

Atonement, Justification, Sanctification

by Harald Lindström

Wesley's view of atonement emphasizes Christ's work as the sole basis of justification, while the Thirty-nine Articles view atonement as a form of satisfaction.

Scripture: Isaiah 1:16, Matthew 5:19, Romans 6:22, Ephesians 2:8, James 2:17

Topics: "Salvation Theology", "Christian Sanctification"

Description

Harald Lindström preaches about the importance of salvation through faith, emphasizing the distinction between justification and sanctification. He delves into Wesley's view of salvation, highlighting the foundational role of atonement in both forgiveness and the transformation of the soul. Wesley's doctrine stresses the necessity of repentance and its fruits as a precursor to faith, although faith alone is the immediate condition for justification. The sermon underscores the significance of sanctification as the ultimate goal of salvation, leading to a restoration of the soul to its original purity and divine nature.

Transcript

Atonement.

In considering Wesley's attitude to man we have already touched upon his view of salvation and the place in it of sanctification. We now pass on to a closer examination of his idea of salvation, in order, firstly, to determine the principles governing the relation between justification and sanctification, and, secondly, to bring out the importance attributed to sanctification. In this chapter, in clarifying the connection between justification and sanctification, we shall be concerned only with present justification. The question of the relation between sanctification and final justification, or final salvation, will be dealt with later on. The first step must be to scrutinize Wesley's view of atonement. It is the natural starting point here, for both justification and sanctification are based on it.

Wesley never took up the Atonement for special consideration in any of his treatises or tracts. Nor is it the main theme in any of his sermons. His views on it will be found primarily in scattered remarks bearing on his exposition of sin, justification, and sanctification. Yet it was undoubtedly a pivotal and essential theme in both his preaching and his thought.¹

Along with the new knowledge of justification in 1738, the Atonement, the rock on which justification is built, naturally comes to the fore. The controversy between Wesley and William Law, which was engendered by the doctrine of justification, also embraced the Atonement.

Law had seen religion as in the main synonymous with sanctification, which meant conformity to the life of Christ. It was man's duty to bear the cross and follow Christ. Mortification constituted the essence of piety.² Man had to die to the world and live a new life in the spirit of Christ.³ But although Christ is regarded as the cause of human sanctification, considerable emphasis is nevertheless laid on the necessity to exert oneself to the uttermost to achieve that holiness of life and heavenly wisdom in all one's actions which is Law's definition of Christianity.⁴ The struggle for sanctification is also regarded as a necessary condition of justification. Salvation, that is, depends upon the sincerity and completeness of man's effort to attain it. Until he has striven to the last ounce of his strength he cannot win God's favour.⁵

But sin and guilt too have their place in Law's conception of man, and through them his attention is directed towards atonement. Man has perverted the nature with which God endowed him. He has fallen, and consequently has no right to feel proud.⁶ If we consider the Atonement, which was necessary that man might be liberated from the guilt of sin, the frightfulness of sin becomes manifest.⁷ Law sees the Incarnation and the suffering and death of Christ as essential to the re-establishment of man's fellowship with God. "Nothing less," he says, "has been required to take away the guilt of our sins, than the sufferings and death of the Son of God. Had He not taken our nature upon Him, our nature had been for ever separated from God, and incapable of ever appearing before Him."⁸ Without the mediation of the Son of God and His intercession with the Father, man would not even have been in a position to pray for the forgiveness of his sins.⁹ Because of his sin, man is subject to punishment, and the only way in which he can obtain the favour of God is through the Atonement effected by Christ.¹⁰

Yet this line of thought does not lead to a Reformed adjustment of the relation between justification and sanctification. Christ's work for mankind in the Atonement is not given significance enough to make such a step possible. The idea of atonement is modified in Law, as it was in practical mysticism in general, by the notion of man's own mortification. Christ's suffering on the cross is not regarded as a vicarious suffering for mankind. It is only a representational act in the name of mankind which has been credited to man in the sense that his union with Christ is accepted by God. Christ is a sacrifice to make the sacrifices of mankind acceptable to God.¹¹ For Law Christ's work of atonement does not constitute the only ground of deliverance from guilt and the favour of God: another factor is man's own mortification. Man must practise self-denial and bear his cross if he is to benefit from Christ's atonement. Law maintains that "all the sons of Adam are to go through a painful, sickly life, denying and mortifying their natural appetites, and crucifying the lusts of the flesh, in order to have a share in the atonement of our Saviour's death."¹² The restoration of God's favour demands not only "so great an Atonement of the Son of God" but also so great a "repentance of our own."¹³

Wesley's new insight into, and experience of, salvation by faith was made possible because he too acquired a new way of looking at the question of atonement.¹⁴ For him Christ's work of atonement became the sole basis of justification and regeneration. Justifying faith became a faith in Christ's work of atonement and His merits. Thus it was inevitable that Wesley should find himself compelled to settle matters with William Law, who had been his principal spiritual mentor for a number of years. He saw clearly that the main source of dissension between them was the Atonement. Wesley's chief concern was now "a living faith in the blood of Christ."¹⁵ Writing to Law in May, 1738, he expresses the fundamental difference between their views in the words: "He is our propitiation through faith in His blood."¹⁶ It is true that the Atonement, as we have seen, had a place in Law's theology, but it was not, as with Wesley, of such fundamental importance for justification that in this respect man's own actions could be left entirely out of account. To Wesley, Law's way of salvation now seemed a way of law, which he had tested but

found quite impracticable. Of course Wesley undoubtedly exaggerates Law's legalistic tendency. It had assumed excessive proportions for him precisely because of his earlier concentration on Law's insistence on sanctification. This had meant that Wesley had put all the emphasis on man's bearing of his own cross and mortification, while he had hardly paid any attention at all to what Law had to say about Christ's work of atonement.¹⁷ Consequently Wesley now tends to underestimate the importance attributed to grace in Law's conception of salvation. All the same, it is true that in Law the idea of Atonement is entirely subordinated to sanctification. Further, Wesley's criticism cannot be said to involve any misrepresentation of Law's principles, for in Law's conception of man's justification, grace is not fully freed from the trammels of the legalistic framework.

