we see there are three elements to covenantal fullness by which humanity is designed to live: (i) in the blessing of marriage; (ii) in the constant activity of the vocation God has given him, which is the fullness of God's mandate to him; and (iii) living in the serenity and power of God's Sabbath rest—The Sabbath has been sanctified and Man is to participate in it, and thus share in God's holy rest. This kind of working of the three elements would constitute his 'holy array'. Persons who live in the good order of these three things are at peace with God the Creator, with the creation, and with themselves.

One more factor has to be considered when we are considering the principle of 'holy array', namely Eden. Chapter 2 of Genesis explains that Man was made of the dust of the earth and animated by God. God then formed Eden, His paradise, and He took the man from outside and placed him inside the garden to 'tend it and to keep it'. 'Tend' and 'keep' mean 'to act as guardian', and are two terms which elsewhere in the Old Testament can be related to worship and service. In the garden the man named the animals, which indicated his authority over them, but he himself had no mate. God described him as 'alone' and said that was not good for him. God then created woman out of the man, and so the two became 'one flesh'. This Paul later called the 'profound mystery' of marriage (cf. Eph. 5 : 31–32) . At this point the picture was that Man was one with God in fellowship and worship, since God was present in the garden, and so the garden was really a sanctuary, a place of worship designed to teach Man to live a holy life. All of these elements, rightly understood, combined to make Man's spirit to be in 'holy array', that is, in peace and love and joy. Thus their worship was true and enriching to them.

MAN WENT INTO A DESCENT

Somehow the serpent was there, in Eden, and he tempted the woman to eat of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and Adam joined her in the act. In eating of the tree, Man obtained a knowledge which was evil, false, and which alienated him from God, henceforth to live a depraved life——one of unholy disarray!

Because Man was created in the image of God the King, he was regal, but he abdicated his royal responsibility and became subject to sin. Even so, God never let him off the mandate to be fruitful and multiply, fill up the earth and have dominion over all things. At the same time Man became utterly corrupt—'every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was evil only continually' (Gen. 6:5). When corruption and violence filled the whole world the judgment came to mankind in the form of the Flood. After the Flood, and following Noah's offering sacrificial worship to God in thanks— giving, the blessing God had originally given the primal couple was reiterated and Man was again charged with fulfilling the mandate of Genesis 1:28 (Gen. 9:1—17).

We now need to look at the matter of Cain and his actions. God had had a beautiful future in mind for humanity, and this was indicated to them. Even so, they abdicated their trust in God for a different word than His—the word of the serpent. God's holiness was still known; hence the sacrifice both Cain and Abel offered to God. Cain offered his sacrifice certain that it was in order, but it was not accepted. Abel's sacrifice was accepted and Cain was enraged by the rejection of his offering. Even so, *the word of the Lord came to Cain* (Gen. 4:6, 9) but it was for judgment and eventually a curse when Cain killed his brother out of jealousy. *Sacrifice was forforgiveness*. The truth of the matter was that Cain rejected holy worship, essential to true humanhood. He refused the propitiatory, sacrificial element. We arrive at this conclusion simply by seeing that Cain did not see the necessity for offering propitiation¹ to bring to him the forgiveness of sins. God had said to him, 'If you do well [that is, offer something for your sins] shall you not be forgiven?'

Romans 1: 18—32 must be read carefully for it tells the whole story, compassing Man's history of sinfulness, rejection of God and idolatry. It was firstly rejection of God's glory and then a loss of created glory in Man. At the same time the Fall constituted a rejection of true vocation—the whole purpose of work in the world and worship and service of God. It was ontological disarray, that is, cosmological, theological, anthropological disarray. We need to spell this out strongly in these easygoing days. What, then, do we mean by this sentence with long words? We mean that in every aspect of his being, Man was in disarray. 'The pain and turmoil of that disorder is indescribable.

The corruption of the heart took place through the Fall. It seems harsh to say that it was total corruption, but by it we mean every facet of Man's being was tainted by sin. Genesis 6:5, 11—12 speak of total corruption:

The LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually ... Now the earth was corrupt in God's sight, and the earth was filled with violence. And God saw the earth, and behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted their way upon the earth.

Genesis 8:21, spoken by God after the Flood was that, 'the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth'. Other Scriptures which are worth pursuing are Jeremiah 17:9;

¹ This idea of offering propitiation opens a discussion both wide and deep. In Leviticus 17:11 it is God who aids Man to make atonement by propitiation. Man, from himself, would have nothing to offer.

Proverbs 4:23; 25:26; Mark 7:20ff.; and John 2:23—25. They insist on Man's total depravity, a doctrine which has never been popular with humanity.

GOD'S GIFT TO MAN OF HIS PRESENCE AND THE GRACE OF HOLY WORSHIP

One thing impresses us as we read the Scriptures, and that is that there is always a people of God, men and women who have faith in Him and love Him. Abel is the first one named in this regard. In I John 3:10—12 he is said to have loved his brother, and in Hebrews 11:4 is said to be the first in the great company of the faithful, offering up a proper worship to God. This community always offered proper worship, and they knew they were in God's presence.²

Whilst Abraham is the one God chooses to be the leader of the covenant people, it is in his lifetime that Melchizedek, priest of God and king of peace (shalom), ministers to Abraham. We have glimpses of representatives of God, such as in Melchizedek, and later in Moses' time, of Jethro, priest of Midian and of God. We gather from Exodus 18:10—12 that Jethro's sacrifice was superior to that of Aaron. Hebrews 7:1—10 gives us a high view of Melchizedek's priesthood, showing that his offering of sacrifice was superior to that of Aaron's worship rituals. Certainly all sinful humanity did go into the land of Nod where Cain dwelled. Sometimes we talk about the presence of the Presence (God's Presence), the absence of the Presence, the presence of the Absence (God absent in certain cases), though it is still true that 'in him we live, and move, and have our being' (Acts 17:18).

There Is an Ontological Pressure for True Worship

What do we mean by this statement which is our heading? We mean that Man, through the Fall, sin and guilt, has a personal disarray for his pain and anguish are beyond telling. Ontologically, Man knows he must be holy. He will never be at peace until he is holy. We have seen that Man being in the image of God must have known God's holiness and in Eden must have worshipped Him with joy and awe. Holiness was his way of life. He was in the image of God, the holy God.

This matter of Man being in God's image is important and it would be helpful for us to look at passages which speak about it. We need to read Genesis 1:26—27; 2:18—25; 5:1—2; 9:6; Psalm 8:3ff.; I Corinthians 11:7; and James 3:9. For Christ as the true image of God we need to ponder Colossians 1: 15; 11 Corinthians 4:4; Hebrews 1:2—3; Ephesians 2:1ff.; 4:24; and Colossians 3:9—10. As we give our attention to these passages, one by one, we will see that even though Man was created 'in the image of God', that image by salvation is now in Christ. This means it is being rehabilitated by being in him yet we also see that Man's image was, at creation, in 'true righteousness and holiness'. This can be seen in Ephesians 4:24, and Colossians 3:10 speaks of the process of its renewal 'in knowledge after the image of the creator'.

Explicit confrontation of God's holiness to all the world was made in an amazing choke, especially by Israel and their God. The increased pain is when Man is out of ontological, covenantal peace and activity, that is, out of 'holy array'. He cannot worship God with 'clean hands and a pure heart', as we saw in Psalm 24:4, and Hebrews

² In Genesis 4:13-14 Cain complains that in being sent away he will be out of the presence of the Lord. He wishes to remain in it, no matter what he has done.

9:14 speaks of a conscience purified for worshipping the living God. In regard to true worshipping arising only from a cleansed conscience, there have been enormous problems in every age and stage of human history. We conclude, then, that holiness which is the very being of God is a holiness Man seeks to give in order to relieve that ontological pressure to worship. Sadly enough, Man gives Ids worship to the idols, lords and deities, but, as such, these imaged things cannot give ontological satisfaction because they are not truly ontological. Hence Man's further complication of disarray.³

At this point we need to note that Man, at creation, was in covenant relationship with God. The Fall meant he broke that relationship, and hence lost the joy of worshipping the Holy One. We know that the Patriarchs—Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and their children did worship God, but it awaited the covenant with Moses and his people at Sinai to have a formed and prescribed worship of Yahweh. This was prescribed so that it would fit the holiness of God and His people, Israel. That worship was also a covenant worship. Later we have the holiness of the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ and that worship was given to him by the saints of the new covenant. The new worship was 'in spirit and in truth'.

Man Is Caught in His 'Unholy Array'

Man—fallen Man—can never know anything but shame. He must cover up his failure, cheat himself in insisting he is in his true 'array', and so in true worship. He can never know the Sabbath participation in 'the rest'. Had the grace of God not appeared bringing salvation and transforming the believer,⁴ then he would still be in the anguish, agony and unfulfilment of what is 'unholy disarray'. Of course, if he rejects this grace, his condition cannot be bettered, but rather, worsened. Man lives in the three dynamics of the past, the present and the future. To be robbed of his future means he has a lifeless present. Not to have his past purified by the Cross and himself admitted, by consecration, into the true people of God, also means a lifeless present. In this sense he knows the Absence of the Presence, the presence of the Absence, and is without God and without hope in the world. This is hellish disarray. It is pollution of the most shaming order. In this context Man cannot offer true worship which means he is robbed of the true being for which he was created, the fulfilling of the vocation which is his *raison d'être*, and the identity and destiny which God intended for all His created humanity.⁵

The fact that there is the grace of God, and that it has been present from the beginning, tells us that Man's disarray would be felt more keenly by Man than it has been. God's grace is not withheld even from sinful Man, and will prevent him being immediately destroyed by his own depravity and the subjection he knows to evil powers. Grace in its strong redemptive form has come to humanity in Jesus Christ, and so there is great hope for holiness whilst it is still the day of grace. Beyond that is too terrible a time to be contemplated, except as a powerful warning to hasten to the God of all grace.

³ 1 Corinthians 8:1-6 shows—as do many passages in the Old Testament—that there is only one God.

⁴ Titus 2:11-14; 3:3--7.

⁵ See my *All Things Are Yours*.

STUDY 7

HOLY CROSS: HOLY PEOPLE

INTRODUCTION: THE ALL—EMBRACING CROSS

Often the Cross is pondered and celebrated on Good Friday. In a sense it is also often relegated to that day, and not considered proper to be proclaimed at other times. Of course many find its reality to be central to all Christian theology and preaching. Even so, it can be considered as a happening in its own right and is proclaimed distinctively. Properly speaking it should never be considered outside of, and apart from, the Incarnation, the Resurrection and the Ascension. Some preach it as the means of forgiveness, justification and complete redemption. It is less spoken of as the means of sanctification. Generally, in the immediate past centuries it has been central to the teaching of the Western churches and acknowledged in the Eastern churches, although in the latter the Resurrection and the Ascension are more the basis of liturgy and worship than even the Cross.

In this latter part of the 20th century, old views of the Cross and its redemption are giving way to a more symbolic view of the Good Friday event. Whilst there is talk of 'sacrifice', yet it is more a principle than an event, but whilst Christ's sacrifice is more looked upon as a unique example, yet it is seen as motivation to sacrificing ourselves for others' sakes, and the blood of propitiation is rejected as being the indispensable heart of the matter. Indeed it is said to repel hearers, rather than win them to peace.

This latter view of the Cross, linked as it is with the Moral Theory of the Cross, may well lose its centrality as the significance of the Good Friday event, and older views may be reinstated, or yet newer ideas become espoused. It is common knowledge that contemporary philosophy deeply influences our theological ideas.

THE EVERLASTINGNESS AND UBIQUITY OF THE CROSS

By this we mean that the Cross—event was purposed before the creation of the world. I Peter 1: 18—21 supports this contention:

You know that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your fathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot. He was destined before the foundation of the world but was made manifest at the end of the times for your sake. Through him you have confidence in God, who raised him from the dead and gave him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God.

Linked with this is Revelation 13:7—8:

Also it was allowed to make war on the saints and to conquer them. And authority was given it over every tribe and people and tongue and nation, and all who dwell on earth will worship it,

every one whose name has not been written before the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb that was slain.

This latter quotation indicates that the book of life tied its names written in it before the creation of the world, but in virtue of the coming slaying of the Lamb. Thus the Cross was planned before time and then executed in time. Yet that was not all: the active power of the Cross proves to be lasting in time and in eternity. It is to this thought that we will later return. On what we have discussed it is fair to conclude that the Cross is, at least in intention, from everlasting to everlasting.

As to its effective power being ubiquitous,¹ it is clear that all evil was transfixed to that Cross, so much so that Paul could say the world was crucified to him. By the same token he could say that he was crucified to the world (Gal. 6:14). This notion we will later expand, but there was nothing in all history which was not placed on that Cross and dealt with in a proper way.

GOD'S INTENTION TO MAKE A HOLY PEOPLE

There can be no doubt that God's intention, even before He created the world, was to have a holy people. Ephesians 1:4 says, 'He [God the Father] chose us in him [Christ the Son] before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him'. Colossians 1:21—22 shows the same intent:

And you who were once estranged and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, he has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death, in order to present you blameless and irreproachable before him ...

In the New Testament, Christ gives himself up for his bride (the Church) 'that he might present the church to himself in splendour, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing that she might be holy and without blemish'. Revelation chapters 19 and 21 show the Bride as holy, as 'clothed with fine linen, bright and pure'.

Long before this there was the holy people, Israel. She was 'a people holy to the LORD your God'. Exodus 19:5—6 show that holiness is linked with covenant.² Israel is a people 'holy to the LORD'. So in Leviticus 11:44, and Deuteronomy 14:1—2. If we go back to creation and the creational covenant, we see its intention was holiness for all mankind. Participation in the sabbath rest necessarily meant holiness for all God's people—the children of God (I John 3:10ff.), and the people of faith (Heb. 1 1:4ff.). Titus 2:14 speaks of God's intention in Christ 'who gave himself for us to redeem us from all iniquity and to purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds'. It is patently clear from Revelation chapters 21 and 22 that at the close of creation's time the people of the Covenant and the Kingdom will be holy, part of the sanctified *telos* when Bride, Bridegroom, the City, the Temple, Paradise and all creatures celestial and terrestrial will be holy. John speaks in Revelation of the elect as being 'a kingdom, priests to his [Christ's] God and Father'.

We can rightly assume, then, that the ultimate intention of God is for all things to be holy, including God's created humanity.

¹ By ubiquitous we mean that the effects of the Cross are everywhere at the same time. This may not at first seem very obvious, but further investigation may show all things have been and are being affected by the Cross.

² In Daniel 12:28-30 the covenant is thrice called 'holy'.

HOLY CROSS BY THE SANCTIFYING BLOOD OF THE EVERLASTING COVENANT

In this section we shall see that Christ did that work which was so vast and deep as to result in (i) *the total crucifixion of all evil* so that it was judged forever and its ultimate defeat guaranteed, and (ii) *that sinful Man was so crucified* that through this act of grace of the Cross he became forever washed from the pollution of sin, forgiven its evil acts, justified from the guilt of the law and curse, and sanctified, that is, included in the people of God and given the gift of worshipping God. The following helps us to understand the dimensions and effects of the Cross.

