INSIGHTS FROM HOLINESS TRADITIONS FOR FAITH PRACTICE TODAY

By

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SUMMARY

This study offers insights into holiness traditions, with the aim of applying them in faith practice today. The concept of holiness is ancient and therefore has often been relegated to the fringes in terms of theological importance in this present-day world. Through exploring several holiness traditions and the development of these traditions, it is evident to see that holiness has been crucial in adding value to faith practice over many centuries. For instance, the Wesleyan/Holiness Movement grew from John Wesley's emphasis on holiness, which he often referred to as Christian Perfection. He was influenced not only by the Scriptures and his contemporaries, but by the Church Fathers and spiritualities such as the Quakers, Quietists, Reformers, Puritans and Pietists. Ascetic Spirituality involved holiness as being physical separation from the society and the wickedness associated with it. Reformed Spirituality was founded on the Protestant Reformation and emphasises the importance of reforming to conservative views of the Scripture in order to spiritually cleanse the institutionalised church and individual Christians from corruption. Puritan Spirituality extended this to beyond the church into family and community life, emphasising piety or purity as essential for a Christian and as essential to Christianise society at large. Pentecostal Spirituality emphasised the importance of the power and presence of the Holy Spirit in order to sanctify a believer's life. The Emerging Church Movement aimed to build bridges across denominations and reach those outside the institutionalised church through living an authentic faith open to conversation. Inter-religious Dialogue extended this inclusive approach by forming a dialogue between different world religions to form solutions to global issues, such as poverty and human slavery. Through these traditions, holiness has been emphasised in different ways. For instance, it moved from being initially individualistic and exclusive to more communal, global and inclusive. Each tradition offers insights on how to live out faith practice for today.

KEY TERMS:

Holiness; Spirituality; faith practice; Methodist; Wesleyan tradition; Reformation; church; tradition; history

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Holiness is a topic that has intrigued me ever since I became a Christian in my matric year at school, thirteen years ago. I was raised as an only child in a household where the importance of good values was emphasised. Jesus was the example to follow and the local church as God's family would guide me. From an early age, I was encouraged to follow Jesus and live a life of virtue, based on love for God and others. Rather than compare myself to peers, I was encouraged to be more like Jesus, to follow his life and example and also that of biblical characters who live holy lives that please God. I was motivated to be the best person I could be. My father emphasised values such as honesty, excellence and hard work. He was an example of a person who led a morally upright life. I resolved to also be a person of character, who would do what was right regardless of the personal consequences and, like my father, to live a devoted Christian life. My mother was an example of a person who lived a life characterised by love, generosity and compassion for people and animals. Her approachability and emotional support helped me through difficult times in my life. She showed me another side of what it involves to be a better person. Even though I only consciously made a decision to follow Jesus in matric, my upbringing based on good morals and values gave me a glimpse of what a "holy life" could and should look like. The message from early childhood was that the Scriptures can guide me, good morals and values can benefit me and others and attending church services would help me become a better person. My upbringing was moralistic, but also happy and loving. I learnt from my parents that the goal in life was to strive to become the best person that I could. In other words, my purpose was to live a "holy life".

Life in a small town and a close community showed me what living a "holy life" could look like in community. The pastors and friends were accessible. People knew much of one another's lives. This community at the foot of the Drakensburg Mountains in the Eastern Cape was characterised by transparency and warmth. However, in my teenage years I had to leave this comfortable space and go to boarding school. In my

last school year after having experienced the typically confusing teenage years with its personal struggles, I realised more deeply what it meant to live a Christian life. At this point I realised that it was not as much about what I did for God as what God had done for me through Jesus Christ and how the Holy Spirit comforted, encouraged and helped me. The Scriptures became my spiritual nourishment. This made me feel truly alive. I understood a deeper, more personal love and could better comprehend what a Christian life should look like. My aim was to love more and to become holy like Jesus was. I read the Scriptures, prayed, went to Christian camps, participated in outreaches and spoke to others about the love of Jesus. This journey was, however, complicated and turbulent. I realised that professing to be a Christian is much easier than actually having to live a Christian life. It is difficult to try and live a “holy life” in an unholy world where sometimes it feels as if God is far away. .

During my formal theological training I came to understand *holiness* both as a quality of God and an endeavour of human beings’ who live their lives in vibrant and healthy relationship with God and others. In my later experience with the Pentecostal tradition, I found a strong emphasis on the *work of the Holy Spirit*. The approach was experience-based and the emphasis was on themes such as the power and presence of the Holy Spirit. Though different to how I was raised, this experience provided a powerful motivation to live a truly Christian life. From there I moved to a church from a Reformed tradition where the emphasis was on the importance of *justification and sanctification* in living a holy life that pleases God. It was a challenge to try and reconcile Pentecostal and Reformed spirituality. However, I had read a variety of books from different spiritual traditions. These had broadened my thinking.

For example, *The pilgrim’s progress* (1678) from a Puritan Reformed tradition presented me with a broad view of what a Christian life entails and emphasised that holy living requires an intentional resolve. *The deeper Christian life* (1895) from the Pentecostal tradition illustrated what a Spirit-led life would entail. These were supplemented by works from the Emerging Church Movement and Ascetic Spirituality. I have also been exposed to mystic spirituality and interreligious dialogue, which have provided me with a more interconnected global perspective on “holiness”.

These experiences from various traditions have culminated in this study where I shall consider holiness from a variety of perspectives. The study aims to investigate whether the insights and perspectives of various traditions on “holiness” could enrich the lives and faith practices of Christian believers in a postmodern world.

1.2 Problem statement

The term “holiness” has a long history of interpretation. The terms “holy” and “holiness” are found extensively in Scripture. The word “holy” is used to describe God, believers’ relationship towards God and people or objects that God has set aside for special use. The term is also found throughout the course of Christian history. The term “piety” has sometimes been preferred. “Holy” can also indicate that someone or something deserves honourable mention. For instance, “his holiness” refers to a high-ranking religious leader such as the pope. “Holy” refers to something that supersedes the ordinary. With the term “holy” someone or something is placed outside of the ordinary. It indicates a higher standard.

In the Christian tradition the term “holy” generally indicates believers’ responsibility to strive to not settle for average moral character but strive to be better. For a Christian believer to be holy is to strive to become more and more like Jesus Christ, to become more obedient to God, to develop a pure heart and mind and to live a life that is completely devoted to God’s service. Though a generally used term in the broader Christian tradition, “holiness” is emphasised particularly within the framework of evangelical theology and then in a fairly narrow sense. For instance, it has been described as essentially “a cutting off or separation from what is unclean and a consecration to what is pure” (Comfort & Elwell 2001:608; cf. Sproul 1998:32). The aim is a separation from whatever defiles and a consecration to what is holy or pure. Whatever is pure should be embraced and that which is impure rejected or “cut off”. God is seen as the one who transcends any limitations and is therefore referred to as “transcendent holiness” (see Sproul 1998:32). In terms of spirituality, holiness has been described as “the chief attribute of God and a quality to be developed in his people” (Comfort & Elwell 2001:608). If holiness is the main attribute of God, the

question is whether holiness can also function in the faith practice of believers and if so, how.

Some problems are encountered today with regard to the term “holiness”. If holiness is reserved for God and those elect few who have been “set apart for God” and “set apart from corruption”, which includes “sin”, “worldliness” and “the sinful nature” of human beings, then moral judgements are made that separate people. In postmodern thought there is an awareness of the diversity that exists in this world and that “different” should not be judged to be “better” or “worse”. The great variety of religions and cultures in the world all have their different rules and ideas of what it means to be holy. In postmodern times the truth claims and value judgements of a modernist and positivistic paradigm have been superseded by language such as “perspectives on truth”, “truths” and “preference”. Language has changed as society has changed. It has therefore become necessary to “intentionally diversify the language we use to describe and to explain holiness” (Hersey 2015:30).

Another problem with the term “holiness” is that it is an outdated theological idea and can therefore be seen as less important, archaic and irrelevant. This problem can be overcome by either using a different term to describe the idea of holiness, which will fit better into the spirituality and faith practices of today or, alternatively, the word “holiness” can be retained and can be filled with a richer content, described and expressed in the language of contemporary spirituality. This is possible because of the rich and dynamic meaning of “holiness”, that should not be restricted to older definitions.

A problem with the idea of holiness and the practice relating to it today is that it is often seen as unattainable, exclusivist and only possible for certain people or times of revival in history. For instance, when the Spirit was poured out at Pentecost and during revivals, people were dramatically cleansed from their sins and given a sharper motivation to live holy lives. Such dramatic experiences are not prevalent today. From another perspective holiness is seen as “objectively” attainable because of the redemption of human beings by the death of Jesus on the cross.

However, “subjectively”, a Christian cannot become “truly holy” while still a sinful human being in practice. This makes “holiness” an ideal to strive for, though realistically it will never be attained in this life. In practice “holiness” is therefore reserved for God, God’s angels and those regarded as “super saints”. Believers will then regard God as holy, as acknowledge that there were people in history who lived exemplary lives on earth, but see themselves as sinful and unable to truly do what is right. Therefore, holiness is an ideal that is not worth pursuing because it is unattainable. In this way holiness is relegated or dismissed in practice as something that is not worthy serious consideration.

The term “holiness” has a variety of synonyms and, whatever it is called in various traditions, it continues to be practiced extensively in many ways across the world. Therefore, to dismiss the idea of holiness as irrelevant for the lives and faith of contemporary Christian believers would be based on a misunderstanding of what the it entails and how it can still be fruitfully applied in faith practice today. What it means to be a Christian, is to live for God and strive to live more and more according to the values of the kingdom of God. That can be regarded as a description of holiness. In this sense, to view holiness as no longer central to the faith practice of Christian believers today is to negate the necessity for Christians to dedicate themselves to what is good and turn away from what is destructive. This study aims to broaden the idea and application of “holiness” in order to demonstrate its richness and usefulness as a key component of spiritualities today. “Spirituality” can be described as the lived experience of belief (Kourie 2000:12) and therefore this study aims to broaden the application of holiness as a key aspect of faith practices.

1.3 Orientation and research gap

This study considers holiness a key component of spirituality[1]. Because one’s own spirituality provides access to the phenomenon of spirituality (see Schneiders

[1] For other studies that also illustrate or emphasise the link between holiness and spirituality, see amongst others, De Villiers 2016; Waaijman 2016; Van der Merwe 2017.

2011:29), the remarks and overview of the ‘problems’ with regarding to holiness in the preceding section is based on my personal religious experience. Having considered the problems regarding the term “holiness” today, the question is whether it is still relevant to the faith practice of Christian believers in the contemporary world.

The difficulties relating to holiness have limited the broadness of scope in which this topic has been explored. It is often only applied to Jesus, his life and death, and as a description of God, who is beyond ordinary humanity. In certain traditions, holiness has also been identified as a “by-product” of revivals and has been explored as a rare quality of some extraordinary people throughout history. Holiness is then viewed as something that has manifested among human beings in history but will probably not happen in a personal way in the lives of ordinary people. It can only be personally realised after death. In the contemporary world the exploration of holiness has been largely confined to evangelical theology. The contribution of this study is to broaden the relevance and applicability of “holiness” beyond evangelical circles to also be useful to a variety of spiritual traditions in the context of today’s world. This broadening of the scope and practical application of the idea of holiness aims to reappropriate “holiness” for ordinary human beings in their everyday lives, and to transcend the exclusivist connotations attached to the concept – that holiness is exclusive to God, Jesus, and only a small number of highly extraordinary human beings.

“Holiness” as a concept appears within different traditions, such as mysticism (Lardner Carmody & Tully Carmody 1996; Waaijman 2016) and within the Reformed tradition. Examples of such works from the Reformed or Puritan tradition are *Institutes of Christian religion* (Calvin 1536) and *The pilgrim’s progress* (Bunyan 1678). The former giving an introduction to the foundations of the Christian faith that would be the starting point of Reformed spirituality and the latter, an allegory or a genre of fiction pertaining to what a Christian life involves. Both of these classics inform a believer how to live a holy life as a Christian, with the former more academic and the latter more practical. Investigating aspects of origins of Reformed spirituality by reflecting on the lives and work of Martin Luther and John Calvin contributes insights toward a broader approach to how holiness could manifest in practice. More contemporary contributions in this regard, namely those of Jürgen Moltmann and

Miroslav Volf will also be considered in order to articulate a more current approach to holiness in a global context. These two in particular were selected because both can be considered as ecumenical theologians who made significant contributions to Reformed theology. Moltmann is a key theologian in modern Christian thought (Thompson 2013:227-237) and one of the most influential contemporary Protestant theologians in multiple contexts and different traditions (Bauckham 2003:209). Moltmann has contributed much to a Protestant pneumatology (Zimmerling 2013:468; Moltmann [1975] 1993; [1991]1992). As a former student of Moltmann, Volf incorporates the theological nuances of Moltmann's theology, but connects it to other aspects of his own ecumenical theology and Pentecostal background (cf. Van den Borght 2009; Volf 1992; 1996; 1998). Therefore Volf is considered as a "bridge theologian" and his work is especially suited for a study such as this.

Reformed theology often had, and in some circles still has, the propensity to elaborate on fundamental theological themes rather than reinterpret this theology into a spirituality for the present-day world. Within the Holiness Tradition, *Relational Holiness* (2005) and *Renovating Holiness* (2015) are considered and develop Wesley's theology on holiness. This is because they provide a fresh and ecumenical approach to the subject of holiness.

Some recent approaches that relate to holiness challenge the way that the institutionalised church has lived out the Christian faith. They protest against structures that build barriers instead of bridges with other people. These are, for example, the Emerging Church Movement and Interreligious Dialogue. Though their aim is not to describe "holiness" as such, their emphasis is on living authentically and holistically. This connects with the idea of holiness to some extent. *The lost message of Jesus* (Chalke & Mann 2004) and *A generous orthodoxy* (McLaren 2006), form part of this spirituality and changed approach in the Emerging Church Movement. For the Interreligious Dialogue, *The Wiley-Blackwell Companion to Interreligious Dialogue* (2013) and *The joy of discipleship: Reflections from Pope Francis on walking with Christ* (2016) have enriched Interreligious Dialogue through comparative theology and personal testimony. Other than Wesleyan Holiness spirituality, Reformed spirituality, and Puritan spirituality there is also ascetic spirituality as demonstrated in the work,

The life of St Anthony (Athanasius [1892] 2017). The New Monastic Movement was built on this in search for an authentic community of believers. The work which describes the approach of this movement is *A monk in this world: Cultivating a spiritual life* (Teasdale 2003).

Pentecostal spirituality, which was rooted in experience and was influenced by the Holiness Movement, emphasised the power of God to make a person holy. It was not necessary to understand doctrine, but rather to make the intentional choice of a total commitment to God. *Fields white unto harvest: Charles F. Parham and the missionary origins of Pentecostalism (*Goff 1988) and *The Holiness-Pentecostal tradition: Charismatic movements in the twentieth century* (Synan 1997) explore the origins of this movement. Later developments of this kind of spirituality include the Faith Movement. In most of these spiritualities, holiness is a main concern, while others include it as part of their holiness in faith practice in a discreet and even unnoticed way.

In response to a fast changing postmodern world, the Emerging Church Movement has developed in recent years. It is rather challenging for believers to live out holiness in their practical everyday lives in a postmodern context. If holiness in faith practice is interpreted as something moralistic rather than relational, it is understandable that it would be relegated to the fringes of theological discussion in a postmodern world where the emphasis is on the relational aspect. However,
Wesley's emphasis on holiness as "perfect love" and the idea of *relational holiness* highlight a strong relational aspect that is central to holiness.

The question is how holiness can be practised relationally in a postmodern world so as to build bridges between people and make a difference to the quality of their lives, rather than serve to simply create more exclusive groups of Christians who deem themselves better, "holier" than others. When local and global issues are discussed, antiquated terminology such as "sin" and "holiness" are often replaced by words such as "the human condition" and "holistic". Though newer language has its merits in a postmodern world, maintaining the term "holiness" in the dynamic sense of the word and applying it to faith practice today can be beneficial in promoting not only a moral, but also a relational transformation of society.