Wesley, then, came to regard Christ's work of atonement as the sole ground of human justification. "The sole cause of our acceptance with God (or, that for the sake of which, on the account of which, we are accepted) is the righteousness and the death of Christ, who fulfilled God's law, and died in our stead."¹⁸ Justification cannot therefore be based on any righteousness in man himself: neither righteousness of outward acts nor righteousness of inward temper. Thus sanctification becomes not a cause, but an effect, of justification.¹⁹ Faith alone is regarded as the necessary condition for justification, a faith which does not embrace any form of human sanctity, but out of which inward and outward sanctity spring.²⁰

The controversy with Law and the other mystics brings out clearly the importance that Wesley now ascribed to the Atonement. We have already hinted at its significance for the relation between justification and sanctification. The purport of the breach with the mystics can be summed up in the statement that he changed his mind about the way of salvation. But as to the goal of salvation, he remained in agreement with Law and practical mysticism. As we shall see later on, he continued to regard sanctification as the true aim and essence of religion.²¹ Yet the fact that Wesley's way of salvation did not remain Law's, was a natural consequence of the former's deepened conception of Sin.²²

Before attempting a definition of Wesley's idea of atonement, we turn our attention to the view of it contained in the Thirty-nine Articles and the Homily of Salvation of the Church of England.

In the Thirty-nine Articles it will be found in a few sentences dealing with Christ's work of atonement, which is particularly treated in three of the Articles. In connection with the Incarnation it is maintained that Christ, who was a true God and a true man, "truly suffered, was crucified, dead and buried, to reconcile his Father to us, and to be a sacrifice, not only for original guilt, but also for all actual sins of men."²³ The Roman Catholic doctrine of the sacrifices of Masses is rejected. The sacrifice of Christ, "once made, is that perfect redemption, propitiation, and satisfaction, for all the sins of the whole world, both original and actual; and there is none other satisfaction for sin, but that alone."²⁴ In the Article on justification, Christ's merits are said to be the only basis of human justification: "We are accounted righteous before God, only for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ by Faith, and not for our own works or deservings: wherefore, that we are justified by Faith only is a most wholesome Doctrine, and very full of comfort, as more largely is expressed in the Homily of Justification."²⁵

Orthodox satisfaction would seem to be the dominant conception in the view of atonement reflected in these brief formulations.²⁶ The legal order and the judicial system emerge as the governing principle. The work of Christ, by which God is atoned, is perceived as a satisfaction. By it God's justice is satisfied. Yet it does not follow that the idea of grace is absent. In the Article on justification, where we are told that man is justified by the merit of Christ, the stress is laid on the justification of man solely "for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ by Faith" and not "for our own works and deservings." Of the alternatives, the

merit of Christ on the one hand and our own works on the other, the former is put first to accentuate the principle that justification takes place by grace alone. But while this theocentric view is seen in the attitude to grace, an anthropocentric tendency seems simultaneously to emerge in the notion of comfort for distressed man.²⁷

The Homily of Salvation, which explains Article XI in the Thirty-nine Articles, shows still more clearly that this view of atonement is in alignment with the orthodox doctrine of satisfaction. Thus it agrees with the Latin idea of atonement, which, dating from Tertullian and Cyprian, is fully developed in Anselm, and in modified form continues in orthodox theology.²⁸ The act of atonement is seen from the point of view of both grace and justice, but the latter seems to be the dominant principle. As all men have broken the law of God and thus their fellowship with Him, God justifies them instead through Christ. Thus no one can be justified by his own acts²⁹; the justification of man occurs by the grace of God³⁰. Implicit in, but partly independent of, this view of grace, a conception of justice also emerges. We see it in the way atonement is regarded as a form of satisfaction. The law broken by man must be fulfilled. This is done through Christ. God sent His only Son to fulfil the law for us and that by shedding His most precious blood He should provide God with that satisfaction or compensation for our sins which was necessary if God's wrath against us was to be appeased.³¹ Since atonement is thus regarded as a form of satisfaction tendered to God, the work of Christ is seen as partly independent of God's and operating as a separate factor, distinct from God's, in redemption. In this way the free operation of God's grace is interrupted. This is also seen when the act of atonement is regarded as sacrifice. Christ's sacrifice, seen as meeting the just exactions of God, is regarded as the immediate -- and from God's grace partly independent -- condition for the re-establishment of fellowship with God. Redemption is represented as a ransom paid by Christ to God.³²

The relation between the functions of God and of Christ in redemption reflects two aspects of the Divine nature. By the redemption God is conceived to have "tempered his justice and mercy together." In this way the human intelligence is provided with a satisfactory answer to the question as to how redemption can be given both freely and by payment of ransom.³³ As a result of this adjustment the consequences of neither God's justice nor His mercy have been fully exerted. Without mercy his justice would have sentenced us to the everlasting captivity of the devil; His mercy, on the other hand, would have freed us without the payment of a just ransom. Instead, "with his endless mercy," God has "joined his most upright and equal justice," delivering us from our captivity without recompense from us -- we had no means of paying it -- and ordaining a ransom through the precious blood of Christ. As well as paying this ransom, Christ has also wholly fulfilled the law for us.³⁴ Thus justification is bound up with three related factors: From God, His mercy and grace; from Christ, His satisfaction of God's justice by the ransom of His blood and His perfect fulfilment of the law; and from man: a true and living faith in the merits of Christ, a faith which is yet not his own work but God's working in him. Through faith man relies on the promise of God's mercy and the forgiveness of sins. Thus any idea of man achieving justification due to merits resulting from any action of his own is entirely eliminated. The mind is directed towards the merits of Christ instead of man's own, and at the same time this brings the idea of God's grace to the fore.³⁵ But joined to this view of grace is that of justice: equally balanced, both God's mercy and His justice are operative.

Here I have called particular attention to the feature specially characteristic of the orthodox doctrine of satisfaction. The main point was that the just claims of God had to be fulfilled and compensation paid. Even Christ's vicarious suffering of punishment was regarded as satisfaction. It is true that the grace of God is also seen in the Atonement, but this grace is an integral part of the order of law. Thus, in the orthodox way, the Atonement expresses an unbroken legal order and a broken act of God.

