

## **The Cowman Lectures, Seoul Theological Seminary**

### **Lecture One:**

#### **A Time-Line Narrative of How the Idea of Pentecostal Sanctification**

#### **Developed in John Wesley and John Fletcher<sup>1</sup>**

Laurence W. Wood, Ph.D  
 Frank Paul Morris Professor of Systematic Theology/Wesley Studies  
 Asbury Theological Seminary  
 Wilmore, KY 40390

“That we ‘must be baptized with the Holy Ghost,’ implies this and no more, that we cannot be ‘renewed in righteousness and true holiness’ any otherwise than by being over-shadowed, quickened, and animated by that blessed Spirit.”<sup>2</sup>  
 --John Wesley

John Wesley, Charles Wesley, and John Fletcher were the three central leaders of Methodism. When John Wesley was fifty eight years of age and John Fletcher was thirty two years of age, he asked Fletcher to take over the leadership of Methodism.<sup>3</sup> On three separate occasions, John Wesley pleaded with Fletcher to be his successor, and Charles Wesley also urged Fletcher to take over the leadership of the Methodists.<sup>4</sup> John Wesley’s preachers also pressed John Wesley to urge Fletcher to take on the leadership of the Methodists.<sup>5</sup> Fletcher declined all such offers because he did not consider himself worthy of this honor and because he felt the Lord wanted him to remain as the vicar of the Church of England at Madeley, Shropshire.

John Wesley listed Fletcher in the conference minutes after he died as “a pattern of all holiness, scarce to be paralleled in a century.” Methodist historian, J. F. Hurst, said that Fletcher *Checks to Antinomianism* “constitute the greatest prose contribution to the literature of the Methodist awakening as do Charles Wesley's hymns to its poetry.”<sup>6</sup> William Larrabee in 1851 explained that each one of this “great triumvirate of Arminian Methodism was peculiarly adapted to the work which Providence assigned him to do—John Wesley to travel and superintend the societies, Charles Wesley to make the hymns, and John Fletcher to perfect the doctrines. Each did well his part. Each deserves, perhaps equally, a ‘place in the memory’ of the great Methodist family.”<sup>7</sup>

## Pentecostal Sanctification Defined<sup>8</sup>

John Wesley and John Fletcher explained the idea of Christian perfection as the purpose of God's saving history which culminated in the pouring out of the Holy Spirit of Christ on the day of Pentecost. Charles Wesley said to John Fletcher: "Christian perfection is nothing but the full kingdom in the Holy Ghost."<sup>9</sup> Here is a brief biblical explanation for this view of Pentecostal sanctification. Fifteen years after Abraham was accounted righteous for his faith in God (Gal. 3:6), the Lord commanded him to be "perfect or "blameless in heart" (Genesis 17:1); and the rite of circumcision was performed exactly on that "self-same day" as this command to be perfect in heart was given to Abraham (Genesis 17:26) as a symbol of this blamelessness, or perfection of heart.

The Israelites were taught that the Land of Canaan was "the abode of God" (Ex. 15:17) and hence they were expected to be holy if they were going to live in God's land. Later, as the Israelites were about to occupy the land of Canaan, Moses warned them (even before they crossed the Jordan River into the Land of Canaan) that they would be driven into captivity again because they would fail to be blameless in heart before the Lord. Moses also prophesied that the day would come when they would be returned to their homeland and they would remain there forever because the Lord would circumcise their hearts, enabling them to love God with all their hearts, mind, and soul (Deut. 30:6). This same theme was later developed and proclaimed by the prophets that God would circumcise their hearts (Jer. 4:4), establishing them forever and securely in the land. This expectation of the coming kingdom is what Peter said occurred on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:16), referring to Joel's prophecy that the Israelites would be restored forever to Judah through the pouring out of the Spirit in order to make them "holy" (Joel 2:38; 3:17, 20).

This expectation that the kingdom would be forever established in Israel through the circumcision of their hearts by the Spirit is why both John and Charles Wesley often spoke of Canaan Land as a symbol of perfect love. This is why they spoke of Christian perfection in terms of the "kingdom within" and the "kingdom of righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." The true kingdom transcended a literal place like Canaan Land, and it was established in the hearts of individual believers who together make up the Church through the indwelling of the Spirit of the risen Christ. This is why Paul said a real Jew is circumcised inwardly (Rom. 2:29).

Peter also explained to the Jerusalem Council that when the Holy Spirit came upon them on the day of Pentecost that their hearts "were cleansed [circumcised] by faith" (Acts 15:8, 9). Paul also said the decisive meaning of Pentecost was that the "love of God was *poured out into hearts* [Pentecost language] by the Holy Spirit *who has been given to us* [Pentecost language]" (Roman 5:5). Circumcision of heart means being cleansed by the Holy Spirit

to enable one to love God perfectly with the arrival of the expected kingdom.<sup>10</sup> This is why Wesley defined Christian perfection as being “fully renewed in his image” and the “abiding witness of the Holy Spirit.”<sup>11</sup> This is why he identified Canaan Land with circumcision of heart (perfect love). This is why Wesley said God fixes his abode, not in Canaan, but in the heart of the believer: “He [God] ‘cometh unto’ them with His Son and Blessed Spirit; and fixing his abode in their souls, bringeth them into the ‘rest’ [of perfect love] which ‘remaineth for the people of God.’”<sup>12</sup>

We will now trace how this idea of Pentecostal sanctification was first developed in John Wesley and then further expanded by Fletcher.

### **A Time-Line Narrative of John Wesley’s Developing Interpretation of Pentecostal Sanctification**

The first clear idea of a believer being justified by faith and then subsequently being fully sanctified appeared in 1739 when John and Charles Wesley published a book of “Hymns and Sacred Poems.” One of the hymns was entitled, “JUSTIFIED, but not SANCTIFIED.”<sup>13</sup> In their preface to “a second volume of Hymns” (1740), the Wesley brothers denied that “full salvation is *at once* given to true believers” because “forgiveness of sins” (justifying faith) comes first, followed later in time by “the abiding witness of the Spirit, and a new, clean heart” (full sanctifying grace)<sup>14</sup>

The following narrative will show that John Wesley distinguished between the justifying faith of the disciples during the earthly life of Jesus *before* Pentecost and the sanctifying descent of the Holy Spirit upon the disciples *after* Pentecost. This distinction is how the idea of “a second blessing” was first developed by John Wesley.

John Wesley wrote in his journal for February 1, 1738 (on the day of his return to England from Georgia) he had “*a sort of faith*” equivalent to the faith of the disciples of the earthly Jesus who “had not then ‘the faith that overcometh the world’.” He then described his quest for Christian perfection when he further explained: “The faith I want is, ‘a sure trust and confidence in God,... I want that faith which none can have without knowing that he hath it ... For whosoever hath it is ‘freed from sin’; ‘the whole body of sin is destroyed’ in him. He is freed from fear ... And he is freed from doubt, ‘having the love of God shed abroad in his heart through the Holy Ghost which is given unto him’.”<sup>15</sup> Here John Wesley distinguishes between “the faith of the disciples of the earthly Jesus” and the full assurance of faith that frees one from all sin “through the Holy Ghost which is given unto him” (Pentecost).

Another hint of how John Wesley was moving in this direction of a temporal distinction between justifying faith and full sanctifying grace is seen in the first standard sermons, “Salvation by Faith” (June 11, 1738). This sermon was

preached just two weeks before his Aldersgate conversion. He distinguished between salvation by faith that frees believers “from all their sins: from original and actual,” on the one hand, from the faith “which the Apostles themselves had while Christ was yet upon earth,” on the other hand. John Fletcher was later to cite this sermon as a basis for his idea of Pentecostal sanctification.<sup>16</sup>

Just a few days before his Aldersgate experience on May 19, 1738, John Wesley listened to a sermon on Pentecost by John Heylyn who, Wesley said, did “preach a truly Christian sermon on ‘They were all filled with the Holy Ghost’—and so, said he, may *all you* be.”<sup>17</sup> Heylyn was the first rector of St. Mary-le-Strand (1724–59) and became prebendary (honorary canon) of Westminster Abbey (1743–59). Wesley also noted in his diary that he assisted Heylyn in administering Holy Communion following the sermon. John Wesley had already used Heylyn’s devotional writings extensively while he was in Georgia, and he later included them in his recommendations to his preachers. He was also later to use Heylyn’s *Theological Lectures* (1749) as a source of his *Explanatory Notes upon the New Testament* (1755).<sup>18</sup>

This Pentecost sermon is contained in Heylyn’s *Theological Lectures* and has had significant influence in the Methodist interpretation of sanctification. It deserves special attention here in this time-line narrative because John Wesley heard it just a few days prior to his Aldersgate experience. This sermon implicitly explained the *inner meaning* of the Anglican rite of confirmation (the laying on of hands to bestow the Holy Spirit). Most in the Wesleyan tradition have heard little about this rite, but it was an ordinance regularly practiced in the Church of England, indeed going back to the earliest days of primitive Christianity. There were two initiation rituals for Anglican church membership. First, *water baptism* was the first rite for becoming a member of the Church of England. It represented Easter and signified the forgiveness of sins through Jesus’ resurrection from the dead. The second rite required for full church membership was called “confirmation” (baptism with the Spirit). This ritual represented (Pentecost), signifying the bestowal of the sanctifying Holy Spirit through the lay on of hands, usually for older children who had been catechized and who had been baptized as infants. Fletcher called attention to the parallel between John Wesley’s two-stages of justifying and sanctifying faith and the Anglican rites of water baptism and confirmation.<sup>19</sup> Both the Wesleyan tradition and the Church of England relied upon the same passages in the book of Acts (2; 8:14-17; 19:1-3) to show that two distinct stages of salvation are required for becoming a complete Christian, the difference being that Fletcher interpreted those passages evangelically and personally instead of a ritual.

Interestingly enough, Heylyn did not mention confirmation. Instead, he showed what Pentecost meant personally. He noted that “to enlighten, to purify, and to warm, are the properties of fire. Now if we transfer these to the spiritual world, the light of the soul is truth, the purity of the soul is holiness, the warmth or heat of the soul is an active, vigorous ardour to surmount obstacles.”<sup>20</sup> He showed that the Holy Spirit is called “holy” because He is “the hallowing, i. e. sanctifying Spirit.”<sup>21</sup> He further explained: “When it is said that the Holy Ghost sanctifies Christians, the meaning is, that He infuses this generous motive, extinguishing the narrow principles of covetousness, pride, and sensuality, and exalting our nature to the noble disinterested purpose of glorifying our Maker.”<sup>22</sup>

Heylyn then said that a Christian believer is sanctified through the “baptism with the Spirit,” “purging away . . . carnal desires,” producing “perfect Purity.” The following citation from Heylyn’s Pentecost sermon is also quoted word-for-word by John Fletcher<sup>23</sup> and Thomas Coke<sup>24</sup> to explain the meaning of Pentecostal sanctification:

To wash, cleanse, baptize, and sanctify, are commonly synonymous in Scripture hence the Phrase of being baptized with the Holy Ghost, which is elsewhere called being baptized with Fire, to signify the universal and intimate Purification of the inmost Springs of Action thereby. With this View the Prophet Malachi [Mal iii.3] compares the Spirit to Refiner of Gold or Silver destroying the Dross, and separating all heterogeneous Particles from those Metals by force of Fire, till they are reduced to perfect Purity. Thus the Spirit sanctifies the Soul by abolishing all sordid Inclinations, by purging away the multiplicity of carnal Desires, and reducing all the Powers of the Mind to one simple constant Pursuit, viz. that of God's Glory. This renders the Soul holy, i. e. pure, all of kind, concenter'd in the End of its Creation, even the Glory of its Maker.<sup>25</sup>

If there is any doubt that John Wesley was right when he said the Methodist doctrine of holiness was “the religion of the Church of England,”<sup>26</sup> the above definition of Pentecostal sanctification ought to be convincing. Nothing that ever has been written by John Wesley or John Fletcher more clearly defined it. Heylyn showed how the sanctifying baptism of the Spirit transformed the disciples after Pentecost. This description is similar to the way that John Wesley would later explain the weakness of the disciples prior to Pentecost as being “a plain proof that the sanctifying ‘Spirit was not’ then ‘given,’ because ‘Jesus was not glorified.’”<sup>27</sup>

Heylyn said “to show how the Apostles were thus sanctified” would require him “to relate their history, which is but one continued narrative of their holiness. They were purified from all corrupt principles of action . . . . They rejoiced that they were accounted worthy to die . . . . Such was the holiness of the Apostles, was the purity of their hearts, the unity of their desires all meeting in one point, the glory of their Maker.”<sup>28</sup>

John Wesley recorded in his diary that at the end of Heylyn’s sermon he encouraged believers today to be filled with the Holy Spirit. An examination of this sermon shows that this call to receive the sanctifying baptism with the Spirit could not be more direct. He showed that Pentecost was not a single past event that marked a new stage in the history of revelation, but it marked the beginning of the very possibility of a personal Pentecost that all subsequent

believers were to expect. Here is what Heylyn's published sermon on Pentecost said: "The same Holy Spirit, which then descended upon the Apostles, does still descend upon all the living members of Christ, according to his gracious Promise."<sup>29</sup> He then offered these instructions on how to be filled with the Spirit:

It remains only that I add a word or two concerning the disposition by which we must prepare our hearts to receive him: and this, as our Lord teaches us, is earnest and persevering prayer. We have his direction, *Luke xi. Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.— If a Son shall ask Bread of any of you that is Father, will he give him Stone? how much more shall your heavenly Father give his holy Spirit to them that ask him?* The terms you see are very easy, are highly reasonable: if we do not perform them we shall be without excuse. But if by humble, fervent, incessant prayer we seek from our heavenly Father the Gift of his Spirit, we shall infallibly receive it, we shall be enlightened, purified, and confirmed in all goodness, we shall advance from strength to strength, till we *become meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.*<sup>30</sup>

This remarkable sermon on Pentecost contains virtually everything that Wesley and Fletcher had explained about the connection between Pentecost and sanctification, including the idea that the baptism with the Spirit will sanctify and cleanse one from all impurity if one prays and will receive "the Gift of his Spirit." The main difference is that this Anglican idea of Pentecostal sanctification<sup>31</sup> was nuanced by John Wesley to occur suddenly in a moment of faith.