Contemporary language that includes terms such as “authentic”, “holistic”, “interconnected” and “restored” can be used fruitfully to describe aspects of a dynamic understanding of holiness. Yet, putting “holiness” into practice today in a relevant and authentic way, can counteract the materialistic and superficial approach to many serious local and global issues in contemporary societies. A relevant and contemporary holiness practice can contribute towards the transformation of people and societies in an authentic and other-oriented way.

1.4 Methodology

This is a qualitative literary study in which a historical approach will be adopted. A historical approach aims to provide a brief overview of how the ideas relating to holiness have developed in various spiritualities with the aim of interpreting these ideas for faith practices (in this study). According to Sandra Schneiders (2011:1921), the historical approach and its methodology (with regard to spirituality) is interested in the understanding of spirituality rather than a construction of it. The challenge of this approach and method is, “to avoid either reducing spirituality to an account of ‘what happened’ or accounting for ‘what happened’ in purely genetic terms … to recognize that phenomena of the past can and must be studied by a variety of methods if the experience is to be understood as experience” (Schneiders 2011:21). As stated previously, this study considers “holiness” a key aspect of spirituality and will therefore focus on “holiness’ from this perspective/field. The point of departure is the Wesleyan holiness tradition. The holiness tradition was compared to a house that had been passed down over generations, containing many memories and priceless items, but also in need of renovation to replace outdated and fix neglected features (see Broward 2015:1-3). This “house”, passed down from John Wesley, through the Holiness Movement and through the Wesleyan Holiness Tradition, was somewhat neglected and in need of restoration. Related and other spiritualities are included in the exploration and insights with regard to holiness that are gained from these traditions and utilized to reinterpret the idea of holiness to be relevant for faith practice today. These contribute to renovating the concept of holiness within the Wesleyan/Holiness Tradition in the exploration of what holiness can mean for the complex world of today.

Related views and different perspectives on holiness are introduced briefly to enrich and enhance the traditional Wesleyan ideas of holiness. The study is interdisciplinary in nature, combining aspects and perspectives from the academic fields of Spirituality, Systematic Theology and Practical Theology.

John Wesley's theology of holiness is chosen to be the starting point of this investigation because his idea of holiness, which he called "Christian perfection", became the focal point of the Holiness Movement. This idea of "Christian perfection" has also been central to the founding of churches in the Wesleyan and Holiness traditions around the world. This in turn influenced the development of Pentecostal spirituality.

Though John Wesley was from the Anglican tradition, his personal pursuit of holiness and what it entailed in practice, exposed him to a range of influences that he incorporated in his thinking. His idea of "perfection" or "becoming perfect" was taken from Scripture, specifically Matthew 5:48: "Be perfect, therefore as you heavenly Father is perfect". His interpretation of such Scriptures was influenced by the early Church Fathers and their understanding of *theosis*, namely that a Christian believer partakes in the divine nature of God and could attain perfection in this life. In addition to this, Wesley was influenced by the Reformed, Puritan, Pietist and Quietist spiritualities. Writings from these traditions were included in his *Christian library* (1749), which he edited and included in this sizable and wide-ranging compilation.
He was influenced by classical works on holiness by several authors. These include Thomas á Kempis' *imitating Christ* [1418 (1981)], William Law's *A serious call to a devout and holy life* [1729 (2007)] and Jeremy Taylor's *The rule and exercises of holy dying* [1651 (1967)]. They wrote and John Wesley built on their ideas in his work, *A plain account of Christian perfection* [1777 (2007)] in which he aimed to present a clear and accessible explanation of his idea of Christian perfection that could be applied in practice. He preached extensively on holiness of life, for example *Christian perfection* (1984), *On perfection* (1984) and *Circumcision of the heart*
(1984). Wesley used synonyms such as "perfect love", "entire sanctification" and "sinless perfection" to express aspects of what Christian perfection entailed. For Wesley, Christian perfection was centred on love for God and for others. After having

become a Christian, a life of sanctification was the ideal. God would then made it possible for a believer to live a sinless life. He qualified these terms in his writings, insisting that it was attainable for any Christian who pursues holiness. His idea was to make Christian perfection understandable and attainable for ordinary people.

Phoebe Palmer and her husband Walter, were early leaders of the Holiness Movement who furthered John Wesley's concept of Christian Perfection in a simpler and more inclusive way. Through considering her developed view of Christian Perfection, it becomes clearer as to how Christian Perfection can be applied to people's lives during the Holiness Movement to include a more dynamic audience. Phoebe Palmer was raised in the Methodist tradition and sought to revive early Methodist spirituality (see Jones 2002:4). The way in which she conveyed the idea of Christian perfection was through her personal testimony. She also related the experiences of others to illustrate what "entire sanctification" entailed. This involves a person fully surrendering or consecrating oneself to God to be transformed and used wholly by God. Her work, *The way to holiness* (1854), was her own story written in third person. The story form was regarded as accessible and an effective way of communicating with a broad range of people. For Palmer it was no longer necessary to engage in spiritual warfare. Individual believers should rather make a personal decision to be "entirely consecrated" to God (see Palmer [1854] 2016:17-21). This did not involve a "payment" on the part of the believer, but rather just receiving the redemption that Jesus has made possible for people on the cross. Palmer's aim was to be a "humble Bible Christian" seeking holiness (Palmer 2016:20). The decision to be consecrated could be made even before becoming a Christian. God would honour the individuals' decision, and enable them to have faith and testify of their commitment. If either of these steps was not applied in practice, salvation and holiness could be lost.

For Hannah Whitall Smith, from a Quaker background, Christian perfection meant a life surrendered to God in obedience and trust. Her contribution towards developing the concept of Christian perfection was in her all-inclusive view of salvation, which was unlike the ideas of Wesley and Palmer. Her emphasis was on knowing one's identity and on God's acceptance of all humanity. Her approach towards holiness was therefore broader and she reached a larger audience which included those on the

margins of society. In her work, *The Christian's secret of a happy life* (1885), Smith explains that the reason why many Christians are not happy is because they are not holy. Smith experienced many personal hardships in her life, including the loss of children and a difficult marriage. Through all of this, she felt secure in her position and identity in Christ. She remained steadfast in the Scriptures, regardless of her feelings. The love of God comforted her and she remained steadfast and blessed in spite of hardship. She found that Christian believers who remain unhappy in life, do so because they have not learnt to simply trust in God. Smith's central concern was with the confusion about the role of God and the role of the individual believer in becoming holy. She explained it as follows: "In this higher life, man's part is to trust and God's part is to do the thing entrusted to Him" (Smith [1885] 2012:26). Smith draws a distinction between God's grace and human works. She emphasises that a believer's task is to trust and it is up to God to initiate and stimulate the growth of the believer (see Smith 2012:27). In other words, "sanctification is both a step of faith and a process of works" (Smith 2012:27). She does not negate the importance of commitment to God but emphasises that holiness is ultimately the work of God in a believer's life. Hannah Whitehall-Smith was actively involved in social issues such as the rights of women. Her perspective was ecumenical. According to her, God's salvation was for all people, because of God's universal love (see Spencer 2013:7). Her inclusive approach put her at odds with orthodox evangelical teaching, but it also attracted a more diverse following to the Holiness Movement.

Charles Grandison Finney was influential in the Second Great Awakening, the beginnings of Modern Revivalism. He used the idea of Christian perfection to promote revival in the North America. He also became president of Oberlin College, the theological institution of the movement. Finney was from a Reformed background, but left the Reformed church because of the preaching in that tradition. After a dramatic conversion he became acutely aware of the love of God. He emphasised obedience to the commandments in the Scriptures. This obedience manifested in the commitment to truly love others like Jesus did (see HambrickStowe 1996:185). His own love for others manifested in his acceptance of women and black men into the Oberlin College. He was also opposed to the slave trade and made education more accessible. For

Finney, Christian perfection was practiced and attained in community and in missionary initiatives. His “new measures” represented a methodical way to attain salvation. Finney extended the length of sermons, which focused on people’s emotion. He included women in prayer meetings (see Van de Walle 2011:448). Finney’s ministry resulted in a large number of converts and his techniques were increasingly employed by others. For Finney, salvation would be granted to anyone who desired it enough. Christian perfection was made possible by the power of the Holy Spirit (see Finney 2000:483-485, 488-
489). This is a demonstration of God’s power over evil. Believers can therefore live victorious lives if they attain Christian perfection which starts with being the recipient of the “new measures”.

In the wake of the Holiness Movement Mildred Bangs Wynkoop (1905-1997), an ordained minister, theologian and missionary in the Nazarene Church, was influential in reawakening the idea of “holiness” as it was understood in the Wesleyan and Holiness Tradition. She emphasised the importance of love as the essence of what she thought Wesley meant by Christian perfection. Where the aim of the Holiness Movement was largely to simplify and reinterpret the idea of Christian perfection, she interpreted holiness in the light of love. Her theology of holiness was about living out holiness in love. Her work, *A theology of love: The dynamic of Wesleyanism* (1971) is her most influential contribution. Wynkoop sees love as the main emphasis of
Wesley’s spirituality. Contrary to the soft, popularised idea of love, this love is “unlimited, impartial, indestructible” (Wynkoop 1971:11). Wesley was a biblical theologian, who did not differ much from mainline orthodoxy. He added the emphasis on “a new relationship and experience” (Wynkoop 1971:12). To see love as something sentimental is to water down theological truth and practice. This tendency has resulted in moralism to contaminate the idea of Christian perfection. Holiness in faith practice should include a deep love, authentic actions and building unity in and through diversity. With an attitude of authentic Christian love conflicts dan be dealt with in a mature fashion, “without tearing apart the fabric of Christian unity” (Wynkoop 1971:11).

Wynkoop did not replace the idea of holiness with love. She regarded them as different terms that are in harmony with each other. Wynkoop correlates love and holiness and

describes love as the “inner character of holiness and holiness does not exist apart from love” (Wynkoop 1971:16). According to her, Wesley defined both holiness and perfection as love (Wynkoop 1971:16). An authentic Christian life is more than just holy or upright moral life. Authentic holiness in faith practice is relational. Relationships of love are the basis of holiness (see Shelton 2008:3).

Michael Lodahl & Thomas Jay Oord, theologians in the Nazarene tradition, coined the phrase “Relational Holiness” to describe an approach to Christian holiness that aims to be relevant and applicable to faith practice today. They concur with

Wynkoop’s emphasis on love. In their approach to holiness they replace moralism with a relational in focus. In their work, *Relational Holiness: Responding to the call of love* (Oord & Lodahl 2005), they argue that to live a holy life is more than merely following rules. Instead, a holiness centred on love and the heart of God, is the basis for living a holy life. The idea of “Relational Holiness” refers to humans being “inescapably related to God, creation and others” (Oord & Lodahl 2005:15). This approach is inclusive. It focuses on God’s relationship with all of creation and *visa versa*. To be relational is about being part of God’s creation. It does not necessarily include salvation. This idea is based on the Methodist doctrine of “prevenient grace” where there is “an awareness of God’s invitation to leave one life and to enter something brand new” (see Oord & Lodahl 2005:16-17). Holiness is also not exclusive. Rather it is “the story of love that embraces all of us” (Oord & Lodahl 2005:19). With their idea of “Relational Holiness”, Lodahl and Oord aim to “return holiness to its rightful place of chief importance” by presenting holiness in a way that more Christians will understand, and regard as realistic and significant to their lives (Oord & Lodahl 2005:21). It is through a fresh understanding of what holiness entails that people will be motivated to live a the kind of holy life that will reflect the love of

God for all of God’s creation. Older concepts such as “entire sanctification”, “the baptism of the Holy Spirit” and even “Christian perfection” are reinterpreted for the contemporary world. The concept of “Relational Holiness” is seen as practical, mission-centred and ecumenical. Its emphasis is on breaking down barriers that are caused by misunderstanding and rebuilding the Wesleyan legacy so as to have a greater impact on the people of today.

An extensive project which resulted in the publication, *Renovating Holiness* (Broward

& Oord 2015), with over 100 contributors, was launched to explore how the Wesleyan and Holiness traditions can be adapted to be meaningful and relevant in the contemporary world. The contributors were from a variety of contexts and their work showcases the dynamic ways in which holiness can be applied. These practical and contextual views on holiness reveal its adaptabiliby over time and contexts. The dynamics of holiness in faith practice has been approached in a broad and universal way, but was also applied specifically to particular contexts.

As the ideas of the holiness tradition have been passed down from the Holiness Movement, frustrations have been encountered and practical solutions were sought (see Broward & Oord 2015: viii, 5-32). Language has been an important aspect throughout history when it comes to the understandability, communicability, relevance, and practicality of the idea of holiness (see Hersey 2015:29-32). The history of the idea of holiness and its impact on various generations and contexts have been explored extensively, including interreligious dialogue with Buddhism (see Broward & Oord 2015: viii-ix). The historical overview shows how the idea has been adapted and newly applied to different contexts in different times precisely because it has been consistently regarded as valuable and still relevant. The Nazarene Church, for instance, has found creative ways of communicating the idea of holiness and its application to faith practice. The aim is not only to preserve the Church, but to provide guidelines for believers to day on how to live a holy life in an authentic and relational way.

The Wesleyan and Holiness Tradition have a rich heritage of holiness that is worth exploring in the interest of contemporary faith practice. The aim is to find relevant ways to live a holy and authentic life in the present-day world. Perspectives on holiness that come from outside the Wesleyan and Holiness Tradition can also be considered with the aim to enrich and integrate into faith practice in a complex and diverse contemporary world. Such perspectives can be gained from a variety of traditions and spiritualities in interreligious conversation. Insights from each of these traditions from their specific place and context can be expanded and applied to various contexts. In this way the idea of holiness can further developed to have an even greater impact on contemporary faith practice.

For the purposes of this study, Ascetic Spirituality will be examined for insights that can enrich the Wesleyan Holiness tradition. The exponent is St Anthony who left his comfortable life behind, gave away and sold his possessions and lived in the desert. In his ascetic contemplation he discovered a connection between self-denial and holiness in faith practice. Ascetic spirituality evolved into the New Monastic Movement with its emphasis on developing authentic community and restoring the role of the spiritual disciplines in a contemporary Christian pursuit of living a holy life in this world.

Reformed Spirituality was rooted in Martin Luther's protest against the exploitive practices of the Roman Catholic Church in the sixteenth century. For Luther holiness was not attained through works but by faith alone. Calvin developed this idea further in his influential work, *Institutes of Christian religion* (1536). Contemporary Protestant theologians, Jürgen Moltmann and Miroslav Volf built on the foundations of the Reformers and developed a more inclusive practice.

Puritan spirituality was an application of Reformed spirituality with its emphasis on the "covenant of grace" to the faith practice of holiness in family life. It was developed by Jonathan Edwards in his work, *Religious affections* (1746) and applied in more contemporary language by John Piper in his work, *Desiring God* (1986). In this work he coins the term, "Christian hedonism", basing it on Edwards' theology.

Pentecostal spirituality, rooted in the Azusa Revival where the power of the Holy Spirit was emphasised and made manifested through spiritual gifts, was articulated by Charles Parham and A.B. Simpson in their respective pioneering works, *The everlasting gospel* (Parham 1911) and *The fourfold gospel* (Simpson 1888). Essek W. Kenyon further adapted their theology and Kenneth Hagin turned it into a global movement known as the Modern Faith Movement, where faith is linked to healing and material prosperity. Holiness now becomes reinterpreted as: living a victorious life through the power of the Holy Spirit.