All Were There at the Cross

Paul once said, ‘God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world’. He was saying that all the world was taken up on to that cross and crucified. ‘The world’ must have been no less than all humanity, but, more, it was also the Satanic system of evil. Likewise he said, ‘Our old self was crucified with him so that the sinful body might be destroyed’. This is clear enough, all humanity in Adam was destroyed.

Then Paul narrows it down to the intimately personal note, and says, ‘I have been crucified with Christ’. There is no ‘Were you there?’, but ‘I was there. I was crucified. No less than the thief who was a sinner and repented, I was there, being crucified with Christ’. At the beginning of this meditation on the Cross let us recognise that each one of us was present in that crucifixion, ‘I was there when we crucified the Lord, and it was my sins which crucified him’.

The Whole World at the Cross

In Acts 4:23—28 the early church prayed:

When they were released they went to their friends and reported what the chief priests and the elders had said to them. And when they heard it, they lifted their voices together to God and said, ‘Sovereign Lord, who didst make the heaven and the earth and the sea and everything in them, who by the mouth of our father David, thy servant, didst say by the Holy Spirit,
"Why did the Gentiles rage,
and the peoples imagine vain things?
The kings of the earth set themselves in array, and the rulers were gathered together,
against the Lord and against his Anointed"—
for truly in this city there were gathered together against thy holy servant Jesus, whom thou didst anoint, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, to do whatever thy hand and thy plan had predestined to take place.’

We can see by this passage that in essence Herod, Pontius Pilate, the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel were present at the Cross. We may rightly conclude that these mentioned were representative of all the Gentiles and all the peoples of Israel, in that day there was more than *representation* of the whole of humanity: the whole of humanity, from the beginning to the end of the race, all were present. Whilst what was seen by eyes was a comparatively small number of watchers, yet Paul says, ‘We are convinced that if one died for all, then did all die’. The ‘all’ meant the entire human race, the world that was crucified with him. Hence John later said that Jesus died ‘not for ours [sins] only, but for the sins of the whole world’. This, surely was behind the

words, ‘God so loved the world’, and ‘We have seen and testify that the Father has seen his Son as the Saviour of the world’. Yet again we read, ‘God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved’.

Sinners Were at the Cross

Paul pursues this thought strongly in Romans 5:12—21, showing that the sin of one Man, Adam, brought sin and death into the world for all, and the obedience of one Man, Christ, brought obedience and life into the world for all. It is clear that we were all in Adam: we all sinned in him. We, then, are the sinners that were at the Cross.

The action of sinners at the Cross cannot be denied. So far as we know, John was the only disciple at the Cross. Jesus addressed him. We are told that ‘all his acquaintances and the women who had followed him from Galilee stood at a *distance and* saw these things [emphasis mine]’. ‘Acquaintances’ could have included the disciples: if so, then they were ‘at a distance’.³ Whatever their feelings were, we cannot fully know, but the feelings of the crazed mob were without doubt. Their anger at Christ the Holy One was vented in their screaming, ‘Crucify him! Crucify him!’ They were not only mad for his blood, but they were mad *against* it, though they knew not that they hated it as the most powerful, purifying and pacifying of all blood shed in history. The entire guilt of the human race rose up against him on that holy Friday, in that holy place, Calvary. It rose up against him in its anger, as the love of God was about to pour upon him in all its wrath. What has ever been in the heart of sinful Man spewed on him, the **Holy One** on the Cross of human shame. ‘He was despised and rejected by men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; and as one whom men hide their faces, he **was despised, and we esteemed him not**’.

All Evil Was Present at the Cross

Jesus had said it: ‘the ruler of this world is coming. He has no power over me.’ He had told those who came against him in the Garden, ‘this is your hour, and the power of darkness’. He did not use the word *dunamis* for power, but the word *exousia*, the authority of darkness. What a thing the devil, his angels, his spirits and his people possess—the authority of darkness’. Evil is accusatory. This is its bitter sting. If the squadrons of angels looked down with pitying eyes, the squadrons of fallen angels looked with maniacal fury and hatred.

Psalm 22 shows us that the powers of darkness were ‘many bulls encompassing him, strong bulls of Bashan surrounding him’. They gaped on him as ‘ravening and roaring lions’. They were the pariah dogs encircling him, snarling and venomous. They were the company of evildoers out to pierce his hands and his feet. No doubt the one who gloated most was the Prince of darkness himself. He had nothing in Christ and so had nothing on him, but since we were all in Christ, and our sins and guilts were in him, the Accuser had his field day. Christ bore the biting scorn and acidic bitterness of the Accuser because he was as us, ‘made to be sin’, and sin he had never known.

³ Psalm 88:8 has it, ‘Thou hast caused my companions to shun me; thou hast made me a thing of horror to them’. How apt these words to the crucifixion. Also in Psalm 69:20, ‘Insults have broken my heart, so that I am in despair. I looked for pity but there was none; and for comforters, but I found none’. The words of Lamentations 1:12 express the situation: ‘Is it nothing to you, all you that pass by? Look and see if there is any sorrow like my sorrow, which the LORD inflicted on the day of his fierce anger.’

‘I Am [Have Been] Crucified with Christ’

We know enough of this statement to know it is cast in the perfect tense, and that tense indicates that something happened in the past, the effects of which are still going on. The act has happened in the past definitively, and is not still proceeding, but the effects are continually proceeding *as though* the act were even now present. It is present in its power, but its act has been consummated and completed.

Long before those of us of this age were born, the act had happened, the event had taken place. It is an unrepeatable act. It is also an irreversible act. Nothing can take away its effects. Whilst in the present I cannot project myself back into the past, into what happened at Golgotha, yet *I was there!* What, then, happened in me and with me when I was crucified with Christ?

I was made to be one with him. He made me to be one with him. ‘When one died for all, then did all die.’ All my life God’s judgment was upon me for my sin. I felt his wrath in many ways. I knew that wrath in my conscience as pain and shame and loneliness, terror, fear of death, fear of judgment, shame for my pollution, yet all the time I denied this was the case, that it could not possibly be the case. So I hardened myself. I developed barriers of self—righteousness. Deep down in me was turmoil, was awryness of spirit, dislocation of my true self, distortion of my being, derangement of my peace.

Now, here on his Cross, as I am being crucified with him, I know he is taking all that pain and shame and dislocation, hurt and sorrow, bitterness and spleen. Now, as I am on this Cross, he is taking it into himself, and as he does I feel it slipping away. Incredible happening! My guilt is passing away as he takes the wrath of the Holy One upon himself. He does not simply *share* my guilt: he *becomes* my guilt. He does not simply receive punishment for what I have done, but he takes the very wrath of what I have done, for the guilt *is* the wrath.

So then, with eyes wide open to the mercy of God, I see the wrath of my evil dissolving in his bearing the guilt, himself. The things of which I was deeply ashamed, the things that harrowed my spirit, and that burned their shamefulness into me, are now expending themselves upon this great High Priest who is the true Guilt—Offering, the true holy Oblation. Into his pure self flow the sin and evil of me, only to be met by such utter purity that the evil dissolves in the pure, the darkness in the light.

Pain it all is to him, but effective pain, for it destroys all my evil, all my guilt, and it destroys it wholly until not one fragment remains. There is nothing in me or about me which is evil: no sin remains, no guilt is in my conscience. That conscience has been wholly purified and so has given me the first true sight of the loving God whom now I desire to worship in my purified spirit.

So then, I have been crucified with Christ and transformed by that experience. I live, yes, but not in my old impure self—rule, but this very life I live daily in my body I live by the faithfulness of the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me. Not only was I crucified with him and died in his death, but I rose with him in his resurrection, for he did not let go of me when I died in his death, but carried me on into his new life. Believing Man then was washed, justified, and sanctified (I Cor. 6:1 1), and Christ became to him wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption.

**CONCLUSION: EVERY PERSON RESPONSIBLE:
ALL EVIL PURGED FROM THE WORLD**

‘I have been crucified with Christ.’ That is enough. I must go on believing in this act, or I must refuse to believe it. Every day I must live by the power of that act in refusing accusation and condemnation, and every day I must live by this faithfulness of the Son of God in dying for me and rising again for me, and taking me on in life. The effects of that Cross will never diminish. That act of sacrifice for all sins for all time has included me and I and we to live the life God has given me by it.

In chapter 8, ‘Holy Lord and Holy History’, we will see that the very being and presence of all that is evil will know its destruction in the lake of fire. Nothing that is evil or works an abomination will enter the Holy City. At the telos all things will be seen to have been sanctified.

CHAPTER 7(B)

HOLY RESURRECTION: HOLY PEOPLE

THE CROSS AND THE RESURRECTION

For reasons we can show simply, some persons oppose the Cross to the Resurrection or the Resurrection to the Cross. Both actions are, of course, wrong. The Cross and its work are sealed and authenticated by the Resurrection. If the Cross had happened, but not the Resurrection, then the Cross would have been in vain (I Cor. 15:17; Rom. 4:25). The Resurrection would not have happened had the Cross not first destroyed the power of death by Christ's bearing of the sin of the world. I Corinthians 15:55—58 bears this out I Corinthians 15:3—4 pairs the two events. Christ committed his spirit to the Father, and the Father sealed his Cross—victory with the Resurrection. Those who do not understand the Cross—since it is a scandal to the Jew and folly to the Greek often want to dismiss the Cross and go straight to the Resurrection, since they think of the latter as the source of power and victory.¹

I Corinthians 1: 18 speaks of the word of the Cross being 'the power of God' for salvation. Philippians 3: 10 speaks of 'the power of his resurrection'. The truth is that both Cross and Resurrection constitute the one act of Atonement, and in this we find the distinctive power of both events.

A fuller explanation of the significance and power of the Resurrection can be seen in that through it death and evil powers have lost their grip on humanity (Heb. 2:14—15; Col. 2:14—15), especially since forgiveness and justification are sealed by the Resurrection (I Cor. 15:14; Rom. 4:25). Through it Christ is declared Son of God and Lord over all creation, and thus Judge of all the world (Rom. 1:4—5; Eph. 1:21f.; Acts 17:3 1). Because the believer through baptism is buried and raised with Christ (Rom. 6: 1 —10; Col. 3:1—3—4) so he/she is in union with Christ, and shares Christ's life which includes his present resurrection and reigning power. Christ's Lordship determines all of the movement of history. I Pear 1:3 also speaks of the living hope which comes as a result of the new birth which, itself, springs from the Resurrection:

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! By his great mercy we have been born anew to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and to an inheritance which is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you.

In all of these matters we see the power and distinctive dynamics of the Resurrection.

¹ This bears out Luther's rejection of a 'theology of glory' in favour of 'a theology of the Cross'. God can only be properly understood through suffering, especially the suffering of We (Noss. A theology of glory goes directly to seeing and knowing God in the context of glory and not in suffering.

THE REALITY OF THE RESURRECTION

The reality of the Resurrection can be considered along two lines: (i) the revelation of that happening as revealed to us as part of ‘the mystery of Christ’, and (ii) the statements of Scripture which show us its historical facticity, and its significance for us as sinners and saints. Whilst the accounts of Christ’s resurrection in the Gospels are not easy to harmonise, the *fact* of his resurrection is clearly stated. Paul says in I Corinthians 15:3—8:

For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. Then he appeared to more than **five** hundred brethren at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep. Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me.

It is easy enough to follow the Gospels’ accounts, and the mentions of him in Acts as having risen. There are also many references to his resurrection in the Epistles and the Revelation. If all of these statements could be shown to be untrue, then the gospel would also have to be discredited as having no viable foundation. It has been pointed out that the Resurrection cannot be proved beyond doubt to be an historical fact, but then neither can it be disproved beyond doubt. Many factors combine to show that the Resurrection must have happened. The claim that the followers of Jesus had hallucinations, triggered by psychological pressures of a strong kind, can be dealt with. Far from expecting his resurrection, there is plenty of evidence to show that in every case his followers were sceptical even of the Resurrection news they had heard from their own company. They were bewildered. The accounts point out that often he was unrecognisable to those to whom he appeared, until he did something characteristic of his pre—resurrection manner. The matter, because of its importance, will ever be debated. Without doubt, it was a basic and central element of the apostolic truth.

THE RESURRECTION AND CHRIST OUR HOLINESS

On the day of Pentecost, Peter quoted Psalm 16:8—11 in the words of Acts 2:23—28

... this Jesus, delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men. But God raised him up, having loosed the pangs of death, because it was not possible for him to be held by it. For David says concerning him,
 ‘I saw the Lord always before me,
 for he is at my right hand that I may not be shaken; therefore my heart was glad, and my tongue rejoiced;
 moreover my flesh will dwell in hope.
 For thou wilt not abandon my soul to Hades, nor let thy Holy One see corruption.
 Thou hast made known to me the ways of life;
 thou wilt make me full of gladness with thy presence.’

The words ‘For thou wilt not abandon my soul to Hades, nor let thy Holy One see corruption’ are very telling. Paul also quotes, ‘thou wilt not let thy Holy One see corruption’ (Acts 13:35). Jesus is, then, ‘the Holy One’. The words certainly link with Romans 1:4: ‘Jesus Christ ... designated Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead’. In chapter 4 we spoke of Christ as being holy.

In some fourteen passages in the New Testament, Christ is called holy. These mentions are in Mark 1:24 and Luke 4:34, the demon calling him ‘the Holy One of God’; Luke 1:35 where Gabriel tells Mary ‘the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God’; John 6:69, Peter saying, ‘You are the Holy One of God’; Acts 3:14 where Peter speaks of the ‘Holy and Righteous One’; Acts 2:27 (cf. 13:35) where Peter speaks of Jesus before the Father in the hour of death in terms of Psalm 16; Acts 4:27, 30 where the people speak to God of ‘thy holy servant, Jesus’; in Hebrews 7:26 he is spoken of as ‘a high priest, holy, blameless, unstained, separated from sinners, exalted in the heavens’; I John 2:20 says, ‘you have been anointed by the Holy One’; Revelation 3:7 refers to Christ in saying ‘the holy one, the true one’, referring to the vision of the risen Christ in chapter 1. The word ‘holy’ is the adjective *hagios* in all cases but Acts 2:27, 13:5, and Hebrews 7:26, where it is *hosios*.

We recognise, then, that our holiness is dependent upon him, as the Church, as the holy people of God and also as persons. It is clear that H Timothy 1:8—10 speaks of holiness and the Resurrection, both linked with Christ:

Do not be ashamed then of testifying to our Lord, nor of me his prisoner, but share in suffering for the gospel in the power of God, who saved us and called us with a holy calling, not in virtue of our works but in virtue of his own purpose and the grace which he gave us in Christ Jesus ages ago, and now has manifested through the appearing of our Saviour Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.

The ‘holy calling’—the effective call to be consecrated into the people of God, and given the grace to live a holy life—is through the grace of God in Christ, ‘who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel’. Life and immortality spell the end to unholiness and corruption, for these ended with the ‘It is finished!’ of the Cross, and the new life by virtue of the Resurrection (Rom. 6: 1—10; Col. 3:1—3, ‘your life is hid with Christ in God’). ‘Life and immortality’ are the new life in Christ. These have been brought to light by Christ and powerfully, of course, through the Resurrection. Before they were ‘hidden’, but now are made apparent. A new age has risen, the age of life, and that life is in holiness.

In I Corinthians 1:2, Paul speaks of the Church, ‘those sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints’, and in 6:9—11 he contrasts those who were unholy with the present saints, now made holy:

Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither the immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor sexual perverts, nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor robbers will inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God.