Five days later after hearing this sermon, Wesley experienced his "heart-warming" experience at Aldersgate on May 24, 1738. Being cleansed from all sin and freed from all doubt and fear was John Wesley's idea of Christian perfection. He initially thought he had attained this perfection at the Moravian Aldersgate society meeting, but he downsized his understanding later when he still suffered from fear and doubt, as Richard Heitzenrater has shown.<sup>32</sup> This continuing struggle is why Wesley visited Herrnhut on June 13, 1738, so that "those holy men ... would be a means, under God, of so stablishing my soul."<sup>33</sup> His visit to Herrnhut would become the basis for John Wesley synthesizing his Anglican idea of Pentecost with the German Moravian emphasis on the personal indwelling of the sanctifying Spirit.

So three weeks later at Herrnhut, John Wesley met a lay preacher by the name of Christian David. John Wesley heard him preach four times, and held extended conversations with him. John Wesley said Christian David discussed the exact issues that he was trying to resolve in his own mind about holiness.<sup>34</sup>

He heard Christian David explain about the varying degrees of assurance. It was consoling to Wesley to hear him say that those "weak in the faith" may still be believers with some measure of assurance, though not full assurance. John particularly liked Christian David's threefold distinction among (1) those in bondage, (2) those in an intermediate state of faith, and (3) those with the fullness of faith. John reported in his diary:

Thrice he described the state of those who are 'weak in faith', who are justified, but have not yet a new, clean heart; who have received forgiveness through the blood of Christ, but have not received the indwelling of the

Holy Ghost. This state he explained once ... when he showed at large from various Scriptures that many are children of God and heirs of the promises long before their hearts are softened by holy *mourning*, before they are *comforted* by the abiding witness of the Spirit ... before they are 'pure in heart' from all self and sin...

A second time he pointed out this state from those words, 'Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God, Jesus Christ our Lord.' 'There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus.' Hence also he at large both proved the existence and showed the nature of that intermediate state which most experience between that bondage which is described in the seventh chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, and the full glorious liberty of the children of God described in the eighth and in many other parts of Scripture.

This he yet again explained from the Scriptures which describe the state the apostles were in from our Lord's death (and indeed for some time before) till the descent of the Holy Ghost at the day of Pentecost. They were then 'clean,' as Christ himself had borne them witness, 'by the word which he had spoken unto them'. They then *had faith* ... Yet they were not properly *converted*; and they were not *delivered* from the spirit of fear; they had not *new hearts*; neither had they received 'the gift of the Holy Ghost'.<sup>35</sup>

In a private conversation with John Wesley, Christian David explained that he himself once struggled with feelings of assurance concerning his own salvation, but finally through increasing degrees of assurance he came to experience the full assurance of faith. John Wesley recorded Christian David's testimony about his struggle moving from fear to faith:

Neither saw I then that the 'being justified' is widely different from the having the 'full assurance of faith'. I remembered not that our Lord told his apostles before his death, "ye are clean"; whereas it was not till many days after it that they were fully assured, by the Holy Ghost then received, of their reconciliation to God through his blood.<sup>36</sup>

Christian David says this full assurance of faith comes through "the indwelling of the Spirit." He said the pre-Pentecost disciples of Jesus lacked this full assurance, although they were justified and forgiven before Pentecost. Because of the descent of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, one can, like the disciples, be cleansed from all sin.<sup>37</sup> The disciples' experience is thus cited as a pattern for all subsequent believers. What is noteworthy is the statement: "The state the apostles were in from our Lord's death (and indeed for some time before) till the descent of the Holy Ghost at the day of Pentecost" included a degree of faith. Christian David compared "being justified" with the experience of the disciples of the earthly Jesus prior to Pentecost, whereas the coming of the Spirit at Pentecost meant they were "fully assured" and "cleansed from all sin."<sup>38</sup>

In 1741, after the bishop of London told John Wesley to preach to the world his idea of Christian perfection,<sup>39</sup> he wrote his sermon on "Christian Perfection." This sermon contained some of the same emphases found in John Heylyn's Pentecost sermon. It also contained some of the same ideas that he heard from Christian David. John Wesley said the possibility of being cleansed from all sin and made perfect in love became a possibility for the world only *after Jesus was glorified when the Holy Spirit came on the day of Pentecost*. Like John Heylyn, John

Wesley explained “the wide difference” between a pre-Pentecost and Pentecost experience in terms of sanctifying grace. He writes:

The Holy Ghost was not yet given in his sanctifying graces, as he was after Jesus was glorified . . . . And ‘when the day of Pentecost was fully come’, *then first it was* <sup>40</sup>[in the history of salvation], that they who ‘waited for the promise of the Father’ were made more than conquerors over sin [a common phrase for Christian perfection] by the Holy Ghost given unto them . . . . That this great salvation from sin [a common phrase for Christian perfection] was not given till Jesus was glorified, St. Peter also plainly testifies.<sup>41</sup>

Attached to this sermon is the hymn by Charles Wesley, “The Promise of Sanctification,” which highlights the sanctifying work of the Spirit. Here are two verses:

Thy sanctifying Spirit pour,  
To quench my thirst, and wash me clean:  
Now, Father, let the gracious shower  
Descend, and make me pure from sin.

Within me Thy good Spirit place,  
Spirit of health, and love, and power:  
Plant in me Thy victorious grace,  
And sin shall never enter more.<sup>42</sup>

This hymn shows that Charles Wesley, like John Fletcher, linked Pentecost primarily to sanctification.

In John Wesley’s conversation with Count Zinzendorf at Gray’s Inn Walks in London on Sept 3, 1741 over the question whether or not entire sanctification occurred after justifying faith, John used the same explanation that he had heard from Christian David that “the apostles were justified before Christ’s death” and “they were more holy after the day of Pentecost” because “they were ‘filled with the Holy Spirit’.” In debating with Zinzendorf over the meaning of entire sanctification, the point that Wesley made here was the disciples before Pentecost were “justified,” but after Pentecost they were made “more holy.” In contradiction to what he had learned from the Moravians at Herrnhut, Zinzendorf (their main leader) argued that “from the moment of justification he [any believer] . . . is also entirely sanctified.”<sup>43</sup> Later, John Wesley wrote a letter to the Moravians at Herrnhut reporting that they and their leader Zinzendorf held to different views on salvation and urging them to seek clarification of their own views.<sup>44</sup>

In 1742, John Wesley’s critics understood him to link “the indwelling of the Spirit” with full sanctification. In “The Principles of a Methodist” (1742), he answered one of his critics by noting: “I desire not a more consistent account of my principles than he has himself given in the following words” that a justified believer “hath not yet, in the full and proper sense, a *new* and *clean heart*, or the *indwelling* of the Spirit.” One who was sanctified was



described as one who had attained “the last and highest state of *perfection* in this life. For then are the faithful born again in the full and perfect sense. Then have they the indwelling of the Spirit.”<sup>45</sup>

In 1744, Wesley preached a sermon on being filled with the Holy Spirit (“Scriptural Christianity”) at St. Mary’s Church, Oxford, based on Acts 4:31. We noted above that Wesley had heard Heylyn preach on this text. Like Heylyn, Wesley said nothing about the rite of confirmation. Also like Heylyn, Wesley emphasized that the purpose of the Spirit-filled life was to produce the fruit of the Spirit, not supernatural gifts—“It was therefore for a more excellent purpose than this that ‘they were all filled with the Holy Ghost’. . . . It was to give them . . . ‘the mind which was in Christ’, those holy ‘fruits of the Spirit’ . . . to fill them with ‘love, joy, peace . . . ; to enable them to ‘crucify the flesh with its affections and lusts’, its passions and desires; and, in consequence of that *inward change*.”<sup>46</sup> He said to the Oxford professors: “Are you filled with the Holy Ghost?” with all those ‘fruits of the Spirit,’ . . . . Is your heart whole with God? full of love and zeal to set up His kingdom on earth?” John Fletcher later cited this sermon as a source of his idea of perfection.<sup>47</sup>

It was typical of Wesley to equate being “filled with the Spirit” and Christian perfection. For example in 1745, Wesley wrote: “It was hereby shown that you were filled with the Holy Ghost and delivered from all unholy tempers; when ye were all ‘unblameable and unrebukeable, without spot, or wrinkle, or any such things’, a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people, showing forth’ to all . . . by your active, patient, spotless love of God and man.”<sup>48</sup> One of his correspondents in 1757 mentioned Wesley’s equation: “O that you was filled with the Holy Ghost, with all inward and outward Holiness!” and then expressed her feelings that she wished this for herself.<sup>49</sup>

In his essay, “Farther Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion,” (1745) John Wesley defined “the baptism with the Spirit” as the “inward baptism” which had a deeper meaning than “water baptism.” He said: “Would to God that ye would . . . ‘repent and believe the gospel!’ Not repent alone, (for then you know only the baptism of John,) but believe, and be ‘baptized with the Holy Ghost and with fire’ . . . May the Lord constrain you to cry out, ‘How am I straitened till it be accomplished!’ even till the love of God inflame your heart, and consume all your vile affections!” Wesley then said the baptism with the Spirit means “that we are all to be taught of God, and to be ‘led by his Spirit;’ that the Spirit alone reveals all truth, and inspires all holiness; that by his inspiration men attain perfect love.”<sup>50</sup> In “An Extract of a Letter to the Reverend Mr. Law” in 1756, Wesley said: “That we ‘must be baptized with the Holy Ghost,’ implies this and no more, that we cannot be ‘renewed in righteousness and true holiness’ any

otherwise than by being over-shadowed, quickened, and animated by that blessed Spirit.”<sup>51</sup> Wesley always connected the language of “the baptism with the Holy Ghost,” not to justifying faith or forgiveness of sins, but to holiness, even as he had connected “the indwelling of the Spirit” with perfection, and not justification, in his “Principles of a Methodist” (1742).

Another instance where John and Charles Wesley made a distinction between justifying and sanctifying faith, linking Christian perfection to the meaning of Pentecost, occurs in John Wesley’s description of the holiness revival which had spontaneously developed first in London and then spread throughout the British Isles in the early 1760’s.<sup>52</sup> John Wesley wrote of this revival (October 28, 1762):

Many years ago my brother [Charles] frequently said, ‘Your day of Pentecost is not fully come. But I doubt not it will, and you will then hear of persons sanctified as frequently as you do now of persons justified.’ Any unprejudiced reader may observe that it was now fully come. And accordingly we did hear of persons sanctified in London and most other parts of England, and in Dublin and many other parts of Ireland, as frequently as of persons justified, although instances of the latter were far more frequent than they had been for twenty years before.<sup>53</sup>

#### **A Time-Line of Fletcher’s Expansion of John Wesley’s Idea of Pentecostal Sanctification**

A clear indication that Pentecost was about to become a dominant theme for Fletcher can be seen in a letter to Lady Huntingdon on February 10, 1769. This was only a few months after he had accepted her invitation to serve as the first president of Trevecca, a Methodist Calvinist College, which she had established. Fletcher said to her: “Power from on high is what I want still,” he confessed and was hoping for “an abiding day of Pentecost.” He admitted that his “unbelief runs ... so high that I doubt whether it will come before my dying day.”<sup>54</sup> This theme of “Power from on high” and “Pentecost” constitute a repeated theme in his correspondence with Lady Huntingdon, who had established Trevecca College as a training center for Methodist preachers and appointed Fletcher as its president.