In conformity with his general subscription to the Thirty-nine Articles and the homilies of the Anglican Church Wesley adopted in his abridgement without essential changes the three Articles that deal specifically with Atonement.³⁶ Apart from his general solidarity with Anglicanism, his conception of sin, which was expounded in the previous chapter, would in itself lead us to expect his concurrence in the doctrine of the work of Christ as satisfaction and in the related idea of the merits of Christ. He did concur in this. It was through the sin of Adam, who was not only the father but also the representative of mankind, that all became subject to sin and punishment; similarly Christ, as the second Adam and representative of the human race, bore the sins of all. He suffered on behalf of all. His sacrifice was a full, perfect and sufficient satisfaction for the sins of the whole world.³⁷ Christ bore our punishment.³⁸ He paid the price for us.³⁹ Consequently man has nothing to offer to God but the merits of Christ.⁴⁰ Because of their inward and outward evil all that men deserve is the wrath of God and eternal damnation. Yet they can do nothing to assuage that wrath, atone for their sins, and escape the punishment they rightly deserve. They have no means of making satisfaction to the justice of God for their sins.⁴¹ Thus their only hope is the vicarious suffering of Christ.⁴²

This train of thought, which is found in the first of Wesley's sermons published after his experience in 1738, continues to be expressed; we see him considering the idea of the payment chargeable for the debt man owes to God. The man who has undergone first repentance and thus become aware of the punishment he merits, finds himself confronted by this problem of compensation and of his inability to discharge his debt: "But what shall he give in exchange for his soul, which is forfeited to the just vengeance of God? 'Wherewithal shall he come before the Lord?' How shall he pay Him that he oweth? Were he from this moment to perform the most perfect obedience to every command of God, this would make no amends for a single sin, for any one act of past disobedience; seeing he owes God all the service he is able to perform, from this moment to all eternity: could he pay this, it would make no manner of amends for what he ought to have done before. He sees himself therefore utterly helpless with regard to atoning for his past sins; utterly unable to make any amends to God, to pay any ransom for his own soul."⁴³ Man's only hope is therefore "to be washed in His blood, and renewed by His almighty Spirit, who himself 'bare all our sins in His own body on the tree!'"⁴⁴ In conformity with the Anglican Homily of Salvation, Wesley further maintains that "these things must go together in our justification; -- upon God's part, His great mercy and grace; upon Christ's part, the satisfaction of God's justice; and upon our part, true and lively faith in the merits of Jesus Christ."⁴⁵ In the court of Divine justice Christ acts as mediator between God and the sinner. In this way Divine justice is satisfied and man can obtain forgiveness through faith.⁴⁶ With his active and passive righteousness Christ effects perfect atonement.⁴⁷ The satisfaction thus given by Christ, Wesley thinks, is given by Him qua homo. It is as Man that Christ mediates between God and mankind.⁴⁸ In his activity as High Priest Christ is also considered as a representative of mankind.⁴⁹

This agreement in Wesley with certain essential features in the traditional orthodox view of atonement⁵⁰ is again conspicuous in another controversy with Law, after the latter had come under the influence of Böhme's mysticism. Law's fundamentally mystical position led him to identify the Atonement with the regeneration of fallen man.⁵¹ Christ's death did not constitute any satisfaction to God, but was only a means to the transformation of man and a demonstration of Christ's superiority to the world, death, Hell, and the Devil.⁵² To Wesley as to Law the death of Christ was the only possible way by which the Almighty might overcome the evil in fallen mankind. But this was true only if Christ really atoned for our sins.⁵³

To Wesley, therefore, it was important that Christ's death should also have an objective import with relation to God. It had to have the meaning of an objective event establishing a new basis for human justification. Here as previously Wesley regarded Christ's work of atonement as the payment of ransom or satisfaction. By analogy with the parable of the kingdom of Heaven as a king who would take account of his servants, the relation of fallen mankind to God is seen as that of debtor to creditor. Man cannot pay his debt. Nevertheless God has the right to insist on its discharge, and if this fails, to hand him over to the tormentors.⁵⁴ Christ, however, was a ransom for us all and a sacrifice to God.⁵⁵ His work acquired satisfactoral and meritorious significance for all men.⁵⁶

This difference between Law and Wesley in their attitude to atonement is naturally accompanied by divergence in their attitude to God. The former is a consequence of the latter. Whereas Law denies that wrath ever was or will be attributable to God, Wesley maintains that He is capable of wrath just as He is capable of justice.⁵⁷ Law holds that wrath and pain are attributes of the created world only.⁵⁸ God is goodness alone, and nothing but happiness can emanate from Him.⁵⁹ Punishment cannot emanate from Him.⁶⁰ His punitive justice is denied.⁶¹ In their respective conceptions of God, Law evinces a superficial monism and Wesley a more dualistic tendency. To Wesley God's mercy is mixed with His justice.⁶² His wrath bears the same relation to His justice as His love to His mercy. In human terms the love and wrath of God are passions corresponding to the dispositions of mercy and justice. If, Wesley says, we deny that God is capable of wrath it would only be consistent to deny His justice also.⁶³ From all eternity God was infinitely just and consequently His wrath had to manifest itself when man sinned.⁶⁴ Thus there is in God punitive justice, and Adam's sin must necessarily call forth His punishment.⁶⁵

Differing thus from Law in this matter of God's wrath⁶⁶, Wesley also differs to some extent from Zinzendorf, to whom God's wrath does not seem to have the same force and significance⁶⁷. Consequently, Wesley gives more prominence than Zinzendorf to the objective side of the Atonement.⁶⁸

Now as Wesley regarded Christ's work of atonement as a form of satisfaction, it is chiefly a judicial view that finds expression in his conception of it. God's justice must be satisfied, compensation must be paid. Christ is thought to have given this satisfaction *qua homo* and thus the Atonement is not regarded as a single continuous act of God. It is true that God takes the initiative in His grace, but in the act of atonement itself His grace is interrupted by His justice.

Grace, however, also has its place in Wesley's idea of atonement. He dwells a great deal on the grace and love of God as reflected in His willingness to provide means of satisfaction.⁶⁹ He emphasizes the love of God or Christ in the Atonement, although this love is not specifically defined.⁷⁰ Just as in the Thirty-nine Articles and the Homily of Salvation, he considers the satisfaction and merits of Christ to express Divine grace. Salvation comes to man not because of his own works but through Christ alone.⁷¹ The issue is put thus: salvation on the grounds of what God did for us in Christ, or alternatively on the grounds of man's own merits; and as the former is the true way the stress is laid on grace. A further point is that the sentence of damnation on all men was necessary in order that the inexhaustible wealth of Christ might be made manifest.⁷²

Wesley is not unfamiliar with the concept of Christ's work of atonement as an act of deliverance and conquest, although this is implicit rather than explicit and found chiefly in the earlier sermons. The Atonement is a step after which God no longer puts forth His wrath but instead appears as a loving father. When Wesley regards the devil as "the executioner of the wrath and righteous vengeance of God⁷³," the Atonement is seen as Christ's victory over the devil. The association of the devil with God's just sentence

leads on to the idea that the victory over the devil both implies that God reconciles and is reconciled: at one and the same time He is both the subject and the object of atonement.⁷⁴ In consonance with this Wesley writes of that perpetual and victorious Divine intervention against the powers of Evil that so greatly helps him who believes: "He feared not all the powers of darkness, whom God was daily bruising under his feet. Least of all was he afraid to die; nay, he desired to 'depart, and to be with Christ'; (Phil. i. 23;) who, 'through death, had destroyed him that had the power of death, even the devil; and delivered them who, through fear of death, were all their lifetime', till then, 'subject to bondage'. (Heb. ii. 15.)"⁷⁵

Although in this way atonement can sometimes appear as an act of liberation, this is never more than ancillary to the main train of thought. The characteristic expression of the idea of atonement lies in satisfaction. Accordingly, Wesley links the Atonement with Christ's office as High Priest, which as well as His vicarious work of atonement also comprises His intercession with the Father on man's behalf. The victorious and liberating aspect of Christ's work finds expression primarily in His office as King.⁷⁶ A natural consequence of this partition of Christ's offices is that the conception of satisfaction and the victor theme are thus distinguished; satisfaction standing first in the work of atonement, while the idea of victory and liberation is realized in Christ's royal office. In this way the victory idea is associated not with Christ's work for us but with His work in us; the restoration of the image of God in man. And thus the idea of victory is expressed not in the Atonement but in the New Birth and sanctification.