‘You were sanctified’ is what happens by Christ and the Holy Spirit, and refers to the people being consecrated to the Lord. In 1:30 (cf. 11 Thess. 2:13—14) Christ is our sanctification.

PRACTICAL HOLINESS LINKED WITH CHRIST’S CROSS AND RESURRECTION

We have noted that the work of the Cross and Resurrection cannot be separated in Christ’s ministry of salvation. The declaration of us being sanctified—included in the Church, the holy people of God, the saints, as in I Peter 2:9—10; (cf. Exod. 19:5—6)—

is linked with the injunctions for us to live a holy life. So see 11 Corinthians 6:14 — 7: 1, I Thessalonians 4:1—8, Hebrews 12:14, and I Peter 1: 13—17.

When we come to the practice of holiness, two passages are of primary importance, Romans 6:1—23 and Colossians 3:1—17. Since it is not our aim here to expound these passages, we will look at the primary principle of them both, which is summed up in Galatians 2:19—21:

For I through the law died to the law, that I might live to God. I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me; and the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. I do not nullify the grace of God; for if justification were through the law, then Christ died to no purpose.

The principle found in this passage is that through co—crucifixion with Christ, the person dies, but through Christ’s resurrection the person comes to life, and lives in the body as one dependent upon the faith of Christ. Whilst it is the same person, the person is not, now, the same.

Romans 6 works on the basis that the person who has come to belief in Christ and is baptised is firstly on the Cross with him, then in the grave and thirdly in the Resurrection. Two elements are thus born of this work: (i) already a death and resurrection of the person has taken place, and (ii) this will ensure the believer that he will rise at the day of the Resurrection. What is in view is the life of holiness. One who has judicial death is no longer a guilty person. The power of sin lies in the law (cf. I Cor. 15:55—56; Rom. 6:7, 14), so that sin’s power has been broken by the Cross and Resurrection. Hence this person is wholly surrendered to God, and his members (that is, his faculties) are now in the work of ‘righteousness for sanctification’ (6:19), the outcome being eternal life (6:22). It is a beautiful truth to know that we are not under the power of sin and that we can live in acts of righteousness which really constitute practical holiness.²

In Colossians 3:1—17 the same principle is in action. Death and resurrection of the believer have effected practical holiness. This chapter is eminently practical. In the light of these two things, and living in Christ, the believer uses the exercises of mortification and vivification. That is all things evil are ‘put to death’, or ‘put off’, whilst all things which are good, righteous and holy are ‘put on’.

CONCLUSION: THE CROSS AND THE RESURRECTION ARE ONE IN EFFECTING HOLINESS

Our conclusion, then, is that because of the Cross and Resurrection, the gift of sanctification is given to believers, incorporating them into the holy community, the Church, and they are enabled to live a life of practical holiness. These are the dynamics of the Cross and the Resurrection working together—as one—in the person of the believer. All of this happens only because the believer, and the believing community, is in the Triune Godhead.

² cf. Isaiah 5:16, ‘But the LORD of hosts is exalted in justice, and the Holy God shows himself holy in righteousness.’

STUDY 8

HOLY LORD AND HOLY HISTORY

INTRODUCTION: ONE HOLY LORD

Rich theology has been written and enacted around the *Shema* of Deuteronomy 6:4—9:

Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD; and you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might. And these words which I command you this day shall be upon your heart; and you shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. And you shall bind them as a sign upon your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. And you shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

If we link this passage with that of Exodus 3:13—17:

Then Moses said to God, ‘If I come to We people of Israel and say to them, “The God of your fathers has sent me to you,” and they ask me, “What is his name?” what shall I say to them?’ God said to Moses, ‘I AM WHO I AM.’ And he said, ‘Say this to the people of Israel, “I AM has sent me to you.”’ God also said to Moses, ‘Say this to the people of Israel, “The LORD, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you”: this is my name for ever, and thus I am to be remembered throughout all generations. Go and gather the elders of Israel together, and say to them, “The LORD, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, has appeared to me, saying, ‘I have observed you and what has been done to you in Egypt; and I promise that I will bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt, to the land of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites, a land flowing with milk and honey.’

then we have some understanding of God’s revelation to Israel of His Being, His Lordship.¹ The primary word for Him as ‘LORD’ (*YHWH*) is vocalised as Yahweh, and the secondary use is Lord, *Adon* and *Adonay* transliterated as Adonai.

For the purposes of our study we see the Old Testament words translated in the New Testament as Kurios, and in a few cases as *Despotes*, both referring to God the Father and to Jesus Christ His Son. For the bridge of Old and New Testaments, I Corinthians 8:4—6 serves us well:

Hence, as to the eating of food offered to idols, we know that ‘an idol has no real existence,’ and that ‘there is no God but one.’ For although there may be so—called gods in heaven or on

¹ We have desisted at this point from showing that in the Old Testament Yahweh is King. He is King over all the earth, and King over all the nations. Israel identified itself as a kingdom because it was under the King. It was a theocracy, but it also linked this Kingship with the universal King and Kingdom.

earth—as indeed there are many ‘gods’ and many ‘lords’—yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist.

So ‘for us there is one God, the Father’ and ‘one Lord, Jesus Christ’. In the Old Testament, Yahweh and Adonai refer to God. That both names include the understanding of God being holy is made clear by ‘the Holy One of Israel, your Redeemer’ and similar statements. We have seen special reference to God alone being holy in Psalm 99, Isaiah 5:16, and 6:3. We have seen that God as essentially ‘the Holy One’ is shown by His being ‘exalted in justice’, and showing Himself ‘holy in righteousness’, a thought much expanded throughout Psalm 99.

JESUS IS THE LORD

We saw Paul’s claim, ‘for us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist’. It has been shown convincingly that in the New Testament, and especially in the text of Acts, the Epistles and the Book of the Revelation, the use of the term ‘God’ (Greek; *theos*) always refers to the Father, the first member of the Trinity. Leaving aside, for the moment, the matter of the Old Testament term Yahweh (Lord) being applied to Jesus and so assuring us that he is God, that is, that he had and has deity, it is quite clear that Jesus is accorded Lordship. On the day of Pentecost Peter said, ‘Let all the house of Israel therefore know assuredly that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified’. In support of this he quoted Psalm 110: 1, ‘The Lord said to my Lord, Sit at my right hand till I make thy enemies a stool for thy feet’. The OT statement is, ‘The LORD [Yahweh] says to my lord [Adonai] ...’² Psalm 2 also indicates Kingship and Lordship, and is often linked with Psalm 110 (e.g. Heb. 1: 3—13; 5:1—6).

The NT has many references to his Lordship in the Acts, the Epistles and the **Book of the Revelation**. In the Gospels Jesus is often referred to as the Lord, but the word ‘Kurios’ can simply mean ‘master’, one who is the leader of the group. The early references in Acts do not specify that they saw him as the Lord of history. By Acts 2:36 it is apparent, ‘Let all the house of Israel therefore know assuredly that God has made **him both Lord and Christ**, this Jesus whom you crucified’. Thus to call on the name of the Lord for salvation is said in reference to the resurrected Jesus. The terms ‘Lord’ and ‘Christ’ begin to be linked until it is often said, ‘the Lord Jesus Christ’. In Acts 10:36 Peter tells Cornelius, ‘he is Lord of all’. The references to the risen Jesus as ‘Lord’ are many.

In the Epistles this practice continues, and calling upon the name of the Lord or confessing his name as Lord is the basis of salvation. ‘If you will confess with your **mouth Jesus as Lord and** believe in your heart that God has raised him from the dead you will be saved’. The quote ‘there is one Lord, Jesus Christ’ of I Corinthians 8:6 is linked with the Fatherhood of God, and even so, can be associated with the proclamation of the *Shema* (Deut. 6:4—6), ‘the LORD our God is one LORD’. In Acts 2:34 Peter quoted Psalm 110: 1, ‘The LORD says to my lord’, as ‘The Lord said to my Lord’, so the Lordship of Christ is constantly proclaimed in the Epistles, almost every

² References in the NT are Matthew 22:44; 26:64; Mark 12:36; 14:62; 16:19; Luke 20:42-43; Acts 2:34; 1 Corinthians 15:25; Ephesians 1:20; Colossians 3:1; Hebrews 1:3, 13; 8:1; 10:12-13; and 12:2. The number of references show how significant the attribution of Lordship was to the early church.

mention of the word being referred to Christ. Indeed the material in the Epistles is almost endless, showing various aspects of the Lordship of Christ, but the essence is ‘Jesus is Lord!’, rather than ‘the incarnate Son is Lord!’ This needs to be understood. It is Christ’s humanity which is raised to universal Lordship so that he is above every principality, every name that is named: he is uniquely Lord.

In the Book of the Revelation he is designated as ‘the ruler of kings on earth’ (1:5), and in 2:18 he is designated as ‘the Son of God’, and titles synonymous with ‘Lord’ are accredited to him. In 17:14 the ten kings of the earth make war on him ‘and the Lamb will conquer them, for he is Lord of lords and King of kings’. In 19:13 he is ‘The Word of God’, and later in verse 16, ‘On his robe and on his thigh he has a name inscribed, King of kings and Lord of lords’.

So high and deep is the mystery of the matter that Paul says in I Corinthians 12:3, ‘Therefore I want you to understand that no one speaking by the Spirit of God ever says “Jesus be cursed!” and no one can say “Jesus is Lord” except by the Holy Spirit’. Christ’s Lordship is, then, a mystery.

JESUS IS THE LORD, THE ONE WHO IS HOLY

We have already seen that God’s holiness is dynamic, always working acts of righteousness, equity and justice. Indeed all works come from that holiness. Therefore, to say that Jesus is the Lord who is holy is to say that the holiness of the Father not only flows to him, but is expressed in those acts which are of the Father. Thus in John 14 : 8–11 :

Philip said to him, ‘Lord, show us the Father, and we shall be satisfied.’ Jesus said to him, ‘Have I been with you so long, and yet you do not know me, Philip? He who has seen me has seen the Father; how can you say, “Show us the Father”? Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own authority; but the Father who dwells in me does his works. Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father in me; or else believe me for the sake of the works themselves.’

As to Jesus the Son being holy, we said in chapter 4, ‘The Holy Trinity’, that the Son’s holiness is established, and we here quote the appropriate section:

In some fourteen passages in the New Testament, Christ is called holy. These mentions are in Mark 1:24 and Luke 4:34, the demon calling him ‘the Holy One of God’; Luke 1:35 where Gabriel tells Mary ‘the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God’; John 6:69, Peter saying, ‘you are the Holy One of God’; Acts 3:14 where Peter speaks of the ‘Holy and Righteous One of God; Act 20:7 of 1130 where Peter speaks of Jesus before the Father in the hour of death in terms of Psalm 16; Acts 4:13 where the people speak to God of ‘my holy servant Jesus’; in Hebrews 7:26 he is spoken of as ‘a high priest, holy, blameless, unstained, separated from sinners, exalted above the heavens’; I John 2:20 says, ‘you have been anointed by the Holy One’; Revelation 3:7 refers to Christ in saying ‘the holy one, the true one’, referring to the vision of the risen Christ in chapter 1. The word ‘holy’ is the adjective *hagios* in all cases but Acts 21:13 and Hebrews 7:26, where it is *hosios*.

THE LORD AND HOLY HISTORY

We have seen in previous chapters that God’s aim is to sanctify all creation. We saw that His blessing made those things active which He commanded with the blessing, but in addition to blessing the seventh day lie sanctified it. All who would have participated

in the Sabbath rest would have known the holiness of God. We assumed Eden was the sanctuary of God and therefore holy. Worship in it would have been holy because of His presence. In history the first nation to be sanctified and have prescription for holy living was Israel. Everything in Israel was sanctified, and sanctified means to the worship and service of God, who, Himself, was active in His plan for bringing all the nations into Israel, into the new temple—'newer' even than the new temple spoken of in Haggai 2:9, 'The latter splendour of this house shall be greater than the former, says the LORD of hosts; and in this place I will give prosperity, says the LORD of hosts'. This new temple will be the house of prayer for all nations, as Isaiah 56:6—8 shows, a claim supported by Christ in the days of his flesh.

This expansion to defeat the nations and bring them under the rule of Christ is amply shown in the New Testament. Whatever may be the assertion of some theologians that Eden was to expand until it covered the earth, it is clear from passages such as Matthew 28:18—20; Romans 14:9; 1 Corinthians 15:24—28; Ephesians 1:20—23; Hebrews 10: 12; and Revelation 1: 10—20, that Christ was/is to rule over all nations, fulfilling the Kingship of Psalms 2 and 89, and all the Davidic promises of Kingship and covenant. Ultimately everything will be under the holy rule of the holy Christ.

The Book of the Revelation is an expanded statement of I Corinthians 15:24—28. Indeed history is the extrapolation of this statement:

Then comes the end, when he delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power. For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death. 'For God has put all things in subjection under his feet.' But when it says, 'All things are put in subjection under him,' it is plain that he is excepted who put all things under him. When all things are subjected to him, then the Son himself will also be subjected to him who put all things under him, that God may be everything to every one.

After the many affirmations of Christ's Kingship in the first four chapters, Revelation chapter 5 shows him as the Slain Lamb and the Lion of Judah, to whom is accorded worthiness 'to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honour and glory and blessing'. All this places him on the throne of God with the Father. The rest of the Book shows him bringing all judgments upon the world, as well as protecting, energising and leading his holy followers—the Church and the hosts of heaven. The climax comes in chapters 19 — 22, where all evil is destroyed, cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, whilst all the sanctified people of God are brought into the holy city, the holy marriage takes place, the holy temple is God and the Lamb, and the holy Eden now is manifested in holy triumph and the intimate power of God.

THE PASTORAL POWER OF THE REALITY OF CHRIST'S LORDSHIP

This can be shown in innumerable ways. We only have to ask ourselves what Christ's Lordship means in history, and the answer is 'Everything!' We only have to ask what it means to the Church, and the answer is the same. We look at the churches, so many of which are marketing units, units which are seeking to show power in the ways the world about them understands power. Prayer is listless whilst folk are activistic with their schemes and plans and techniques. How much of our endeavours are of the harlot city of Babylon rather than the holy city of the heavenly bride, needs to be examined. All of this we think of as a new holy endeavour, but it lacks the sight of Christ as the

triumphant, risen Lord, leading his folk to eschatological victory, not to success as the world counts it.

We should teach our people the Lordship of Christ, and not a domineering Lordship which dominates with a contract and not a covenant; which puts on the people excruciating demands of a legalistic 'holiness' which is far from the dynamics of God as He is in His roles of Creator, Redeemer and Restorer of all things. This sight of the authority of Christ over all things, and the prophetic assurance of the subjugation of all evil, should be an immediate and practical help to those who waver in indecision and despair in the midst of what seem to be multitudinous problems.