One of Fletcher’s assignments to the students at Trevecca College was to “draw a parallel between John’s baptism & Christ’s, and prove the superiority of the latter over the former.” They were also “to draw up an Address to Jesus for the [bestowing of] the Holy Ghost urging the strongest reasons you can think of and feel to engage him to grant it you.”<sup>55</sup> Being filled and baptized with the Spirit was Fletcher’s primary preaching and teaching theme. In his biography of Fletcher, Bensons said that Fletcher insisted that “to be filled with the Holy Ghost was a better qualification for the ministry of the Gospel than any classical learning, (although that too be useful in its place).” He often turned “the school-room” into a chapel service. His addresses emotionally and spiritually moved the students profoundly. At the close of a typical service, he would say to his students: “As many of you as are athirst for this

fulness of the Spirit, follow me into my room.”<sup>56</sup> Benson reported that “many of us have instantly followed him, and there continued for two or three hours, wrestling, like Jacob, for the blessing, praying for one another.”<sup>57</sup>

During the early days of his presidency of Trevecca, Fletcher chose Joseph Benson to be the principal of the college. Benson was a classics scholar and one of the most promising young preachers among Wesley’s preachers. Fletcher and Benson were of the opinion that one way of convincing the Calvinist Methodists to accept Wesley’s doctrine of Christian perfection was to explain that it meant being “baptized with the Spirit,” a phrase commonly used by the Countess of Huntingdon to mean power to do ministry and to live the Christian life.<sup>58</sup>

Benson sent a letter (ca. December 15, 1770) to John Wesley explaining his and Fletcher’s views on this subject, hoping to get his evaluation and recommendations.<sup>59</sup> John Wesley responded in a letter of December 28, 1770, telling Benson that the phrase, “receiving the Spirit,” is not a proper term for full sanctification because all believers have received the Spirit.<sup>60</sup>

A fragment recently discovered from some of Wesley’s personal notes contained comments strongly disagreeing with linking the phrase, “baptized with the Holy Ghost,” with full sanctification, noting that the phrase was controversial and used by the Quakers in order to set aside water baptism.<sup>61</sup> There is no indication that these notes were ever sent to Benson, but it is clear that Benson and Fletcher knew that Wesley did not approve it.

In addition to the fact that Benson and Fletcher were unsuccessful in convincing Lady Huntingdon to accept the idea of Pentecostal sanctification, Benson was dismissed from his position and Fletcher resigned. Fletcher unsuccessfully requested Lady Huntingdon to allow him to address the students to explain to them that he was leaving the college because of the lack “of freedom in the College since the grand point to be maintain’d there (the baptism of the Holy Ghost and day of power) hath been given up either in whole or in part.”<sup>62</sup>

Benson and Fletcher were even more perplexed by John Wesley’s criticism. It seemed to them that John Wesley himself had changed his mind because of his own earlier affirmation of Pentecostal sanctification. Even Wesley’s *Plain Account of Christian Perfection* in 1766 restated his earlier sermon on “Christian Perfection” (1741) on Pentecostal sanctification.<sup>63</sup> He also said that “a larger measure of the Spirit” had been given on the day of Pentecost in order to make entire sanctification possible.<sup>64</sup> Now in 1770 Wesley seemed to have abandoned this idea.

Fletcher expressed his true disappointment with John Wesley’s negative assessment in a letter to Benson on March 22, 1771. This letter reported to Benson about his final visit to Trevecca, and Fletcher specifically explained how Benson’s essay on the baptism with the Holy Ghost that had been ridiculed. Then he concluded with these

words of advice to Benson : “Now with respect to M<sup>r</sup>Ws [Wesley’s] letter to you, I would have you ... preach the *seal of the Spirit the witness of the Spirit, or as he [John Wesley] properly calls it the Spirit of Adoption: None can have it (for a constancy) but the baptiz’d [with the Spirit];* that you know, whether he assents to it or not.” Fletcher requested Benson to keep this part of the letter confidential, except that he would allow Charles to read it.<sup>65</sup>

It is likely that he was willing for Charles to know about their dispute because of their intimate friendship and because Charles’ hymns affirmed a post-justification idea of Pentecostal sanctification. Charles was even a closer friend than John Wesley, and they frequently corresponded for over 28 years.<sup>66</sup> As an indication of their close friendship, Fletcher was asked to be the godfather of Charles Wesley’s daughter, Sally.<sup>67</sup>

Benson always respected Fletcher’s request of confidentiality about this dispute. When Benson quoted this lengthy letter in his biography of Fletcher, he deleted this controversial portion. It has only been discovered in recent years.<sup>68</sup>

John Wesley’s idea of “receiving the Spirit” was related to the witness of the Spirit (as seen below in Wesley’s criticism of Fletcher’s use of it), and “baptism with the Spirit” was controversial because the Quakers used it as a substitute language for water baptism (as noted above). Wesley’s objection to this language of receiving and being baptized with the Spirit was not a rejection of Pentecostal sanctification because John Wesley sent another letter to Benson three months later on March 16, 1771, affirming the equation between being “filled with the Spirit” and entire sanctification. Wesley wrote: “A *babe* in Christ (of whom I know thousands) has the witness *sometimes*. A young man (in St. John’s sense) has it continually. I believe one that is *perfected in love, or filled with the Holy Ghost*, may be properly termed a father. This we must press both babes and young men to aspire after ---- yea, to expect. And why not now?”<sup>69</sup>

We do not know why John Wesley changed his mind, after having embraced the idea of Pentecostal sanctification since 1738. The two people who should have known are Fletcher and Benson, but they were very surprised about it. What is clear is that John Wesley rejected both phrases, “Receiving the Spirit” and “baptism with the Spirit” as language for perfection. Perhaps it was like a temporary blip on the screen, but Fletcher noted that there was an inconsistency in Wesley’s theology in a conciliatory letter to the Countess in 1771 following his resignation from Trevecca. Fletcher wrote: “With regard to perfection itself, I believe that when Mr. Wesley is altogether consistent upon that subject, he means absolutely nothing by it but . . . the baptism of the Holy Ghost.”<sup>70</sup>

It is understandable that Fletcher would say that he was inconsistent because in previous instances where John Wesley used the language of the baptism with the Spirit it always entailed the meaning of holiness. For example, in 1745, in his essay, “Farther Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion,” John Wesley distinguished between “the baptism with the Spirit” and water baptism. He said: “Would to God that ye would . . . ‘repent and believe the gospel!’ Not repent alone, (for then you know only the baptism of John,) but believe, and be ‘baptized with the Holy Ghost and with fire.’” To be “baptized with the Holy Ghost and with fire” is to have “the love of God inflame your heart, and consume all your vile affections!” It means the Spirit “inspires all holiness; that by his inspiration men attain perfect love.”<sup>71</sup> In “An Extract of a Letter to the Reverend Mr. Law” in 1756, Wesley said: “That we ‘must be baptized with the Holy Ghost,’ implies this and no more, that we cannot be ‘renewed in righteousness and true holiness’ any otherwise than by being over-shadowed, quickened, and animated by that blessed Spirit.”<sup>72</sup> Wesley connected the language of “the baptism with the Holy Ghost,” not to justifying faith or forgiveness of sins, but to holiness, even as he had connected “the indwelling of the Spirit” with perfection, and not justification, in his “Principles of a Methodist” (1742).

Despite John Wesley’s censure, Fletcher continued to develop the link between the baptism with the Spirit and sanctification. Fletcher believed it would enhance the understanding of holiness. He said to Charles Wesley (August 14, 1774) that he believed “the dispensation of the Holy Ghost . . . to be the grand characteristic of Christian perfection” and “that by maintaining . . . the doctrine of Christian perfection, and connected with the . . . accomplishment of the promise of the Father, we can make the doctrine more intelligible to and defensible against all opposing friends.”<sup>73</sup>

The controversy at Trevecca marked the decisive moment when the baptism of the Spirit became a focus in Fletcher’s theology. We know about this development because of the large number of letters that Fletcher wrote to Charles Wesley. On Dec. 16, 1770, Fletcher sent a letter to Charles mentioning his exploratory ideas about the baptism with the Spirit. He noted that Mrs. Power who lived at Mr. Ireland’s home had asked him: “What is that evangelical faith of which you speak that you do not have, and that gift of the Holy Spirit which is the baptism of the true Christian?”<sup>74</sup> Because Mr. Ireland was in a hurry to leave, Fletcher said to Charles: “I do not have time to copy my ideas that I have tossed rapidly onto paper. She will communicate them. I pray you to say to me what you think of them.”<sup>75</sup>

Fletcher then suggested that Charles himself should have another Pentecost as a follow up to his original personal Pentecost on May 21, 1738:

But new baptisms are necessary from time to time. Compare Acts 2 and Acts 4. The more the magnet rubs the needle the more magnetized it becomes. Why did you not follow the Lord for another Baptism, and by his Spirit dwelling within you, when he once gave you an earnest of that happy day of Pentecost that you have not forgotten. Well then, Jonah, sleeper, why do you not cry to your God for the Spirit of Resurrection and of life which must enter again in the witnesses who are dead, or sleeping [an allusion to Charles' sermon, "Awake thou, that Sleepeth"].<sup>76</sup>

Fletcher observed in a letter to Charles that "the difference [between your brother and me] consists, (if there is any) in my thinking, that those who ... baptized and sealed with the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost ... were in the state of Christian perfection ... . As contradistinguished from the faith of ... babes, or carnal believers ... which the apostles had before the day of Pentecost."<sup>77</sup>

Fletcher explained to Charles Wesley that he was writing an *Essay on Truth* to show that there is a difference between the faith of those who like the apostles were "babes, or carnal believers" before Pentecost and the faith of those who are in "the state of Christian perfection" as a result of being "baptized and sealed with the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost."<sup>78</sup> This treatise was his first attempt to develop this theme in a focused manner, and it was passed back and forth between John Wesley and Fletcher.<sup>79</sup> Both John and Charles Wesley were very much involved in the pre-publication process of critiquing and approving this work.

The first action of John Wesley, once he had received Fletcher's corrected manuscript on the *Essay on Truth*, was to publish an abridged edition so that it would be more widely read. Wesley worried that Fletcher's tendency to be verbose would limit his readership.<sup>80</sup> Fletcher also asked Charles Wesley to help him in his writings to be "sententious" and "shorter and full."<sup>81</sup>

In John Wesley's special abridged edition of the *Essay on Truth*, he said he had marked the most useful parts of it with an approving asterisk.<sup>82</sup> In the preface, Fletcher stated that he did not intend to "dissent" from the Church of England, but he said that "our church" talked about faith "according to the fulness of the *Christian* dispensation," but he intended to examine the "*inferior* dispensations" represented by the different degrees of faith as typified in "John the Baptist, Moses, and Noah." By presenting the progressive order of salvation from the lowest to the highest, he showed that an assurance of faith "was not *fully* opened till Christ opened *his* glorious baptism [of the Spirit] on the day of Pentecost" when "his spiritual kingdom was set up with power in the hearts of his people." Fletcher said this message was "of late years gloriously revived by Mr. Wesley and the ministers connected with

him.” Wesley’s approving asterisk appears in front of this paragraph,<sup>83</sup> and this exposition will only use Wesley’s special abridged edition to show his agreement.