The recent Emerging Church Movement (ECM) has been referred to as a "conversation" as opposed to a type of spirituality. *A new kind of Christian* (McLaren 2001), *The lost message of Jesus* (Chalke & Mann 2003), *A generous orthodoxy* (McLaren 2004) and *Finding our way again* (McLaren 2008), are some of the key

works of this movement. It consists largely of people from the evangelical tradition who are disillusioned with the institutionalised church and who seek a fresh expression for their faith. In a postmodern context their emphasis on Jesus' relational approach to all people, makes this a radically inclusive approach. The aim is to
"reinvent" the church similar to how the Nazarene Church aimed to reinvent the idea of holiness. For the ECM, a Christian life includes aspects such as holiness and should be lived out in an authentic way. It should build bridges and reach out to those outside the walls of local churches. Interreligious Dialogue goes even further in crossing the bridge to people of other faiths. In interfaith discussions human needs and crises are considered on a global scale and solutions are sought through an incorporation of various religious perspectives. In a field such as Comparative Theology, different beliefs from various religious persuasions are considered in order to find common ground. This began at an event called the "Parliament of the World's
Religions". Since then annual meetings have been held to discuss how religious belief can influence the contemporary world in a positive way. Some prominent recent proponents of this dialogue directly and indirectly are Hans Küng and Pope Francis.

The study aims to explore the variety of perspectives related to holiness in order to search for compatible insights that can be combined towards reinterpreting the meaning of holiness in faith practice in today's diverse world. Insights from these spiritualities, movements and discussions that have developed subsequent to the Wesleyan and Holiness Tradition that remain the point of departure of this study, can possibly contribute to enriching the "old" idea of holiness in order to become more relevant and be applied more effectively to faith practice in a contemporary world. This study explores how the idea of holiness has been understood and applied in practice over time and enquires as to how this significant aspect of Christian faith practice can be reinterpreted and reactivated in the contemporary world without losing it rich and valuable heritage. Considering holiness from a variety of different perspectives can also contribute to greater unity based on authentic and effective practices that are at home in this postmodern world with its increasingly globalised perspective.

1.5 Chapter outline

In Chapter 2, John Wesley's concept of Christian perfection will be discussed. These ideas build on the reflections of the Eastern Fathers, who regarded perfection of some kind to be attainable in this life. John Wesley, who was heavily influenced by the Eastern Fathers likewise considered perfection to be a standard that Christians not only can attain, but towards which they should actively strive as a life goal. John Wesley describes in depth how he understands Christian perfection and points out how it has also been misunderstood over the ages. The idea of Christian perfection was adopted and adapted by the Holiness Movement through leaders such as Phoebe Palmer, Hannah Whitall Smith and Charles Finney. For Palmer there was a shorter, simpler and more instantaneous way to attain perfection. For Smith holiness means being secure in one's position and identity as a believer, and Finney instituted practical methods to attain perfection. Their reflections built on John Wesley's idea of Christian perfection and adapted it to the broader audience of the Holiness Movement. The Wesleyan/Holiness Tradition appropriated and further developed the teachings and insights of John Wesley. Examples of those from this tradition are people such as Mildred Bangs Wynkoop, Jay Oord and Michael Lodahl and the combined contribution from leaders of the Nazarene Church around the world. Wynkoop pointed out that the centrality of love as emphasised by John Wesley had been lacking. She aimed to restore the centrality of love. Oord and Lodahl pointed to the lack of relationality and interconnectedness and by emphasising these aspects aimed to restore the impetus of Wesley's foundational idea of Christian perfection. An ecumenical approach was spearheaded by contributors of the Nazarene Church in their quest to "renovate" the idea of holiness. Adopting, refining and expanding on Wesley's idea of Christian perfection over time, made it possible to reach greater numbers of people during periods of revival. It also made the application of this central Christian idea simpler to understand and apply to everyday life.

In Chapter 3 a variety of relevant spiritualities will be considered. Each contributes to a broader perspective on holiness. Although not all of these traditions emphasise Christian perfection in the Wesleyan sense, their perspectives on holiness can contribute to a richer, more varied understanding holiness. This is especially useful to

the aim of this study, namely to explore how the idea of holiness can still be relevant and useful for today. Ascetic spirituality considers holiness from a perspective of self-denial and rigorous self-discipline. The New Monastic Movement builds on the idea of discipline, but is less ascetic and more community oriented. Reformed spirituality originated in protest against the abuses of the institutionalised church. The emphasis was on reforming the institutionalised church according to Scriptural rather than traditional or pragmatic principles. Taking this idea further Puritan spirituality focused on also reforming society according to the word and will of God. The recent Emerging Church Movement went beyond the evangelical tradition to include other denominations and those outside of the institutionalised church in conversation. This approach is suitable in a world that is shifting to
"postmodernity", a world where store is set on authentic relationships and there is respect for diversity. Interreligious Dialogue also adopts a conversational approach and takes the conversation to other religions. Comparative Theology compares differences and searches for common ground with the aim to contribute towards solving global issues. The various spiritualities and conversations collectively contribute towards making the idea of holiness more attainable and relevant in faith practice.

The findings of the study are presented in Chapter 4.

CHAPTER 2

JOHN WESLEY, HOLINESS AND CHRISTIAN PERFECTION

2.1 Foundations of Christian perfection

2.1.1 John Wesley's "practical theology"

John Wesley's theology was dynamic, integrating theology reflection with practical concerns. Due to his emphasis on the practical and experiential aspects of spirituality and his in-depth theological reflection, he has been referred to as a "practical theologian" (see Langford 1998:3; Collins 2007:1). John Wesley's spirituality was "practical" in that it primarily focused on "love for the poor and concurrent mistrust in riches" and inclusive in the sense that he included prisoners and women in his ministry (see Hammond 2011:834). Furthermore, John Wesley's theology was formed through personally being among God's people (Langford 1998:3; cf. Attwell 1994:3; 2005:7). His style was that of "a homiletical theologian, a service orientated theologian" (Langford 1998:3). Wesley's theology has been called "Practical Divinity" in that it is "practice in nature and intention", developed from practice, a reflection on practice and strived to improve practice (Langford 1998:3; cf. Maddox 1994:17). By emphasising practice as the goal of his theology, Wesley directed all of his efforts towards this end. His spirituality was, in a nutshell, about practicing truth in order to understand truth. Therefore, Wesley's theological ideas were centred on this main focus, which was faith practice. His faith practice of holiness was conceptualised by means of "sanctification" and "Christian perfection". The theology of John Wesley as well as the legacy that he has passed down to this day, most specifically within from the Holiness Movement to the Wesleyan/Holiness Tradition has relevance to holiness in faith practice.

Wesley contributed much to Christianity in the West, not so much through original thought as through "being a lifelong student of other men's [sic.] ideas", according to Hattersley (2003:vii). John Wesley was brought up in the Anglican tradition by parents Samuel and Susanna Wesley. They were also influenced by the Puritan tradition which

has been referred to as “a heritage of dissent” (see Collins 2003:13). Wesley spoke fondly of the Anglican Church when it came to the disciplines within the church, but was “disapproving of many of its bishops and priests” (Hempton 1996:83; cf. Hulley 2006:2). His conversations, sermons and letters show him to have been a plain and direct communicator (see Outler 1984:57). He combined theology and ministry in a way that was appealing to ordinary people and was down to earth (see Attwell 1994:3; Foster 2001:7). According to Outler (1984:56), his
“baseline tradition was Erasmian”, because of his humanistic emphasis. He was concerned primarily with “a gracious Christian lifestyle” with the development of morality and the guidelines of “Scripture, reason and Christian antiquity” (see Outler 1984:56). John Wesley’s holiness in faith practice was primarily rooted in his interpretation of the Scriptures and he was also greatly influence by the theological reflections of the Church Fathers (see Bounds 2007:7; cf. Outler 1984:484).

The Church Fathers especially influenced the development of Wesley’s central theological idea of “Christian perfection” (see Levterov 2013:301; cf. Outler 1964:30). According to Outler (1991:69) it was also “the most distinctive and most widely misunderstood of all Wesley’s doctrines”. In Scripture there is abundant evidence of practical spirituality, for instance radical conversions, transforming preaching and miraculous healings. There was also clear evidence of “power from on high” throughout the book of Acts (e.g. Acts 1:8). John Wesley’s faith practice of holiness was based on the words in Matthew 5:48 on being perfect like the heavenly Father is perfect and the words in 1 Peter 1:15-16 on being holy like the Lord is holy. This holiness was clearly to be practical and not theoretical. It was to be lived out in practice in the difficult life circumstances experienced by the Matthean community and the persecutions experienced by the readers of 1 Peter.

For Wesley the variety of interpretations of holiness from the different traditions contributed to a fuller understanding of the Christian faith and of holiness in faith practice. Due to his dynamic, practical approach and enquiring mind, his theological approach cannot be reduced to a simple description.

The Holiness Tradition, the Evangelical Tradition and the Pentecostal Tradition have been greatly impacted by his theology. Wesley’s purpose was to not only “save souls”,

but also to lead people to experience the fullness of salvation. Salvation meant restoration and relationship in Wesley's view on the Christian life (Chilcote & Collins 2013:4). While Reformed spirituality focused heavily on justification, Wesley emphasised both justification and sanctification. For Wesley the doctrine of justification and the new birth of believers were foundational. His life's work was dedicated to bringing people to a deep and clear understanding of what this entailed in practice (see Outler 1985:187). Although Wesley emphasised justification by faith as the Reformers did, his focus was also on "all good works and all holiness", because this, according to him, was included in God's plan of salvation (see Outler 1984:125). Love rather than dogma should be the main feature of the church (see Thorsen 2013:102). The new birth refers to a "part of sanctification – being made in the image of God" (Wesley 2003:22). A believer is made holy by God, on God's initiative. This "holiness" is activated in practice when people believe, in other words through their act of faith.

Holiness in faith practice is available to *all* people, not only to "the elect". *All* are able to pursue a holy life, because the initiative lies with God and the guidance comes from God through Scripture, the power of the Holy Spirit, and other means of grace such as the sacraments of holy communion and baptism. Holiness was therefore an invitation to all people. It was Wesley's aim to make it practical and simple to understand what it entailed in real life. The idea of limited or particular atonement he regarded as an affront against Christians growing in holiness (see Outler 1986:545556). For Wesley, atonement was only the beginning of the process of salvation. For him a greater emphasis on atonement than on sanctification would have a detrimental effect on the salvation of a believer. Believers' will to grow in holiness would be inhibited and the would be made passive rather than active in intentionally pursuing their salvation. Balance was needed: the grace of God would accomplish much in a believer's life and the believer would then make full use of the "means of grace" in order to live a spiritually fruitful life. John Wesley explained that the "means of grace" enabled believers to receive more of the grace of God. This was his argument against those who spoke against the importance of works (see Outler
1984:384; cf. Chilcote 2016:11). Works as evidence of one's salvation and holiness in faith practice involves an actively fruitful spiritual lifestyle. John Wesley used the

“means of grace” to institute discipline. He developed the General Rules, by means of which his followers could grow in sanctification (see Thompson 2013:6, 22). Christian love was the greatest evidence that a person had received salvation. This was central to his idea of Christian perfection, which was what John Wesley regarded as the apex in a Christian’s salvation. This was only attained by some individuals. Through this, Wesley showed believers that a Christian life involved more than what they previously thought and that faith in God and love for one’s neighbour are central to a Christian spirituality (see Collins 1997:16).

2.1.2 John Wesley’s Puritan heritage

Exploring John Wesley’s Puritan heritage shall provide insight into what formed his theological perspective and how his life formed a part of the Wesley’s moving away from the institutionalised church, whilst retaining much of its theological ideals. He retained the thrust of conservative theology. Though John Wesley’s theology differed from the Puritan and Reformed tradition, there are also commonalities. His Puritan heritage came from both his mother’s and father’s lineage. His parents, Susanna and Samuel Wesley, both came from a line of Puritan preachers who were commonly called “Dissenters”. This was because the Puritans caused dissention against the Church of England. The Dissenters did not agree with the way in which the Reformation was institutionalised and the direct Reformed churches were taking. They also wanted to broaden the vision to include the reformation not only of the church, but of society as a whole. They became involved in political disputes, which made them controversial during their times.

The quality of “holiness” was central to their understanding of a life of faith. According to them, holiness should be exercised in faith practice. It should be a lifestyle. Holy people should strive towards “Christianising all of public life” (Packer 2011:702). For the Puritans, all of life and all every activities were sacred, to be sanctified and their goal should be to glorify God (see Packer 1990:23-24). A deep conviction of sin, the Spirit changing the desires of one’s heart, a longing for God and a determination toward holiness were characteristic of the Puritan mindset (see Packer 2011:703).

Puritan spirituality was disciplined, earnest and holistic. Their emphasis on holiness in faith practice was central to their understanding of what it meant to be a Christian. On the positive side, holiness should be fully pursued and from the negative side sin should be fiercely forsaken.

The Puritan movement started during the reign of Queen Elizabeth I (1533-1603). Puritans sought to "purify" the Church of England "from numerous ceremonies, vestments, and customs that harkened back to the Middle Ages" (Collins 2003:11). Under their leader Oliver Cromwell, they achieved some authority and success from 1640-1660, but were later outlawed from preaching the Gospel within five miles of the nearest town (see Collins 2003:13). Puritans' emphasis on holiness and their measures of reform were often experienced by the citizens of the country as rigid (see Collins 2003:12). The Puritan faith practice of holiness was thorough in attempting to "purify" the church and society from anything that they viewed as not conforming with an orthodox Christian perspective on Scripture. When Wesley was growing up the Dissenters were numerous, but curbed to an extent. Their voice was largely silenced by the Church of England.

John Wesley was born in 1703 in an era of change. The Enlightenment was an era of transition from the Medieval to the modern period and from the centrality of religion to rationalist and secular worldviews (see Attwell 1995:3). Some of the most prominent intellectuals of the eighteenth century included Voltaire, John Locke, Isaac Newton, Adam Smith and David Hume. The individual identity and religious patterns were replaced by a corporate, scientific and intellectual emphasis. Wesley was critical of these trends and sometimes perceived as being anti-intellectual. Wesley accused Rousseau, Voltaire and Hume as having "no relation at all to God, nor any dependence on him" and he thought that Hume did not understand the heart of human beings "any more than a worm or a beetle does" (see Outler 1987:69, 158).

Wesley's faith practice was not directly influenced by the popular philosophies and trends of his day but was rather in contrast to that. Wesley was influenced more by his Puritan heritage of strict morality and view of Scripture as truth, as well as the practical application this morality and truth as a means of holding both personal lives and society together.

Much of Wesley's approach, the founding of the Holiness Movement and even the development of the idea of holiness can be attributed to Wesley's family heritage. Wesley was influenced largely as a person and in his faith practice by his mother, Susanna Wesley. He acknowledged that his mother's disciplined way of raising him and his siblings, left an impact on him. For instance, John Wesley received a letter from his mother where he received the "principle rules" by which she educated her children (see Jay 1987:64). He went on to apply a similar approach to discipline when it came to his application of holiness in faith practice. For instance, John Wesley, like Susanna Wesley, regarded breaking the law of the Sabbath as a serious offense against God (see Collins 2003:15). The Ten Commandments were central to her for the development of a disciplined and holy life. Susanna Wesley's parents and John Wesley's father Samuel also had a great influence on his formation. This heritage of relating holiness to faith practice will be discusse in greater depth later in the study.

The lineage of John Wesley consisted of four generations of preachers both from his mother and father's side. They were men with strong convictions who earnestly sought to live holy lives. On account of their convictions they opposing and broke away from the established Church of England and followed the Puritan movement.
Samuel Wesley's great grandfather, Batholomew Westley and his grandfather, John Westley were expelled from their congregations due to their opposition to the Anglican Church. John Westley was imprisoned for political reasons (see Collins 2003:21). Susanna Wesley's father, Samuel Annesley and her grandfather, John White, were also devout Puritan preachers. Samuel Annesley's emphasis on holiness "where God and man concur in operation" was included in John Wesley's comprehensive 50 volume work, *A Christian library* (1749-1755; see Collins 2003:14; cf. Newton 1964:19). The Puritans aimed to further "reform" the Church of England through the "correct" preaching of Scripture, catechism and an emphasis on family stability (see Packer 1990:25-27). However, by the time of John Wesley, under King James I, there was "a mass exodus of Puritans" (see Forster 2001:7). Most of the Puritans left for North America from 1630-1640 to flee persecution and to settle in what became known New England where they could take refuge and establish the Puritan heritage with a sense of freedom.