STUDY 9

HOLY FATHER: HOLY SONS

INTRODUCTION: THE FATHER—SON RELATIONSHIP

It has been said that any theology which is not relational is not true theology. Perhaps it would be better said that all truth in its biblical origin and form is relational. It has taken many centuries for us to arrive, theologically, at the point where we would come to such statements as ‘Being as Communion’,¹ and ‘Persons in Communion’² as being the heart of Trinitarian theology, the heart of true personhood and the heart of all authentic relationships. When there is a holiness theology which starts from the beginning point of ethics, or has its essence in ethical behaviour, then it is doomed. It is bound to produce a law view of holiness, a behaviour view of sanctification, and a vast works program which will hold the subject in legal slavery. It will inspire manuals to be written on ‘the way of holiness’, and although relationships will certainly be held in view they will not be in the way of ‘other—person centredness’ or coinhering relationships between human beings, and human beings and God.

Much of the New Testament Epistles is given over to the idea of us indwelling the Father and consequently indwelling the Son and the Holy Spirit. With it is the idea of the Father, the Son, and Holy Spirit indwelling us. For them to indwell us is the same as for us indwelling love and love dwelling in us. With it, also, is the idea that the Son is the Second and Last Adam. Just as we know our humanity to be very much in Adam, we know it to be very much in the Last Adam. By ‘Last’ we mean ‘Final’. We will forever be in Christ, having renounced our former being in Adam. The Last Adam will transform us into his being as Christ, just as Adam—in the reverse way—transmogrified us from being in innocence to being in guilt.

Now the Last Adam is the First Son of God. He has always been this uniquely and to this ‘being in communion’ with the Father he has added the work of his life when he ‘became flesh’. We can say no more powerful or explanatory word than that ‘he became flesh’. He became human. In his humanity which always acted—and is going on acting—vicariously for us, he has brought us to indwell him who is the True Head of our Race, as he also indwells us, making us to be that New Race. If we reduce this to the most minimal of explanations it will mean that we are sons of God by being in the Son of God. We not only hold the Son’s view of the Father, but we are in his communion with the Father. Because of his relationship with the Father he knows the Father, and because we are in him we also know the Father. This is the thrust of Matthew 11:27, John 14:6, and both their contexts. Christ alone, as the Son, reveals the Father to us. Matthew 11:27 and John 6:44—46, 65 and contexts, likewise reveal

¹ John Zizioulas, *Being as Communion: Studies in Personhood and the Church*, St Vladimir’s Press, New York, 1985.

² Alan J. Torrance, *Persons in Communion: An Essay on Trinitarian Description and Human Participation*, T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1996.

that only the Father knows the Son and that He is pleased to reveal him to His elect people.³

TRUE COMMUNION, IDOLATRY AND RELATIONSHIPS

In Acts 17:22—31 Paul describes the nature of God to an audience of intelligent idolaters. He points out the distinct difference between confining a god to a shrine, and having a God who cannot be confined in a shrine. He quotes a Greek poet who utters simple words and a profound thought in saying, ‘In him [God] we live and move and have our being’. This agrees with Paul’s previous statement, ‘he himself gives to all men life and breath and everything’. If, then, we receive all from God, and we live and move and have our being in Him, the gods and idols are redundant. We receive nothing from them—they do not give us life and breath and everything. Whether we accept the fact or not, we live and move and have our being in God. The idolaters experience this under protest, and so do not get the good of it.

Paul in his sermon went on to say that the idols which are produced by human imagination and skill have no right to man’s worship since ‘we are his [Gods] offspring’. That is, God originates us, not as in a devising factory, but as the creating Father. All who do not hold this latter view and do not live in the relationship of communion with God need to repent of their scandalous idolatry. A whole volume could be written of the anti—idolatry comments in the Old Testament, and the likening of idolatrous adultery to a ‘communion’ which is illicit and impure. The most intense and intimate experience of ‘communion in being’ of husband and wife is in their physical union; hence the most dreadful parody of it is in a human being in ‘communion’ with his god which, in turn, is a travesty of the God—human relationship. The most impure thing in all the earth is idolatry, and the most unholy thing is a person’s union with his or her god, and no less when that idolatry is in the form of narcissism.

GOD IS THE FATHER OF HIS SONS AND DAUGHTERS

If we take Acts 17:28—‘We are his offspring’—and add to it Luke 3:38, ‘Enos, the son of Seth, the son of Adam, [Adam] the son of God’, then we certainly have an elementary understanding of the human race being the offspring, children or sons of God. True, Adam abdicates this sonship⁴ in going for his own autonomy, but in doing so he is really a prodigal son, and prodigals generally have a thrust to return to their fathers. This seems to be what Paul was driving at in Acts 17:24—3 1.

Father in the Old Testament

In the Old Testament—and especially in the history of Israel—there are many moving passages which indicate that God saw Israel as His children, and they saw Him as their Covenant—Father. They were never familiar with Him in the wrong and irreverent sense. He was hidden from them, shrouded in the darkness of the holy of holies,

³ Of course the understanding of both Father and Son, as also our being in them, is through the working in us of the Holy Spirit.

⁴ Ontologically it is impossible to abdicate one’s sonship as God has created us. The renewal—or coming afresh into the fullness of that sonship—is shown in John 1: 12-13.

hidden by a curtain from them, dwelling beneath the overshadowing cherubim. It is true that in their writings and their music and songs they had endearing thoughts of Him as Father, but He was rather the Father of His people, than of a Son who was begotten of Him. Such ‘begetting’ would have been foreign to their thinking. At the best, Israel was His firstborn son, but they had seen no Son begotten before creation. That concept and reality was left to Christ in his incarnation to reveal.

God as Father in the New Testament: In the Gospels

The first acclamation of his Sonship was at his baptism, an affirmation that needs to be understood in the light of the whole of Psalm 2 and the first couple of verses of Isaiah chapter 42. Nathanael exclaimed before Jesus, ‘Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!’ Peter later cried similarly, ‘You are the Christ, the Son of the living God!’ The soldier at the Cross likewise said, ‘Truly this was the Son of God!’ It is doubtful whether they knew in depth what they were proclaiming.⁵ Surely it was with bitter hatred that demons acknowledged him to be both ‘Son of God’ and ‘holy’.

The word spoken at his baptism, and later at his transfiguration, ‘This is my beloved Son’, would have limited understanding in those who heard it. The idea of ‘the Son’, as found in Psalm 2 and other places, approximated to ‘the Christ’. An idea of a special person was surely present, one who was to be the deliverer of Israel, but such concepts as we hold today have developed from some 2,000 years of historical theology. We have little of their substance in the Synoptic Gospels—Matthew, Mark and Luke. Even so, we have a richly developed view of Christ as the Son in John’s Gospel, and it is mainly from this book that much of our historical theology has developed. Jesus’ constant reference to himself as ‘the Son’—though rarely as ‘the Son of God’ means that God as his Father was always in his mind. It is abundantly clear that he saw himself as the Son who was always revealing the Father by whom he was and what he did. ‘He that has seen me has seen the Father’, meant he believed in himself as the life of the Father, the truth of the Father and the way to the Father. John 14: 1—10 shows that all his words and actions were firstly those of the Father and so, secondly of him. John 17:1—5 is a plea for the Father to ‘Father’ him in the hours of the Cross, so that he could ‘Son’ the Father by what he said and did.

God as Father in the New Testament: In Acts and the Epistles

The term is used only three times in the Acts, and by Jesus who was speaking of the Holy Spirit as ‘the promise of the Father’, and of ‘the times and seasons’ as being in the Father’s hands. It is also possible that in the Acts, Christ is referred to as a ‘holy child’ (Acts 4:30; cf. 3:13), though the term may mean ‘servant’. The use of the term ‘Father’ for God in the Epistles is well established. It did not take the early Christians long to see that they were ‘children of God’, and were often spoken of as being ‘sons of God’. Christ had succeeded, especially through the Cross, Resurrection and Ascension, in bringing them to realise their adoption. Israel was said by Paul to have had ‘the adoption of sons’, and now all in the church had this category of

⁵ We are not saying that the Spirit of revelation could not have revealed all the import of his Sonship within their depths. We simply mean that the reality of Christ’s being the Son of God was of vast dimensions, too vast to be comprehended wholly by the mind.

relationship with God, the outcome of which was that they saw themselves personally and congregationally as brethren, with Christ being ‘the Elder Brother’.

We are concerned with this relational category of believing men, women and children knowing their affinity with the Father, through His Son and by the means of the Holy Spirit. Two passages—Galatians 4:4—7 and Romans 8:14—17—speak of both the fact and the intimacy of this relationship. The Galatian passage tells us that Christ became born of a woman and born under the law in order to redeem us from the law and make us ‘sons of God’, or ‘sons of the Father’.⁶ Redemption is with a view to sonship (adoption). Sonship is taken for granted—‘because you are sons’—and the sensing of this sonship is by the sending into the hearts of believers ‘the Spirit of his Son’, that is, the Holy Spirit. He was the one who enabled Jesus to cry ‘Abba!’, that is, ‘Father!’, and so the Spirit constantly gives this cry until we, too, give vent to the same cry. Our Paternal—filial relationship is thereby established. This element of relationship is dynamic—perhaps the most powerful of all elements to do with relationship—and derives its fullness from the Father—Son relationship. The Holy Spirit is known as both the Spirit of the Father and the Spirit of the Son and so he establishes the nature of this relationship within us.

HOLY FATHER, HOLY SONS IN HUMAN EXPERIENCE

The Sanctifying Ministry of the Father

We now come to the heart of this essay, ‘Holy Father, Holy Sons’, that is, the work of the Father in sanctification. All that has gone before in it has been the building up of the reality of the relationship of the Father to those whom He has made sons. Once this reality is established as an objective fact it becomes axiomatic that ‘like Father, like son’ is the lot of all believers. ‘Holy Father’ determines ‘holy sons’. In our chapter, ‘The Climax of the Covenant: Christ Our Holiness’, and our chapter to come, ‘The Holy Spirit and Our Holiness’, we see the work of the second and third members of the Trinity. Here we seek, primarily, to speak of the work of the Father, yet so interwoven is the world of the Three Persons that this will be a difficult task, as the next few paragraphs will show.

It was Jesus who—on the right of his betrayal—addressed his Father in his most profound recorded prayer as ‘Holy Father!’ He also addressed him as ‘Righteous Father’. Such addresses were testimony to the nature of the Father, and we assume that some—if not all—of the disciples heard this prayer. The utterances were not involuntary ejaculations, but linked with the meaning and substance of his prayer—often called ‘high—priestly’. For example, Jesus spoke of consecrating himself (sanctifying) for the sake of his disciples. Sanctifying himself meant he was setting himself apart for the action of saving his disciples by the Cross and Resurrection. Likewise, he was looking to his consecration to bring them to consecration. He prayed, ‘Sanctify them in the truth; thy word is truth’. These words are profound, referring as they do to the transformation which was to take place in the life of his followers. Previously he had said to them—on that same night—‘You are already made clean by the word which I have

⁶ The word *huios* (son) and *teknon* (child) do differ in meaning. ‘Son’ seems to be the most used term and whilst the word is masculine it embraces all who are redeemed, without reference to gender. ‘Son’ has with it the idea of maturity and of proceeding to even further maturity. ‘Child’ does have reference in most uses to the experience of being a child of a father, but used corporately it covers, of course, both genders. All believers are children, no matter what degree of maturity they may-or may not-have.

spoken unto you'. His prayer to the Father shows us that the Prime Mover in sanctification is the Father. Some references in the Epistles point to the Father being the Sanctifier, such as in I Thessalonians 4:1—7, and especially I Thessalonians 5:23, 'May the God of peace himself sanctify you wholly; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ'.

When the disciples pleaded to be taught to pray he gave them the prayer which we call 'The Lord's Prayer', and its first address was 'Our Father who art in heaven, *Hallowed* be thy name'. It is known that this means, 'May we regard you as Father and also as the One who is holy throughout'. That is why Peter, in enjoining his readers to holiness of life, says:

As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, but as he who called you is holy, be holy yourselves in all your conduct; since it is written, 'You shall be holy, for I am holy.' And if you invoke as Father him who judges each one impartially according to his deeds, conduct yourselves with fear throughout the time of your exile (I Pet. 1:14—17).

The most powerful of all motivating forces to being about holiness must simply be, 'We are sons of the Holy Father!' In the Son we are sons, so our adoption is authentic, but the Spirit, so to speak, authenticates existentially this rich relationship to us, and so it is natural—and glorious—for us to cry time and again, 'Abba! Father!' Holiness is not then a marathon endeavour of ascetic endeavour and near morbid mortification. It issues naturally from this 'I' and 'Thou' relationship and has in it a joyous spontaneity. We have been given the assurance that we have been sanctified, *once for all!* We love the Father and desire to do His will. If, from time to time, we fail then He will chastise us. Hebrews 12:3—22 shows us this is the case, that such discipline 'yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness'. This is all part of the action of striving 'for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord'.

It is not without point that in the Book of the Revelation the people of God are **marked not with** the mark of the Beast, but with the mark of the Son and the Father. In 14:1—5 we read:

Then I looked, and lo, on Mount Zion stood the Lamb, and with him a hundred and forty—four thousand who had his name and his Father's name written on their foreheads. And I heard a voice from heaven like the sound of many waters and like the sound of loud thunder; the voice I heard was like the sound of harpers playing on their harps, and they sing a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and before the elders. No one could learn that song except the hundred and forty—four thousand who had been redeemed from the earth. It is these who have not defiled themselves with women, for they are chaste; it is these who follow the Lamb wherever he goes; these have been redeemed from mankind as first fruits for God and the Lamb, and in their mouth no lie was found, for they are spotless.

In Revelation 21:7 we read, 'He who conquers shall have this heritage, and I will be his God and he shall be my son'. It is the son who lives a righteous, holy, truthful and loving life, who will inherit all things. The reward such as this will be known in the Paradise of God. All the hungry and thirsting after righteousness shall be fulfilled, the mournful shall rejoice, the poor grow rich in spirit, and all things shall be reconciled. The words of Revelation 22:1—5 show us the great reward:

Then he showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb through the middle of the street of the city; also, on either side of the river, the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. There shall no more be anything accursed, but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and his servants shall worship him; they shall see

his face, and his name shall be on their foreheads. And night shall be no more; they need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they shall reign for ever and ever.

There is a finality about being evil and choosing, to remain so, of being sanctified and living a holy life and choosing to live it for ever. Revelation 22: 10—11 speak of this:

And he said to me, ‘Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is near. Let the evildoer still do evil, and the filthy still be filthy, and the righteous still do right, and the holy still be holy.’

There must be a final thought and it is this: What a life it is to live as a son with the Father, having the Father to make one’s life that of a holy child before its adorable and holy Father. Here there will be reverence for the grand and eternal Father, so that the trivial things will be seen for what they are, and the profound things for what they are. Even so, such filial living with the Father is not great and grand for simple souls, but is the deepest and most satisfying of all things. To live in holiness with the Father who is ‘above all things, and through all things and in all things’ is to have discovered the true and noble way of life, the true, simple and joyous way of life—the way of life in which all participate as brothers and sisters as part of that great family—that holy family.

CHAPTER 10

HOLY BRIDE: HOLY PEOPLE

INTRODUCTION: THE BRIDE HAS ALWAYS BEEN HOLY

We need to recognise that the theme of the—true Bride in Scripture has been that of a pure person. Thus even before the Fall, Israel was predestined as the Bride of God, the Church as the Bride of Christ. When we recognise that the Bride of Christ is the sanctified people of God, then we realise this people should be holy, firstly by being sanctified as the people of God, and secondly by living consonant with that holiness into which she has been called, the enablement of that holiness being enabled by the Triune God—Holy Father, Holy Son and Holy Spirit.