In the orthodox manner it is thus satisfaction that especially distinguishes Wesley's attitude to atonement. But this does not mean that his idea of satisfaction is exactly identical with the orthodox conception of it, particularly as formulated in the classical period. Though Wesley can include both the active and the passive obedience of Christ in the work of atonement, the stress nevertheless lies on the latter. From the very beginning the thought of the death and suffering of Christ predominates⁷⁷, and in a controversy with a contemporary representative of orthodoxy, James Hervey⁷⁸, Wesley virtually confines satisfaction to comprise passive obedience. He contends that it was the passive obedience of Christ that laid the foundation of justification. True, he speaks also of the meritorious life of Christ, but always in connection with His atoning death. Christ's fulfilment of the moral law, moreover, is not regarded as essential to our redemption. The satisfaction through the death of Christ is sufficient for our full forgiveness. Christ was a substitute only in suffering punishment, not in His fulfilling of the law.⁷⁹ The fact that in essence satisfaction only implies His suffering and death is conditioned by the alternatives with which according to Wesley man was confronted. The choice was simple: to obey and fulfil the law or to die.⁸⁰ But Christ died in obedience to the Father⁸¹, and His death alone gave full satisfaction for the sins of the world⁸².

As Wesley gives such prominence to the death of Christ and regards only His penal suffering as substitutional, it is clear that the judicial factor cannot be as important in His view of atonement as it was to the orthodox. If atonement also comprises a fulfilment of the law by proxy, as it did to Hervey, the legal concept must obviously be emphasized. Clearly the idea of the law fulfilled by Christ involved the restoration of a greater degree of equilibrium to the judicial order deranged by the Fall.

Parallel to this view of atonement is Wesley's conception of justification. Here he had to diverge from the orthodox outlook, in which the imputation of Christ's righteousness is involved in justification together with forgiveness and acceptance by God. To Wesley, justification implies the two latter factors only.⁸³ It is true that he also speaks of the imputation of Christ's righteousness to the believer, but this does not imply more than that by virtue of Christ's righteousness man shall obtain forgiveness and acceptance.⁸⁴ In this way Christ's righteousness is regarded only as the meritorious cause or ground of human justification.⁸⁵ Here Wesley was guided by a twofold motive: on the one hand he was eager to repudiate all thought of any

righteousness or merit in man on the basis of which he might be justified⁸⁶; on the other, he wanted to repudiate a tendency in man to rely on Christ's righteousness imputed to him and to neglect the demand for inherent righteousness⁸⁷.

Wesley's rejection of the idea of a fulfilment of the law by proxy is an outcome of his struggle against antinomianism. He finds its very essence to lie in the idea that Christ has met the claims of the law on man's behalf and that therefore he is not called upon to fulfil the moral law.⁸⁸ Accordingly he disassociates the fulfilment of the law from atonement and justification and attaches it instead to sanctification. This explains why sanctification in the sense of fulfilment of the law occupies such an important place in his theology.

II

The Law.

In his treatment of the law Wesley, like the orthodox theologians⁸⁹, could not agree with the dualistic view of Luther. It is typical that the law is always regarded as holy and good.⁹⁰ Thus he expressly repudiates Luther's belief that it can be ranged with sin, death, and the devil.⁹¹ Accordingly he cannot see it as an evil power overcome by Christ in the Atonement.

This law, which became so important to Wesley, is exclusively the moral law. It is regarded as "an incorruptible picture of the High and Holy ONE that inhabiteth eternity." It is the making visible of that God whose spirit none has seen nor can see. "It is He whom, in His essence, no man hath seen, or can see, made visible to men and angels. It is the face of God unveiled; God manifested to His creatures as they are able to bear it; manifested to give, and not to destroy, life -- that they may see God and live. It is the heart of God disclosed to man. Yea, in some sense, we may apply to this law what the Apostle says of His Son: it is -- the streaming forth or out-beaming of His glory, the express image of His person."⁹² This law, ordained by God, is further defined as "a copy of the eternal mind, a transcript of the divine nature; yea, it is the fairest offspring of the everlasting Father, the brightest efflux of His essential wisdom, the visible beauty of the Most High." It is "the delight and wonder of cherubim and seraphim, and all the company of heaven, and the glory and joy of every wise believer, every well instructed child of God upon earth."⁹³ Wesley also sees it as an eternal, unchanging, rational order of things. "If we survey the law of God in another point of view," he says, "it is supreme, unchangeable reason; it is unalterable rectitude; it is the everlasting fitness of all things that are or ever were created."⁹⁴

In proceeding to explain the characteristics of the law, he pays special attention to its holiness, justice, and goodness.⁹⁵ Above all it is holy. It is "in the highest degree, pure, chaste, clean, holy."⁹⁶ It follows that it is "the immediate offspring" and "the express resemblance, of God, who is essential holiness."⁹⁷ It is "pure from all sin, clean and unspotted from any touch of evil." Just as sin is essentially "enmity to God," God's law is "enmity to sin."⁹⁸ Thus it can neither be sin itself or a cause of sin. The law unveils sin and brings it into the light of day, so that it can be seen in its proper hideousness. If committed against better knowledge, "being stripped even of the poor plea of ignorance, it loses its excuse, as well as disguise, and becomes far more odious both to God and man." Thus exposed to the light of the law, sin will rage more wildly. It will become still more violent when the law tries to repress it. Yet this is no blemish: the law is holy all the same. What it does show, however, is how evil and corrupt is the heart of man.⁹⁹