Despite the large decline of Puritan influence, John Wesley retained their disciplined and structured approach to spirituality. Although both Samuel and Susanna no longer adhered to Puritan thought, Susanna retained Puritan faith practice. This was evident also in the way in which she raised her children. Qualities of his grandfather Samuel Annesley, such as "loyalty to conscience and having a zeal for practical godliness" were also taught to him (Hulley 2006:4). However, before her marriage to Wesley, Susanna Annesley had come to her own convictions. She chose the Anglican tradition as a twelve year old girl. So also did Samuel Wesley break away from the Puritan tradition. Disgusted by the "ferocity and bigotry" of the Puritans, he chose to join the Anglican Church (see Collins 2003:23; Wesley [1741] 2016:13).

His rich heritage gave John Wesley a stable spiritual foundation from a young age. Susanna raised her 19 children with the aim "to save their souls" (see Wallace 1997:150). She was a source of guidance for John Wesley until her death. John Wesley was born in a decent and orderly home that combined "Anglican and nonconformist piety" (see Shelley 2013:348). John Wesley's father Samuel, "was a learned and devout high-church man" (Shelley 2013:348). Although Samuel and Susanna would differ with regard to some aspects, together they created an environment conducive to spiritual growth in the development of holiness. When Samuel left Susanna for several months because of a political dispute between them, she continued to effectively lead the household and guide the children. She was known for her leadership qualities and her resolve to cultivate holiness in her children. She insisted on spiritual disciplines such as prayer, family devotions, Sabbath observance and discussions on spiritual growth. Through strict discipline and consistently rewarding good and punishing bad, she instilled values such as honesty and encouraged good deeds (see Wesley [1741] 2016:96-97). Her theology was sophisticated, and the Wesley household reflected "the puritan strictness towards life", as well as loyalty and piety (see Hulley 2006:3-6).

According to Oden (2013:113), Susanna Wesley was an "educated, thoughtful, highly spiritual, strong-willed woman in her own right" who could read Hebrew, Greek and Latin and was able to debate theologically "as well as any man" (Dengler 1987:10). As her children moved away from school, she maintained correspondence with them in

an ongoing bid to educate them to keep growing spiritually in obedience to God (see Wallace 1997:41). She encouraged John Wesley to be “most pure and free from all scandalous actions” as the priests in the temple during Old Testament times were (Wallace 1997:53). Her education of John Wesley from when he was a child to his ordination into full-time ministry contributed vastly towards his keen awareness of holiness in faith practice. Some scholars regarded Susanna as
“unduly harsh and rigorous”, but John Wesley himself expressed his gratitude for his upbringing (see Collins 2000:13). The origins of the Methodist Church, the Holiness Movement and the Wesleyan and Holiness Tradition have been significantly influenced by the heritage of disciplines passed down from Susanna Wesley to her son, John who later warned his followers against “the unholy triumvirate of pride, self-will and the love of the world” (Collins 2000:13). Susanna Wesley created a greater awareness of what it meant to pursue God’s will through holy and pure living and not conforming to the patterns of this world (see Romans 12:1-2).

2.1.3 John Wesley’s evangelistic approach

The Holy Club is John Wesley’s first public attempt in applying holiness in faith practice and therefore exploring the Holy Club provides insight into how Wesley’s practical works in relation to this. At Oxford University, John Wesley focused on practical mission work with the aim to lead others to experience the impact of the gospel in practice. It began as a small group of four students, led by John Wesley, who were committed to making a difference for God. The students were struggling with their spiritual lives and were concerned with the students of the university (see Hulley 2006:9). The Holy Club was influential among the students. They began seeking
“mutual edification”, among others by studying the Greek New Testament (see Hulley 2006:8-9). Their private devotion took the form of much effort, self-denial and selfdiscipline which could even be characterised as an “obsession with self-examination” (Hattersley 2003:76). They searched for the salvation of their own souls and found inner holiness through regular fasting, studying the Christian life, taking

communion and reading beneficial books (see Campbell 1991:115; Wesley [1741] 2016:27).

The influence of the Holy Club was an inspiration to Wesley to study theology. He was ordained in 1925 (Campbell 1991:115; see Thomson 1976:112). Along with much study, contemplation and exercising spiritual disciplines, the Holy Club focused also on practical outreach. Their mission work, led Wesley to examine his own faith (see Thomson 1976:112). Wesley maintained a zeal for evangelising in a simplistic and rational rather than fanatical way (see Yrigoyeng 1996:28; Hong 2006:10). Holiness in faith practice can be enhanced by ministering in a plain way in a society that promotes both “spiritual apathy” and “decadence” (Hong 2006:10). Wesley's missionary endeavors, emphasis on Christian love and his controversial doctrine of Christian Perfection has had a vast influence on the Christian Church over the past few

centuries.

Wesley ministered alongside George Whitefield, who was also a member of the Holiness Club at Oxford University. According to Maddock (2018:3-6), Wesley and Whitefield underwent similar conversion experiences and were both missional in their approach. They differed with regard to their Arminian and Calvinist approaches respectively. Though they differed in many aspects, they both ministered to great numbers of people and had a great influence also outside of the institutional churches. Where Calvinist spirituality focuses primarily on Jesus’ work on the cross as a motive to live a holy life, Wesleyan spirituality emphasizes the cultivation of spiritual disciplines and the means of grace with the aim to become “entirely sanctified” (see Thorsen 2013:87). Love that is evidenced by good works will holistically benefit one’s neighbour. The Holiness Club under John Wesley, showed a holistic concern with meeting the needs of the widows, orphans and poor people. Clothes were provided, money was donated, jobs were created, and people were loved equally because they were seen as humans created in the image of God (see Cairns 1981:383). The formation and exploits of the Holy Club would contribute to

Wesley’s conversion experience. Wesley’s conversion took place after being confronted by a Moravian group who emphasized justification by faith alone (see

Cairns 1981:383). Through the Holy Club, he inspired missions and evangelists such as George Whitefield.

John Wesley had a life-changing experience at a society meeting at Aldersgate Street in 1738 during which the Preface of Martin Luther's work on the Book of Romans was read. This experience at Aldersgate was significant in contributing towards building the character and ministry of John Wesley. Prior to the Aldersgate meeting, Wesley had been failing in his ministry. The experience at Aldersgate transformed him and became foundational to the Methodist Movement (Abraham 2010:2). Wesley testified to having his heart warmed or consoled by God (see Strong & Dorrance 2007:13; Abraham 2010:1; cf. Hammond 2011:834). His emphasis on "the new birth, justification by faith, and assurance" were shaped after this event (Hammond 2011:834). Wesley experienced the saving faith typical of evangelical tradition, validated by a fruitful ministry in pursuit of holy living (see Burnett 2006:37). This experience increased his impact. John Wesley influenced those who followed him to reach out to the less fortunate people, whilst remaining within the established church. John Wesley prompted his protégé John Fletcher to continue promoting Methodist theology. He had a high regard for Fletcher's "pattern of all holiness" (Wood 2016:25). Fletcher shared many of Wesley's ideas, including the idea of Christian perfection as God's salvific plan, which begins when the Holy Spirit is poured out on a person (see Wood 2016:25). Fletcher regarded the possibility for Christian perfection to occur gradually. He adapted Christian perfection by linking the baptism of the Holy Spirit and love to holiness. In his work, *The last check to Antinomianism* (1775), Fletcher linked the baptism of the Spirit with Christian perfection and the doctrine of perfect love (see Wood 2007:111). John Wesley and Fletcher concurred in their view that the purpose of being filled with the Spirit was to receive the perfect love of God. However, Fletcher linked Spirit baptism and perfect love more frequently than John Wesley did (see Wood 2007:113). According to Fletcher (1774:46), the loving Spirit of God works holiness in believers to exalt Christ as Lord. The merits of Jesus Christ are the basis for believers being baptised with the Holy Spirit and granted perfection. It cannot be earned through human merit. Through Jesus' sacrificial death it was earned on behalf of believers (see

Fletcher 1774:46). Jesus imparted life through death on a cross, which becomes imputed to those who believe in Jesus as their Lord and Saviour. Wesley also had other followers that significantly contributed towards the development of the Wesleyan movement, which later developed into the Holiness Movement.

The importance of moving on to "perfection" rather than merely holding onto the fundamental truths of the Christian faith, is emphasised (see Hebrews 6:1-3). According to John Wesley, Christian Perfection is something that is accepted through faith and makes a radical difference within the believer. John Wesley regarded justification as being instant, sanctification as gradual but the attainment of Christian Perfection as instantaneous (see Collins 2007:16). This was because John Wesley had more an Eastern theological perspective on Christian Perfection that refers to as a process not a state and as a goal, not "the perfection of gods" (see Campbell 2013:59). Being saved from sin is not the goal, but rather being made Christ-like is.

2.1.4 John Wesley and the influence of the Church Fathers

Through considering the writings that John Wesley studied, it becomes clearer what John Wesley meant when he referred to Christian Perfection. Apart from background knowledge to what John Wesley's promotion of this doctrine, it would be easy to misunderstand him. John Wesley studied the writings of early Christian writers. His idea of Christian perfection can be understood against the backdrop of the practical mystical spirituality of the Eastern Church Fathers (see Levterov 2013:302) whom Wesley regarded as the "most authentic commentators on scriptures" (Jackson 1978:484; 492-493; Bounds 2007:7). Wesley studied ancient Christian literature under John Clayton, particularly the work of Macarius the Egyptian and Ephraem Syrus (Outler 1964:9; see Campbell 1995:61). In their work "persevering prayer" was central to "sanctifying perfection" of the Spirit (see Jaeger 1954:210). The notions of sanctification and perfection were both apparent in the writings of John Wesley. He was also influenced by Macarius' view of attaining higher levels of perfection. Perfection was a process rather than a state (see Schlimm 2013:140). Macarius, in

turn, was influenced by Gregory of Nyssa, for whom perfection was a “perpetual becoming” (Spencer 2011:487). John Wesley also aligned with the thought of Gregory of Nyssa in that he moved away from mysticism to embrace an ethical view on perfection. Gregory referred to it as the “life-experience of every Christian believer” (Levterov 2013:305; cf. Meredith 1995:95). Likewise, John Wesley understood Christian perfection as “an ongoing maturational process of grace” that leads to spiritual development and is based on God’s gracious gift of Jesus Christ (see Strawn 2011:666-667). For Wesley perfection was not to be applied to “every word, thought and deed” of a Christian, but was rather to be seen as a process

(Campbell 2013:59). He included several of the Church Fathers’ writings in his “Christian Library”. He was especially influenced by their explanations of holiness, their ideas on *theosis* or deification.

With regard to the doctrine of salvation, John Wesley could relate to the thought of Origen, Cyprian, Chrysostom, Hilary, Basil, Ambrose and Augustine who ascribed to justification by faith in Christ alone, not by works (see Maddox 2012:35). Initially a holy standing with God is attained despite of, not because of, human works. The process towards holy living begins with God taking the initiative. Like John Wesley, John Chrysostom was a disciplined man who practiced many spiritual disciplines, such as Bible reading, fasting and private devotion, regularly along with other young Christian men (see Litfin 2007:192). Prominent theologians such as Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria and Origen saw “Christian Perfection as Christian love, freedom from sin and being (re)made into the image and likeness of God” (see Bounds 2007:7-27).

The Church Father’s emphasised *love* along with holiness. This is because God is both holy and the God of love (Oden 2009:24). Taken together holiness and love mean: “separation for the sake of purity and communion for the sake of love” (Collins 2007:8). This combination was emphasises by the Church Fathers and John Wesley’s. Litfin (2007:47) explains that for the Church Father, Ignatius, “zeal for the truth was not at odds with loving harmony”. Wesley building on the ideas of the Church Fathers gives his idea of holiness as Christian perfection greater credibility. The idea of Christian perfection originates from the ideal in the Western church to attain a *state*

of infallibility, rather than subscribing to the idea of a *process of maturing* as a Christian believer. The Scripture central to this notion of perfection is
Matthew 5:48: “Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect”. This tendency to interpret Christian perfection as a state rather than a process is contrary to how it was understood by the Church Fathers (Campbell 2013:58-59). By
Christian perfection, John Wesley means “whole, complete, mature, grown-up, perfect”. This is the *goal* (Manskar 2003:6). Christian perfection is therefore the main aim of a Christian’s life. It involves a hard and long journey of faith towards a destination of becoming more human. From this perspective, the Church Fathers emphasised love not at the expense of holiness, but rather together with holiness.

John Wesley was specifically influenced by John Chrysostom’s idea of *theosis*, which has been described as “a matter of divine-human participation” in God (see McCormick 1991:48). For the Church Fathers *theosis* was the ultimate goal of Christian life. They regarded mortality rather than guilt as the main problem of human beings (see Kärkkäinen 2004:18). *Theosis* as participating in the divine nature through the grace of God involves becoming “all that God is” besides who God is in essence (see Kärkkäinen 2004:31). *Theosis* is not attained against a person’s will, but rather requires “one’s total devotion and willingness to be transformed” through exercising good works (see Kärkkäinen 2004:31). The Church This involves humans becoming like God in energy not in essence. In other words, humans cannot be God, because the Godhead is made up of the God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit, but can assume divine qualities of God. This is possible through the role that the Holy Spirit plays in a believer’s life and is based on the reconciling work of Jesus Christ on the cross.

2.1.5 Other main influences on John Wesley’s theology

Influences on Wesley’s views include the spiritualities of the Reformers, Quietists, Quakers, Pietists and Puritans. All of these spiritualities had different distinctive approaches towards holiness. Each shall be briefly considered in order to show the dynamic formation of John Wesley’s application of holiness in faith practice. By

considering these traditions individually and highlighting key individuals within them, it provides more context to John Wesley's concept of Christian Perfection.

Reformed spirituality was started from a schism in western Christianity. The groundwork for the Reformation was developed by Martin Luther (1483-1546) in Wittenburg, John Calvin (1509-1564) in Geneva and Zwingli (1484-1531) in Zürich. The Reformation is popularly acclaimed to have been started by Martin Luther. Martin Luther has been referred to has been the first Protestant reformer who was able to "capture the imaginations and hearts of vast multitudes" (see Eire 2016:133-134). He along with other reformers ignited and furthered "a movement which sought to return the western church to more biblical foundations in relation to its belief system, morality, and structures" (McGrath 2001:60).

According to *Quietist* spirituality, "union with God or perfection came from annihilation of the will and total indifference to self" (Chan 2011:706). Madame Guyon and Francois Fenelon were among the best known Quietists (Chan
2011:706). Madame Guyon directed her writings at the "common people" and she championed an anti-intellectual approach, over against the spiritual elitism of many mystical authors (see Campbell 1991:34). Her approach involved a life of contemplation.

Quaker spirituality was founded by George Fox and was deemed a "new spirituality" (Campbell 1991:58). It initially developed around the idea of holiness, which was understood as "perfection" or "union with God". It was a spirituality of radical optimism (Spencer 2011:704). Although John Wesley was influenced by the Quaker spirituality, he criticised it for being based more on human opinion than Scriptural revelation (see Ewbank 2009:94-95). The Quaker, Hannah Whitall Smith, became an influential leader in the Holiness Movement. She was described as "evangelical in orientation, yet a universalist" (Spencer 2013:7).

The founder of *Pietism*, the German Lutheran Philip Jacob Spener, described the essence of the Pietist message in his *Pia Desideria* (Spener 1675; see Thomson 1976:109). In his work, *True Christianity*, Johann Arndt ([1605-1610] 1978:21) aimed to promote "a true, living faith, active in genuine godliness and the fruits of

righteousness". This work expressed a longing to restore the fervency and purity of Christianity (see Carlson 2011:673). Pietist spirituality aimed to be a "contemporary application of the sixteenth-century reformation", and focused on the "inner vitalization of Reformed doctrine and a radical sanctification of life" (De Reuver 2007:16).