THE FIRST DEFILING OF THE BRIDE

In chapter 6, ‘Unholy Humanity’, we saw the fall of Man into sin. In this, Eve, the bride of the first husband, took the first step as she was beguiled and sought to have her husband share with her in accepting the deception of the serpent.¹ Adam called Eve ‘the mother of all living’. All humanity is in and from that bride. There was a ‘first Adam’ and this ‘first Eve’, but the Church is to be ‘the last Eve’—the Mother of those truly living, ‘the Mother of us all’. When we look at this last Eve eschatologically, we see she *Will* be the ultimate Mother of us all.

ISRAEL THE BRIDE OF YAHWEH

I would suggest in the text of this Study that readers read carefully my *The Profound Mystery*,² to trace the bride—bridegroom theme throughout the Scriptures. In regard to Israel being the Bride of Yahweh, in Jeremiah 2:2—3 God says to Israel, ‘I remember the devotion of your youth, your love as a bride, how you followed me in the wilderness, in a land not sown. Israel was holy to the LORD . . .’ That is, God sanctified her as His people, His betrothed, and espoused none other. In Ezekiel 16:8—14 there is a moving passage which describes how God, who had saved the abandoned and exposed baby girl from perishing, now prepares her for marriage. The whole chapter is a very moving passage, but the description of the one brought to wifhood followed by

¹ cf. I Timothy 2:11-15.

² Geoffrey Bingham, *The Profound Mystery: Marriage Love, Divine and Human, NCPI*, Blackwood, 1995, pp. 70-76. With this goes Geoffrey Bromiley’s fine treatment of marriage in his *God and Marriage* (T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1981). See also the bibliography in *The Profound Mystery*.

her post—marital adultery and idolatry is fearful to read. Here is an unclean wife, worse than a harlot. Likewise, the first few chapters of Hosea speak in much the same tone. In spite of Israel's adultery and faithlessness, God will not divorce or abandon her. 'I will love you freely', He says. When we remember that Israel was to be a holy nation, then we are astonished by the grace which still permits her to be known as the Bride. See Deuteronomy 7:6—11 where Israel is to be 'a people holy to the LORD your God', Deuteronomy 14:1—2 (cf. Lev. 11:44) where Israel's witness is to be holy, and Exodus 19:5—6 where Israel is to be the holy priest—nation to the world. Holiness is here dynamic and revelatory of the nature of the God of the universe.

We might miss the whole theme and concept of practical holiness and righteousness of living if we get caught up simply in the nature of the narrative. Something better than Israel as a bride has to happen, and it does, in Christ and his Church. Even so, Yahweh sees Israel as His Bride. We then have to ask the question, how it comes about that the Church and not Israel is the Bride, and if Israel and the Church are virtually the one, then how does it happen that the Bride is for the Son and not the Father. In this regard Geoffrey Bromiley has a good statement:

At the level of the original [Israel the bride] the deserted husband [Yahweh] lovingly went to look for the erring bride and brought her back. He did this *by offering himself in the person of the divine Son*, as the price of redemption [emphasis mine].³

THE CHURCH THE BRIDE OF CHRIST

The making of the Church as the Bride of Christ is no little thing. Bromiley says of this work and event:

God the Son comes into the world as the heavenly bridegroom, rescuing or establishing his own marriage in the face of the infidelity of his spouse or bride. To accomplish this task, which will carry with it the reinstatement of earthly marriage, he does two things: he bears the cost of human unfaithfulness and he breaks its power. In these two ways he wins, or wins back, to himself a people that can finally be united to him in endless union. He also makes it possible for this people to realise to some degree on earth the creaturely copy of this union in human marriage.⁴

Lest at this stage of our book we should think this essay is of little practical value, we should see that what has been called 'marriage theology' is of great importance, if not the greatest. When we grasp it we have a key to counselling people, not only regarding marriage, but also life. Unless we see the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit constitute the Family, we will not know how to go about the human family. Ephesians 3:14 speaks of Him as being 'the Father, from whom every family in heaven and earth is named'.⁵ Today we have a secular therapy called 'Family Therapy', which tries to work on the principle that the family is the most important of all matters and the heart of society. For the moment, however, we must leave these things in favour of what the theologian Robert Jenson calls 'marriage theology'. If we would understand 'holy bride' and 'holy people', we need to understand this theology. In his brilliant book on Jonathan Edwards, he has mined precious mineral out of Edwards's *Miscellanies*.⁶

³ Bromiley, *God and Marriage*, pp. 77, 78.

⁴ Bromiley, *God and Marriage*, p. 46.

⁵ Many translations of this passage have been made, one of which 'from whom all fatherhood in heaven and earth is derived'.

⁶ I have not been able to give the reference to Edwards's *Miscellanies* apart from Jenson's own references to that work which he used for his writing from the original manuscripts of Edwards. The *Miscellanies* are not presently available in print.

Edwards' answer takes us finally to the centre of his systematic reflection, to—'as it were'—his notation of the universal melody's fugal structure: 'To this I say, that the Son is the adequate communication of the Father's goodness . . . But yet the Son has also an inclination to communicate *himself*, in an image of his person that may partake of his happiness: and this was the end of the creation, even the communication of the happiness of the Son of God. ... Therefore the church is said to be the completeness of Christ.' It is as and only as a factor in the plot of the triune God's inner life, that God has a need to overflow. In the *Miscellanies*, Edwards is beautifully simple: 'The end of the creation of God was to provide a spouse for his Son Jesus Christ, that might enjoy him and on whom he might pour forth his love. . . .' '[H]eaven and earth were created that the Son of God might be complete in a spouse.' The church is with Christ the object in the triune love and so the purpose of creation.⁷

We see from this how important is the Bride, the Church. Revelation chapters 19, 21 and 22 show how much she is 'in the beauty of holiness', her bridal garments being made of white, white as linen, clothed in the righteous deeds of the saints. She is pure, suited to her Holy Bridegroom. Lest we think this is somewhat dissociated from the present church, we need to read Ephesians again, since it is the book of the Bride and the Bridegroom; the Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit and the family:

- (a) In chapter 1 we see that the Church was chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world that she might be 'holy and without blame before him'.
- (b) In chapter 2 the Church is derived from Jew and Gentile, all coming through the access of faith to the Father, and being built into a holy temple, for holy worship.
- (c) In chapter 3 the Church becomes the witness to God's plan and is equipped with the fullness of love and power to carry out this task.
- (d) In chapter 4 the seven 'unities' are nominated; the gifts, also, by which the Church grows into full maturity, and then practical holiness and purity in which it lives.
- (e) Chapter 5 speaks further of the love—holiness life of the Church, opening out into its worship——in holy array—and then speaks of the Bride and the Bridegroom in unmistakable terms.
- (f) Chapter 6 follows on immediately speaking about the life of the family and house—holds, then leading to the spiritual warfare in which Christ and his Church operate.

We conclude that the Church is God's dynamic unit for proclaiming the Kingdom. As the Wife of Christ she is his 'helpmeet' in his carrying out his New Adamic work—the work of the Last Adam—so that both functionally (Gen. 1:28) and soteriologically (Matt. 28:18—20) her Husband the Son can fulfil the plan of God the Father, which He set before him. The way in which she lives is thus of immense importance. Just to follow the matter of holiness in this Epistle is enough to motivate us to see that the Church is fully submitted to Christ her Lord and Spouse, so that she walks the way of holiness.

UNHOLINESS IN THE CHURCH TODAY

I think we could have a very useful discussion at this point. We could discuss the various aspects of the Church's surrender of much of her holiness in the matters of

⁷ Robert W. Jenson, *America's Theologian: A Recommendation of Jonathan Edwards*, OUP, New York, 1992, p. 42.

worship, of walking in love, *of* walking in light, *of* failing to live life fully and obediently in the matters of sexual purity, marital love, and marriage—this marriage giving way to marriage breakup and the terrible lot that children have to bear as a consequence. We might mention the present moral looseness which is further blurring the ethical life of the Church and the social community. There are also the unbiblical views of the Church, and the unreasonable expectations of her life and ministry. We have to be careful that we do not consider the Gospel a product to be marketed, and so assume ways the world uses because we think they will be successful. This is a secular and not a holy approach.

HOLINESS IN THE CHURCH TODAY

We come now to the matter of purity. Soren Kierkegaard said that ‘the purity of the heart is to will one thing’. We have seen above, that to will the right thing is true purity; to will the wrong thing is impurity and evil. When we realise that purity is never apart bona love, and love is never apart from purity, then the Epistles and The Revelation come alive. In our coming chapters on ‘Holy Law: Holy Gospel’ and ‘The Climax of the Covenant: Christ Our Holiness’, we will see that Christ’s law is that *of* love, as it is that *of* holiness, and he is our holiness (sanctification). The Husband cannot be holy and the Wife, unholy. That is why there are so many exhortations to holiness in the NT, and why so often they are connected with the nature *of* the Church.

Pastorally, we need to alert our people to the command to be holy, but without making it part of a contract with God. It is a participation in God’s holiness (e.g. Heb. 12:7—11; cf. II Pet. 1: 1—4). The Church has already been sanctified (Eph. 1:3f.; 5:25) 27; Heb. 10: 10—14; cf. I Cor. 1:2, 30; 6:11) and her holy response to this grace constitutes her life of holiness.

THE PASTORAL POWER OF THE HOLY ECCLESIA

It is doubtful whether a great number *of* church members think *of* the Church as a matter of sanctification or consecration into the people *of* God and the consequent holiness *of* them required by God. *If* the pastors and elders can approach it from the point *of* view of the great love that is between Christ and his Church, signified by true marriage, and if they can sense the community of love, then holiness will naturally follow. Much of holiness is regarded strictly as a contract of law—keeping in God’s sight, instead of a participation in the totality of blessing already given (Eph. 1:3f.; I Cor. 3:21; Rom. 15:29; II Pet. 1:4) and a luxuriating in grace. Holiness is lived out *of* love, but not just love on a selfish level, but love that flows from the Triune God and is ‘other person regarding’. Much teaching along these lines is required, and we should persist until our folk see that a holy church in an unholy world is the richest witness that can be given to the holy God *of* love. Holiness, as we have seen, is an active life *of* deeds *of* righteousness and goodness. It is never static, never inert, never passive. All the time it is immersed in Christ’s love and so lives without spot or wrinkle, stain, or any such thing.

CHAPTER 11

HOLY LAW: HOLY GOSPEL

INTRODUCTION: ETERNAL LAW¹ AND ETERNAL GOSPEL

It is clear that as pastors and teachers we must have a clear understanding of law and gospel. Some churches may feel that they should keep up traditions of sociality, adding to their numbers, meeting people with their present problems, but whilst these things may have their place and merit, the deeper questions of Man and his sinfulness, salvation and new birth, the life and way of holiness, righteousness and truth must be known and applied. Paramount to all things is an understanding of the Triune God, and His demands for transformation of life from the condemned sinner state to the state of salvation, and the life of righteousness and holiness. Without doubt, the law and the gospel must be thoroughly known, and warmly and simply taught. Only out of this will come the true life of the Church, the Bride of Christ. The listener's views of law and gospel are not always easily changed. By fallen nature we mistake both, failing to understand them. A revelation of both is needed.

Take, for example, the thought of a law that has ever been and is ever unchanging and stands before us ruthless; a bloc inexorable, and heavily demanding righteous behaviour is enough to turn us against it. Nothing about it is attractive. We fail to see in it the beauty that we find expressed about it in Psalm 19 where it says, in effect, that the law is 'sweeter than honey and more precious than gold'. We do not want to be like the man in Psalm 1 who meditated on the law day and night, and his delight was in it, and so much so that he was likened to an ever—green, ever—fruitful tree. That for us is too dull, too pious, not enough 'out there' where the action of life takes place. So we think!

The thought of 'an everlasting gospel' is likewise strange and surprising. We know the gospel to have been formed by Christ, formulated by his apostles and so something began to be at a certain point in history: such is credible. How could it ever have been eternal? Doubtless, an angel in the Book of the Revelation is seen 'flying in midheaven, with an eternal gospel to proclaim to those who dwell on the earth, to every nation and tribe and tongue and people'.²

Exegetically, under the idea of 'law and gospel', is a particular method of preaching which preaches up law in all its excruciating demands until, it would seem, hearers are awakened to a heavy sense of guilt, Banned at the judgment of the law, and so brought—in many cases—to the place of despair. When, then, the eternal gospel is preached, grace is seen as against law, and repentance comes **and the gospel brings** relief to sinners in the form of their salvation. This seems to be a good mode for preaching, but is it, in fact, the way law and gospel are set forth in Scripture?

¹ Much of the material on the nature of law in this chapter is taken in substance from my book *Sweeter than Honey, More Precious than Gold* (NCPI, Blackwood, 1995). I recommend that it be read. Understanding the law of God is no small project.

² Revelation 14:6-7.

A SCRIPTURAL VIEW OF GOD'S LAW

Law, and Law in the Old Testament

The pastor must have a scriptural view of law. For some it has required a lifetime of study and thought to know the true nature of law. Since folk associate holiness of life with keeping of the law, the view of life will determine the view and practice of holiness. Take, for example, the quotes below: do they reflect our own views of law?

In the way of thy testimonies I delight
as much as in all riches.

I will meditate on thy precepts,
and fix my eyes on thy ways.
I will delight in thy statutes;
I will not forget thy word.
My soul is consumed **with longing**
for thy ordinances at all times.

Thy testimonies are my delight,
they are my counselors.

... let me not be put to shame!
I will run in the way of thy commandments
when thou enlargest my understanding!
Teach me, O LORD, the way of thy statutes;
and I will keep it to the end.
I will keep thy law continually,
for ever and ever;
and I shall walk at liberty,
for I have sought thy precepts.
I will also speak of thy testimonies before kings,
and shall not be put to shame;
for I find my delight in thy commandments,
which I love (Ps. 119:14—16, 20, 24, 31b—33, 44—47).