What did Fletcher mean by the idea of a “glorious baptism [of the Spirit] on the day of Pentecost” that the Methodists had “revived”? Fletcher explained it represented the goal of God’s saving history on the day of Pentecost, making it possible for believers to have the full assurance of salvation and to be empowered to love God perfectly. Fletcher explained that the “everlasting gospel” was present from the beginning of humankind and progressively developed in the history of salvation through “four grand dispensations.”<sup>84</sup> (1) The intuitive Faith in God the Father (the Gentile dispensation ,Noah) is superseded by (2) the Jewish dispensation (Moses) with its expectation that the Messiah will come. (3) The dispensation of John the Baptist which “was as singular [to himself] as that of Moses,” because just as Moses pointed beyond himself to the leadership of Joshua, so the dispensation of John the Baptist prepared the way for Jesus.<sup>85</sup> The dispensation of John the Baptist proclaimed that the “Messiah is come in the flesh” and this pre-Pentecostal stage typifies “*babes in Christ*,”<sup>86</sup> and “imperfect Christians, who like the apostles before the day of Pentecost, are yet strangers to the great outpouring of the Spirit.”<sup>87</sup> (4) The dispensation of the Spirit is that “the Promise of the Father is fulfilled” and believers are “intimately one with Christ,”<sup>88</sup> through being “baptized with the Holy Ghost.”<sup>89</sup> Imperfect Christians are like the “Lord’s disciples before the day of Pentecost” who have not been “fully baptized [with the Spirit].”<sup>90</sup> To be “baptized with the Holy Ghost” means to experience “an uncommon degree of sanctifying grace.”<sup>91</sup> Being perfected in love was the primary purpose of the baptism with the Spirit, while the miraculous gifts were “a *temporary appendage*, and by no means an *essential part* of Christ’s spiritual baptism.”<sup>92</sup> Fletcher also interpreted the three thousand converts on the day of Pentecost to have moved quickly from “faith in the Father, to an explicit faith in the Son” to the dispensation of the Spirit when they were “*filled with the Spirit*.”<sup>93</sup>

In correspondence with Charles Wesley as he was composing this essay, Fletcher mentioned this analogy of all converts being fully sanctified on the day of Pentecost to suggest that he and Charles should set the example in praying for the baptism for the Spirit. He said: “Undoubtedly the apostles went into the kingdom before the 3000 on the day of Pentecost. If we ... get in, who knows but perhaps 3 scores ... may follow us. This is the only way to retrieve the asperred doctrine of perfection.”<sup>94</sup>

If Fletcher’s preface to the *Essay on Truth* began with an announcement about the “glorious baptism [of the Spirit] on the day of Pentecost” which had been “revived by Mr. Wesley and the ministers connected with him,”

Wesley's abridged edition concluded with the explanation of why "Christ opened the dispensation of his Spirit." With Wesley's approving asterisk, Fletcher said the purpose was "that they may be made *perfect in one*" with "'gladness and singleness of heart, praising God, and having favour with all the people,' by their humble, affectionate, angelical behaviour."<sup>95</sup> Fletcher then notes that this promise of the Spirit given on the day of Pentecost was not just for the disciples, but for all those that believe through their word of testimony. His point was that a day of Pentecost is promised to all future justified believers.

Fletcher also explained his idea of "the glorious baptism [of the Spirit] on the day of Pentecost" in direct reference to Wesley's early sermons on "Salvation by Faith" and "Christian Perfection." Specifically, Fletcher shows that Wesley "clearly distinguishes Christian faith properly so called, or faith in Christ glorified" from "the faith of initial Christianity, i.e., 'the faith which the apostles had while our Lord was upon earth.'"<sup>96</sup> Fletcher then shows that Wesley identified "Christian Perfection" with "the *Christian* dispensation in its fulness" as distinct from the dispensation of the Gentiles, Jews, and John the Baptist.<sup>97</sup> Significantly, John Wesley included this explanation in his special edition of the *Essay on Truth*. Even more significantly, John Wesley promoted with his own approving asterisk Fletcher's idea of the role of his Methodist preachers in proclaiming that the full assurance of "adult Christians" is possible because of Christ's "glorious baptism [of the Spirit] on the day of Pentecost."<sup>98</sup> This means, as Fletcher explained, "imperfect Christians" are like "our Lord's disciples before the day of Pentecost" and hence they were not "fully baptized [with the Spirit] . . . They had not yet been made *perfect in one*."<sup>99</sup>

John Wesley praised the *Essay on Truth* exuberantly: "Mr. Fletcher has given us a wonderful view of the different dispensations which we are under. I believe that difficult subject was never placed in so clear a light before. It seems God has raised him up for this very thing."<sup>100</sup> The same month that Fletcher's *Essay on Truth* was completed, Wesley wrote a letter to one of his prominent class leaders, saying that Fletcher had written with more clear understanding on "pardon and holiness" than "scarcely any one has done before since the Apostles."<sup>101</sup>

To say that God had "raised him up for this very thing" and no one "since the Apostles" had explained holiness better than Fletcher is the highest recommendation and approval that could have ever been offered to anyone. John Wesley not only said Fletcher's writings were without parallel among writers since the days of the Apostles, he personally marked specific texts with his approving asterisk, including the language of the baptism of the Spirit for Christian perfection. This exuberance for Fletcher's order of salvation culminating in the baptism with the Spirit is



remarkable considering John Wesley had only a few years earlier seemed to reject the connection of the baptism with the Spirit with perfection.

Fletcher's concept of perfection is most fully developed and explained in *The Last Check*, which was finished in March, 1775, but it was begun at least by November 24, 1771, having been interrupted by other pressing matters,<sup>102</sup> although Charles Wesley had encouraged Fletcher to give priority to its completion.<sup>103</sup>

Fletcher had given John Wesley a copy of this manuscript for his approval, and John Wesley returned it to Fletcher on March 22, 1775, noting that "their views were a little different, though not opposite" because Fletcher had used "receiving the Spirit" as a description of entire sanctification, whereas John Wesley insisted that all believers had received the Spirit.<sup>104</sup>

It seems our views of Christian Perfection are a little different, though not opposite. It is certain every babe in Christ has received the Holy Ghost, and the Spirit witnesses with his spirit that he is a child of God. But he has not obtained Christian perfection. Perhaps you have not considered St. John's threefold distinction of Christian believers: little children, young men, and fathers. All of these had received the Holy Ghost; but only the fathers were perfected in love.<sup>105</sup>

Fletcher corrected the manuscript and then sent it to Charles on May 21, 1775 for his approval as well.<sup>106</sup> After sending his corrections to John Wesley, John Wesley responded on August 18, 1775, giving his approval to Fletcher's revised wording about "receiving the Spirit." John Wesley wrote: "I have now received all your papers, and here and there made some small corrections." He then said: "I do not perceive . . . that there is any difference between us."<sup>107</sup>

Fletcher had prominently featured "the baptism with the Holy Spirit" in this manuscript as the means for being made perfect in love. For example, Fletcher wrote: "O, baptize my soul, and make as full an end of the original sin which I have from Adam . . . . Give me thine abiding Spirit, that he may continually shed abroad thy love in my soul . . . . Send thy Holy Spirit of promise to fill me therewith, to sanctify me throughout." On the other hand, Fletcher modified his statement about "receiving the Spirit" to: "Expect to receive . . . a fullness of the sanctifying Spirit."<sup>108</sup> But he still linked the phrases, "baptize me with the Holy Ghost: fill me with the Spirit!"<sup>109</sup>

John Wesley said nothing against Fletcher's idea of the baptism with the Holy Spirit and entire sanctification in this manuscript. Not only was John Wesley pleased with Fletcher's acceptance of his suggested correction about "receiving the Spirit," but in this same letter he encouraged Fletcher to travel with him, whenever he was not writing, in preparation for the time when Fletcher would become his successor. Further, no one in Methodism knew about any disagreement between Wesley and Fletcher until 1933 when John Telford published these letters.

*The Last Check* contains more references to John's writings and to Charles' hymns than any of his previous writings<sup>110</sup> to show that he was in agreement with them. This was important because Christian perfection was the central tenet of Methodism. If John Wesley was particularly concerned to edit Fletcher's writings to insure that his ideas reinforced his own views, it was equally important that Fletcher receive both John and Charles' imprimatur. Among John's many words of commendation about Fletcher's writings on holiness, he said that Fletcher had written with more clear understanding on the theme of "pardon and holiness" than "scarcely any one has done before since the Apostles."<sup>111</sup> Charles once said to Fletcher on October 11, 1783: "You had from the beginning my Imprimatur."<sup>112</sup> Charles Wesley's caution to Fletcher was that idea of dispensations of salvation might encourage some to remain in a lower stage of faith. Fletcher reassured Charles that he would obviate that possible misunderstanding.<sup>113</sup>

Fletcher cited more than twelve of Charles Wesley's hymns in his treatise on Christian perfection, *The Last Check*.<sup>114</sup> He believed that Charles' hymns supported his interpretation of the connection between Pentecost and sanctification. Fletcher was generously assisted by Charles Wesley through editorial help, theological guidance, and technical assistance in arranging for his manuscripts to be published and in correcting the press copy. Fletcher's understanding of the role of the Spirit in sanctification was decisively influenced by the hymns of Charles Wesley. The time involvement of Charles' editorial and technical assistance was huge, but the affection between them was profound and intimate.<sup>115</sup>

Fletcher's *Checks* did not merely repeat Wesley's ideas, but he reshaped them into a larger synthesis. This reshaping is what Fletcher meant by making Wesley "consistent with himself." Many writers in subsequent generations have frequently noted Wesley's inconsistencies.<sup>116</sup> This element of inconsistency was used as an argument at the end of the nineteenth century for allowing theological pluralism in the Methodist Episcopal Church.<sup>117</sup> Many of Wesley's contemporaries also accused him of inconsistencies. This charge of inconsistency had presented a possible hazard for the Methodist movement. One of Wesley's most formidable critics had said: "I despair to find any consistency" in John Wesley's thinking.<sup>118</sup> One critic accused Fletcher of being given the assignment to resolve the inconsistencies in Wesley.<sup>119</sup> Fletcher never implied that Wesley was logically inconsistent, though he did recognize that John Wesley's thinking did require some explanation in order to resolve apparent inconsistencies.<sup>120</sup>

In the *Last Check*, Fletcher pointed out a verbal difference between himself and John Wesley by acknowledging that he used the phrase, baptism with the Spirit, whereas John Wesley did not use it in his sermon on “The Scriptural Way of Salvation” (1765). Fletcher noted that his *Last Check* “exactly coincides with Mr. Wesley’s sermon; with this verbal difference only, that what he calls *Faith*, implying a twofold operation of the Spirit . . . I have called *Faith* apprehending a sanctifying *baptism* or *Outpouring of the Spirit*.” He then remarks: “His mode of expression savours more of the rational Divine, who logically divides the truth, in order to render its several parts conspicuous: and I keep closer to the words of the Scriptures, which, I hope, will frighten no candid Protestant.”<sup>121</sup>

### **A Consensus between John Wesley and John Fletcher**

Did John Wesley approve or merely permit Fletcher’s view? It should be remembered that John Wesley’s criticism of Fletcher’s views were only expressed when his writings were still in manuscript form. Once Fletcher had incorporated John Wesley’s corrections, there was never a word of criticism about Fletcher’s idea of Pentecostal sanctification, only praise and recommendation. What is apparent is that Wesley himself subsequently embraced Fletcher’s Pentecostal interpretation, thus indicating that he had been convinced by Fletcher’s own attempt to make his ideas consistent, as it will be shown below.

Here is what Fletcher said to Mary Bosanquet in 1778: “If you ask me what I think to be truth with respect to Christian perfection, I reply my sentiments are exposed to the world in my Essay on ‘Christian Perfection’ [*The Last Check*] and in my Essay on ‘Truth’ [in the *Equal Check*] where I lay the stress on the doctrine on the great *promise of the Father*, and on the *Christian fullness of the Spirit*.” He then says: “You will find my views of this matter in Mr. Wesley’s sermons” on Christian Perfection [1741] and on Scriptural Christianity [1744].” Both of these early sermons by Wesley highlighted Pentecost and sanctification.