Puritan spirituality was individualistic in its approach, yet without neglecting the importance of fellowship and collective growth through prayer and biblical learning. The Puritans continued the reform that the Reformation had accomplished, going beyond the church to include society at large. Their view of life was that of the Christian pilgrimage of an individual (see McGrath 2001:82; Packer 2011:702-703; Spickard 1994:192). This was described in John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's progress*.

In his work, *A plain account of Christian perfection,* John Wesley (1777:3; see Bundy 2004:116) mentions several other prominent influences on his life and theology. This includes the writings of Thomas á Kempis (1380-1471), William Law (1686-1761) and Jeremy Taylor (1613–1667), who emphasized that a Christian can attain some measure of perfection in this life. "For God weighs more the love out of which a man works than the work that he does" (à Kempis [c.1418-1427] 1981:29). For Wesley, this emphasis on love over works was contrary to his own works-centred, moral upbringing which was focused on doing what was right and avoiding what was wrong. The emphasis on the aspect of "love", therefore, reflects a development in
Wesley's understanding of holiness toward a greater focus on grace, as opposed to merely being works-based. Taylor (1651 [2005]) concurred with á Kempis with regard to love being the central aspect which holds all of Christian living together. In 1725, Wesley read several parts of *Rule and exercises of holy living and dying* (Taylor 1651) and was "exceedingly affected; that part in particular which relates to purity of intention" and became "thoroughly convinced" that each aspect of his life be fully committed to God (Wesley 2007:4). For Wesley, holiness is about committing one's entire life to God, also and especially that which cannot be seen by people. To serve God through a holy life involves an inward discipline also of one's deepest motives. The following year, *Of the imitation of Christ* (à Kempis [1710] 1981) cemented this idea further in Wesley's thinking, as Wesley interpreted it to mean that even the giving of one's life would profit nothing, unless all one's heart is given to God as well (see

Wesley 2007:5). In other words, no amount of holiness in intention could make up for a heart that is not fully devoted to God. A year or two later,
Wesley became convinced Wesley of the importance of being “all devoted to God, to give him all my soul, my body, and my substance” (Wesley 2007:6).

In his work, *A plain account for Christian perfection* (1767), John Wesley explains that his purpose is “to give a plain and distinct account of the steps” that led him “to embrace the doctrine of Christian Perfection” (Wesley [1767] 2007:3). This was the pivotal doctrine for John Wesley, which he embraced with strong conviction. It was not his own invention, but rather the culmination of what prominent Christians authors from the early centuries of Christianity had claimed to be true. John Wesley explains how he interprets the idea of Christian perfection and refutes some objections that had been made against his theology. This he did by using Scripture and theological arguments to substantiate his interpretaton. He also explained the significance of Christian perfection for faith practice.

John Wesley also elaborated on his understanding of Christian perfection in various sermons and in his work, *A plain account of Christian perfection* (1767). Christian perfection is described as that state that “excludes all sin from the heart and possessing pure love to God” through replacing the remains of sin with the love of God (see Wood 2016:34). According to Wood (2016:39), all the main theologians of the Holiness Tradition agree that Christian perfection centres on love and moral purity, while they differ on other minor aspects. By all accounts Christian perfection is primarily about *love* and *holiness*. Holiness in faith practice, according to John Wesley, is centred on love and expressed through a holy life exercised in loving obedience to God. Love is what makes the faith practice of holiness possible, because it connects all the aspects of Christian life. Holiness is therefore not sterile or austere, but driven by a loving heart and a wholehearted seeking of God.

2.1.6 John Wesley’s conferences

John Wesley held conferences that included numerous discussions on what the holiness involves in faith practice. He studied the Scriptures to imitate Christ more fully

in life (see Wesley 2007:7). This was foundational to the formation of his understanding of Christian perfection. In a sermon entitled “The circumcision of the heart”, he explains that holiness implies being cleansed from sin, being given the virtues of Jesus Christ and being perfected (see Outler 1984:403; cf. Wesley
2007:8). According to Outler (1984:398), this sermon is one of Wesley’s most “complete statements on the doctrine of holiness”. Wesley described love as “the life of all virtue” and the means to perfection (Outler 1984:407). Through statements like these, he clearly connected holiness and love together. Perfection is not so much about behaviour as it is about the condition of one’s heart. On the advice of Dr Gibson, the bishop of London, Wesley published a sermon on Christian perfection in which he explained what it was and what it was not. The sermon was his answer to critics who found contradictions in his idea of what Christian perfection entailed (see Outler 1985:99-100).

The idea of Christian perfection was further promoted in the first volume of hymns published by John and Charles Wesley in words such as: “heavenly Adam, life
Divine, change my nature into Thine” (Wesley 2007:15). This is in line with the Church Fathers’ idea of *theosis* – believers as partakers in the divine nature. Also in the tract, *The character of a Methodist*, Wesley (1742) elaborated on what he meant by Christian perfection. For Wesley, the term “Methodist” is another word for perfect Christian (see Outler 1985:98). He describes the character of a Methodist as being where “God reigns alone, all that is in the soul is holiness to the Lord” (Wesley 2007:18). Wesley highlights unceasing prayer, love for God and people, measured by complete obedience to God in thought, word and action (see Wesley 2007:17-19).
Christian perfection is about a change of heart and lifestyle.

Wesley held conferences where the meaning of Christian perfection and sanctification were discussed. From 1744 to 1747, four conferences were held, where like-minded Methodist pastors discussed the doctrine of sanctification and perfection by reflecting on 21 questions (see Wesley 2007:40-47). Sanctification was described as being renewed in the image of God and Christian perfection meant to love God with one’s entire being and remove all inward sin (see Wesley 2007:40; Murray 2003:234). Sanctification is not only to be constantly pursued and expected, but is to be lived

completely (cf. Deut 30:6; Ps 130:8; Ezek 36:25, 29; Mat 5:48, 12:37; Luke 1:69, 72-75; John 17:20-23; Rom 8:3-4; 2 Cor 7:1; Eph 3:14-19; 5:25b,
27; Tit 2:11-14; 1 Th 5:23; 1 Jn 3:8, 4:17). John Wesley's view on Christian perfection was based on two main Scriptures. In these Scriptures, Jesus urges individual believers to be perfect and prays to God that believers to be collectively perfect (see Mat 5:48; John 17:23). These conferences took the idea of Christian perfection further. All those who attended the four conferences agreed on the description of holiness (see Wesley 2007:47). For Wesley, every Christian was called to live a perfect life and was able to attain a level of perfection in spite of human limitations, if they were willing to receive and appropriate God's grace.

Wesley (2007:24) interprets 1 John 1:8-10 that says that anyone who claims to be without sin is a liar, as referring to the sins committed by the person before having become a Christian. After conversion the person is cleansed from all unrighteousness. Christian perfection, the inner purity of heart, will necessarily result in righteous works and then there will be no inconsistency between a righteous inner and outward life. The latter stems from the former. John Wesley's practical approach to holiness highlights love as central and holiness as a by-product of living a Christian life. According to John Wesley and those present at that conference, a
Christian is inwardly changed by God and and then continues to grow in the love of God. Christian perfection is about striving to live with love. It is attained through living a life of more complete love towards God and others. During the Fourth Conference, John Wesley explained in more detail where the foundation of the idea of Christian perfection were to be found in both the New and Old Testaments. He explained the meaning and application of verses pertaining to a complete cleansing of sins and becoming perfect in righteousness (see Wesley 2007:42-44).

In his work, *A plain account of Christian perfection* (1766), Wesley describes is as loving God with one's entire being, harbouring no wrong intentions within the soul and emphasises that pure love governs all "thoughts, words, and actions" (Wesley 2007:53). In his subsequent work, *Further thoughts on Christian perfection*, Wesley
(2007:83) aims to make these ideas clear to new believers. In his "review of the whole subject", Wesley encourages all Christians to be mindful of this doctrine and

"continually agonise over it" (Wesley 2007:53). The idea of Christian perfection was further refined in 1752 when John Wesley and his brother Charles agreed that it was "instantaneous" (Wesley 2007:51).

The writings of John Wesley argue strongly that Christian perfection was central to what it meant to be a Christian. It was about becoming more like Christ. John Wesley made an effort to explain this more clearly after the conferences in subsequent writings and testimonies. John Wesley constantly expounded on this concept of Christian Perfection through the use of Scripture and reason. Although it was received by many Methodists, it remained to some extent, a disputed idea. It was especially controversial from the perspective of Reformed theology's emphasises on justification and that perfection could only being attained after death.

2.2 Christian perfection: Developments

2.2.1 Holiness and love

John Wesley referred to holiness as essentially involving love for God and one's neighbour, which provides a relational aspect to holiness that differs from an aloof approach towards holiness in life. The qualities of holiness and love as viewed by Wesley are important in this study because it forms the basis for other insights on holiness even to this present-day. As mentioned earlier, John Wesley's perspectives on Christian Perfection were formed by numerous authors from the time of the Early Church Fathers. However, he documents his views clearly on several occasions during his ministry to inspire more to attain to Christian Perfection and to clarify the concept as to avoid confusion. Wesley's sermons were and continue to be a source of inspiration for those seeking to live a holy life. His sermons illustrate that he was concerned about the salvation of souls from start to finish. He gives explanations on the prevenient and sanctifying grace of God, as well as descriptions of what it means to attain Christian Perfection. Through these sermons, Wesley emphasised his core notion of holiness of heart and life. In his sermon *On Perfection,* John Wesley introduced his sermon by explaining that using the concept of perfection is biblically motivated (see Wesley 2003:169). While justification has been understood as the

stage of salvation where perfection is attained, Wesley contended that it equally holds value for the process of sanctification. He bases this on Jesus' character and work on the cross (see 1 Jn 1:5; 4:17). He observed that "Christians are saved in this world, from all sin and all righteousness" so that they are freed to be perfect in state and conduct (see Outler 1991:83-84). In this sermon, Wesley made the points that Christians are not perfect in that they are sometimes ignorant, mistaken, weak, tempted and misunderstanding (see Wesley 2003:170-173).

On January 1733, John Wesley preached a sermon *Circumcision of the heart* where he explained that this involves having a heart cleansed from sin and filled with the love of God (see Wesley 2007:9). This was Wesley's most thoroughly prepared sermon on his concept of Christian Perfection (see Outler 1991:23). This is where a Christian actively does everything possible to gain complete devotion towards God.
This is not done through observing the correct doctrine, but through practicing a holy life of setting oneself apart for God. It involves "the living sacrifice of the heart" as well as one's spirit and affections (see Outler 1991:31).

John Wesley describes Christian Perfection as not being "angelic perfection". Though angels did not fall into sin to have their abilities, understanding, knowledge and decisions impaired, they are also creatures who are not perfect. They cannot, like God, comprehend everything (Outler 1986:72). Likewise, humans are not perfect in knowledge. They did fall into sin. They are therefore ignorant, fallible, prone to infirmity, and unable to resist temptation (Wesley 2007:21-22). Christian perfection is therefore the "full freedom to love and not necessarily freedom from flaws" (Hernandez 2011:666). Holiness in this light does not place human beings on the level of God the Creator. They remain limited and imperfect creatures.

Christian perfection also does not involve "Adamic perfection". All people have a corruptible body and as Adam's rebellion shows, are not always pure in God's sight. Human beings need atonement in order to be able to stand before God (Outler 1986:73-74). They are reliant only on the grace of God, the Creator, through the work of Jesus Christ to make holiness a possible pursuit. Wesley deemed Christians to be imperfect in their words, behaviour, understanding and strength. These imperfections are in the mind and cannot be removed. They are evidenced outwardly in practice.

What can be pure are the attitude and intentions of the heart. From a heart of love, holiness can be attained within this limited but by no means, low standard that Wesley sets. Niles (2008:123) coins the phrase “Christian imperfection” to show how Wesley’s spirituality provides the opportunity for believers to seek restoration in the community of believers after having committed sin. Human error is sinful only when a person becomes aware of it. Ignorance and immaturity are not sinful *per se*, but a person should grow out of it by growing in righteousness (see Niles 2008:124-125).

According to Wesley, Christian perfection can be attained when Christians reach a level of maturity in their life. They can then be referred to as “adults in faith” (see Wesley 1985:105; Wesley 2007:22). Christians do not need to lead a sinful life because the grace of God is sufficient. “Grown Christians” can be perfect in that they are “freed from evil thoughts and tempers”. Their heart is made pure at conversion (Wesley 2007:23-24). Christians are holy in that Christ, who is holy, lives in them. Their hearts are purified by faith from evil “desire and self-will; for Christ desired only to do the will of his Father” (Wesley 2007:25). Christians are not only holy in intent and motives, but also in their affections that display meekness, gentleness, righteous anger against sin and no selfish anger (Wesley 2007:25).

An adult or mature Christian cannot commit outward, wilful and habitual sin. Such an outward act includes “any outward transgression of the law” (Wesley [1767] 1985:107). The Christian believer therefore differs from those who do not believe and they are also different to their “old self”, the person they were before becoming a Christian. To be perfect means to be “free from evil thoughts and evil emotions” (Wesley 2003:178). Therefore, Christian believers are perfect from the moment they become a Christian. They are perfect in that their hearts have been purified. This leads to living for God in a way that is clearly and outwardly visible Their way of life distinguishes Christians from non-Christians *in practice*.

According to Wesley (1986:74-76; cf. Ewbank 2009:2-6), Christian perfection is love towards God and people, the transformed disposition of the mind of Christ, the display of “the undivided fruit of the Spirit”, the renewed image of God and holiness of heart displayed through inward and outward righteousness. A Christian can avoid sins of omission or wilful sins through humility and sins of commission or procrastination

through the community's encouragement through life and witness (Niles 2008:126-127). Christian perfection is demonstrated through "pure love toward God and neighbour" (Hammond 2011:834). This kind of love is also described as "perfect love" or "perfection in love" (see Cairns 1981:384; Volf & Welker 2009:31; Hammond 2011:815). Therefore, the holiness and love that are characteristic of God and a Christian are intricately and essentially connected. "Where there is no love of God there is no holiness" (Wesley 1984:91). When the love of God is displayed through a person, so too is the holiness of God. To be holy is to obey the "Great Commandment" to love (see Mat. 22:37-39). It is this combination of holiness and love that was seen as central and was taken further in the Holiness Tradition.

John Wesley further enforced the concept of Christian Perfection through conferences, hymns and tracts. These means were consistent with what Wesley had already preached. The four conferences that Wesley held were called networks or connexions. This shows that the concept of Christian Perfection can be used to unite people from across different denominations. The First Conference involved the conclusion that perfection involves all inward sin being removed, an individual being renewed into the image of God and able to love God with one's entire being (see Wesley 2007:40). This conference led to a conference being held annually to incorporate "far-flung societies" into the network who were taught to share the same soundness in beliefs and morality (Tomkins 2003:115). During the Second Conference, they agreed that Christian Perfection can be attained earlier than just before one's death if it is expected sooner (see Wesley 2007:41). The Third Conference involved no change to the previous conference (see Wesley 2007:41). At the Fourth Conference they examined the foundation of Christian Perfection and as with the other conferences resolved any confusion or disagreements (see Wesley 2007:42, 47). Therefore, these conferences helped to form an informed decision about what the nature of Christian Perfection was and gave more details surrounding it.

In 1739, John and Charles Wesley published their first "volume of *Hymns and sacred poems"* (Wesley 2007:14). The extracts of some of these hymns show a desire for a single devotion to God, love as the guidance through life's struggles, being absorbed in God's greatness and the radical transformation that God brings (see Wesley

2007:15). These hymns reveal that the love of God and transformation that God as a result of pursuing God is central to attaining Christian Perfection. In 1741, the second volume of hymns were published were John Wesley wrote a strong preface that explained Christian Perfection in the “strongest” way to date whilst not adding anything new (see Wesley 2007:27-30). They published another volume of hymns where John Wesley explained Christian Perfection in the preface, summing his view as consistent and having a balance between devotion to God “in heart and life” (see Wesley 2007:36) Holiness of heart and life is one of the most mentioned themes in
John and Charles Wesley’s hymns (Yrigoyen 1996:28). In 1749, Charles Wesley printed two more volumes of *hymns and sacred poems* (see Wesley 2007:48). He sums up his views on Christian Perfection in light of these hymns as love for God and neighbour and by implication “deliverance from all sin” received by faith, provided instantly and to be expected each moment (see Wesley 2007:51). It is clear that John Wesley expressed holiness in faith practice through his writings, sermons, shared testimonies of others and through writings hymns. These hymns reinforced his theology of Christian Perfection and transferred its concept from being one of mental assent to being one that stirs the heart of a person.