Throughout Scripture the law is known as ‘the law of the Lord’. We would assume that this means, ‘the law as given by the Lord to Man’ and that is true enough. However, the law of the Lord is the very law by which the Triune God subsists and acts. God, of course, subsists of His very self, but the Three Persons of the Trinity have what we might call ‘the internal relationships of the Trinity’. We naturally think of these as being of love; the Father being love Himself, the Son being the ‘Son of His love’ and the Spirit ‘proceeding from the Father and the Son’—thus being ‘the Spirit of the Father and the Son’, and thus ‘the Spirit of love’. We dare not think of this law of God apart from the communion they have. The richness and practice of law is only known when one is in communion with God and his fellow creatures. J. A. Motyer has put the matter well:

... we find in Lev. 19 that God has provided another image of himself on earth. Every aspect of human experience is gathered into this rich review of man’s life under God’s law: filial duty (vs. 3), religious commitment (vs. 4), ritual exactness (vs. 5), care of the needy (vs. 9), honesty in deed and word (vv. 11—12), and many more, touching on relationships and even on dress, hygiene, and horticulture. Yet all this variety suspends from one central truth: ‘I am the Lord.’ Lord is the divine name, the ‘I am what I am’ (Exod. 3:14), so that the significance of the recurring claim is not ‘You must do what I tell you’ (i.e., “Lord” as an authority word) but ‘you must do this or that because I am what I am’; every precept of the law is a reflection of ‘what I

am.’ *Man is the living, personal image of God, the law is the written preceptual image of God* The intention of Lev. 19 is declared at the outset: ‘You shall be holy, for I the Lord your God am holy’ (vs. 2). The Lord longs for his people to live in his image, and to that end he has given them his law [emphasis mine]³

When Man was made in the image of God, the law of the Lord was innate to him: it could be no other way. *Man is the living, personal image of God, the law is the written preceptual image of God* must mean that God reveals Himself, His nature and His working by the law. Unfortunately, the very word ‘law’ is linked in most people’s minds with the Latin *lex*, and so of legislation and legal ideas. The Hebrew word *torah* has a much different connotation, which is better even than the Greek word *nomos*. It really means instruction. Law, in the first case, is linked with creation, but has no contractual idea. It is the way God is in action and, hence, the way by which creation functions. If we hold—as I do—to the idea of a covenant which is, like the law, inbuilt into creation, then the law must be seen in the light of God’s covenant which first pertains to Man’s receiving creation *as a gift*, and not even by grace.⁴ Covenant means God’s inner communion is covenantal, life being the mutuality of love and its circulatory, perichoretic nature.⁵

When Man is created, he receives the covenantal life of the Godhead and so has innately that kind of law which guides, teaches and instructs, as well as corrects where that is necessary. This is the sense that the person who has faith in God receives, and by which he operates. Law, then, is simply the true way of life, summed up in love to God and love to one’s neighbour. With a trifle of adjustment, we can say each Person of the Trinity loves his ‘neighbour’. God can be said to love Himself, that is, to perceive and to honour His unique perfections.

Law, and Law in the New Testament

Many deficient ideas exist about the law when the New Testament is studied. Some of these spring from a natural aversion to law of any kind, and, in particular, the law Israel promised to keep in Exodus 24, at the cutting of the covenant when it cried, ‘All that the LORD has spoken we will do, and we will be obedient’. Two passages seem to say that Christ fulfilled the law and thereby outmoded it. In Matthew 5:17 Jesus said he had come to fulfil the law and the prophets. Note two things about this passage: (i) he had not come to abolish the law and the prophets but to confirm them,⁶ and (ii) he castigated any who would depreciate the law in any manner. The second passage is Romans 10: 1—4, where Jesus is said to be ‘the end of the law, that every one who has faith may be justified’. ‘End’ here (*telos*) does not mean the finish. In this case it is the goal, or we could say the aim of *torah* was Christ, and he established the law.⁷

³ J. A. Motyer, ‘Biblical Concept of Law’, in *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, ed. W. A. Elwell, Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, 1990, p. 624.

⁴ It is difficult for many theologians to grasp the idea that creation was God’s direct gift to us and its creatures. Grace always has a restorative element and so grace was needed following the fall of Man. To see creation as a gift from the Creator God is to know His nature in a profound and edifying way.

⁵ *Perichoresis* is the circulatory movement of gifts and blessings from one Person to the Others within the Trinity. Each Person gives out of his particularity (e.g. Father to Son, Son to Father, etc.), thus making the complementarity of the Godhead. There is a further movement from the Godhead outwards to make creation, provide for it, and love all of it.

⁶ The best exegesis does not speak of fulfilling, but of confirming or establishing. Note, too, it was ‘the law and the prophets’ not just the law. It was the whole corpus of the Old Testament including the prophets.

⁷ There are, of course, other exegeses of this passage, but I doubt they really meet the text. See N. T. Wright on this text in his *The Climax of the Covenant: Christ and the Law in Pauline Theology* (Fortress Press, Minneapolis, 1993). In fact, the title of his book is taken as interpreting Romans 10:4 correctly.

Of course, the law also has to do with curse, judgment and death. But for sin, we would not know this side of the law. This is the thrust of Deuteronomy chapters 27 and 28. Paul uses its condemnation to awaken people, both Jews and Gentiles, to the need for faith, and for one who would be the curse of the law, so that the law might shut people up to faith and bring them to justification, though only through the propitiatory work of the Cross.

Following justification, the law takes on another hue altogether to the justified, sanctified believer.⁸ The law of God is still the law of God, and now the righteous demands of it can and should be fulfilled by the believer, not for salvation, but because that salvation has come (Rom. 8:1—4). With this in mind, we can assume that the keeping of the holy law is the practical way of working out the sanctification that has already been pronounced as a perpetual category, a fruit of the Cross.

Note on ‘The Eternal Law’

Nowhere does the law seem to be called ‘eternal’. John in his First Epistle does say, ‘I am writing you no new commandment, but an old commandment which you had from the beginning; the old commandment is the word you have heard’. His Epistle is all about loving God and others. Jesus spoke of divorce, saying, ‘It was not so from the beginning’, that is, there was no provision for divorce at the beginning. The law concerning the Sabbath may also be inferred to be from the beginning, according to Exodus 20:8—11, and Deuteronomy 5:12. Of Abraham, God said, ‘Abraham obeyed my voice and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws’. If we see the law as ‘the law of God’, rather than just ‘the law from God’, then we will see it as being for ever, but not as some hard, implacable, ruthless and immutable piece of legislation. If it is of God, then it will be as the law—lovers down through the ages have always seen it. As Paul, himself living in the New Covenant, said, ‘I delight in the law of God, in my inmost self’, which is the law placed there in the New Covenant (Jer. 31:31—241 and the covenant is always called ‘the everlasting covenant’. To quote Motyer again, ‘Man is the living, personal image of God; the law is the written preceptual image of God’.

A SCRIPTURAL VIEW OF THE HOLY GOSPEL

Both John the Baptist and Jesus came preaching the gospel of the Kingdom. This appertained to Isaiah 52:7:

How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings good tidings, who publishes peace, who brings good tidings of good, who publishes salvation, who says to Zion, ‘Your God reigns’.

Israel knew what this meant: God was reigning in spite of appearances to the contrary. But those of Israel were to repent and be baptised into the Kingdom. A new thing had to happen and was happening. By the time Jesus had gone proclaiming the Kingdom throughout Judea, Galilee and Samaria, it was the time for him to offer himself up as the great High Priest for Israel and the world. He became the propitiatory sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. Law—breakers were not justified until they repented and had faith in the crucified and risen Christ.

⁸ We have already dealt with the fact that sanctification issues from the Cross. One cannot be justified without being forgiven, cleansed of sin and guilt, and sanctified. These are all in the one bundle.

At Pentecost, the Church came into full view, and with it a way of life that was unique. From the beginning, it was dynamic. What we call the *perichoresis* was visible in the life of the community as they loved God and their neighbours, and shared their goods and possessions with those who had need in the new community. This is too vast a subject to tackle in this paper, but what we need to see is the liberation from sin, the flesh, the law as condemnation, the world, Satan and death, so they became holy in their living. The holy gospel brought the desire to follow and fulfil holy law, Without legalism, without dread of that law. Unfortunately, some theologians substitute the law of Christ for the law of God, but a sustained exegesis will show the deficiency of this view. In Romans 13:8—10, and James 1:22—25; 2:8—13, the law of love is still the heart of the Sinaitic law, which we see to be present in God and Man at the creation, since it is the law of God Himself. We must never say, ‘The new law of Christ, the law of love, now took the place of the old law’. The passages quoted above do not permit this. Romans 8:1—4 shows we cannot say, ‘There is a law, of the Holy Spirit which shows us at any point what we ought to do’ for although this may be true, it is the law of God that the Spirit shows us at the point we require *torah*.⁹

We note there that if the law of God is contractual, and if the effects of grace are dependent upon obedience of a legalistic kind, then there will be no joy in law. As we have seen it is in communion With God and others that the law is ‘sweeter than honey and more precious than gold’, for obedience springs from grace, and when there is that obedience, then ‘all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you, if you obey the voice of the LORD your God’. If we see the law as harsh and will not obey out of grace, ‘then all these curses shall come upon you and overtake you’.

There are more precepts, injunctions and exhortations for obedience in the New Testament than the Old, yet such were obeyed with joy because of the liberation of the Cross and the total gift of God to the believers.¹⁰ We can say that where the gospel is proclaimed freely, and men and women respond,¹¹ then the holiness of God sanctifies His people, and they set about active holiness in Walking according to the law in all its newness and freshness. There can be no doubt from Galatians 5:16—26 that ‘the fruit of the Spirit’ is the free fruit—bearing of the law, by the Spirit, over and against the works of the flesh which result from an egoistic attempt to fulfil the law out of the flesh.

⁹ Note that Ezekiel 36:24-27 and Jeremiah 31:31-34 teach us that the Holy Spirit will dwell in our hearts as the Spirit of the New Covenant, which is why we will delight in the law after the inner man. However, the law of God in the sense of the Decalogue does not change. It is the law of the heart—love to God and neighbour.

¹⁰ See I Corinthians 3:22; 11 Corinthians 9:15; Ephesians 1:3f.; Romans 15:29; 11 Peter 1:3-4.

¹¹ John 16:7-11 speaks of conviction of sin, righteousness and judgment. Does the law bring this conviction? No: it is the Holy Spirit. He may well use the law to bring this conviction, but the verses should be read to see why persons are convicted. Primarily the law does not bring *conviction* of sin. Romans 3:20 says it is through the law that the *knowledge of sin* comes. This can mean (i) the law outlines what is good and what is wrong, or (ii) the law so works in the interior of a person that he or she gains an existential knowledge of sin, which is a terrible thing. We take it that these two things happen through the law, but not without the work of the Spirit.

**CONCLUSION: LAW AND GOSPEL BOTH NECESSARY FOR
PRACTICAL HOLINESS**

Practical holiness is something practiced Without conscious effort. Theologically, the law and gospel are not opposed one to the other. The law is the way of holiness, but not a way that is contractual. The gospel Rees us from the condemnation of the law, to give us the liberty to obey law, not for earning salvation, but for walking in the way of the Lord. So many of our internal problems in the Church would melt away were we to understand the things of this chapter.

CHAPTER 12

THE CLIMAX OF THE COVENANT: CHRIST OUR HOLINESS

INTRODUCTION: THE TRIUNE SANCTIFICATION

‘Holy Trinity’ has become a much—used term for the Triune Godhead, in that God is holy (see ch. 1), the Three Persons are holy, and holy together, holy as one, and that must be remembered. When, then, we say ‘Christ is my holiness’, we must remember that he is not this apart from the Father and the Spirit. All three are one thing together: one righteousness, one love, one wisdom, one holiness—and so on. It is true that the Father is *fons divinitatis*, but once, so to speak, He flows out in all His perfections, these become the perfections of the Son and the Spirit. We have already seen that the Father is holy, the Son is holy and the Spirit is holy.

We also know that in the whole order of creation, redemption and the restoration of all things, the Three Persons are wholly involved. We have also noted that the goal or *telos* of God is the sanctification of all things. In the chapter ‘Holy Father: Holy Sons’, as also in other chapters, much of the material we will reiterate here should help us to fix the matter in our minds of the Father in holiness, just as the following chapter, ‘The Holy Spirit and Our Holiness’, should be helpful in that regard. We will have covered the work of each of the Persons in holiness.

CHRIST OUR HOLINESS

It can be rightly said that Christ is our all in all. This may seem like a theological cliché, but it is more than that. The Gospels show us that Christ is our Water of life, our Bread *of* life’, our Light, the Door, the Vine of which we are branches, our Shepherd of which we are the flock, our Lord, our King, our Saviour, our Elder Brother, our Great High Priest, our wisdom, our righteousness (justification), our sanctification and our redemption. We could think of many more things such as our baptism by which we are incorporated in him, and are made sons of God. The New Testament has many references to us being in him, and that in him we can do all things. He is said to be in us and that we live by his faith. So much is said that we cannot comprehend it all. When we look at, contemplate and then meditate upon all things in this chapter, we see the wonder of what Calvin and Luther called ‘the wonderful exchange’ or ‘the blessed exchange’, namely that we give to him all that we are, and on the Cross he assumes this, so that he may give to us all that he is, that we may assume that. What he assumes he redeems, the church fathers used to say. There is also a warning here, namely that

what we will not have him assume, he will not redeem. In actuality, he did assume all, but repentance and faith must rise up to that full and peerless sacrifice and receive all its treasures.

An Impediment to Full Christological Pastoral Ministry

Before we proceed to look at Christ as the ‘climax of the covenant’ (Rom. 10: 1—4), we need to sound a pastoral note. In the church, the congregations—‘the company of all faithful people’—should have constantly brought to their attention and remembrance the facts of Christ’s multi—faceted Person and ministry. For example, if the congregation thinks only in terms of the Shepherd of the flock, powerfully enriching and helpful as this may be, they miss all the other ‘aspects’ of Christ and his ministry. Whilst Christ for his part, as Head of the church, will continue to be all these things to his, people, yet the pastors and elders will be an impediment to this fullness of Christ coming to the people ‘by way of remembrance’. Reiteration of these is essential to the full life of the Church, and motivating them strongly to participate in the world—wide mission of Christ in the redeeming and sanctifying of humanity and all things.

CHRIST THE CLIMAX OF THE COVENANT

We need to look closely at Romans 10: 1—4:

Brethren, my heart’s desire and prayer to God for them is that they may be saved. I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but it is not enlightened. For, being ignorant of the righteousness that comes from God, and seeking to establish their own, they did not submit to God’s righteousness. For Christ is the end of the law, that every one who has faith may be justified.

There may be many readings or interpretations of this passage, but the passage itself, paraphrased, is saying something like this: ‘Brethren I am not against Israel, against my ethnic brethren, but I desire for them and pray for them that they may be saved. The means of salvation are there for them. We do not question their zeal, and especially the zeal for the law, but they have made a mistake. They have contended that the law, of itself, when obeyed, would establish their own righteousness. They are in part correct, for the goal or *telos* of the law is the Messiah—to him the law and the prophets look. They, however, have a *national* view of the law, seeing it as confined to Israel, and not for the Gentiles. However, the Gentiles were promised justification through the Abrahamic covenant, and it is the covenant my brethren have confined to Israel. Even in confining it to that, they have missed the fact that the law looked to the coming of Messiah, for the law, of itself, could not save anyone, neither Jew nor Gentile. Christ is the climax of the covenant. By him we see the law was not harsh or foolish or unproductive, but Christ came in conformity with the law and the prophets. Now my brethren’s zeal should be for Christ and for the justification they will know when they have faith in him as God’s propitiatory sacrifice set forth by God Himself, and requiring the faith of all for justification.’

This passage does not take up the matter of whether the law is now terminated. It simply indicates that the law reaches its goal in Christ. What needed to be concluded has been concluded. Romans 8:1—4 should now be seen to show that the law still functions as *torah* for the believers, who ever they may be:

There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set me free from the law of sin and death. For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do: sending his own Son in the likeness of sin—ful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, in order that the just requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

Here ‘the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus’ appears to equal ‘the gospel as brought through, expounded and applied by the Spirit’. Once cleared by the gospel, the new believer is enabled to fulfil the just demand (*dikaïoma*) of the law. That one walks in the Spirit and that one pleases God (cf. 8:8). In fact here, as in Galatians 5:22—23, those believing bring forth the fruit of the Spirit, which is the true fruit of the law, the law of Christ, for against such there is no law: *this is the law in action*. That is, Christ being the climax of the covenant enables the believer—or better still the believing church—to live in holiness.