Fletcher then mentioned to her that “I would distinguish more exactly between the believers baptized with the Pentecostal power of the Holy Ghost, and the believer who, like the Apostles after our Lord’s Ascension, is not yet filled with that power.” He observed that when he preached this theme at Trevecca, it was called “Mr. Wesley’s *whim*,” and when “I preached it to our brethren, some have called it Lady Hungtindon’s *whim*.; and others have looked upon it as a *new thing*.” This controversy, Fletcher wrote, “is the strongest proof that this capital Gospel doctrine is as much under a cloud now as the doctrine of justification by faith was at the time of the Reformation.”<sup>122</sup>

He then told Mary Bosanquet that he had recently completed an *Essay on the New Birth*,<sup>123</sup> and told her where she could find the manuscript in London. He had written this essay after the *Last Check* had been published and a

just prior to a four-year visit to his home country in Switzerland in 1777.<sup>124</sup> This essay disclosed that John Wesley agreed with him on the use of the language of the baptism with the Holy Spirit. Fletcher reported “that Mr. Wesley rests the perfection of Christianity on the Pentecostal dispensation of the Spirit, and teaches, that, imperfect believers need only ‘*wait for the promise of the Father,*’ till ‘*the Holy Ghost is given unto them*’ according to the fulness of that grand promise.” He said: “My friend [Wesley] . . . chiefly rests the doctrine of Christian perfection on being *baptized and filled with the Spirit,*” noting that “this is Mr. Wesley’s sentiment.”<sup>125</sup>

Of course we have Wesley’s own statement that there was no longer any disagreement between them after Fletcher had accepted Wesley’s suggested correction (as noted above). Do we have any further evidence that Fletcher was genuinely expressing “Mr. Wesley’s sentiment”? The answer is Yes. After his treatise on perfection (*The Last Check*) was published, John Wesley wrote to John Fletcher on June 1, 1776: “The generality of believers in *our* Church (yea, and in the Church of Corinth, Ephesus, and the rest, even in the Apostolic age) are certainly no more than babes in Christ; not young men, and much less fathers. But we have some [fathers], and we should certainly pray and expect that our Pentecost may fully come.”<sup>126</sup>

If one will compare this letter to John Wesley’s earlier letter about a slight difference between them, it will be seen in both letters that he referred to three categories of believers--“babes in Christ,” “young men” and “fathers”—and each category of believers had “received the Spirit,” although only “fathers” were perfected in love. If John Wesley reported that there was no difference between them on August 18, 1775 because Fletcher incorporated John Wesley’s correction, here in this latest letter ten months later (June 1, 1776) Wesley specifically mentioned again the categories of “babes in Christ” and “young men,” but this letter showed that Wesley accepted Fletcher’s idea that Pentecost belonged to the category of “fathers” or those who had been perfected in love.

In one of Fletcher’s letters to Charles Wesley in 1776, Fletcher expressed the hope of seeing “an outpouring of the Spirit, inwardly and outwardly” which will establish “a Pentecost Christian Church.” He noted that “if it is not to be seen at this time upon earth, I am willing to go and see that glorious wonder in heaven.”<sup>127</sup> This concept of a Pentecost church was a frequent theme in Fletcher’s writings, but Wesley only had the idea of the one hundred twenty in the Upper Room on the day of Pentecost as being entirely sanctified,<sup>128</sup> but it was Fletcher’s observation that all three thousand hearers experienced a quick transition to perfect love as explained in his *Essay on Truth*, showing that the “glorious baptism [of the Spirit]” was the essence of the message of “Mr. Wesley’s preachers” and that it was leading to another Pentecost-like Church when all believers were made “perfect in one.” This idea of

everyone on the day of Pentecost, including the three thousand hearers, were entirely sanctified was a theme John Wesley's sermons, such as "The Mystery of Iniquity" and "The General Deliverance of the Gospel," coinciding with Fletcher's idea that just as on the day of Pentecost when all believers were entirely sanctified, then in the millennium there would be Pentecost-church when "righteousness will cover the earth as waters cover the sea." Here again is shown the influence of Fletcher's thought upon John Wesley.

Wesley's critics in his day believed that Fletcher's writings were written with John Wesley's *Imprimatur*. Richard Hill, who was one of Fletcher's primary controversialists, noted that "Mr. Wesley revised, corrected, and gave his own *imprimatur* to all Mr. Fletcher's *checks*, throughout which, Mr. John is the *Alpha* and the *Omega*."<sup>129</sup> Fletcher also believed that Wesley approved the actual wording of his manuscripts unless he changed it.<sup>130</sup> However, it is clear that Fletcher influenced John Wesley's ideas as well, especially in regard to the idea of Pentecost.

In his memorial sermon for John Fletcher, John Wesley said in regard to Fletcher's "excellent *Checks to Antinomianism* . . . one knows not which to admire most, the purity of the language . . . , the strength and clearness of the argument, or the mildness and sweetness of the spirit which breathes through the whole." Wesley noted that reading Fletcher's writings was enough to be convinced of his ideas.<sup>131</sup> Apparently Wesley was convinced by Fletcher as well. He also said: "I was intimately acquainted with him for above thirty years. I conversed with him morning, noon, and night, without the least reserve, during a journey of many hundred miles . . . . One equal to him I have not known . . . . Nor do I expect to find another such on this side of eternity."<sup>132</sup>

In his biography of Fletcher written soon after his death, Wesley reported that Fletcher's "favourite subject" in conversations among his friends was being "filled with the Spirit."

When he was able to converse, his favourite subject was, *the promise of the Father, the gift of the Holy Ghost*, including that rich peculiar blessing of union with the Father and the Son, mentioned in that prayer of our Lord which is recorded in the seventeenth chapter of St. John. Many were the sparks of living fire which occasionally darted forth from him on this beloved theme. "We must not be content," said he, "to be only cleansed from sin; we must be filled with the Spirit." One asking him what was to be experienced in the full accomplishment of the promise? "O," said he, "what shall I say! All the sweetness of the drawings of the Father; all the love of the Son; all the rich effusions of peace and joy in the Holy Ghost; more than ever can be expressed are comprehended here! To attain it the Spirit maketh intercession in the soul, like a God wrestling with a God!"<sup>133</sup>

The point that I am making here is that Fletcher emphasized Pentecost sanctification everywhere he preached without a word of censure from Wesley—whether he was preaching at Wesley's annual conference or travelling with Wesley. As noted above, Wesley mentioned that he had travelled with Fletcher on occasions. On the day before

Fletcher left Madeley with Wesley to go to London in 1776, Fletcher wrote a letter to some Methodist friends at Hull and York on November 12, 1776, where he had been invited to come to preach. He wrote:

If I have any desire to live at any time, God is my witness, that it is principally to be a witness in word and deed, of the dispensation of *power from on high*; and to point out that kingdom which does not consist in word, but in *power*, even in *righteousness, peace, and joy by the Holy Ghost*, the *Spirit of power*. I am writing an Essay upon that important part of the christian doctrine, and hope that it will be a mite in the treasury of truth, which the Lord has opened for the use of his people.<sup>134</sup>

This letter was quoted in *The Methodist Magazine* in 1801, which illustrates that Fletcher's "favourite subject" continued to receive attention.

Convincing evidence that John Wesley gave his approval to Fletcher's idea of Pentecostal sanctification is seen in his later sermons. In his "Preface" to *The Arminian Magazine* for January, 1781, Wesley says he intended "to write, with God's assistance, a few more plain, practical Discourses, on those which I judge to be the most necessary of the subjects I have not yet treated of." He included one of those sermons in this 1781 issue, entitled, "Sermon on Galat. iv.18," affirming Pentecostal sanctification. He wrote: "In a Christian Believer, *Love*, sits upon the throne, which is erected in the inmost soul; namely, love of God and man, which fills the whole heart, and reigns without a rival . . . This is that Religion which our Lord has established upon earth, ever since the descent of the Holy Ghost on day of Pentecost . . . Love enthroned in the heart."<sup>135</sup> He preached this sermon on May 6, 1781. Was Wesley only talking about the ideal Church established on the day of Pentecost without intending to suggest that believers today should expect to have their own personal Pentecost? The answer is clearly that Wesley thought this Pentecost reality was to be personalized today, for example, as it will be shown below in the testimonies he published in *The Arminian Magazine*.

Three months later, on June 3, 1781 (Pentecost Sunday), Wesley wrote in his journal: "I preached on, 'they were all filled with the Holy Ghost;' and showed in what sense this belongs to us and our children."<sup>136</sup> The phrase, "to us and our children," is a paraphrase of Acts 2:39 where Peter says the Pentecostal gift of the Spirit is "to you and your children" We noted above that John Wesley heard John Heylyn preach a sermon on Pentecost based on Acts 2, with Wesley reporting, "And so, said he [Heylyn], may *all you* be." As we showed, Heylyn's exposition of Pentecost emphasized "the baptism of the Spirit" as the means of obtaining "perfect purity." We also noted that both Fletcher and Coke had cited this sermon in support of the Methodist interpretation of entire sanctification. Now Wesley used this same text, using similar words which he cited from Heylyn that the invitation is extended to believers in all times and succeeding generations.

Two months after John Wesley had preached this Pentecost sermon, Fletcher preached on the same Pentecost theme at the Leeds Conference at 5:00 in the morning to two thousand people with Wesley's full commendation.<sup>137</sup> On Wednesday, August 8, 1781, Wesley wrote: "I desired Mr. Fletcher to preach. I do not wonder he should be so popular; not only because he preaches with all his might, but because the power of God attends both his preaching and prayer."<sup>138</sup> A letter written by one of Wesley's preachers, John Pescod, to his wife while he was still at the conference reported that Fletcher preached on "the promise of the Holy Ghost, whom our Lord told His disciples He would send after His ascension. The dispensation of the Spirit is to renew us after the image of God."<sup>139</sup> Considering Wesley's insistence on unity of doctrine among Methodists, Fletcher's sermon would surely have been consistent with Wesley's sermon preached two months earlier on being "filled with the Spirit," especially considering the fact that Fletcher was perceived as one of the leaders of the Methodist movement along with John and Charles Wesley.

In this same 1781 volume of *The Arminian Magazine*, John Wesley published an article by Joseph Benson, "Thoughts on Christian Perfection." If John Wesley earlier said that he did not agree with the language of the baptism of the Spirit for speaking of Christian perfection when Benson was principal at Trevecca College, this essay shows that he now had come to agree with it. If Fletcher told Benson at Trevecca College that only those who have been baptized with the Spirit have the full sanctifying assurance of faith whether or not John Wesley was willing to "assent to it," this essay shows that John Wesley now assented to it. We also know that Benson did not change his mind about the language of the baptism with the Holy Spirit since he left Trevecca because Benson reported seven years later in December 4, 1777 that he still held to the same views: "About six years ago, when at Oxford [=time with Fletcher at Trevecca], my convictions, desires, were the same that they are now; and then, as now, I longed for the baptism of the Holy Ghost."<sup>140</sup>

This essay by Benson and approved for publication by John Wesley is addressed to those who profess entire sanctification. Benson expressed concern about "the many instances of misconduct in the Professors of Christian Perfection" who "have fallen" because of pride, unwatchfulness, lukewarmness and indolence. Christian perfection is "an extirpation of all sin," but "the whole deliverance from sin, depends on the constant indwelling of the Holy Ghost." The problem, Benson said, is that while "the Lord hath promised to *circumcize our heart*, so that we shall love him *with all our heart* . . . those who love Him *perfectly*, may love him *more perfectly* still. Thus will the flame of holy Desire be kept alive in their soul."

Benson then said: “Once more [as a reminder to his readers about how they may be kept from backsliding by always pressing forward]: Allowing, what (I think) neither Reason nor Scripture forbids us to allow, that God *may*, and that he often *does, instantaneously* so baptize a soul with the Holy Ghost, and with fire, as to purify it from all dross, and refine it like gold, so that it is *renewed in love*, in *pure and perfect love*, as it never was before; yet ought not those who have experienced this, to be repeatedly told, 1. That there is a further, and still further renewal to be experienced *day by day*.”<sup>141</sup> This is reminiscent of what John Fletcher had said six years earlier in his *Last Check*:

Should you ask, how many baptisms, or effusions of the sanctifying Spirit are necessary to cleanse a believer from all sin, and to kindle his soul into perfect love; I reply, that the effect of a sanctifying truth depending upon the ardour of the faith with which that truth is embraced, and upon the power of the Spirit with which it is applied, I should betray a want of modesty if I brought the operations of the Holy Ghost, and the energy of faith, under a rule which is not expressly laid down in the Scriptures . . . . If one powerful baptism of the Spirit 'seal you unto the day of redemption, and cleanse you from all [moral] filthiness,' so much the better. If two or more be necessary, the Lord can repeat them.<sup>142</sup>

Entire sanctification may and often does happen *instantaneously*, but the believer must continue to rely upon “*this* power from on high for further growth. No matter how holy a believer is, Benson reminds them, there be continual growth. He concludes with an exhortation for “professors of Christian perfection” to be increasingly “full of zeal.”<sup>143</sup>

Benson’s reference to “full of zeal” is precisely the topic of Wesley’s sermon in this same volume of *The Arminian Magazine* (noted above) in which Wesley had affirmed that “love enthroned in the heart” which “fills the heart” was made possible by the descent of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost. Benson’s focus on a dynamic understanding of the Spirit-filled life as a lifelong process is why Fletcher had talked about “deeper baptisms,” “daily baptisms,” “many baptisms,” and “fuller baptisms” (phrases also often found in the testimonies recorded in the literature of the early Methodists).