The character of a Methodist (1739) was the first tract that John Wesley wrote, where he described what a “perfect Christian” is (Wesley 2007:16). In *The character of a Methodist,* John Wesley describes what the “distinguishing marks and principles” of a Methodist is in defence against those who speak against it (Wesley 1739:2). Having written this tract against sceptics in religious circles, he starts off with the aspects that Methodist have in common with orthodox Christians. These include the view that Scripture is foundational, Jesus is the core of a Christian’s existence and that love is the distinguishing factor of a Christian (see Wesley 1739:3-10). It is wholehearted love that is the cause for a Christian to continuously rejoice in Christ and this love purifies a Christian “from every unkind temper or malign affection” (see Wesley 1739:5, 10). This tract consists of a summary of what John Wesley meant by Christian Perfection. John Wesley claims that he drew inspiration for this tract from Clement of Alexandra who was “curious and openminded” in his doctrinal beliefs (see Bucur 2011:360; cf. Hughes 1951:185). He claimed that a Christian can progress from conversion to

deification, as he becomes a person living like an angel, moved directly by God and living like a god on earth (Bucur 2011:360). This concept of deification was controversial during those times and mainline evangelical Christianity was also sceptical of this during Wesley's time as well. What added to the misunderstanding is that deification has been commonly misunderstood in western Christianity and avoided. However, this did not detour Wesley from expounding on Christian Perfection and reemphasising its importance and biblical basis.

2.2.2 Testimonies

For Christian Perfection to gain more credibility and clarity among listeners, testimonies of attaining this perfection were shared. These testimonies provide practical aspects on the transformation and some of the evidences of Christian Perfection in lives of believers, albeit from largely subjective standpoints. During John Wesley's lifetime there were numerous testimonies of individuals who claimed to have experienced Christian perfection. These testimonies provided detail as to what led to their experience, what the experience entailed, and how the experience transformed their lives. The testimonies are written in personal and emotively descriptive language. They bear testimony of how Wesley's work reached a broad audience of lay people in their ordinary lives as believers (see Oden 1994:12). Collectively, these testimonies reveal that Christian perfection is not merely an abstract theological idea, but a practical experience that can have a transformative effect on people. Notable testimonies are those of early Methodist preachers such as Sarah Crosby (1729-1804), Jane Cooper (1736-1783) and George Clark (18321901).

In her pursuit of Christian perfection, Sarah Crosby (1729-1804) sought to have a pure love for God. She was deeply and increasingly aware "of her own sinfulness" (see Bratton 2014:51). But Crosby was also "overwhelmed" with God's presence in her life (see Taft 1825:107). When asked by John Wesley to describe her relationship with God, she said that God is "the centre of all my hopes, the end of my enlarged desires" (Baker 1949 [1773]: 80). She was the first female Methodist preacher and her ministry was influential in spreading the message of holiness. Crosby initially sought

more knowledge in order to try to overcome her own sinfulness. Later she rather pursued the love of God in order to achieve this goal. In her pursuit of love, rather than in her pursuit of knowledge, she experienced

Christian perfection. Crosby describes it as experiencing God's presence and love dramatically (see Bratton 2014:51). Christian perfection was therefore not to be based on theoretical knowledge, but on experiencing the love of God in faith practice. In Crosby's case it was awareness of sinfulness that led to the pursuit of forgiveness and restoration. Love, rather than knowledge, has a purifying effect on the believer's life. For Crosby, her attainment of Christian perfection occurred as a consequence of diligently seeking the presence of God and being fully open to receiving the love of God. Through God's love it is made possible to live a holy life, because it draws one closer to the reality of living in the presence of God.

According to Wesley (2007:77), Jane Cooper was "a living and dying witness of Christian perfection". Cooper testified that once she had randomly found and contemplated on a verse in Scripture. Her contemplation was then articulated in a prayer that someone prayed for her and the prayer was fulfilled. After this, her view of Jesus was greatly transformed. Cooper saw Jesus as "altogether lovely" and he reigned in her heart "without a rival" (see Wesley 2007:77). She felt no pride or affection or inclination to do any will but God's (see Wesley 2007:77). For Cooper, Jesus was the standard for her own pursuit of holiness and experience of Christian perfection. On her death bed she bore extreme suffering with joy, acknowledged that her pain as the will of God, and "expired without a sigh or groan" (see Wesley 2007:79-82). This testimony shows that Christian perfection is not merely a fleeting experience, but can sustain a person until death. With Christian perfection comes not only the ability to overcome difficult circumstances, but to do so with joy. According to this testimony, Christian perfection brings contentment, a heavenly perspective and peace. God's grace and power enable the individual to transcend circumstances that many would find overwhelming. Christian perfection therefore gives a deep assurance and confidence in God.

Some journal entries of George Clark (1783) recount of the spiritual battle he fought in order to overcome his own limitations. Though his heart and conscience were in a

healthy state, his courage to persevere was being tested. He was discouraged by how difficulty he found it to connect with the presence of God. This was because of deeply rooted sinful attitudes such as pride and complacency. His aim was to become holy like God, not to avoid hardship but to love God with all his soul (Clark 1783:19, 22; see Bratton 2014:69). For Clark, his happiness in life was proportional to his level of holiness. Unhappiness was the consequence of his stuggle to become holy and had nothing to do with any circumstance or object (Clark 1783:19-21). Eventually after much struggle, George Clark described his experience of Christian perfection as that his soul "partakes of the divine nature" (Bratton 2014:107).

Clark's testimony indicates that Christian perfection does not happens by chance and does not necessarily occur instantly. At times it is a long process of struggling against one's personal limitations to come to the sober realisation of one's own inadequate spiritual condition (Clark 1783:19). Christian perfection therefore not only involves loving God and overcoming challenges with joy, but it is also about coming to the realisation of one's true spiritual condition in the sight of God. According to Clark, happiness is evidence of a developing inner holiness. In his view holiness and happiness are interconnected. The latter is the manifestation of the former.

2.3 Christian perfection: Further developments

2.3.1 Christian perfection as consecration: Phoebe Palmer

Phoebe Palmer further developed Christian Perfection by making it something more accessible and immediate to more people during the Holiness Movement. Her approach enabled those from outside the institutionalised church to gain access to experiencing holiness for themselves. Therefore, her approach holds relevance to this study in that it personalises Christian Perfection more.

Phoebe Palmer, whose father was a dedicated Methodist, experienced conversion during the Wesleyan Revival in England (see White 1987:23). She and her husband, Walter, also a committed Methodist, became interested in John Wesley's idea of

Christian perfection. She “simplified and modified” Wesley’s teachings on Christian perfection through sharing her personal experience and her basic understanding of Scripture. Her aim was to make these teachings more accessible to the people (Kostlevy 2010:227; cf. Thornton 2014:3). Palmer’s approach gained social respectability. She maintained an intense religious commitment (see Kostlevy 2010:227) and attracted a large following through her tent meetings and popular writings.

Phoebe Palmer appreciated the mystic tradition. She was referred to as an “apoptotic mystic” in that she struggled with inner and circumstantial conflict and yielded to a passive form of surrender (Heath 2006:88). From the age of four, she had experienced salvation and from then on her whole life was focused on seeking God (see Heath 2006:88). She was able to adapt Wesley’s theology and make it more accessible and appealing to the ordinary people of her day (see Jones 1996:124). Her spiritual breakthrough to which she referred to as her “altar covenant”, came when she accepted God’s promise to sanctify her. The initiative was with God rather than with her and her feelings (see Leclerc 2001:113; cf. Heath 2006:88; cf. Sanders 2011:651). Palmer adapted Wesley’s view of holiness. She explained it as a power “in the midst of overwhelming events” (Miskov 2011:12-13). According to Palmer, laying one’s life on the altar in surrender to God is what sanctifies the believer: “the altar sanctified the gift” (Jones 1996:125). Though she built on John Wesley’s ideas, there were also marked differences in their approach. Like Wesley, her faith practice was grounded in Scripture, personal experience and the Methodist tradition. However, her spirituality was based on Scripture interpreted through the experience of the Second Blessing or Baptism of the Spirit, which is a different emphasis (see Menzies 2011:216; Dodrill 2012:152).

Phoebe Palmer is seen to have “created something new” and to have popularised John Wesley’s idea of sanctification (Raser 1987:155; cf. White 1987:198; Leclerc 2000:189; Lowery 2001:188). Due to her Quietist leanings from a more mystic tradition, her theology also differed from that of John Wesley. According to Lowery (2001:188-189) Palmer aimed to reach a greater variety of people than Wesley. This also led to a diversity of approaches towards holiness and to some conflict. Palmer

promoted an individualistic perspective on salvation, which catered for less educated and marginalised people. Her focus was more on personal sanctification and less on the love for God and others (see Dodrill 2012:153-154; Leclerc 2004:63). She was greatly influential and many were “converted” and “sanctified” under her ministry (see Tucker & Liefeld 1987:263; Leclerc 2000:191).

Like John Wesley, Christian living and holiness were the main concerns of Phoebe Palmer (White 2008:106). Her work, *The way to holiness* (1854), was written in narrative form which made it accessible to ordinary people who could relate her story and apply her wisdom to their practical lives. Though her Five Points Mission she provided food, clothes, shelter and education for underprivileged people (see Avery & Smith 2013:153). In this way she broadened the practice of holiness to beyond the church and touched the lives of those traditionally neglected and even sometimes exploited by the institutional church. In this way she also furthered Wesley’s emphasis on holiness though social engagement in order for it to become more practical and make a difference to people’s lives.

An obstacle for Palmer in her quest for a holy life was her fear that it would be “beyond her reach” (Palmer 1854:20). For Palmer (1854:21), even a life completely surrendered to God would still be unprofitable, but a life not surrendered to God at all would make a person “guilty of keeping back” what belonged to God. Therefore, rather than viewing Christian perfection as something that was optional, Palmer saw it as an obligation to God. Her goal was “to be fully conformed to the will of God, as recorded in the written word” (Palmer 1854:20). This could be done through a believer’s decision to be completely conformed to Christ. Palmer urged believers to believe in the Scriptures, claim the promises of Scripture for themselves by faith and then holiness would follow instantly (see Kostlevy 2010:133; Sanders 2011:651). Holiness was, according to her, based on a *decision* to believe God’s promises of personal sanctification from Scripture. Heath (2010:2) refers to Palmer as “the Mother of the Holiness Movement”.

Walter and Phoebe Palmer continued the Tuesday prayer meetings called “the Promotion of Holiness”, which attracted Methodists and people from other

conservative denominations (see Jones 2002:3). Soon after her experience of “entire sanctification” in 1837, her family followed. She experienced her conversion in surrendering the difficult circumstances pertaining to her loved ones to God (see Heath 2006:91). She suffered pain after her children died, but believed that God took them away because she loved them too much. From that point onwards she embarked on a journey of Christian perfection (see White 1987:23). She “was a firebrand who evangelized a sleeping church” and whose faith practice of holiness resulted from personal hardships (Heath 2010:2).

The Palmers taught about the experience of Christian perfection mostly at tent meetings. Palmer (1837:14) described sanctification as: “give ourselves at once wholly and for ever away to [God’s] service”. For Palmer, holiness in faith practice involved “an act of consecration prior to conversion” (Kostlevy 2010:226). Serving God involves forgetting about oneself and instead doing everything to honour God. Palmer made a covenant with God to be consecrated after which she immediately began with “the work of God” (Palmer 1837:14). Her emphasis was on testimony. She simplified salvation to a three step process, namely “consecration, faith and testimony” (Pugh 2014:10; cf. Leclerc 2004:64; Kostlevy 2010:227). Whereas Wesley emphasised the search for Christian perfection through perfect love, Palmer stressed the importance of a sanctified life which was the emphasis of Methodism that, at the time, was in its initial stages (see Jones 2002:4). This aspect was taken so seriously that a failure to testify about one’s faith could result in the loss of salvation (see Pugh 2014:10).

2.3.2 Christian perfection as identity: Hannah Whitall Smith

Hannah Whitall Smith approached the concept of Christian Perfection from outside of the Methodist Tradition. She was influenced by the Quaker tradition and she moved beyond the religious realm and became involved in social groups that promoted the wellbeing of other people. Her approach towards holiness therefore crossed faith barriers to an extent. Hannah Whitall Smith (1832-1911) was an influential preacher and writer of the Holiness Movement. She was an activist in providing support for the Women’s Suffrage Movement, which sought to give women the right to vote. She also

supported the Women's Christian Temperance Union, which promoted the prohibition of alcohol in order to curb its abuse (see Sumner 2011:757). Therefore, her practical approach to holiness in faith practice is focused on social engagement. Smith's emphasis was broader than Palmer's as she actively promoted the common good of society. She was practical and vigilant with regard to social abuses whereas Palmer's approach was more spiritual. Both she and her husband, Robert Vincent Smith came from a long line of influential Quakers. They left the Quaker community after Hannah Whitall Smith had experienced revival at a Noon-Day Prayer Meeting. After than she was influenced by the Wesleyan Methodist idea of Christian. Smith was influenced by the writings of Phoebe Palmer and
William Boardman's (1858) work, *The higher Christian life* and became one of the main speakers of the Higher Life Movement (Sumner 2011:757).

Although Whitall Smith's main focus was also holiness, as was the case with John Wesley and Phoebe Palmer, her different tradition of origin resulted in a somewhat different perspective on holiness. Though she had left the Quaker community, she retained many of their beliefs and referred to herself as a Quaker later in life (see Henry 1984:40). Her work, *The Christian's secret of a happy life* (Smith 1885), was aimed at those who experience difficulties with their Christian faith (Smith 1885:iv). She wrote in an experimental way. With regard to the role of God and the role of the believer, she explained that the believer's part "is to trust and God's part is to work" (Smith 1885:9). For her a believer's role was simply to surrender, trust and obey God (Smith 1885:15). She provided Scriptural texts to substantiate her point and encouraged her readers to study the Bible. According to Smith (1885: v-vi), Palmer claimed that Christianity was a practical religion where Christians should be aware of their position in Christ even when fulfilling the most mundane tasks of their daily lives. Smith emphasised the importance of knowledge of one's "position and standing" in Christ rather to rely on feelings (see Smith 1885:9, 11, 13).

Hannah Whitall Smith experienced a number of tragic circumstances regarding her closest family. Her husband was disgraced because of a scandal and four of her seven children died young (see Hardesty 1984:20).The way in which she dealt with these difficulties in life contributed to her attaining the experience of sanctification. She had

a steadfast confidence in God despite hardship. She had a great love and compassion for people. Because of her own trials and tribulations, she was better able to support others who were going through suffering. Spencer (2013:7) describes
Smith as “irrepressible and fiercely feminist, holiness evangelist, bestselling author, ecumenist and Quaker mystic”. She was a dynamic and powerful figure of the Holiness Movement. Her holiness spoke not only through her writings, but also through her exemplary lifestyle. Her pursuit of holiness resulted in “empowerment, inner freedom, divine union, joy and happiness” (Spencer 2012:9). It empowered her to become a popular and influential public figure of the Holiness Movement. It gave her the inner freedom to be at peace with being labelled a heretic by orthodox Quakers. She was labelled such for believing that everyone would ultimately be reunited with God and be spared from hell.

Smith’s writings, sermons and numerous journal entries describe her union with God. Her spiritual joy endured a multitude of challenges and the happiness about which she wrote in her work, *A Christian’s secret to a happy life* (1885), continues to influence the lives of many. Her expression of Christian perfection was similar to that of Wesley and Palmer, in that it was experiential, Scripturally based and accessible to all. Her emphasis on living a surrendered life of trust and obedience aligned with evangelical teachings. Yet, her belief of the restitution of all people set her at odds with evangelical teaching and made for a more inclusive Holiness Movement following.