There are other ways of looking at Christ as the climax (fullness, *telos*) of the covenant, and none better than in the Epistle to the Hebrews. Here there is a somewhat different ethos to what we **find** in Pauline theology. Here Christ is incarnated to be the High Priest.¹ He is trained to be the High Priest; he is ordained as such; he is given a body in order to be both the Victim and the Offeror; he fulfils his High Priesthood and gives us access to the Father in the Holy of Holies, and ever remains to carry out the High Priestly task of interceding for us. Having then established the basis—or bases—on which Christ *is for* us and in us and *with* us, we may now proceed to see him as our holiness.

LIVING HOLINESS OF LIFE IN CHRIST

If we consider the absurd notion of taking Christ away completely, then there is nothing left for the Church, and indeed for the whole creation. To think of all things drained of Christ is to see but the shreds and tatters of a defunct creation. Evangelistically, we must keep proclaiming Christ to those outside of him or they will never come into reality. Pastorally, we must keep pointing to Christ in all his offices and actions. Nor must our preaching simply be of biblical facts, for facts may become only noetic knowledge and not the intimate knowledge of Christ which is a relationship in, and because of, and by, the facts.

We remind ourselves that when he cried ‘Holy Father’ in John 17:1 1, he was really affirming himself as ‘Holy Son’. In this context he sanctified himself for the task of the Cross, so that he might sanctify his brethren (John 17:19). In John 10:36 the Father—is said to have consecrated him and sent him into the world. We have seen in previous chapters that Christ is the Holy One, and therefore all in him are holy. We might say that in the living of life there is a new ontological pressure upon all the saints² to live holy lives.

It is, however, when we come to a verse like I Corinthians 6:11 that we realise we have been washed, sanctified and justified, and in that order, also. There is a near parallel to this in I Corinthians 1:30, ‘He [God] is the source of your life in Christ

¹ There are many indications in the Gospels of Christ as having High Priestly ministry, although they are not explicitly stated as being that. The subject is beyond the scope of this book.

² cf. I Corinthians 1:2, ‘to those sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints . . .’ shows that those in Christ have been consecrated and hence can be called ‘saints’.

Jesus, whom God made our wisdom, our righteousness and sanctification and redemption'. Here the emphasis is as in I Corinthians 1:2, 'those sanctified in Christ Jesus'. That is, we have been given the category of being sanctified-since all who come into Christ's body are sanctified-and also have Christ as our continuing sanctification. From such a state must spring the practical holiness of which we often speak. Only in this context can we understand a passage such as I Thessalonians 4:1-8. Of course, we have the promise of our holiness in Ephesians 1:4. This theme of 'holy and blameless' is repeated in Ephesians 5:27, and Colossians 1:22.

A passage which confirms us in sanctification is Hebrews 10: 10-14:

And by that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. And every priest stands daily at his service, offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. But when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God, then to wait until his enemies should be made a stool for his feet. For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are sanctified.

This passage does away with *seeking* to become holy. We *are* sanctified; we *are* holy. Yet the verses following this passage refer back to Jeremiah 31:31-34 where there is firstly forgiveness, and secondly the law of. God implanted in the heart for *doing*. It is almost a replay of Romans 8:1-4 and 10: 1-4.

In this chapter we have sought to show that there can be no talk of active holiness of life unless Christ not only sanctifies us in the sense of purifying us, and consecrates us to the service and worship of God within the Body of Christ, the Church; not only making us his Bride so that we love him and live in purity out of love, but that the intimacy of the living Christ possessing us, and we possessing him, is the vital life that inspires us by that love to walk in holy fashion. In our next two chapters 'The Holy Spirit and Our Holiness' and 'Living in Holiness', we will see the outworking of this abiding in Christ and his abiding in us.

CONCLUSION: THE ESTABLISHMENT OF OUR SANCTIFICATION IS THE FOUNDATION OF ACTIONAL HOLINESS

We have said little about the eschatology of holiness, for this will be filled out in our final chapter, 'The Glory of Holiness: The Holiness of Glory'. I John 3:1-3 is a passage which directs us to the dynamics of hope related to holiness:

See what love the Father has given us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are. The reason why the world does not know us is that it did not know him. Beloved, we are God's children now; it does not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. And every one who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure.

Here, however, we take up the pastoral significance of Christ being our holiness. Such a teaching takes away the strain of folk thinking they are not holy, believing they should achieve such holiness, but yet despairing of doing so. In Colossians 3:12, Paul addresses his readers as 'God's chosen ones, holy and beloved'. Holiness is a calling and a gift: having been called our sanctification is assured, as indeed our walk in holiness is likewise assured.

Our congregations can be mightily liberated and made confident in the gift of sanctification³ and the power of the Triune God to keep and

³ A young woman once said to me, 'I have known I am a Christian but unclean. Now I know that I am pure and that I can live in holiness'.

enlarge the Church in holiness. If we neglect this kind of teaching, then we neglect it to the peril of the congregation. We will have to substitute something like contractual legalism, or just move over into the hedonism that has invaded not only society today, but even our churches. The true worship will find substitutes in entertainment, in shallowness of thought and understanding, so that there will be little or no worshipping the Lord in the beauty of holiness.

CHAPTER 13

THE HOLY SPIRIT AND OUR HOLINESS

INTRODUCTION: THE PEOPLE OF GOD ARE HOLY

Time and again in our studies we have seen that there is a people of God who are also known as ‘the people of faith’ and ‘the children of love’. Exodus 19:5—6 reads:

Now therefore, if you will obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my own possession among all peoples; for **all the earth** is mine, and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.

The equivalent to this in the New Testament—1 Pet 2:9—10—makes the new *qahal*, the new *ecclesia*, to be parallel to Israel of the Exodus:

But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s own people, that you may declare the wonderful deeds of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light. Once you were no people but now you are God’s people; once you had not received mercy but now you have received mercy.

We have seen that God’s people are sacrosanct to Him, that is, they have been sanctified by Him. Hebrews 10: 10—14 makes it clear that the people of God have been sanctified:

And by that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. And every priest stands daily at his service, offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. But when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God, then to wait until his enemies should be made a stool for his feet. For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are sanctified.

As we will see, this work which has been effected through Christ in his death is a work so profound that an explanation of it, other than in the terms in which the writer of Hebrews describes it, will be inadequate. Even then, the Spirit of God—who is the Teacher—will be necessary for a true understanding. If, for example, we read in Ephesians ‘425—27:

Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, that he might present the church to himself in splendour, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish,

we might ask *how* Christ sanctifies his Bride, the Church, for—without the event of the Cross—it would be a mystery to us. Of course, it will always remain a mystery, but

it is the Spirit who reveals these mysteries, and then only to faith. The sanctification of the Church is through the Spirit working Christ's work in us.

THE WORK OF THE SPIRIT IN BRINGING THE PEOPLE OF GOD TO SANCTIFICATION

It cannot be doubted that, through Christ, believers are personally sanctified, yet we have seen that this work of giving the category of holiness to all who constitute the *ecclesia* is accomplished also by the Spirit. The primary Sanctifier is the Father, for this was Christ's prayer to the Father—'Sanctify them in the truth: thy word is truth'. That the Father is the Initiator is seen in 11 Thessalonians 2:13—14:

But we are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God chose you from the beginning to be saved, *through sanctification by the Spirit* and belief in the truth. To this he called you through our gospel, so that you may obtain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ [emphasis mine].

The work of the Three Persons is also seen in I Peter 1:1—2:

To the exiles of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, chosen and *destined by God the Father and sanctified by the Spirit for obedience to Jesus Christ* and for sprinkling with his blood (emphasis mine).

The order of salvation—the *ordo salutis*—is probably not in sequential steps, but all of it happens to a person in the one act and event. Yet, in John 16:7—11, Jesus says that when the Spirit of truth is come he will convince (convict, rebuke) the world of sin, righteousness and judgment. Jesus does not say the outcome of this conviction of the Spirit will in every case result in salvation, but we assume that in many cases it will. If this is the case, then many will come into repentance and faith and thus into salvation as the one act. That can be seen in Acts 10:34—48. The Gentiles at Caesarea heard Peter's preaching of the gospel and they believed, particularly at the point where he said, 'To him all the prophets bear witness that every one who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name' The point we are trying to make here is that the stages of repentance and faith result in justification and sanctification, and each of these elements of the *ordo salutis* becomes effective by the Holy Spirit. This is undoubtedly so in I Corinthians 6:9—11:

Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither the immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor sexual perverts, nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor robbers will inherit the kingdom of God. And such Were some of you. But *you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified* in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and *in the Spirit of our God* [emphasis mine].

We can see that washing, sanctification and justification were all by the Holy Spirit—whatever else as also done 'in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ'. If we go back to I Peter 1:2, we see that sanctification is done by the Spirit, prior to believing the effective work of *Christ*—'obedience to Jesus Christ and for sprinkling with his blood'. Again, in II Thessalonians 2:13 we saw that 'sanctification by the Spirit' preceded 'belief in the truth'. All of this we can cap with the happening at Caesarea where the Spirit came before—or as—the listeners received the forgiveness of sins. What I have written above may at first sight seem confused and bring confusion to the reader,

but if he or she were to go through the text quietly, I believe we all would come to this conclusion, ‘The Spirit of God does the first work in proclaiming the gospel and making it so clear to the hearer that that person comes into conviction of sin, righteousness and judgment, and then comes to repentance and faith whereby sins are forgiven, justification is effected and with it, no less, sanctification is also effected. It must also be concluded that the believer has received the gift of the Holy Spirit who, henceforth dwells in that believer.’

A Note on the Reality of the Things of Faith

We who believe in the things of faith we have just outlined, always run the hazard of grasping propositionally what has been set forth. There is certainly nothing wrong in asserting and believing biblical propositions, but these may begin and end within the intellect. The knowledge of them may be simply in the mind. The action of the Triune God in the *ordo salutis* is what matters. The Puritans often spoke of having a legal repentance, a legal faith—and so on. They meant that because a person might understand propositions—such as we have set forth—that person might conclude he was one who had gone through the actions of repentance, faith, receiving forgiveness, being justified, sanctified and adopted, when such might not have been the case. Such a person might not, in fact, be in union with God, or have received His gifts. We recognise at the same time, that some emotional state a person may have had need not necessarily mean this one had gone through the elements of the *ordo salutis*.¹ It is because a legal conversion is possible without the Holy Spirit, that the inner work of the Spirit is essential to true conversion. The first four verses of Romans chapter 8 need to be read and considered in order to know whether one has been truly converted. It is because Man’s inner condition is so terrible since the Fall, and because he is spiritually powerless even to desire salvation, let alone will to have it, that he is unable to effect his own salvation. The Holy Spirit not only has to reveal the sinfulness of Man, and the nature of the work of Christ to effect his redemption, but also Man needs the Spirit of God to bring this profound revelation and so convict of sin, righteousness and judgment. Only the Spirit of God can so work that a human being is brought to full salvation. Propositional biblical knowledge might be deceptive, the person receiving it thinking erroneously that the magnificent work of salvation has necessarily been effected in him.

THE WORK OF THE SPIRIT IN BELIEVERS, ASSISTING THE PEOPLE OF GOD IN LIVING THE LIFE OF PRACTICAL HOLINESS

Living a life of holiness is certainly demanded of believers in the New Testament. Without the reality of having been sanctified through the gospel—that is, by the initiative of the Father, the word of Christ and the work of the Spirit—practical holiness cannot be effected. We have already seen that Christ is our holiness, and the Holy Father is the Prime Mover in our Christian living, and that living requires practical holiness.

The Christian life A an affair of the heart and this without dismissing the value and place of the mind. In Israel, God had demanded that His people love Him with all their

¹ Some hearers have an *emotional* satisfaction in grasping a proposition and may mistake this for an *experience* of the truth expounded. Others may be moved by *emotionalism* to concur with the proposition and be deceived into thinking the will has necessarily been moved. Whilst it is nobody’s business to judge such situations, it must be kept in mind that spiritual conversion is an act of great dimensions wrought by the Word and the Spirit and entails more than mental assent.

heart, soul, mind and strength. The Psalms are filled with what we call emotions but could better call ‘affections’, as did Jonathan Edwards in his famous book *A Treatise Concerning Religious Affections*.² He said that religion which was not affectional was not true religion. He has been called ‘a theologian of the heart’. When, then, we come to living out the Christian life, we must see it as a matter of the heart, without prejudice to the mind which, when truly active, is of one piece with the heart.

An introduction to the way in which we should live a holy life derives from the fact that a holy life is one consecrated to God, and in particular to His worship. A holy person is one who worships God. The words ‘worship’ and ‘service’ are closely related. In fact, to worship truly is to serve, and one who serves is truly worshipping. Ezekiel chapter 36 speaks of Israel having de—sanctified—that is, profaned—God by their idolatry and disobedience. Israel was impure at heart, and God judged the nation and sent it into exile. In this 36th chapter He speaks of bringing them back to the land and so sanctifying Himself in the eyes of the other nations. In verses 24—28 we see the work of the Holy Spirit in renewing or regenerating the people of Israel:

For I will take you from the nations, and gather you from all the countries, and bring you into your own land. I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and you shall be clean from all your uncleannesses, and from all your idols I will cleanse you. A new heart I will give you, and a new spirit I will put within you; and I will take out of your flesh the heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to observe my ordinances. You shall dwell in the land which I gave to your fathers; and you shall be my people, and I will be your God.

God’s way of regeneration is to take out the stony heart and replace it with a soft heart—a heart of flesh. At the same time, He will put His Spirit into the heart. The outcome of this act will be that the people will ‘walk in my statutes and be careful to observe my ordinances’; that is, they will obey His law. This prophesied happening is often equated with Jeremiah 31:31—34, and we compared these two references in our chapter on ‘The Holy Covenant’. To have the Spirit in the heart and to obey God’s law—in Ezekiel 36—is the same as having God put His law in the heart, in the ‘inward parts’, so that obedience to it will be spontaneous. This, then, is the Holy Spirit working practical holiness—through obedience.

A parallel to these Ezekiel and Jeremiah references can be found in Romans chapter 8. Indeed—and in passing—let us say that the whole of chapter 8 should be understood in the light of the working of the Spirit. The first four verses show us that there is a ‘law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus’. This law appears to effect two works; (i) it **frees the** believer from the law of sin and death by being the gospel as the Spirit discloses; it to the believing heart, and (ii) it enables the believer to fulfil ‘the righteous demand [*dikaioma*] of the law’. This righteous demand is simply doing the works of the law. The context shows it is not doing the law in order to be justified, since Paul has claimed in the first couple of verses that the gospel has done this. No: now there is a joy in doing the law. In 7:22, Paul has said, ‘I delight in the law of God, in my inmost self’. In 7:6 he has said that ‘we serve not under the old written code but in the new life of the Spirit’.³ Romans chapter 8 is virtually a commentary on 7:6b.

² Jonathan Edwards, ‘A Treatise Concerning Religious Affections, in Three Parts’, in *The Works of Jonathan Edwards, vol 1*, Banner of Truth, Edinburgh, 1976, pp. 234—343.