Of course, John Wesley did not believe that God “*often . . . instantaneously*” justified and fully sanctified an unbeliever at the same moment. In *Plain Account of Christian Perfection*, Wesley wrote: “Neither dare we affirm, as some have done, that *all this salvation* is given *at once*. . . . We do not know a single instance, in any place, of a person’s receiving, *in one and the same moment*, remission of sins, the abiding witness of the Spirit, and a new, clean heart.”<sup>144</sup> So this essay on “Thought of Christian Perfection” was addressed to those who were already justified to encourage them to be diligent in living a life of holiness.

In the same year of 1781 (June 22) that Benson (and John Wesley) defined the baptism with the Spirit as the means of full sanctification, Fletcher wrote to Thomas Coke’s future wife, Miss Loxdale: “The other Comforter in



his fullness, or the *Pentecostal gift of the Holy Ghost*” gives “great grace, and *abundant life*; it destroys self, it fills with *power from on high, perfects in one, it perfects in love.*”<sup>145</sup>

Two days after writing this letter to Miss Loxdale, Fletcher sent a letter to Wesley giving him a report of her spiritual progress. Wesley published this letter in *The Arminian Magazine* in 1782: “As to Miss L[oxdale], I believe her to be a simple, holy follower of the Lord. Nothing throws *unscriptural* Mysticism down like holding out the promise of the Father, and the fullness of the Spirit, to be received *now*, by faith in the two Promisers, the *Father* and the *Son*. Ah! what is the *penal* fire of the Mystics, to the *burning love of the Spirit*, revealing the glorious power of the *Father* and the *Son*, according to John xiv.26, and filling us with all the fullness of God?”<sup>146</sup>

In the 1782 issue of *The Arminian Magazine*, Wesley quoted a testimony from the diary of Mr. G.C. This Methodist disciple of John Wesley prayed for a personal “descent of the Holy Ghost on the Apostles” to “rest upon me” that he might be “purified . . . from inbred sin” and obtain “the fulness of love.”<sup>147</sup> Wesley remarked: “I do not remember ever to have met with a more remarkable account than is contained” in this testimony.<sup>148</sup>

In 1783, Wesley preached a sermon on “The Mystery of Iniquity” (May - June 1783), saying, as Heylyn had done in his sermon as noted above, “how exceeding small was the number of those whose souls were healed by the Son of God himself! ‘When Peter stood up in the midst of them, the number of names were about a hundred and twenty.’ (Acts 1:15.) And even these were but imperfectly healed; the chief of them being a little before so weak<sup>1</sup> in faith that, though they did not, like Peter, forswear their Master, yet ‘they all forsook him and fled.’” Wesley then explains the reason why the disciples were not perfectly healed by Jesus himself prior to Pentecost was because the Spirit had not yet come to make them holy. Wesley cited this weakness of the disciples prior to Pentecost as “a plain proof that the sanctifying ‘Spirit was not’ then ‘given,’ because ‘Jesus was not glorified.’”<sup>149</sup>

A year after the Leeds Conference in 1784 when Wesley had given his blessing to the forming of a Methodist denomination in America, he wrote a sermon, entitled “Of the Church,” based on Ephesians 4:1-6, “One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism.” [Sept. 28, 1785]. It was published in *The Arminian Magazine* in 1786.<sup>150</sup> This sermon reflected his agreement with Fletcher’s concept of “the baptism with the Holy Spirit,” that while the Holy Spirit is given in a lower degree is given to all justified believers, the full baptism with the Holy Spirit is given to believers perfected in love. This is why Wesley says: “Some indeed have been inclined to interpret this [“one baptism”] in a figurative

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<sup>1</sup> Wesley defined “weak” to mean “‘Sin remains in them still;’—in all weak believers” (SOME REMARKS ON MR. HILL’S “REVIEW OF ALL THE DOCTRINES TAUGHT BY MR. JOHN WESLEY.”)

sense, as if it referred to that baptism of the Holy Ghost which the apostles received at the day of Pentecost, and which *in a lower degree* [italics mine] is given to all believers.”<sup>151</sup>

John Wesley’s comments agree with Fletcher’s statement that the disciples only “received the Holy Spirit” in part “until they were endued with power from on high.” Before Pentecost, the disciples “were not *fully baptized* [italics mine]. The comforter, that visited them, did not properly dwell in them.”<sup>152</sup> This phrase, “a lower degree,” is common in Wesley’s writings to define justified believers not yet perfected in love.<sup>153</sup> It had been ten years since Fletcher’s treatise on Christian perfection had been published and promoted by Wesley (*The Last Check*), and the Pentecostal paradigm was already widely accepted. If Wesley was uneasy or rejected Fletcher’s interpretation, this sermon would have been an excellent opportunity for him to clarify this issue. Instead, he made a comment that was totally consistent with Fletcher’s emphasis. This sermon is also consistent with Wesley’s language of the “baptism with the Spirit” in 1745, as noted above.

There are many instances that can be cited to show the normative use of Pentecostal sanctification,<sup>154</sup> but there is a report given by Adam Clarke that shows Wesley himself preached specifically on the text, “Ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost” (Acts 1:5). Maldwyn Edwards says that “Adam Clarke was the greatest name in Methodism in the generation which succeeded Wesley.” He further believes that Clarke “was not only the greatest scholar in Methodism, but amongst the greatest of his age.”<sup>155</sup> Clarke also explicitly affirmed entire sanctification was through the baptism with the Spirit.<sup>156</sup>

Adam Clarke heard John Wesley preach on “the baptism with the Holy Spirit” at the conference at Bristol in 1783. We noted above that Fletcher had preached on the baptism with the Holy Spirit at Wesley’s annual conference in 1781 with Wesley’s high praise. According to Clarke’s autobiography, while he was attending the Bristol conference, early in the morning on August 3, 1783, he heard “Mr. Bradburn preach on Christian perfection, from I John iv.19.” Then at 10:00 a.m. he heard John Wesley preach on the text from Acts. 1:5, “Ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost.” Again later on during the day, he heard Wesley preach on the text, “Let us go on to perfection,” (Heb. 6:1).<sup>157</sup> Significantly, the preaching theme of the conference was on perfection. One could gather that Wesley’s sermon on the baptism with the Spirit was a sermon on perfection. When Wesley came into his district of Norwich in October, 1783, Adam Clarke again heard Wesley preach a sermon on the text, “They were all baptized with the Holy Ghost.”<sup>158</sup> Within the space of a few months, Clarke heard Wesley preach two sermons on “the baptism with the Holy Ghost.”

We do not have the contents of these sermons that Wesley preached on the baptism with the Holy Spirit, partly because Wesley's "later preaching was primarily extempore."<sup>159</sup> Oral preaching was the norm for him and was for "proclamation and invitation."<sup>160</sup> Wesley had a wide repertory of sermons which he preached, and this sermon on "the baptism with the Spirit" was one of them. We do know, however, that he identified the "baptism with the Spirit" with perfect love earlier in his "Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion" and in a letter to William Law as "righteousness and true holiness," which was a phrase consistently used by Wesley for Christian perfection.

Since Adam Clarke often used the phrase, "Baptism with the Holy Ghost," for entire sanctification, he would noted in his autobiography if Wesley's sermon on "the baptism with the Holy Ghost" was nuanced differently from his and Fletcher's. Considering that Pentecostal sanctification, including the language of "descent of the Spirit," "filled with the Spirit," and "baptized with the Spirit, is interlaced with testimonies, letters, and sermons in *The Arminian Magazine*, along with it being a preaching topic in Wesley's annual conferences and Fletcher's writings, it can only be concluded that John Wesley's sermon was consistent with this widespread language of the Spirit.

We also know that Wesley on occasions quoted from Fletcher's treatise on Christian perfection (*The Last Check*) in his extempore preaching as he travelled about from place to place. One such instance was recorded in a letter from Miss R to Mrs. P, November 5, 1789, which was two years before Wesley's death: "I often think of an expression of Mr. Wesley's from the pulpit last winter . . . 'If we had more of what Mr. Fletcher calls *perfect faith*, we should have more lively hopes and more active love."<sup>161</sup> Fletcher defined "perfect faith" in *The Last Check* to mean Christian perfection" and is attained through being "baptized with the Spirit." The mutual citing of each other's writings so favorably would surely create the impression among these early Methodists that John Wesley and Fletcher were in agreement, especially on this primary distinctive belief of Methodism.

When Wesley preached on "the baptism with the Holy Ghost," it is probable that he would have referred to Fletcher because, as Wesley noted in his biography of Fletcher, being filled with the Spirit was Fletcher's preferred subject, and Fletcher was highly popular with Methodists who eagerly wanted him to be Wesley's successor.<sup>162</sup>

If John Fletcher preached with Wesley as they travelled together, Fletcher's wife Mary also preached<sup>163</sup> with John Wesley at designated locations after her husband's death.<sup>164</sup> She was the first woman Methodist preacher, and she mentioned in his diaries about her practice of preaching on a "horseblock" in the streets.<sup>165</sup> In one of her messages perhaps even when she was preaching ("expounding") with Wesley, she alluded to John Wesley's later sermon on "The General Spread of the Gospel" (1783).

This sermon by John Wesley was about the initial fulfilment of this Old Testament promise on the day of Pentecost when the disciples were “filled with the Holy Spirit.” Wesley said that their lives were characterized by “gladness and singleness of heart,” and being “all of one heart and of one soul.” Wesley believed this original day of Pentecost was being extended to a “grand Pentecost” that already had begun during his student days at Oxford with his fellow Methodists. Wesley then predicted this future revival of a “grand Pentecost” would mean that everyone will be “filled with the Spirit” and “righteousness would cover the earth as waters cover the sea.” This “grand Pentecost” would be the fulfilment of the promise that believers would be enabled to love God perfectly with all their heart through spiritual circumcision (Deut. 30:6).<sup>166</sup>

Mary Fletcher’s sermon alluded to Wesley’s prophecy as she encouraged her hearers to be baptized with the Spirit. She said: “We often talk of the time when *righteousness is to overspread the earth*, but this millennium must overspread our own hearts, if we would see the face of God with joy.” She then exhorted her hearers to have a personal Pentecost and to enter into the “spiritual Canaan [of perfect love], that *baptism of the Spirit*, to which every believer is expressly called.”<sup>167</sup>

The rest of this story on how Pentecostal sanctification was developed by John Wesley and John Fletcher will show how this theme was consistently and commonly used by Wesley’s preachers and all the succeeding generations of Methodism in Britain and American. It will show how this theme was made prominent in the rise of the Wesleyan-Holiness tradition in the mid-nineteenth century in America. It will show how modern-day Pentecostalism with hundreds of millions of believers have their origin in Wesley’s and Fletcher’s preaching on the need for believers to be filled with the Holy Spirit in order to enjoy the fullness of God’s love and presence in their lives. The rest of the story may well conclude with a “grand Pentecost” in the twenty-first century, if, in the words of Mary Fletcher, “this millennium . . . overspread our own hearts” as “every believer is expressly called” to wait for the Promise of the Father in the Upper Room to receive the “*baptism of the Spirit*.”

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<sup>1</sup> This presentation will take into consideration the conversations on this topic in recent years.

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<sup>2</sup> *The Works of John Wesley*, ed. Thomas Jackson (London: Wesleyan Conference Office, 1872): 9:495, "Extract of a Letter to the Rev. Mr. Law (January 6, 1756)."

<sup>3</sup> 'Unexampled Labours', *Letters of the Revd John Fletcher to leaders in the Evangelical Revival*, edited Peter S. Forsaith (London: Epworth, 2008), 134.

<sup>4</sup> A letter of Charles Wesley to Fletcher, (June 21, 1784), contained and bound up in a large volume in the John Rylands Library entitled, *Letters Relating to the Wesley Family*. Cf. Patrick Steiff, 273.

<sup>5</sup> Henry Moore, *The Life of the Rev. John Wesley* (New York: Bangs and Emory, 1826), 2:261.

<sup>6</sup> John Fletcher Hurst, *John Wesley the Methodist* (New York: The Methodist Book Concern, 1903), 204-205.

<sup>7</sup> William C. Larrabee, *Wesley and his Collaborers*, edited B. F. Tefft (New York: Carlton and Lanahan, 1851), 2:258-259.