That the law is just implies that it gives each man his due and exactly prescribes what is right with respect to the Creator, ourselves, and every other created being. In every respect the law is suited to the nature of

things and their mutual relations.¹⁰⁰ There is nothing arbitrary in it.¹⁰¹ It is an immutable rule for what is right and what wrong.¹⁰² Since the law thus depends on the nature and relations of things, it must, Wesley continues, depend on God's will, for it is solely through that will that these exist. In this way the law becomes an expression of God himself, for God and God's will cannot be separated.¹⁰³

The third characteristic of the law, its goodness, is disclosed to Wesley when he considers God's motive in revealing His will in the law, or when he contemplates its nature and effects. The law resembles the source from which it flows, viz., God's goodness. It was goodness alone that impelled God to impart this image of himself to the angels and later to men. Nor was it anything other than goodness that impelled Him after the Fall to reveal His will once again to mankind.¹⁰⁴ The law by nature is "full of goodness and benignity: it is mild and kind; it is, as the Psalmist expresses it, 'sweeter than honey and the honey-comb'."¹⁰⁵ Since the law itself is good it follows that its effects are good too. "As the tree is, so are its fruits. The fruits of the law of God written in the heart are 'righteousness, and peace, and assurance for ever'. Or rather, the law itself is righteousness, filling the soul with a peace which passeth all understanding and causing us to rejoice evermore, in the testimony of a good conscience toward God."¹⁰⁶

Thus Wesley affirms the supremacy and inviolability of the moral law. Nevertheless, the Christian, he says, is no longer subject to the law, but under grace. In what sense, then, is he outside the jurisdiction of the law?

First the Christian is free from Jewish ritual.¹⁰⁷ Because of the work of Christ the Mosaic ceremonial law is no longer valid.¹⁰⁸ It has been abolished for ever.¹⁰⁹ Further, the Christian is independent of the whole Mosaic dispensation. No longer under "the Jewish dispensation" he is now under "the gracious Christian dispensation." Because his relation to God is that of child to father he can now serve "without fear, in righteousness and holiness with a free, loving, childlike spirit."¹¹⁰ Through Christ's atonement he is independent of "the whole Mosaic institution" and brought "under a new dispensation: 'That ye should' without any blame 'be married to another, even to Him who is raised from the dead'; and hath thereby given proof of His authority to make the change; 'that we should bring forth fruit unto God'." This is now possible for the Christian because he has learnt to understand the efficacy of Christ's resurrection. Previously, when he was under the power of corrupt nature, sin brought forth the fruit of death. The workings of sin were manifested and inflamed through the Mosaic law, yet not conquered. Now, however, man is delivered from "that whole moral, as well as ceremonial economy" and finds himself "in a new spiritual dispensation." Whereas before his service was but outward and by the letter he shall now serve Christ in a new manner in accordance with the Spirit.¹¹¹

With Christ's work of atonement a new foundation was laid for the salvation of man. The Christian is now independent of the moral law, moreover, in so far as he is not obliged to keep it as the condition of his acceptance with God.¹¹² He is not concerned with it as a means of procuring his justification.¹¹³ Thus Wesley attributes no importance to the moral law in loco justificationis.¹¹⁴

A related fact is that the Christian is freed from the condemnation of the law. The believer has been absolved by Christ from the condemnation and the punishment to which his transgressions render him liable.¹¹⁵ He is absolved from "the curse of the moral law¹¹⁶," from its "condemning power¹¹⁷." We are told of the man who no longer finds himself under the law, but under grace, that: "As he is no longer under the ceremonial law, nor under the Mosaic institution; as he is not obliged to keep even the moral law, as the condition of his acceptance; so he is delivered from the wrath and the curse of God, from all sense of

guilt and condemnation, and from all that horror and fear of death and hell whereby he was all his life before subject to bondage."¹¹⁸

Thus Wesley repudiates the moral law as a necessary condition of justification. The Christian is nevertheless under an obligation to fulfil the law on the basis of faith.¹¹⁹ The moral law, which the gospel of Christ manifested to man in all its clarity¹²⁰, will as such survive eternally. It is regarded as an expression both of God's justice and of His grace. This is seen in Wesley's three uses of the law. The first use is to instil conviction of sin. It unmasks man and reveals to him his real nature; that he is dead to God and devoid of all spiritual life.¹²¹ The second use is to lead man to Christ that he may live. Although in these functions the law acts as "a severe schoolmaster," love is operative behind it and uses the law for its own ends.¹²²

The third use of the law concerns its place in the Christian life. The law does not only lead man to Christ; it also serves to keep the justified and regenerated man alive and helps him to grow in grace.¹²³ The function of the law in promoting sanctification is also threefold: 1. To convince the Christian of the sin that remains in him and thus to keep him so close to Christ that His blood may cleanse him every moment; 2. To "derive strength from Christ" to the believer in order to supply him with that strength which Christ bestows to enable him to do as His law commands; 3. To confirm his hope of whatever the law commands and he has not yet attained, "of receiving grace upon grace," till he is "in actual possession of the fulness" of God's promises.¹²⁴

Wesley associates the law very closely with Christ. This is particularly true when he is speaking of its usefulness in the Christian life. The importance attributed to the law indicates that here he is in closer agreement with Calvin than with Luther.¹²⁵ The more the Christian sees himself in the mirror of the perfect law, the more he feels the need of Christ's atoning blood and of His purifying spirit.¹²⁶ The law drives man to Christ, and Christ drives him to the law. "On the one hand, the height and depth of the law constrains me to fly to the love of God in Christ; on the other, the love of God in Christ endears the law to me 'above gold or precious stones'; seeing I know every part of it is a gracious promise which my Lord will fulfil in its season."¹²⁷ Thus the law and grace are not regarded merely as two poles between which the Christian life is ignited and lived. The latter is also -- and primarily -- regarded as a force by means of which the law is to be fulfilled in man. By faith the law shall be established in the heart and life of man.¹²⁸ Wesley is able to treat the law and the gospel as the same thing seen from different aspects¹²⁹, and similarly he identifies the fulfilment of the law with love in the Christian life. It is typical of him to regard sanctification as an expression of both the law and love.¹³⁰

III

Justification and Sanctification.

We have already seen that the Atonement is the foundation of justification and sanctification. Here justification, taken as the individual application of the Atonement¹³¹, is more closely related to it than sanctification. Man is justified by faith because of Christ's atonement. His sins are forgiven and he is accepted by God. Justification, that is to say, is immediately linked up with Christ's work as High Priest. Since it is true that the latter constitutes the necessary condition for Christ's royal office yet is distinguishable from it, it is possible to say that sanctification will bear an indirect relation to atonement. For sanctification is principally regarded as the consequence of Christ's royal office¹³² or the work of the Holy Ghost¹³³.