2.3.3 Christian perfection as “new measures”: Charles Finney

Charles Grandison Finney contributed towards Christian Perfection in seeking to make it more measurable and attainable to those who willingly chose to pursue it. Charles Finney was the son of a farmer and never went to college. With his family he attended a Baptist Church with revival-style and emotional preaching. Finney was a third-degree freemason and studied as an apprentice to become a lawyer. Later he joined a campaign against Freemasonry and his plans to become a lawyer were altered after a dramatic conversion and the baptism of the Holy Spirit in Adams, New

York. After praying to God, he felt his heart melt and was taken up to heaven to see Jesus face to face. He wept like a baby. However, after that experience his love grew cold again (Andersson 2014:115). The was agains baptised by the Holy Spirit and waves of love came over him like electricity (see Andersson 2014:116). This time the effect was lasting.

Finney emphasised Spirit baptism (Synan 1997:14). He received Christian perfection not through the three steps of Palmer and Smith, but simply through calling out to God. His different emphasis in the pursuit of Christian perfection created a link between being baptised in the Spirit and entering into entire sanctification. From this foundation Pentecostal spirituality developed (see Synan 1997:15). Finney was an
"American revivalist and theologian, founder of Oberlin theology" and "the leading figure of the Second Great Awakening" (Van De Walle 2011:448). He applied "a modified Wesleyan understanding of Christian Perfection" (Kostlevy 2010:114). He saw Christian perfection as obedience to the law of God. According to him, "entire sanctification is the gospel and must be preached" (Hambrick-Stowe 1996:185). Obedience to the law of God meant to love as impartially as Jesus did and devotedly seek God with selfless consideration for others (see Hambrick-Stowe 1996:185). This was not about a sort of moral perfection, because human beings were already remade into the image of God (Hambrick-Stowe 1996:192). It did mean that all people were to obey moral law.

Finney was Methodist in his methodical approach to ministry and in producing revivals ordained by God. His "new measures" included inviting women to attend prayer meetings, the use of the "anxious bench" (according to the Webster's Dictionary "a seat near the pulpit reserved at some revival meetings for persons especially concerned about their spiritual condition – called also *mourners' bench"*), long services, emotional preaching and the expedient acceptance of new members (Van De Walle 2011:448). As the founder of Oberlin College, he promoted Christian love in action through his new measures. He attracted thousands to his gatherings and large number of converts were the fruits of his ministry (Johnson 2014:350). Finney was the one who popularised this way of measuring spiritual success.

Like Wesley, Palmer and Smith, Finney sought the Second Blessing or Christian perfection not only for an individualistic purpose, but also for social transformation. Through Oberlin College, he became involved in the cause of the abolition of slavery, political issues and the issue of temperance (see Van De Walle 2011:448). His version of Christian perfection focused on moralism and social action. With regard to moralism he was criticised for being legalistic and Pelagianist (see Kostlevy 2010:114). He emphasised moral idealism, namely that everything in life should be done with absolute devotion to God (see Kostlevy 2010:114). For Finney, Christian perfection was something to be achieved through exercising free will and having good intentions (see Synan 1997:15).

Finney argued that Christian perfection was often misapplied, misunderstood and neglected, to the detriment of Christian believers. He regarded it as possible to attain not only sanctification but also Christian perfection already in this life. If it were not possible, then the devil would have the upper hand and the Spirit would not be sufficiently powerful (see Finney 2000:483-485). For Finney Scripture is quite clear that a Christian not only has the possibility, but also the duty to attain perfection. The power of the Holy Spirit makes it possible already in this life and for this the grace of God is adequate (see Finney 2000:489). Because of the work of Jesus who had already changed the nature of believers and God's promise in the Scriptures that believers will be sanctified, those who believer can have complete confidence that God will answer their request. As with Palmer, Finney claimed that surrendering oneself on the altar and making a public profession are important for salvation. Believers should persist in asking God to grant them repentance, because God will fulfil this longing if they desire it passionately enough (see Finney 2000:488).

2.3.4 Christian perfection as loving relationships: Mildred Wynkoop

Mildred Bangs Wynkoop reminded people in the Wesleyan/Holiness Movement that holiness is centred on love and without love it loses its impact. Her view on Christian Perfection resonated with John Wesley's teachings and others from the Holiness Movement. She reminded those from the Wesleyan/Holiness Tradition to go back to

their Wesleyan roots and for the purpose of this study, it encapsulates Wesley's teachings with a clearer explanation of what love involves. Mildred Bangs Wynkoop (1905-1997) was ordained as a minister in the Church of the Nazarene. She was an educator, missionary and theologian. She was influential in rekindling Holiness theology, especially among scholars. Her work, *A theology of love: The dynamic of Wesleyanism* (1971) is her most influential writing. According to her, the main core of Wesleyan theology is love for God and people (see Wynkoop 1971:10). Wesley's theology is most authentically interpreted as a theology of love rather than of a theology of holiness (see Wynkoop 1971:13). Love can be seen as "the essential inner character of holiness" and therefore the one cannot exist without the other (Wynkoop 1971:16). Wynkoop emphasised "empathetic interpersonal relationships" (Shelton 2008:3). This idea reaffirms that Christian perfection is not attained by good words or deeds, but goes deeper than behaviour. It is about the attitude of the heart attitude, one's intentions and affections, all of which cannot be measured. It does also involve faith in action, demonstrated by good works and a life lived in love towards God and people.

Christian perfection and other forms of holiness have been presented in a variety of ways. Moralism has often been the emphasis of holiness preaching. Then it can become a works based enterprise which can lead to self-righteousness if many works are done or self-loathing if one falls short of the desired criteria. For Wynkoop

(1969:24), however, "the test of holiness is love". Love is something that can be evidenced in faith practice, through one's daily life. Love was to be the motivation for preaching and is essential for living an effective and holistic Christian life. According to Wynkoop, Wesley did not emphasise holiness as a *state* that could be attained, but rather as *steps* that could be taken toward loving God and people (see Wynkoop 1971:18-19). Furthermore, she saw holiness as a social, dynamic quality attained through a loving engagement with people rather than withdrawing from them (see Wynkoop 1971:18-19; 1975:11).

Where the focus is on loving relationships, the idea of a unattainable holiness is challenged. If holiness is only unattainable where there is a lack of love, then growing in love is as fundamental to faith practice as growing in holiness. It is not the populised

view of love that is central here, but the biblical idea the love is evidenced through living a true and holy Christian life. John Wesley uses the both the terms
“perfect love” and “Christian perfection” when describing what Christian maturity entails. Love and holiness are therefore inseparable and her focus on love makes holiness both relevant and effective in faith practice in this world. This focus has rekindled one of the core views of John Wesley.

2.3.5 Christian perfection as relational holiness: Thomas Oord & Michael Lodahl

The idea of relational holiness is central to the Holiness Tradition. According to Oord & Lodahl (2005:21) the idea of relational holiness can “help change present-day perceptions of holiness and sanctification” and “return holiness to its rightful place of chief importance”. Often the terms “holiness” was no longer received positively and therefore it is seldom used today even by those in the remaining holiness tradition (Oord and Lodahl 2005:25). Therefore, they build on Wynkoop’s approach on love and explore how holiness can be lived out in the world today. Because of the negative connotations to the term “holiness” there has been an attempt to downplay it and to redefine it (Castelo 2012:147). However, if churches do not advance in spirituality and grow, the members will lose interest and the establishment will die (Gooch 2009:69). Gooch (2009:74) finds the description of holiness as reaching one’s potential as a human being and a child of God, as useful (Gooch 2009:74).
Though “interplay between theological assumptions and contemporary worldviews” serves as the main reason why many lack an interest in holiness (Oord and Lodahl 2005:29-30), holiness has less to do with formalities that it has with bringing about unity among people. From the perspective of a relational worldview, persons are seen as deeply interconnected (Oord and Lodahl 2005:31). A relational worldview applied to the idea of holiness, has been proposed as a resolution to the misunderstanding and misapplication of holiness in this century.

Traditional descriptions of holiness include perfection, commitment, and purity, among others (see Oord & Lodahl 2005:45-61). Despite the clear strengths of these descriptions, they also have limitations. They are also to diverse to contribute to

attaining a coherent description of holiness. For Oord and Lodahl (see 2005:50-61, 127-136) love is the core component to holiness. They aim to contextualise it for today. Holiness is not rooted in rules, standards or principles but rather in relationship with God. That makes holiness fundamentally relational (Thomas 1999:67).This relational holiness approach aligns with Wesley's core emphasis on love. However, how it is interpretated today has been aligned with the prevailing postmodern relational worldview. In the language of this paradigm love experienced in relationship with God and that is shared in relationships with others will be denoted as something that promotes *well-being* rather than making use of the "old" holiness language of the Holiness Movement. However, the content can be compatible. Relational holiness can therefore make a contribution to a contemporary understanding of holiness. This study explores the idea of relational holiness in terms of its relevance for today.

The Holiness Movement developed a variety of perspectives on holiness. One of these perspectives was that of holiness as Christian perfection. Some scholars regard the Holiness Movement as a thing of the past. According to Collins (1999:27), the leaders of the Holiness Movement were ineffective in their attempt to pass on the heritage because they compromised their holiness identity on account of distractions from the outside. Rather than adapting their message of what holiness to a changing world, they themselves were pulled in different directions. A focus on church growth supplanted theological thinking, for instance (see Collins 1999:27). Learning from past mistakes, can be useful in a contemporary bid to make the idea of holiness relevant and meaningful in the world of today and for the future.

Not only has the approach to holiness changed, but also the theological emphasis. Even in the Holiness Tradition, there are fewer people who still read the older holiness literature and subscribe to ideas such as Christian perfection, full salvation or instantaneousness. Other theological insights and practical daily issues have come in their place (see Collins 1999:28). Holiness scholars themselves often lack basic knowledge of the foundations of the Holiness Movement. The Holiness Movement has become a wide stream of church traditions and movements, with diverse views when

it comes to the description of holiness and its teachings. The recent *Holiness Manifesto* (2006) is a document with an ecumenical focus which acknowledges the diversity of backgrounds that form the Holiness Tradition. It is a part of the Holiness Study Project (2004) that is a gathering of scholars and leaders who have met since then to explore the mission of the churches of the Holiness Movement. It aims to unify them in order to further the advancement of holiness in faith practice today. Thorsen (2007:209) puts it as follows: “Holiness Manifesto serves to unite disparate church and theological traditions as well as to promote the biblical emphasis upon the holiness of God and God's call for Christians to be holy”. The first subheading of this document is “The crisis we face” (Thorsen 2007:212), since the movement is faced by a “serious identity crisis” (see Dunning 1998:151).

As Oord & Lodahl (2005:25) put it: “The classical terms of holiness – ‘Christian perfection’, ‘entire sanctification’, ‘the second blessing’, and ‘baptism of the Holy Spirit’ – no longer seize the imaginations of many people”. Stockard, Stanley & Johnson (2001:70) explain it as follows: “The unique tenets of the Holiness movement are disappearing or may have already been lost”. Herein lies the unresolved problem and the unsolved mystery of “holiness”.

2.3.6 “Renovating holiness”: The Nazarene project

The Nazarene Church is part of the Wesleyan and Holiness Tradition. It has embraced the John Wesley’s idea of holiness as Christian perfection, on which the Holiness Movement had expanded. The Nazarene community has taken up the task of “renovating holiness” (Broward & Oord 2015) in order to put holiness into practice on a social and global level, not because the idea of holiness has been replaced with something else or left behind completely, but precisely in order to retain it and make it more relevant and applicable more broadly for today (see Broward 2015:2). Cooperation from people across different racial, age-group, genders and various contexts is the manifestation of a collective approach (see Broward 2015:3). Highlighting points from this project provide a more practical and integrated approach in a complex postmodern society and therefore showing how holiness can be applied to daily life at a time where holiness is often misunderstood.

The Holiness Tradition carries with it a legacy associated with famous revivals and role models of the Christian faith. Their influence on holiness in faith practice, building on the ideas of John Wesley, has been vast. However, popular terms such as “entire sanctification”, “the Second Blessing” and “Christian perfection” have lost their effect in the world of today. This kind of language no longer speaks to or appeals to people toady. The Nazarene Church, however, did not want to let go of the idea of holiness. They regard it as their “own sacred cow, impervious to all forces of cultural change” (Broward 2015:4). However, they do realise that some change is needed if it were to be made more relevant for today. This is a challenging task. The edited work titled *Renovating holiness* (Broward & Oord 2015) contains essays by over a hundred Nazarene leaders globally, who “call for change in doctrine, in teaching, in practice and in perspective” (Broward 2015:4). This study focuses specifically on aspects touched upon in the book, such as frustrations, history, context and biblical themes (Broward & Oord 2015: viii-x).

The language and terminology of the holiness heritage often causes frustration for people of today who are seeking to live a holy life. There are testimonies of young people who feel guilty for not being able to experience real change in their lives after having made the conscious and intentional decision to surrender their lives to God (see Walker 2015:5-8). This leads to self-doubt and a lack of trust in God. According to Walker (2015:7) it is then especially difficult to “get them to an altar a second time”. The idea of “surrender” as promoted by Phoebe Palmer was prominent in holiness thought. However, today it often leaves young people confused rather than transformed. It has been argued that young people might not be at the stage of their lives to make a decision of such magnitude (see Walker 2015:6). Rather than providing freedom from sin, young people have expressed guilt for not obtaining a transformed life after having made this decision. Therefore, “renovating holiness” in faith practice could be especially beneficial in ministery to young people. Customs such as approaching the altar during a church service in order to surrender one’s life to God, can today be experienced as a barrier. Sometimes God develops holiness in people gradually rather than instantaneously upon their decision to surrender. God can do

God's work in different ways in different people. That is "evidence of God's work of holiness" (Markusse-Overduin 2015:11). Sometimes holiness is not grasped at once, but is a process of seeking "more of God" (Markusse-Overduin 2015:11-12). This is the kind of language that is easier to grasp and apply in a more dynamic and complex social and religious world. Rather than regarding holiness as having to follow a set of rules to keep believers safe and others out, it should give freedom to people to express their faith through loving all people (see Bender-Cansler 2015:24). What makes the idea of holiness confusing is that many different descriptions of what it entails are given by preachers and believers (see Jemmott 2015:17; cf. Markusse-Overduin 2015:11-12). Preachers by and large neglect to preach on
"entire consecration" and focus instead on more pressing needs that arise. Congregants are often attracted to more mainstream books that do not necessarily have a distinctive Wesleyan or holiness perspective (see Jemmott 2015:19).
According to Jemmott (2015:18), the idea of "entire sanctification" has become a "smouldering wick", consisting of heat, smoke, a glow, but devoid of a flame.
Therefore, it has become increasingly difficult to understand holiness even within the Nazarene Church, which is loyal to the Holiness Tradition. Furthermore, the faith practice of holiness is becoming increasingly difficult to incorporate into one's life of faith and to live out in spheres such as the workplace (see Jemmott 2015:19). Living a holy life today involves interacting with people of diverse backgrounds and contexts. Suitable language is therefore necessary. For example, a phrase such as
"perfect love" can be replaced by "loving well" (see Hersey 2015:30). The meanings of words change over time. It is necessary to make use of language that is understood and that communicates well today when in dialogue about the Christian faith (see Hersey 2015:31).