<sup>8</sup> In *The Sixteen Documents of Vatican II and The Instruction on the Liturgy*, N.C.W.C. translation (St. Paul Editions: Boston: Daughters of St. Paul, n.d.) there is a direct connection between "the gift of the Spirit" and "perfection" of the believer's character. The chapter entitled, "The Universal Call to Holiness in the Church," can hardly be surpassed as a concise statement on what holiness means. The call to holiness is a call for "individuals who, in their walk of life, tend toward the perfection of charity" (p. 151). Of special significance in these documents is the link between the Pentecostal gift of the Spirit and perfect love: "The Lord Jesus, the divine Teacher and Model of all perfection, preached holiness of life to each and everyone of His disciples of every condition. He Himself stands as the author and consumator of this holiness of life: 'Be you therefore perfect, even as your heavenly Father is perfect' . . . Indeed He sent the Holy Spirit upon all men that He might move them inwardly to love God with their whole heart and their whole soul, with all their mind and all their strength and that they might love each other as Christ loves them." It is further noted: "Thus it is evident to everyone, that all the faithful of Christ of whatever rank or status, are called to the fullness of the Christian life and to the perfection of charity" (pp. 151-152). What is significant is that Roman Catholic theology appeals to the same biblical passages as Fletcher does to support the doctrine of holiness, distinguishing between baptized believers and perfect Christians who have been filled with the Holy Spirit in the rite of confirmation. Cf. William J. O'Shea, *Sacraments of Initiation* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1965), pp. 54-55

<sup>9</sup> 'Unexampled Labours', 318, (Letter to Charles Wesley, August 14, 1774)

<sup>10</sup> Albert C. Outler, *Sermons I*, 1:347, "The Repentance of Believers." See also, *ibid.*, 2:121, "Christian Perfection." Also, *ibid.*, 3:78, "On Perfection."

<sup>11</sup> *Plain Account of Christian Perfection, Doctrinal and Controversial Treatises II*, Bicentennial Edition of the *Works of John Wesley* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1985-), 13:152; *A Plain Account of Christian Perfection, from the year 1725 to Year 1777*, (7<sup>th</sup> edition, London: G. Paramore, Printer, 1794), 21.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*

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<sup>13</sup> John and Charles Wesley, *Hymns and Sacred Poems* (London: Strahan, 1739), 151.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> John Wesley, February 1, 1738, *Journals and Diaries I (1735-38)*, ed. W. Reginald Ward and Richard Heitzenrater, *Works of John Wesley*, 18:215-216.

<sup>16</sup> *The Equal Check, Works of the Rev. John Fletcher*, ed. Joseph Benson (London: Conference Office, 1815), 4:259, "Essay on Truth." See also Wesley's special abridged edition of Fletcher's *Essay on Truth* in *The First Part of an Equal Check* (Bristol: W. Pine, 1774), 168.

<sup>17</sup> Wesley, May 19, 1738, *Journals and Diaries I (1735-38)*, 18:241.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid. 18:241n15.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. L. Wood, *Meaning of Pentecost in Early Methodism* (Lanham, Maryland: Scarecrow Press, 2002), 337-379.

<sup>20</sup> John Heylyn, "Discourse XV. On Whitsunday," *Theological Lectures at Westminster-Abbey* (London: Printed for J. and R. Tonson and S. Draper in the Strand, 1749), 114

<sup>21</sup> Ibid. 116.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., 118.

<sup>23</sup> See the discussion in Laurence W. Wood, *Meaning of Pentecost in Early Methodism* (Lanham, Maryland: Scarecrow Press, 2002), 264.

<sup>24</sup> Coke, *A Commentary on the New Testament* (London: G. Whitfield, 1803), 2:942-957. Coke cites the entire sermon from John Heylyn in his *Commentary* on Acts 2:47 without a single reference to its original source.

<sup>25</sup> Heylyn, *Theological Lectures*, 118.

<sup>26</sup> Outler, *Sermons*, 3:585, "On Laying the Foundation of the New Chapel"

<sup>27</sup> Outler, *Sermons*, 2:454, "The Mystery of Iniquity."

<sup>28</sup> Ibid. 119-120.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., 112)

<sup>30</sup> Ibid. 121.

<sup>31</sup> Pentecostal sanctification is also contained in the writings of Jeremy Taylor, who also profoundly influenced John Wesley. Cf. *Meaning of Pentecost in Early Methodism*, 341-345.

<sup>32</sup> Richard Heitzenrater, *Mirror and Memory* (Nashville: Kingswood Books, 1989), 106-149.

<sup>33</sup> Wesley, June 7, 1738, *Journals and Diaries I (1735-38)*, in *Works of John Wesley*, 18:254.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., 18:270 (August 8, 1738).

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., 18:270-271 (August 8, 1738). In his biography of John Wesley, Henry Moore took the editorial liberty to qualify the remark of Christian David that though the disciples "had faith" before Pentecost, they had not "[fully] received 'the gift of the

*Holy Ghost.*” This qualification comes with the insertion of the word “fully” in brackets, indicating there is a difference between receiving the Spirit in justifying faith and *fully* receiving the Spirit in Christian perfection. Cf. Moore, *The Life of John Wesley*,: 1:229].

<sup>36</sup> *Journals and Diaries I (1735-38)*, 18:274, (August 10, 1738)

<sup>37</sup> Christian David equated “full assurance” and being “cleansed from all sin.” Cf. Ibid, 18:272, (August 10, 1738).

<sup>38</sup> The Moravians did not all agree about being “cleansed from all sin.” Christian David affirmed this doctrine, but John Wesley learned three years after his Aldersgate experience that Peter Böhler rejected it, as he told John Wesley on May 16, 1741. *Journals and Diaries II (1735-38)*, in *Works*, 19:195.

<sup>39</sup> John Wesley, “A Plain Account of Christian Perfection,” *Doctrinal and Controversial Treatises II* in *Works*, 13:146. A *Plain Account of Christian Perfection* (7<sup>th</sup> edition, G. Paramore, Printer, 1794), 12.

<sup>40</sup> Italics mine.

<sup>41</sup> Outler, Sermon 40, “Christian Perfection,” § 2, in *Sermons II*, 2:110.

<sup>42</sup> “Pleading the Promise of Sanctification,” *HSP* 1742, 261-262.

<sup>43</sup> John Wesley, *A Library of Protestant Thought*, ed. Albert Outler (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964) p 367ff.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid., 372.

<sup>45</sup> John Wesley, “The Principles of a Methodist” (1742), in *The Methodist Societies: History, Nature, and Design*, ed. Rupert E. Davies, Wesley, *Works*, 9:64-65.

<sup>46</sup> Outler, *Sermons*, 1:160, “Scriptural Christianity.”

<sup>47</sup> *The Equal Check*, *Works of the Rev. John Fletcher*, 4:253, “Essay on Truth.”

<sup>48</sup> John Wesley, *The Appeals to Men of Reason and Religion and Certain Related Open Letters*, ed. Gerald R. Cragg, *Works of John Wesley*, 11:261, “A Farther Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion, Part II.”

<sup>49</sup> *Arminian Magazine* (London: J. Paramore, 1782) 5:214.

<sup>50</sup> Cragg, *Appeals*, 11:253, “A Farther Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion, Part II.”

<sup>51</sup> *The Works of John Wesley*, ed. Thomas Jackson, Third Edition (Hendrickson Publishers, Inc., 1984), 9:495, “An Extract of a Letter to the Rev. Mr. Law.”

<sup>52</sup> Cf. Mary Fletcher’s comments about this revival in Moore, *The Life of Mary Fletcher* (New York: Hunt & Eaton, 1817), 35.

<sup>53</sup> Wesley, October 28, 1762, *Journal and Diaries IV (1755-65)*, ed. W. Reginald Ward and Richard P. Heitzenrater, in *Works* 21:392.

<sup>54</sup> ‘Unexampled Labours’, *Letters of the Revd John Fletcher to leaders in the Evangelical Revival*, edited Peter S. Forsaith (London: Epworth, 2008), 235.

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<sup>55</sup> Ibid., 256.

<sup>56</sup> Benson, *The Life of the Rev. John W. de la Flechere, Works of the Rev. John Fletcher*, 156.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

<sup>58</sup> A letter published for the first time in Tyerman, *Wesley's Designated Successor*, 182-183. Though Fletcher was concerned about the antinomian tendencies of the Calvinist Methodists, he did not think that the Countess herself was guilty of "the charge of Antinomianism." Cf. letter to Mr. Ireland (March 27, 1774) in *The Letters of the Rev. John Fletcher*, ed. Melville Horne (New York; Lane & Scott, 1849), 260.

<sup>59</sup> Randy Maddox and Russell Frazier, "Joseph Benson's Initial Letter to John Wesley concerning Spirit Baptism and Christian Perfection," *The Wesleyan Theological Journal*, 48:2 (Fall 2013): 66, 72.

<sup>60</sup> Telford, *Letters* 5:214-215 (to Joseph Benson, December 28, 1770).

<sup>61</sup> This fragment is housed in the Manuscript Department of William R. Perkins, Duke University and transcribed by M. Robert Fraser and Frank Baker. M. Robert Fraser. *Strains in the Understanding of Christian Perfection in Early British Methodism*. Ph. D. Thesis, Vanderbilt University, 1988. Photocopy (Ann Arbor, MI: University Microfilm, Inc., 1992), 490-492. Cited by permission from M. Robert Fraser.

<sup>62</sup> 'Unexampled, Labours', 271, (March 9, 1771).

<sup>63</sup> *Plain Account of Christian Perfection, Doctrinal and Controversial Treatises II, Works of John Wesley*, 13:147. *A Plain Account of Christian Perfection* (7<sup>th</sup> edition, G. Paramore, Printer, 1794), 13-14.

<sup>64</sup> *A Plain Account of Christian Perfection* (7<sup>th</sup> edition, London: G. Paramore, 1794), 52.

<sup>65</sup> Fraser *Doctoral Dissertation*, 489. John Wesley defined the language, "seal of the Spirit" and "full assurance of hope" with perfection in his *Plain Account of Christian Perfection* (7<sup>th</sup> edition, G. Paramore, Printer, 1794), 70-71.

<sup>66</sup> Cf. 'Unexampled Labours,' *Letters of the Revd John Fletcher to leaders in the Evangelical Revival*, ed., with an introduction by Peter Forsaith, with additional notes by Kenneth Loyer (London: Epworth, 2008).

<sup>67</sup> *Unexampled, Labours*, 88, 252.

<sup>68</sup> The original manuscript is housed in the Manuscript Department of the William R. Perkins Library, Duke University, and it is transcribed by M. Robert Fraser. Cf. Fraser's *Doctoral Dissertation*, 489. Cited with the permission of M. Robert Fraser who discovered this document.

<sup>69</sup> Telford, *Letters*, 5:228-229 (to Joseph Benson, March 16, 1771).

<sup>70</sup> A letter published for the first time in Tyerman, *Wesley's Designated Successor*, (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1882), 182-183. Though Fletcher was concerned about the antinomian tendencies of the Calvinist Methodists, he did not think that the Countess herself was guilty of "the charge of Antinomianism." Cf. letter to Mr. Ireland (March 27, 1774) in *The Letters of the Rev. John Fletcher*, ed. Melville Horne (New York; Lane & Scott, 1849), 260.



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<sup>71</sup> Cragg, *Appeals*, 11:253, “A Farther Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion, Part II.”

<sup>72</sup> *The Works of John Wesley*, ed. Thomas Jackson (London: Wesleyan Conference Office, 1872): 9:495, “Extract of a Letter to the Rev. Mr. Law” (January 6, 1756).

<sup>73</sup> ‘*Unexampled Labours*’, 319.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, 258

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, 320 (August 14, 1774).

<sup>78</sup> ‘*Unexampled Labours*, 320.

<sup>79</sup> *The Letters of the Rev. John Wesley, A.M.*, ed. John Telford (London: Epworth Press, 1931), (to John Fletcher, Feb. 26, 1774), 6:75. *The Works of John Wesley, Journal and Diaries*, (1765-75), ed. W. Reginald Ward (Journal) and Richard P. Heitzenrater (Diaries), (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1990), 22:400 (March 21, 1774)

<sup>80</sup> Cf. Telford, *Letters*, 6:175 (a letter to John Fletcher 18, 1775).

<sup>81</sup> *Unexampled Labours*, (Letter to Charles Wesley, May 21, 1775), 321, A Letter from John Fletcher to Charles Wesley, May 21, 1775, contained in the “Fletcher Volume” (51), in Fletcher-Tooth Archival Collection in the John Rylands Library of Manchester University.

<sup>82</sup> Wesley’s special abridged edition of John Fletcher, *The First Part of an Equal Check* (Bristol: W. Pine, 1774), vi.

<sup>83</sup> Wesley’s special abridged edition of John Fletcher, v.