Although justification and sanctification are closely associated, Wesley nevertheless thinks it necessary to distinguish between them. In the wide sense he is able immediately after 1738 to include both the forgiveness of sins and the New Birth in justification.¹³⁴ In the strict sense, however, justification only implies, as we have already seen, the forgiveness of sins and the acceptance incident to it. In this way it is distinguished from sanctification, which begins in man with new birth. The latter implies a real, inherent righteousness. It is true that sanctification is said to be "in some degree, the immediate fruit of justification," but also "a distinct gift of God, and of a totally different nature." Whereas justification is defined as "what God does for us through His Son," sanctification is "what He works in us by His spirit."¹³⁵ But the distinction is seen most clearly if we say that justification involves a relative, and sanctification a real, change. The former is essentially an objective change.¹³⁶ There is a transformation in the relation between man and God with the result that man is now possessed of God's favour. The latter is a subjective change, a real renewal in man himself. The former involves deliverance from the guilt of sin; the latter, liberation from the power (in the New Birth) and root (in entire sanctification)¹³⁷ of sin. The relation between justification and new birth is described as follows: "But though it be allowed, that justification and the new birth are, in point of time, inseparable from each other, yet they are easily distinguished, as being not the same, but things of a widely different nature. Justification implies only a relative, the new birth a real, change. God in justifying us does something for us; in begetting us again, He does the work in us. The former changes our outward relation to God, so that of enemies we become children; by the latter our inmost souls are changed, so that of sinners we become saints. The one restores us to the favour, the other to the image, of God. The one is the taking away the guilt, the other the taking away the power, of sin: so that, although they are joined together in point of time, yet are they of wholly distinct natures."¹³⁸

Thus the differentiation of salvation into the separate stages of a process -- to which the next chapter will be devoted -- is already apparent here. Nevertheless the relative transformation of justification and the real transformation of the New Birth are only logically, not temporally, distinguished.¹³⁹ In describing justification and sanctification in a later sermon the former is thus defined: "Justification is another word for pardon. It is the forgiveness of all our sins; and, what is necessarily implied therein, our acceptance with God. The price whereby this hath been procured for us (commonly termed 'the meritorious cause of our justification'), is the blood and righteousness of Christ; or, to express it a little more clearly, all that Christ hath done and suffered for us, till He 'poured out His soul for the transgressors'. The immediate effects of justification are, the peace of God, a 'peace that passeth all understanding', and a 'rejoicing in hope of the glory of God' 'with joy unspeakable and full of glory'." Simultaneously with justification, sanctification begins. "And at the same time that we are justified, yea, in that very moment, sanctification begins. In that instant we are born again, born from above, born of the Spirit: there is a real as well as a relative change. We are inwardly renewed by the power of God. We feel 'the love of God shed abroad in our heart by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us'; producing love to all mankind, and more especially to the children of God; expelling the love of the world, the love of pleasure, of ease, of honour, of money, together with pride, anger, self-will, and every other evil temper; in a word, changing the earthly, sensual, devilish mind, into 'the mind which was in Christ Jesus'."¹⁴⁰ Although justification and the New Birth are thus closely associated, both being seen as instantaneous and simultaneous events, they are nevertheless distinguished and regarded as distinct works. The distinction between justification and sanctification now takes on temporal quality as well; this becomes more marked still in the contemplation of continued sanctification, in its successive stages.

So far we have been trying to establish definitions of these general concepts. We must now attempt a more exact definition of the relation between justification and sanctification. It will be best, however, to narrow down the problem here and examine it only in so far as it bears on a presentation of Wesley's doctrine of justification by faith.

Wesley himself considered that in this doctrine he was in full harmony with the attitude of the Reformation¹⁴¹, and many modern scholars have agreed with him. On this point Wesley and the Reformation are found to concur.¹⁴²

This is undoubtedly correct in so far as Wesley's doctrine of justification expresses a fundamentally Reformed attitude. The law had no place in loco justificationis. Further, we have already seen how it was bound up with his view of man. The doctrine of justification by faith without the works of the law was clearly a natural consequence.

The new view of justification turned Wesley's attention to God's grace in Christ. This is now the only cause of human justification and new birth. Since man can offer God nothing but sin, this salvation is God's gift.¹⁴³ It comes to man by faith.¹⁴⁴ Typical of this justifying faith is a personal trust in the efficacy of Christ's work for mankind. This trust is above all a trust in the atonement of Christ.¹⁴⁵

Wesley affirms the way of faith and grace instead of works. Man is justified and re-born solely by God's grace; he cannot plead any righteousness of his own.¹⁴⁶ Nor is faith regarded as a work of man by which he may be justified. Although sanctification and good works are the necessary consequences, the latter does not as such include them.¹⁴⁷ It is the sinner whom God justifies. "God justifieth not the godly, but the ungodly; not those that are holy already, but the unholy."¹⁴⁸ We can say of Him: "He seeks and saves that which is lost. He pardons those who need His pardoning mercy. He saves from the guilt of sin (and, at the same time, from the power) sinners of every kind, of every degree; men who, till then, were altogether ungodly; in whom the love of the Father was not; and, consequently, in whom dwelt no good thing, no good or truly Christian temper; but all such as were evil and abominable -- pride, anger, love of the world, the genuine fruits of that carnal mind which is 'enmity against God'."¹⁴⁹ The notion that man must be sanctified before he can be justified, i. e., obtain forgiveness and be accepted by God, is totally rejected. "So far from it," Wesley writes of this belief, "that the very supposition is not only flatly impossible (for where there is no love of God, there is no holiness, and there is no love of God but from a sense of His loving us), but also grossly, intrinsically absurd, contradictory to itself. For it is not a saint but a sinner that is forgiven, and under the notion of a sinner."¹⁵⁰ Further, no works are good in the Christian sense that do not issue from justifying faith. All truly good works are done after justification.¹⁵¹

This opposition between the way of the law and the way of faith is particularly strongly stressed in the period immediately after the evangelical revolution in his doctrine of justification. Here Wesley employs the idea which is so typical of Calvinist theology, that of the two covenants: the covenant of works and the covenant of grace.¹⁵² He maintains, for instance¹⁵³, that the conditions under which God gave man the covenant of works were quite different from those pertaining to the covenant of grace. The former was given in Paradise and required man's perfect and unflinching obedience to every provision of God's law. It was the necessary condition for man to remain in that state of perfection in which he was created. The second covenant, on the other hand, was established through Christ with fallen man.¹⁵⁴ The aim of fallen man is to regain the grace and life of God. For this all that is necessary is faith, "living faith in Him who, through God, justifies him that obeyed not."¹⁵⁵ The covenant of works "required of Adam, and all his children, to pay the price themselves, in consideration of which they were to receive all the future

blessings of God," whereas under the covenant of grace, "seeing we have nothing to pay, God 'frankly forgives us all': provided only, that we believe in Him who hath paid the price for us; who hath given Himself a 'propitiation for our sins, for the sins of the whole world'."156 Good works done by man himself are not a necessary condition for his justification. "Knowest thou not, that thou canst do nothing but sin, till thou art reconciled to God? Wherefore, then, dost thou say, 'I must do this and this first, and then I shall believe'? Nay, but first believe! Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, the propitiation for thy sins. Let this good foundation first be laid, and then thou shalt do all things well."157