³ We cannot here enter into the whole discussion in Romans 7 regarding the power of sin which seems to get power when a believer seeks to keep the law. It may be suggested that it is why we seek to keep the law which may give sin its power. We do not have to keep the law in order to be justified. If, in any sense, we feel we must keep the law so that our justification may not be fractured, then the power of sin is able to wreak havoc. In Romans 8:1—4 the ‘law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus’ is a greater law—principle—than the law of sin and death. The latter has been overcome by the law of the Spirit, and by his personal presence in the believer.

Paul goes on in this chapter 8 to show that those who obey the law in the Spirit please God. He then points out that if a person does not have the Spirit, he does not belong to Christ: all who are Christ's people have the Spirit. Because the Spirit is the Spirit of life, and will bring resurrection to the believer's body, so then, that person is not in subservience to the flesh. The key to Spirit—mortification of the flesh is this, 'if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you shall live'. This, surely, is practical holiness.

In the same context such obedience is counted as filial obedience. Those who practice filial obedience are the sons of God. The Spirit has brought to bear the relational dynamics of being children of God. This, too, is the way of practical holiness. We might add that in Romans 8:17—25 the Spirit acts as the Spirit of hope, and so encourages believers to anticipate regarding their ultimate goal when they shall enjoy 'the liberty of the glory of the children of God'. Meanwhile, the Spirit intercedes *within* them for them.

What we have discussed in regard to Romans 8, we find in essence in Galatians 5, especially from verse 16 to verse 26. Paul warns against keeping the law as an exercise to justify oneself. He enjoins walking in the Spirit. To walk in 'law—way' is not to fulfil law, but to do the works of the flesh. To walk in the Spirit—to be led by the Spirit—is to bring forth the fruit of the Spirit—'love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self—control'. These fruits are surely the very life of holiness, and they are brought forth by the Spirit who, residing in the believer, causes him to be borne, both personally in each life, and corporately, by the whole Church.

EVERYTHING IS BY THE SPIRIT

There is nothing in the Christian life and in the Body of Christ—the Church—which does not derive from or is not motivated by the Holy Spirit. Love, joy, peace, faith hope and love are the constant virtues in which life goes on. Love, fellowship and unity are linked as one, and all relationships exist within them. Proclamation of the gospel, the offer of eternal life, sharing oneself with those who come to Christ, and sharing also one's goods and possessions are all works which come without ostentation or self—display through the Spirit. The gifts and the ministries are distributed by the Spirit. All of the things which we have here nominated are really in the life of practical holiness. As we shall see in our next chapter, 'Living in Holiness', the presence of the Holy Spirit means we have the power by which to put evil things to death, and give play to the good things which make for practical holiness.

Finally, we see that being the Spirit of hope, this loving Comforter, keeps fresh before us the promises for the end—time, the time of the climax of all things. Such a holy new heaven and new earth, such a holy Temple, a holy Bride, a holy Husband and a holy Marriage await us. Surely we have tasted of these things, and surely our eyes see by faith the great holy City—the holy Paradise of God—and such hope strengthens us when our spirits might be tempted to droop. We freshen up again, and walk gladly in the ways the Spirit has taught us. He, himself, is beloved of us, and all his ways are love, joy and peace; ways which help us in the battle when it waxes fierce, ways which help when darkness at times gathers around us, and it seems all that is good is being blotted out. No: the Spirit is with us and he will 'guide us safe home'.

CHAPTER 14

LIVING IN HOLINESS

INTRODUCTION: THE PLACE OF PRACTICAL HOLINESS

There are many urgings and exhortations to holiness of life in the Scriptures. Hebrews 12:14 is one of these, and a solemn one, too. ‘Strive for peace with all men, and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord.’ These command—promises begin in the Old Testament, and *are always in the context of covenant*. Thus, the ‘be holy for I am holy’, comes to covenant Israel, and it must be noted that in both Leviticus 11:43–45 and Deuteronomy 14:1—2, holiness is linked with ritual action and the deliverance of Israel from Egypt and idolatry. In I Peter 1: 13—17, God’s people are to be holy for God is holy, and this holiness is linked with their deliverance from their former way of life. As we have suggested above, the command is a promise, the promise a command. Holiness is the way of life of those who are delivered from unholiness.

If we revert to the teaching of Hebrews 12:14 (as above), then we see the eschatological drive and dynamic for holiness. All things will be sanctified (see ch. 7, ‘Holy Cross: Holy People’), and we must now walk in the way of holiness. The Old Testament quotes (above) have to do with *an already sanctified people* (cf. Exod. 19:5—6; Deut. 7:6). Thus in both the Old Testament and the New Testament, this principle obtains, namely, ‘No one can live a holy life unless he or she first be sanctified by God, that is, included in God’s people for worship of Him and service to Him. Then one may do no other than live in holiness which is consonant with God’s gracious act of sanctification.’

LIVING IN HOLINESS

In the New Testament—as in the Old—there are given injunctions, exhortations, encouragements and practical precepts for holy living. These are unmistakable.¹ Within the text of this chapter, I am suggesting that my book *The Splendour of Holiness*² could be useful, especially in chapters 22 to 31.³ We could have taken those chapters for the whole of this section, and then have gone away knowing the practicality of holiness. Even so we would have missed ‘the big picture’. Only when we have that does the life of holiness make sense to us.

¹ See David Peterson’s book *Possessed by God: A New Testament Theology of Sanctification and Holiness* (Apollos, Leicester, 1995), especially chapter 4 ‘Pursuing Holiness’.

² Geoffrey Bingham, *The Splendour of Holiness*, NCPI, Blackwood, 1985.

³ An extremely condensed but useful booklet is my *The Christian Doctrine of Holiness* (NCPI, Blackwood, 1985) I would even more suggest three Monday Pastors’ Group Studies given in April, May and June in 1993, titled ‘The Law, Justification and Sanctification—1, 11 and 111’.

I am dividing this treatment into three sections: (i) The defeat of all the enemies; (ii) justification and sanctification in Romans and Galatians; and (iii) other New Testament passages on holy living. Of necessity, these must be presented briefly, but they are treated more fully in *The Splendour of Holiness*.

The Defeat of All the Enemies: Power for Holiness

Holiness of life is contested by a number of enemies, some evil, some good. Evil enemies are sin, the flesh, Satan, the world, idols, death. Good enemies are conscience, the law, the wrath of God. These are 'good' because they are seeking to restrain us from sin, to urge us on to the grace of the gospel, and then to aid us in holy living. All our lives these enemies will oppose us when we are in sin. In particular, the evil enemies will attempt to keep us from holy living. Pastorally, we should understand this and seek to appraise folk of the power of evil. We should have a deep and intimate knowledge of what these enemies do. The good enemies will be on our side when we have been justified and sanctified by faith.

The evil enemies, indeed all the enemies, operate by one dynamic factor, namely human guilt. No guilt, then no power to these enemies. We cannot here enter into what we might call the nature of guilt, except to say that (i) we have guilt for having fallen short of the glory of God and so for being inferior to what God had made us to be, and (ii) we have the actual guilt for each and all our objective sins. Guilt itself is dynamic, worrying us perpetually. In Romans 1: 18-32 we see the nature and effects of guilt, namely they constitute the wrath of God upon us (c.f. vv. 24, 26, 28). In the Cross the guilt of Man was wholly born, so that the power of sin has been broken. The principle we must remember is that the power of sin lies in its guilt. Because we are not under law but under grace, the guilt has been removed and so the power of sin has been broken (Rom. 6:14). The power of sin lies in (the guilt of) the law, but has lost its power through the Cross and the Resurrection (cf. I Cor. 15:56-57). Satan and his world system have power by reason of guilt, as also does death and the wrath of God. The flesh is active because of guilt. When guilt was removed in the death-suffering of Christ who was the propitiation for all sins, then all the enemies lost their power. 'No condemnation' spells doom to all enemies.

All this means that whilst we reckon on the completed work of Christ, sin has lost its power, along with all enemies. The conscience now becomes our friend, the law is beautiful and desirable, and God's wrath no longer oppresses us. We may now live holy lives, although, without doubt, accusation will still be hurled against us by the evil enemies and even by our inner flesh. They will try afresh to utilise the former good enemies—the law and conscience—seeking to manipulate them against us. Faith, however, refuses such manipulation.

Justification and Sanctification in Romans and Galatians

These two Epistles⁴ are partly a re-run and vindication of our proposition in the section above, that is, of Christ's death defeating the powers of evil. In both Romans and Galatians the law appears first as an enemy, bringing a person into condemnation and refusing him what we might call 'law righteousness', that is, justification and a new freedom to obey the law (cf. Rom. 7:6). Christ's death, burial and resurrection, into which the new believer has been baptised, show that in Christ sin has lost its

⁴ For Romans in particular, see *The Splendour of Holiness*, pp. 120-143

power, for example, Romans 6:7, 'he who has died is *justified* from sin'. 'Justified' means freedom from guilt. It also means that the law is no longer the enemy of the new believer, for death has lost the *sting* of sin, and the former *power* of sin which was by reason of the law. No one is free from the temptation to sin, for temptations will continue to come, but because of the death-burial-resurrection experience with Christ, the believer is free to reject that temptation since he is not guilty before the law. In this sense sin's power has been cancelled by the death of Christ.⁵ Romans 6:12-23 calls on all believers to realise that they are in the position now to make a clear decision to use all faculties ('members') for God-seeing they are released from sin's control. This surrender or yielding of all faculties to righteousness has its outcome in holiness of living:

For just as you once yielded your members to impurity and to greater and greater iniquity, so now yield your members to righteousness for sanctification. When you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness ... But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the return you get is sanctification and its end, eternal life' (Rom. 6:19, 20, 22).

It is a conscious decision made by the will which is now under the power of Christ and the Spirit. The sanctification by which God includes believers in the Church gives them the category of being holy, but the will now liberated by the death-burial-resurrection union with Christ brings the saint into practical holiness of life.

Likewise, in Galatians 2:19-21 the believer has been killed to and by the law, in the Cross; has been identified with Christ, Christ being in him and he in Christ, and so the holy life is lived in dependence upon the living Christ and his faithfulness.⁶

Both Romans and Galatians go on to deal with the matter of the law. Romans 7:6 shows us that we live 'in the new life of the Spirit' and (v. 12) that the law is 'holy, spiritual and good', while 8:1-4 shows us the transformation brought about by having 'no condemnation'. The believer now fulfils the righteous demand of the law and lives in the Spirit, and this is practical holiness. Galatians 5:19-26 contrasts the legalistic living under law which brings the works of the flesh, and the living by the Spirit which brings forth the fruit of the Spirit which is the true and holy action of law.

This section is extremely compressed, but it needs to be unpacked and fully known in order to encourage holy living.

Other New Testament Passages on Holy Living

1 Peter 2:4-10

This passage not only shows that we are sanctified (cf. 1:2, 13ff.), but also that we are part of God's holy temple, offering up spiritual sacrifices, and are the new holy people of God. Holiness is never inert and passive, but dynamic and active. Not only does holy worship proceed, but also holy action, that is, the proclamation of God's works-'the wonderful deeds of him who called us out of darkness into his marvellous light'. Practical holiness is thus alive and active.

⁵ Of course, we are thinking of Romans 6:1-10 and Galatians 2:19-21 (cf. Col. 3:1-3). The believers are those who were in union with Christ in his death, burial and resurrection, and so the holy life is lived in dependence upon the living Christ and his faithfulness.

⁶ The best translation of Galatians 2:20, 'I live by faith in the Son of God', is, 'I live by the faith of the Son of God', that is, Christ's faith for me. We see this as part of his continuing vicarious humanity.

I Thessalonians 4:1-8 This passage has to do with a number of things concerning holiness. The first is that it had been taught to the Thessalonians by the apostolic band that their sanctification was with a view to pleasing God. It was by God's will they had been sanctified and obviously God wished them then to live in holiness. Such holiness pertains to proper living in regard to sexuality. Unholiness is wrong sexuality. God had not called the Church in uncleanness but in holiness and for holiness.

Ephesians 4:17-31; Colossians 3:1-25

This first (Ephesian) passage is full enough in itself, but then is amplified in Colossians 3:1-25. Since much is common in both, we will draw out principles from them for living in holiness. The key given in both passages is the renewing of the mind as the new humanity-Christ-is put on. This brings about the renewing of a person as the image of God, 'created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness' (Eph. 4:23-24), 'being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator' (Col. 3:10). Thus the renewed person is as one with the renewed community so that all, together will be set for practical holiness of living.

In the Ephesians passage Paul is contrasting the way the Ephesians had lived as Gentiles, and the way they now live 'as the truth is in Jesus'. From verses 25-32 he speaks of what was, and what is now required. These are very practical injunctions. They need no comment.

Colossians chapter 3 is somewhat different.⁷ A few rhyming nouns may help us to remember the exhortation of this chapter. The first is *concentration*, that is, 'seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth.' This *concentration* is a continuing action (cf. 11 Cor. 4:18; Heb. 12:1-2). It is always looking away from oneself to the Lord who is all, and by whom we live and move in the Christian life, the life of the Church. The second word is *realization*, because we have to realise that we have died with Christ (to sin) and are risen with him, so that we are no longer slaves to sin. This is linked with the verb 'to reckon' or 'consider', as we see it in Romans 6: 11. Knowing what is, we walk in conformity with it. The third word is *habitation*, because '[our lives are] hid with Christ in God'. There is a great doctrine in the New Testament of us living in the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. We dwell in love: love dwells in us. It is much the same as having fellowship with the Father and His Son Jesus Christ, through the Spirit of love. By way of seeming contrast comes *mortification*. This covers the acts we have to do to 'put to death' those things which are not of the new life. Romans 8:13 is a great help here, 'if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live'. For every 'killing' there is a release of resurrection life. The point is @we can mortify: this is strength to our intentions. What Christ has mortified on the Cross, we can now mortify in our lives since such things are foreign to the new humanity. Mortification is also 'putting off' that belongs to death, but *vivification* is putting on all that belongs to the new life. The rule is that there is no mortification without vivification. In fact this 'bringing to life' or 'living anew' takes up most of the remaining part of this third chapter of Colossians, for it not only speaks of *living in unity by love*, but it also points to the domestic way of life in familial and servant and master relationships, and this is the application of that harmonising love.

Such, then, are the practical ways of holiness. It is not that we need a handbook

⁷ For this chapter see *The Splendour of Holiness*, pp. 162-170.

and then personal power to follow its injunctions. It is that we are a sanctified people, that the Holy Spirit indwells us with his love, and that we are ever *participating* in the life of Christ in which we live and who lives in the Father.

CONCLUSION: TRUE MOTIVATION FOR HOLY LIVING

What we have to keep telling ourselves is that all these things are not new laws requiring legal submission and fulfilment, but rather are the wonderful way of life that is lived in grace, by the indwelling of the Persons of the Godhead, and the indwelling by us of those persons. Holiness has, so to speak, its own inner reward and inspiration. We are persons of one aim and will-that of God as given to us. So *mortification* is not asceticism, *concentration* (cf. Heb. 12:2) is not an intense operation but a joyful beholding, likewise *habitation* is the place of our dwelling, our home, our true domesticity of life. Grace abounds in us who are weak, frail and sinful people. Love continually arms us, even though the world around us is often hurtful. We have an enormous power for ministry under the Chief Shepherd, 'that Great Shepherd of the sheep', that wonderful 'Bishop of our souls'. Christ, then, is surely our holiness, and in him we literally live and move and have our being.