<sup>84</sup> Wesley’s special abridged edition of John Fletcher, 112.

<sup>85</sup> *The Works of the Rev. John Fletcher*, ed. Joseph Benson, 6:182.

<sup>86</sup> Wesley’s special abridged edition of John Fletcher. 115

<sup>87</sup> Wesley’s special abridged edition of John Fletcher, 122

<sup>88</sup> Wesley’s special abridged edition of John Fletcher, 115

<sup>89</sup> Wesley’s special abridged edition of John Fletcher. 179.

<sup>90</sup> Wesley’s special abridged edition of John Fletcher 177n.

<sup>91</sup> Wesley’s special abridged edition of John Fletcher 180

<sup>92</sup> Wesley’s special abridged edition of John Fletcher, 180.

<sup>93</sup> Wesley’s special abridged edition of John Fletcher, 180.

<sup>94</sup> ‘*Unexampled Labours*’, 291. (January 1772).

<sup>95</sup> Wesley’s special abridged edition of John Fletcher, 181

<sup>96</sup> Wesley’s special abridged edition of John Fletcher, 174.

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<sup>97</sup> Wesley's special abridged edition of John Fletcher, 175.

<sup>98</sup> Wesley's special abridged edition of John Fletcher, v.

<sup>99</sup> Wesley's special abridged edition of John Fletcher, 177.

<sup>100</sup> Telford, *Letters* 6:136-137. Letter to Elizabeth Ritchie (January 17, 1775).

<sup>101</sup> Telford, *Letters*, 6:79-80. Letter to Mrs. Bennis (May 2, 1774).

<sup>102</sup> Patrick Streiff, *Reluctant Saint? A Theological Biography of Fletcher of Madeley*, trans. G. W. S. Knowles (London: Epworth Press, 2001), 183.

<sup>103</sup> Henry Moore, *The Life of the Rev. John Wesley* (London: John Kershaw, 1825), 2:260.

<sup>104</sup> Telford, *Letters*, 6:146, (to John Fletcher, March 22, 1775). Patrick Streiff points out that "Fletcher did not dispute that every person under the dispensation of the Son also stood under the influence of the Holy Spirit. Following a gentle criticism by John Wesley he corrected himself on this point. But he drew a distinction between, on the one hand, pious Jews in the Old Testament and babes in Christ, and, on the other hand, of the Holy Spirit, in the full assurance of faith. They have experienced that baptism, that is, the fullness, of the Spirit . . . Fletcher urged Christians not to seek to reach perfection through their own works, but through a living faith. They should look forward to perfection in three ways: in faith, just as they are, and always. Fletcher left open the question as to how perfection is attained, whether instantaneously, or gradually. There is a growth in grace and love which both precedes and follows baptism with the Spirit." Patrick Streiff, *Reluctant Saint*, 208.

<sup>105</sup> Telford, *Letters*, 6:146, (to John Fletcher, March 22, 1775).

<sup>106</sup> 'Unexampled, Labours', 321.

<sup>107</sup> Telford, *Letters*, 6:174-175, (to John Fletcher, August 18, 1775).

<sup>108</sup> Fletcher, *The Last Check* in *Works of the Rev. John Fletcher*, 6:396.

<sup>109</sup> "The Last Check," in *The Works of the Rev. John Fletcher*, 1:185.

<sup>110</sup> Streiff, 184.

<sup>111</sup> Telford, *Letters*, 6:79-80. Letter to Mrs. Bennis (May 2, 1774).

<sup>112</sup> A letter loosely contained in and bound up in a large volume (or folio) in John Rylands Library, entitled, *Letters Relating to the Wesley Family*, stored in JRULM MAW F1 Box 18. The immediate context of the approval of Fletcher's writings given by Charles Wesley was related to a pamphlet that Fletcher wrote on "Three National Grievances," but Charles expanded on the extent of approval to include Fletcher's writings from *the* beginning.

<sup>113</sup> Joseph Benson, *The Life of the Rev. John Fletcher* (1804), in Fletcher, *Works of John Fletcher*, 1:180-181, (a letter to Charles Wesley, January 1775).

<sup>114</sup> *The Last Check*, *The Works of the Rev. John Fletcher*, 6:117-420.

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<sup>115</sup> Cf. 'Unexampled, Labours' 281, 305. Cf. Laurence W. Wood, "Charles Wesley's Influence on John Fletcher, The Role of the Holy Spirit in Sanctification," *Proceedings of the Charles Wesley Society* (September, 2014), 18:41-58.

<sup>116</sup> Cf. James Mudge, *The Perfect Life*, (Cincinnati : Jennings and Graham, 1911), 300-301.

<sup>117</sup> W. F. Tillett, Dean of the Theological Faculty in Vanderbilt University, regarded Wesley as a "great religious leader," but not as a reliable theological guide. He frankly regarded Wesley's theology as "inadequate, inharmonious, unsatisfactory, perplexing, open to criticism." Cited by James Mudge, *The Perfect Life in Experience and Doctrine: A Restatement* (1911), 300.

<sup>118</sup> Davies, *Societies*, 9:100, "Answer to Mr. Church's Remarks."

<sup>119</sup> Cf. Wesley, *Works* (Jackson) 1:451, "Some Remarks on Mr. Hill's 'Review of All the Doctrines Taught Mr. John Wesley.'"

<sup>120</sup> *First Check to Antinomianism, The Works of the Rev. John Fletcher*, 2:250.

<sup>121</sup> *Last Checks, Works of the Rev. John Fletcher*, 6 383-384.

<sup>122</sup> Fletcher's letter to Mary Bosanquet, written from Marseilles, March 7, 1778, cited and transcribed by Luke Tyerman, *Wesley's Designated Successor*, 411-412.

<sup>123</sup> Published for the first time in *The Asbury Theological Journal*. 50.1 (Spring, 1998):35-56

<sup>124</sup> For a fuller discussion of this essay and its influence with others who had a private copy of it, including Thomas Coke, cf. *The Meaning of Pentecost in Early Methodism* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2002), 263-264.

<sup>125</sup> *The Doctrine of the New Birth*, 46-47.

<sup>126</sup> Telford, *Letters* 6:221 (to John Fletcher, June 1, 1776). Cf. Harold Lindström, *Wesley and Sanctification*, 135.

<sup>127</sup> *The Arminian Magazine* 18 (December, 1795): 614-615.

<sup>128</sup> Outler, Sermon 40, "Christian Perfection," § 2, in *Sermons II*, 2:110.

<sup>129</sup> Richard Hill, *Logica Wesleiensis, or, The Farrago Double Distilled with an Heroic Poem in Praise of Mr. John Wesley* (London: Printed for E. and C. Dilly, in the Poultry; J. Matthews, near Hungerford-market, in the Strand; and W. Harris, No. 70, in St. Paul's Church-yard, 1773), 53.

<sup>130</sup> Cf. *Fifth Check, Works of John Fletcher*, 3:392.

<sup>131</sup> Outler, *Sermons*, 3:617, "On the Death of John Fletcher."

<sup>132</sup> Outler, *Sermons*, 3:627-268, "On the Death of John Fletcher."

<sup>133</sup> John Wesley, *A Short Account of the Life and Death of the Rev. John Fletcher, Vicar of Madeley* (New York: Ezekiel Cooper and John Wilson, 1803), 51-52. Cf. Joseph Benson, *The Life of The Rev. John William de la Flechere, Works of John Fletcher*, 214.

<sup>134</sup> Cf. *The Methodist Magazine* (London edition), 24 (January, 1801): 43. Regarding the "Essay" that Fletcher mentioned, see above, footnote 75.

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<sup>135</sup> *Arminian Magazine*, P467. Volume 4, 1781

<sup>136</sup> Wesley, June 3, 1781, *Journals and Diaries VI (1776-86)*, in *Works of John Wesley*, 23:206.

<sup>137</sup> John F. Hurst, *The History of Methodism* 2:948.

<sup>138</sup> John Wesley, August 8, 1781, *Journals and Diaries VII (1776-1786)*, 23:218.

<sup>139</sup> *The Wesleyan Methodist Magazine* 8 (August 1829): 528.

<sup>140</sup> James MacDonald, *Memoirs of the Rev. Joseph Benson* (New York: Bangs and T. Mason, for the Methodist Episcopal Church, 1823), 52.

<sup>141</sup> Benson, "Thoughts on Perfection," *The Arminian Magazine* 4 (January, 1778):553.

<sup>142</sup> *Last Checks, Works of the Rev. John Fletcher*, 6:360.

<sup>143</sup> "Thoughts on Perfection," *The Arminian Magazine* 4 (January, 1778):549-553.

<sup>144</sup> John Wesley, *Doctrinal and Controversial Treatises II*, eds. Paul Wesley Chilcote and Kenneth J. Collins, The Bicentennial Edition of *The Works of John Wesley*, 13:152-153. The only exception to those who might have been fully justified and fully sanctified at the same moment were the three thousand on the day of Pentecost who quickly moved from the dispensations of the Father, to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. *A Plain Account of Christian Perfection* (7<sup>th</sup> edition, London. G. Paramore, Printer, 1794). Cf. Fletcher, *The First Part of an Equal Check*, abridged by John Wesley to enlarge the reading audience (Bristol: W. Pine Printer, 1774), 179-181.

<sup>145</sup> Cited in *The Methodist Magazine, being a continuation of The Arminian Magazine*, volume XXXIV or the eighth volume of the new series (London: Conference Office, City-Road, 1811), 312.

<sup>146</sup> This letter was written to Miss Loxdale on June 24, 1781, and published in *The Arminian Magazine* 5 (January, 1782); 49.

<sup>147</sup> John Wesley, "An Extract from the Journal of Mr. G. C.," *The Arminian Magazine*, 6 (May 1783): 244-245.

<sup>148</sup> John Wesley, "An Extract from Journal of Mr. G.C," *The Arminian Magazine* 5 (June 1782): 298.

<sup>149</sup> Outler, *Sermons*, 2:454, "The Mystery of Iniquity."

<sup>150</sup> Outler, *Sermons*, 3:45, "Of the Church."

<sup>151</sup> "lower degree" is used frequently by Wesley to indicate a justified believer who is not entirely sanctified. Cf. sermon on Patience.pt.10

<sup>152</sup> Fletcher, *The First Part of An Equal Check*, Wesley's abridged edition (New York: John Wilson and Daniel Hitt, 1809, Second American Edition), 171. Cf. *Ibid.*, 169.

<sup>153</sup> Outler, *Sermons* 3:177, "On Patience."

<sup>154</sup> Cf. *Meaning of Pentecost in Early Methodism*, 245ff.

<sup>155</sup> Maldwyn L. Edwards, *Adam Clarke* (London: The Epworth Press, 1942). 45.

<sup>156</sup> Cf. *Meaning of Pentecost in Early Methodism*, 270-275.

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<sup>157</sup> *An Account of the Infancy, Religious, and Literary Life of Adam Clarke* (autobiography), edited J. B. B. Clarke (New York: B. Waugh and T. Mason, 1833), 1:110.

<sup>158</sup> *Ibid.*, 171. In his autobiography, Clarke said for "most of these sermons" that Wesley preached during October 1783 he had "preserved either the *skeletons*, or the leading thoughts." *The Life of Adam Clarke* (autobiography), 1:110. This information is missing among Adam Clarke's archival collections at Duke University Library.

<sup>159</sup> Outler, *Sermons* 4:525, "Appendix C" by Richard P. Heitzenrater

<sup>160</sup> Wesley on oral preaching in Outler, *Sermons*, p??? in the section 3. The sermon Corpus, first paragraph by Outler

<sup>161</sup> *The Arminian Magazine*, 20 (January, 1797), 49

<sup>162</sup> Henry Moore, *The Life of the Rev. John Wesley*, 2:261.

<sup>163</sup> Cf. Henry Moore's comments about "her preaching" in Moore, *The Life of Mrs. Mary Fletcher* (New York: Mason and Lane, 184), 386.

<sup>164</sup> John Wesley, March 8, 10, and 12, 1787, *Journals and Diaries VII (1787–1791)*, ed. W. Reginald Ward and Richard P. Heitzenrater, vol 24 of *The Bicentennial Edition of the Works of John Wesley* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2003), 7-8.

<sup>165</sup> *The Life of Mrs. Mary Fletcher*, 115.

<sup>166</sup> Wesley, Sermon 63, "The General Spread of the Gospel," §§ 20–25, in Outler *Sermons II, Works of John Wesley*, 494–498.

<sup>167</sup> *Life of Mrs. Mary Fletcher*, 398.