This evangelical attitude is maintained. Justifying faith is seen as a result of man's total inability to attain justification by his own works. Man must abandon all reliance on his own works and put his trust solely in the atonement of Christ.158 He may not plead any sanctity or works of his own as grounds for acceptance; nor need anything of the kind precede this.159 Wesley answers the question as to the sense in which the righteousness of Christ is imputed to the believer, as follows: "In this: all believers are forgiven and accepted, not for the sake of anything in them, or of anything that ever was, that is, or ever can be done by them, but wholly and solely for the sake of what Christ hath done and suffered for them. I say again, not for the sake of anything in them, or done by them, of their own righteousness or works: 'Not for works of righteousness which we have done, but of His own mercy He saved us.' 'By grace ye are saved through faith; ... not of works, lest any man should boast'; but wholly and solely for the sake of what Christ hath done and suffered for us. We are 'justified freely by His grace, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ'."160

In this attitude to justification Wesley is obviously following Reformed principles. The relation between justification and sanctification is adjusted on evangelical lines: the latter is not considered a necessary condition for the former.

To this extent Wesley himself and Wesley scholarship are right in maintaining that with regard to justification he was following in the train of the Reformation. But in attempting a more precise determination of Wesley's position, and even though the relation of sanctification to final justification at the last judgement is left out of account, allowances should be made for the differences of outlook on this point between Luther on the one hand and on the other Calvin, Melancthon and the orthodox theologians. Recently much has been made of the difference between Luther and Melancthon. It was with the latter that the development towards Lutheran orthodoxy began.161 Von Eicken, like Wesley himself, pays no regard to them in this context.162 The same is true of Cell and others. Cell discusses Wesley's theology in such wide perspective that the relation to Luther is hardly touched upon. It is true, however, that Lang has correctly indicated the Calvinist strain that we saw above in the idea of the two covenants.163

We have seen that Wesley distinguishes between justification and the New Birth, between "a relative change" and "a real change." Although they take place simultaneously, they are regarded as distinct. In this differentiation of the idea of salvation, Wesley diverges from Luther, to whom justification also included inward renewal164; instead he shows an affinity with Calvin165, Melancthon, and Orthodoxy166. Thus Christian life becomes two focal points: justification or the forgiveness of sins, and the ethical regeneration of sanctification. The first is given an objective, the second a subjective import. Further, to Luther justification was immediately associated with atonement, which was an event in the present, not only in the past. Ultimately they meant the same.167 Justification was the continuous work of atonement.168 Wesley, like Melancthon and the orthodox theologians169, distinguished between them: atonement was the legal basis of justification. Atonement was a single event in the past, justification its

individual and present application. The contrast with Luther becomes still more marked when we turn to the structure of the conception of salvation as a whole. Whereas to Luther justification can connote the whole content of salvation, the latter to Wesley is a process in which justification (including the New Birth) is only a primary and basic stage.¹⁷⁰

Here a further consideration is pertinent: on this point Wesley is not in full accord with the purely theocentric tenets of the Reformation. There is no doubt that his attitude to justification is in this respect distinct from a Reformed doctrine based on unconditional predestination. I refer to the fact that alongside the pure theocentricity¹⁷¹ of his representation of faith as the necessary condition of justification, an attempt to present man as an independent subject of faith is also apparent. The latter tendency becomes more prominent with time. It is an inevitable result of Wesley's Arminian view of election, which makes election dependent on man's faith. This Arminian bias excludes the possibility of thinking of grace in the form of sovereign grace, which is the natural consequence of a view of salvation based on unconditional election. His attitude to predestination also makes it possible for him to attribute importance to faith as a subjective condition of justification. Thus man himself is considered active in his salvation, this activity being a necessary condition of justification.

This subjective tendency is seen still more clearly in the idea of the repentance that precedes faith. Here Wesley shows agreement with the same idea in the liturgy of the Church of England.¹⁷² Repentance implies consciousness of sin. It is described as "a deep sense of the want of all good, and the presence of all evil."¹⁷³ In addition to this conviction of sin and guilt, repentance also comprises "suitable affections," among them an earnest desire to escape God's wrath, to cease from doing what is evil and to learn to do good.¹⁷⁴ With time Wesley distinguishes this repentance more and more clearly from justifying faith and comes to regard the former as its necessary condition, although the main stress is always put on the latter.

Thus if we consider the relation between justifying faith and the repentance that precedes it, we find that the latter is given steadily increasing attention. The fruits of this repentance also take on a certain importance. We find Wesley, particularly in the period immediately after 1738, contending with special emphasis that faith alone is really essential to justification.¹⁷⁵ Nothing that man does or feels, he says, is necessary before justification.¹⁷⁶ His own works "are all unholy and sinful themselves, so that every one of them needs a fresh atonement."¹⁷⁷ Before justification his works "have in them the nature of sin," so that he cannot at this stage do anything "acceptable to God."¹⁷⁸

Yet later Wesley pays increasing attention to repentance before justification and its fruits. In this, as in his attack on Antinomianism, he is at variance with Calvinism. At the doctrinal conference of 1744 he declared that earlier there had been too much leaning towards Calvinism and Antinomianism.¹⁷⁹ It is true that faith, which means the faith in atonement effected by the Holy Ghost¹⁸⁰, is said to be the condition of justification, but he also maintains that before justification there must be repentance, which implies the conviction of sin and the corresponding works, "obeying God as far as we can, forgiving our brother, leaving off from evil, doing good, and using his ordinances, according to the power we have received¹⁸¹." Yet no works can justify.¹⁸² At the next conference, in the following year, belief in Christ is said to be the sole condition of justification, but the repentance that precedes faith is also affirmed. If the opportunity is given, he says, the fruits of this repentance ought also to precede faith.¹⁸³

In A farther Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion, published in the same year, Wesley again urges the importance of repentance for justification. Repentance and its fruits, however, are not necessary in the same degree as faith. While at whatever moment he believes man is justified, this is not the case when he

repents or brings forth fruits of repentance. So faith alone justifies and repentance and its fruits are not necessary in the same degree. Nor are they necessary in the same sense as faith, for they do not have "so direct, immediate a relation to justification as faith." Faith is said to be "proximately necessary," whereas repentance is only "remotely" necessary, i. e. "necessary to the increase or continuance of faith." But even in this sense the fruits of repentance are not absolutely necessary: they are dependent on time and opportunity. When these are not available, God shortens his work, and faith precedes the fruits of repentance.¹⁸⁴ He expresses himself similarly in a later sermon in which faith is said to be the sole condition of justification, although repentance and its fruits are in a sense necessary too. However, they are not regarded as necessary to the same extent as faith. The fruits of repentance are only conditionally necessary, i. e., if there is time and opportunity. But without faith man cannot be justified. And when he believes, "with or without those fruits, yea, with more or less repentance," he is justified. Further, repentance and its fruits are only "remotely necessary; necessary in order to faith." Only faith is regarded as "immediately and directly necessary to justification."¹⁸⁵

In his struggle with Quietism and Antinomianism Wesley was impelled to lay particularly strong stress on the fruits of repentance. Some of his remarks on works in the course of these controversies seem to stand in direct opposition to his earlier doctrine of justification by faith. This is particularly true of certain statements made at the London conference of 1770.¹⁸⁶

But in order to understand the purport of these statements we must distinguish carefully between the conditions 1) for the attainment of justification, 2) for remaining in the state of justification, and 3) for man's final justification at the last judgement. He says with regard to the conditions necessary for the attainment of justification: "We have received it as a maxim, that 'a man is to do nothing in order to justification'. Nothing can be more false. Whoever desires to find favour with God, should 'cease from evil, and learn to do well'. So God himself teaches by the Prophet Isaiah. Whoever repents, should 'do works meet for repentance'. And if this is not in order to find favour, what does he do them for?"¹⁸⁷

In spite of its emphatic formulation, however, this statement does not constitute a departure from earlier principles. Particularly heavy stress is certainly put here on the fruits of repentance, yet their importance to justification is practical and not a matter of principle. Nor are these works, which to Wesley are linked up with the idea of prevenient grace, in any sense merits.¹⁸⁸ At the same conference, sanctification was declared a condition of justification, but only in the sense that it is necessary to its retention, not to its attainment. The question "Who of us is now accepted of God?" is answered: "He that now believes in Christ with a loving, obedient heart."¹⁸⁹ That the issue here does not concern how man is to win God's favour but how he is to remain in a state of acceptance, is a point made by Wesley himself in a letter of the following year, in which he comments on the pronouncements of the London conference. These had caused a considerable stir and Wesley had been exposed to much criticism. He now writes: "Who of us is now accepted of God?' (I mean, who is now in His favour? The question does not refer to the gaining the favour of God, but the being therein, at any given point of time.) 'He that now believes in Christ with a loving and obedient heart.'¹⁹⁰ Wesley's insistence here on love and obedience not being a condition for attaining justification but for remaining in God's favour, shows that in principle his attitude was still the same as before. The love attaching to faith is not regarded as a prerequisite for the attainment of justification, though as previously it is a condition of man's remaining in faith and in God's favour.¹⁹¹ Thus at the London conference works were declared necessary if man was to remain in a state of justification. They were also declared necessary to final justification at the last judgement.¹⁹² But none of these declarations constituted a departure from Wesley's earlier attitude.¹⁹³

Thus the idea of a repentance and its fruits preceding faith does not involve any modification of the principles of Wesley's earlier conception of the relation between justification and sanctification. It shows, however, that this conception is linked up with Wesley's Arminian view of salvation. Prominence could also be given to man's repentance and its fruits, due to the association of the idea of prevenient grace with the Arminian view of election. Undoubtedly a synergistic tendency can be seen here -- a corollary of prevenient grace. Wesley's Arminianism made this a latent principle in him from the very beginning, and it becomes more manifest with time.¹⁹⁴

We have now seen how salvation, based on atonement, comprises justification or forgiveness and sanctification. beginning with the New Birth, "a relative change" and "a real change." Although the relative change of forgiveness is given logical priority over the real change of new birth and subsequent sanctification¹⁹⁵, the main emphasis in Wesley's conception of salvation is nevertheless laid on the latter. The necessity of this has already been seen in our examination of the relation between the objective idea of guilt and the conception of sin as an inherent force in his view of sin. In considering his view of atonement we have also seen the dominant position he attributes to the law. Further, we have seen the importance he gave to it in the Christian life. Since the fulfilment of the law was transferred from justification to sanctification, the latter was naturally given prominence. It was regarded as the goal of salvation. Thus a teleological leaning finds its way into his view of salvation.¹⁹⁶

The idea of real change in the New Birth comes clearly to the fore immediately after 1738. The salvation that comes by faith is a salvation from both the power and the guilt of sin.¹⁹⁷ Through new birth by the Holy Ghost a new life is accorded to the man who believes in Christ. Subsequently this life will grow and develop towards perfection.¹⁹⁸ Saving faith necessarily produces good works and holiness.¹⁹⁹ Otherwise it is dead.²⁰⁰ Wesley maintains that by salvation he means, "not barely, according to the vulgar notion, deliverance from hell, or going to heaven; but a present deliverance from sin, a restoration of the soul to its primitive health, its original purity; a recovery of the divine nature; the renewal of our souls after the image of God, in righteousness and true holiness, in justice, mercy, and truth."²⁰¹

In the struggle against antinomianism, the idea of sanctification acquires a prominent place in salvation. Wesley contends that the doctrine of salvation by faith must not occasion any depreciation of love and obedience. The only faith of value is one that operates through love. "It is impossible, indeed, to have too high an esteem for 'the faith of God's elect'. And we must all declare, 'By grace ye are saved through faith; not of works, lest any man should boast'. We must cry aloud to every penitent sinner, 'Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved'. But, at the same time, we must take care to let all men know, we esteem no faith but that which worketh by love; and that we are not saved by faith, unless so far as we are delivered from the power as well as the guilt of sin. And when we say, 'Believe, and thou shalt be saved', we do not mean, 'Believe, and thou shalt step from sin to heaven, without any holiness coming between; faith supplying the place of holiness'; but, 'Believe, and thou shalt be holy; believe in the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt have peace and power together: thou shalt have power from Him in whom thou believest, to trample sin under thy feet; power to love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and to serve Him with all thy strength; thou shalt have power, 'by patient continuance in well-doing, to seek for glory, and honour, and immortality'; thou shalt both do and teach all the commandments of God, from the least even to the greatest: thou shalt teach them by thy life as well as thy words, and so 'be called great in the kingdom of heaven'."²⁰² Such

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