There is an idea in the Nazene Church that "Christian perfection" is specific to revival periods in the past, such as Wesley's time or the times of the Holiness Movement (see Verhoeven 2015:62-63). Christian perfection could only be attained by a few exceptional people who then encouraged others by showing them what such a glorified state entails (see Verhoeven 2015:62-63). Rather than try and attain an extraordinary level of perfection, the aim is rather an ongoing process of transformation. It is about

being as perfect as is possible in a specific developmental stage of one's life (see Miller 2015:88-89). This requires actively applying the idea of holiness to daily living, without having to worry whether "Christian perfection', "entire sanctification" or "perfect love" have been obtained. Such an approach could potentially have a positive effect on the millennial generation. It can offer hope for every phase of their lives and discourage them to the extent that they will aband their quest for holiness in faith practice (see Miller 2015:88-89). Especially in communities where dire social circumstances prevail, holiness should be integrated into everyday life also on a community level in order to address the social concerns. If is limited to something personal in the private realm and holiness is limited to faith communities, then holiness in faith practice cannot be lived out in a transformative way (see Nelson 2015:128-129). In order to combat the corruption of "ongoing acts of violence", sin must be viewed as a relational problem rather than merely personal one (Nelson 2015:129-130).

With their project of "renovating holiness" the Church of the Nazarene aims to be develop an effective ministry for today. The inclusion of contributions from a wide range of perspectives and contexts, makes this approach towards holiness in faith practice dynamic. It addresses the numerous frustrations and concerns expressed by leaders on a practical spiritual level. Rather than considering holiness in faith practice irrelevant and outdated, the aim is to give fresh expression to faith on a personal, communal and global level. The approach remains mission-centred, but is now also more conversational in order to be accessible to the younger generations and relevant to generations to come (see Broward 2015:3). This approach is a working example of what holiness can look like in faith practice. As greater awareness of the global community ensues, holiness is evolving into a practice where people are embraced across previously imposed boundaries. The Holiness Tradition now has a global emphasis and aims to proliferate holiness out of love for humanity and creation. This continues the mission-centred legacy of John Wesley, while clarifying the core of his message in today's language for the people of today.

CHAPTER 3

"HOLINESS": ANCIENT TO CONTEMPORARY

3.1 Contemplative spiritualities

3.1.1 The Desert Fathers and self-denial

Holiness is an ancient faith practice but has been applied in contemporary society. Contemplative spiritualities shall be explored in this study as a means by which holiness can be attained amidst a busy and often ungodly world. Holiness has been pursued in the faith practice of various religions and religious traditions. Different views of sanctification have been (for example) compared in *Five views of sanctification* (1987). These views are the Reformed, Wesleyan, Pentecostal, Keswick and Augustinian-Dispensational views. An example of a difference between some of them involves the Reformed perspective that considers justification and sanctification as being separate experiences, while the Wesleyan view fuses justification and sanctification together (Dieter & Hoekema et al. 1987:14). The Pentecostal view is similar to the Wesleyan perspective as they both seek "God for holiness and spiritual power" (Dieter & Hoekema et al. 1987:148). It is generally about adopting some measure of self-control and discipline. Holiness is not only a characteristic of God or the deity but is then also seen as a quality of believers' lives. Holiness is not attained automatically but is pursued intentionally through dedicating oneself to obeying God.

Asceticism is a Greek word that literally means exercise, repetition or training (see Peters 2011:276). It involves personal sacrifice since it is about exercising rigorous discipline in pursuit of a lifestyle of holiness. This pursuit of holiness has been practiced in religions such as Christianity, Buddism, Islam, Hinduism and Judaism. Taking these approaches to holiness into account along with the Wesleyan approach and its legacy, will serve to broaden the focus on holiness in faith practice for the purposes of this investigation. In various religions and traditions salvation and/or a deeper spirituality have been promoted through forsaking earthly pleasures, especially anything that has to do with sensuality. In other words, asceticism involves abstaining from whatever is

perceived as distracting a person's attention from their spiritual life and practising a disciplined lifestyle. Material possessions and physical pleasures are eliminated, whereas the discipline of fasting and thereby self-control is emphasised. Asceticism is about striving for simplicity in life. Those who exercise asceticism sleep in a simple environment, even on the floor. They dress plainly and eat minimally. In its extreme form it also includes self-flagellation or other ways to inflict pain on the body or even maim the body. An example of such practices is Oregon of Alexandria (185-245) who, in his youthful religious zeal, reportedly castrated himself (see Trigg 1998:14; cf. Litfin 2007:156).

There are examples in biblical times of people or groups that practiced asceticism. In the Old Testament, the Essenes exercised obedience to the Hebrew Bible, maintained celibacy, dressed simply, refrained from speaking coarsely, avoided material attractions and separated themselves from society by living in the desert.
They maintained ritual purity (see Peters 2011:276).

In Stoics from ancient Greece practised asceticism. According to their philosophy human beings could attain perfection in their earthly lives through mastering their emotions. Especially an emotion such as anger could affect both a person's character and conduct adversely (see Peters 2011:276). Ancient Greek philosophies influenced New Testament authors and therefore Christian thought. John the Baptist practiced a life of simplicity in eating and clothing, fasting and the avoidance of material things. Aspects of this can also be found with Jesus and Paul (see Peters 2011:276). In the Early Church such practices were not only promoted but also institutionalised (see Peter 2011:277).

The father of monasticism, Antony of Egypt, also known as Antony of Thebes (251356 CE) responded to the gospel by selling all his belongings and giving the proceeds to the poor. He lived an ascetic life in the desert out of personal conviction.
Antony was revered as a holy man, guided monks and "proved a magnet for pilgrims of all sorts" (Armstrong 2011:269). His holiness in faith practice can be seen in his lifestyle. Though he separated himself from the community, he gained great spiritual and influence among the people. The last two decades of his life were lived in extreme isolation and he fought intense spiritual battles in the desert.

Athanasius, bishop of Alexandria (296/8-373 CE), was exiled five times from the church. He would go to the desert "to live with the fathers and mothers to pray, study and write" (Cotton 2011:282). Athanasius is known for his part in the Arian Controversy. According to Athanasius, Jesus was of one substance with God the Father. In communion with God, one could become God-like and immortal (see Benedict 2008:59-61). He was influenced by Antony and wrote a biography, *The life of Antony* (356 CE). This book referred to Antony as a holy man. This book was inspirational for those who aspired to live a holy life. According to Athanasius, Antony's life was "the perfect image of Christ" and through the Holy Spirit he communed with God the Father (Weinandy 2007:121). Athanasius learnt much from others those who were influenced by Antony and he himself "visited him often" (Carrigan 2010:2).

Antony intentionally applied what was written in Scripture in practical ways. He lived in the desert, sold his earthy possessions and worked with his hands so as to not fall into poverty. He regularly practised spiritual disciplines such as prayer and fasting (see Carrigan 2010:4-9). His willingness to live a holy life inspired others. He fought many spiritual battles and won. He viewed life as temporary and heaven as eternal. Heaven was filled with treasures of far greater worth than anything on earth (see Carrigan 2010:19). His life was testimony that the grace of God is sufficient. It is God's grace that makes a person holy through suffering and constant communion with God. He did not isolate himself completely but served people with his "wellbalanced attitude in all situations". He delivered many from illnesses and instructed people in truth. He resolved many conflicts with his wisdom (see Carrigan 2010:16). Antony's holiness in faith practice was characterised by rigorous discipline of the senses, a focus on eternal life rather than this limited life on earth. Antony's holiness was not gloomy, austere or unapproachable and did not alienate him from people. Those who knew him, loved and respected him (see Carrigan 2010:6). In him holiness was an attractive quality.

Jerome's (347-420 CE) pursuit of perfection was partially influenced by Asceticism. According to Gonzaléz (2010:234), he tried out monasticism in an attempt to rid himself of his obsession with sex, but had to conceded eventually "that he was not

made for the life of a hermit". He then pursued intellectual goals instead. Although he had conflict with other monks and did not continue to pursue the monastic tradition, he was a "monk at heart" until death (Hammon 1993:97). Unlike many of the monks of his day, he was extremely well educated and intellectual in his approach towards life and his faith. Jerome pursued perfection through living a disciplined life in pursuit of truth and spiritual growth. He translated the Bible into Latin, which is a translation commonly known as the Vulgate. He also wrote many other manuscripts enhanced by his Hebrew, Greek and Latin knowledge. Jerome also admired philosophical writing and continued to read these books along with theological books. He left "a rich and varied teaching on asceticism" (Benedict 2008:141). His pursuit of holiness included fasting and all night prayer vigils and the discipleship (see Visalli 1992:266). He was rigorous in his approach to spirituality and his studies. He was firm on renunciation and self-denial (see Hickok 2011:540). His main emphasis was on obedience to the truth. This he aimed to promote through his writings, which included commentaries on almost every book of the Bible. His work gave monasticism widespread credibility (see Hickok 2011:540). Jerome's faith practice of holiness further illustrates the emphasis of discipline in ascetic practice. He showed that holiness can be pursued through engaging in both intellectual and spiritual disciplines. Jerome's life further illustrates that holiness can be pursued in a dynamic way in seemingly contrasting ways, such as through intellectual work and constant mortification. According to Williams (2006:5), Jerome had "the audacity to fuse the identities of scholar and monk". According to Gonzaléz (2010:233), "his holiness was not humble, peaceful and sweet, but rather proud, stormy and even bitter".

More than a millennium later, Jeanne-Marie Bouvier de la Motte-Guyon (1648-1717, a French mystic, was accused by the Roman Catholic Church of the heresy of Quietism, although she never called herself a Quietist. As a mystic, Madame Guyon aimed to immerse herself in the love of God. She sought holiness by embracing her "oneness with God" (Tucker 2011:490). For Guyon (2005 [1685]:22), surrendering the "will to God" was the main prerequisite for holy living. This involved some extreme acts of self-denial. For instance, she "rolled in stinging nettles, sucked bitter herbs, walked with sharp stones in her shoes, and pulled out healthy teeth" (Tucker 2011:490). Personal pain and spiritual advancement went hand in hand. For Guyon

(2005:24) “it is impossible to love God without loving the cross; and a heart that favours the cross, finds the bitterest things to be sweet”.

Madame Guyon’s passion for sharing God in the public sphere and within groups in the Catholic Church was often positively received (see Tucker 2011:490). Yet, her teachings were unorthodox and she was imprisoned for heresy. Her writings were banned by the Catholic Church. Guyon’s faith practice of holiness entailed being harsh with regard to her body for the purpose of attaining union with God. Her devoted pursuit of holy living influenced John Wesley and the early Methodists (Guyon 2001:xvi). The idea was that selfishness and clinging to closely to earthly comforts prevent an intimate union with God. Love is the essential aspect that drives a God follower towards living a holy life. Guyon (2005:28) claims that this is so “for when we truly love, we cannot have so much as a will to anything that might offend the Object of our affects”.

3.1.2 New Monasticism

The New Monastic Movement adopts a contemplative approach towards holiness in faith practice. This movement is of the Ascetic tradition and has Quietist tendencies. The terms “monastic” and “monk” indicate “solitary” (see Peters 2011:618). In the fourth century, this term was applied to those who live alone or in communities and who pursue “ascetic disciplines” (Peters 2011:618). These disciplines include fixed times of prayer, fasting, and taking “vows of poverty, chastity and obedience” (Peters 2011:618). Therefore the Monastic Movement and asceticism are similar in their expressions of spiritual disciplines. In the New Monastic Movement vows were replaced by nine New Monastic vows about growth in morality, harmony with creation, non-violence, an attitude of humility, self-awareness, simplicity, selflessness, compassion, justice and world transformation (see McEntee & Bucko 2015:xxxv-xlvi). The goal to improve one’s personal and community life is evidenced in the vows regarding growth in morality, a humble attitude, and actions that lead to compassion, justice and transformation. Holiness in the faith practice of this movement is evidenced in the attitude towards oneself, other people and the surrounding world.

The New Monastic Movement puts forward a contemporary approach to contemplative spirituality that can contribute fruitfully to contemporary holiness practice.

New Monasticism emphasised caring for the poor. This faith practice of holiness involves efforts for the good of humanity which will contribute to the liberation of one's souls. Although the New Monastic Movement shares many features that are similar to the early Monastic Movement, for example the solidarity and ascetic disciplines, it excludes the vows to chastity and poverty. The traditional monk's habit is also no longer worn. Like the Monastic Movement, the New Monastic Movement is also not restricted to a specific religious denomination. Their aim is to appropriate and expand on the wisdom of the traditional Monastics. The New Monastic Movement was rooted in an ancient faith tradition with the purpose of rediscovering

"more compelling faith-communities" than those in contemporary secularised societies (Ponzetti 2014:36). In their work, *New Monasticism: An Interspiritual Manifesto for Contemplative Living*, McEntree & Bucko (2015:102) describe the aim as becoming "an instrument of God's loving impulse in the world". If individuals dedicate themselves to developing new skills their lives can be used by God in extraordinary ways.

In addition to the nine vows of the New Monastic Movement, there are also Twelve Marks. These include being willing to (House 2005:xii-xiii):

- live among the marginalised in society;
- share what one has with those in need;
- show hospitality to strangers;
- seek reconciliation with others;
- submit to the Christ and the church;
- care for the earth;
- encourage celibacy among "single people"; be a peacemaker in the world.

There is no mention of the Scriptures or of Jesus as Saviour since this group aims to be radically inclusive of different traditions. They are, however, Christian in their focus. Though the do not connecting directly to the church, they are supportive of the church's work. The New Monastics, like the Monastics of old, go out to the fringes of society. These areas are often neglected by institutional churches. The attitude of the New

Monastics display Christlikeness. Their identity has not been formed and informed by a specific Christian institution. One of the leaders who was involved in Interreligious Dialogue, Raimon Panikkar (1982:29), coined the phrase “new monk”. He was fluent in eleven languages, held doctoral degrees in philosophy, chemistry and theology. He describes himself as a Catholic priest who became a Hindu and a Buddhist without ceasing to become a Christian (see Panikkar 1993:v). His diverse experience and broad knowledge of humanity and life, along with his ongoing participation in interreligious dialogue contributed to his radically inclusive attitude which became the hallmark of New Monastic Movement. He was unusual in that he was committed to different religions and also he remained committed to Christ. His idea of what it entails to be a monk is that there should be a balance between developing character and focusing on deeds. Authentic deeds come from genuine contemplation (see Panikkar 1982:7-11, 20, 28).

Wayne Teasdale (20014-5) who first coined the word “interspiritual”, was another important contributor to the New Monastic movement. For him the present age is interspiritual, in that “interdependence is an inescapable fact of our contemporary world”. This includes spiritual, ecological and religious interdependence. This inescapable interdependence makes it necessary to adopt interspiritual practices so as to make a positive contribution to this world. Although the church proclaims salvation and contributes toward spiritual growth, a more practical role is needed in society. With the increased awareness of global problems, spiritually minded people should partner with one another and coordinate their effort to come up with solutions. This is what the New Monastics aim to facilitate. Teasdale (2001:64) puts it as follows: “The Church could be a nurturer of inter-faith encounter, interreligious dialogue, spirituality, interspirituality, work for justice, the promotion of peace, creating sacred culture and teaching environmental responsibility and economic sustainability”.

To live a holy life in faith practice involves learning from others and growing in community. In recent times Christianity has, for the large part, become individualistic in its emphasis on salvation, personal growth through quiet time and personal prayer. With an abundance of spiritual resources readily available, the role of community has diminished. The New Monastic Movement aims to “revitalise interest” by *living* as the

church should be living and not simply attending a church service. Through faith practice in the real world believers can rediscover the role of community in Christian's life (see Bros 2009:49). The New Monastic Movement includes all who want to commit to growing spiritually. The movement takes holy living seriously and is focused on this world as it is today. It aims to remove barriers that have been erected through certain kinds of religiosity and creates space for an interspirituality which is focused on the greater good. Holiness in faith practice has to do with living authentically and transforming the world through unity and seeking to actively practice what pleases God.

3.2 Perspectives from Reformed spirituality

3.2.1 Martin Luther

The Reformation involved a reemphasis on practicing holy lives. According to Michael Horton (2017:218), there are three hallmarks of Reformation piety:

- Growing deeper into the gospel, not moving higher than the gospel
- Public ministry (external ministry) defines private piety, because Reformation piety is communal and covenantal
- 'Good works' is something that is done for others, not for God or for ourselves

By considering the Reformation in this study, it becomes easier to understand how holiness can be applied in the individual lives of Christians and collectively as a church. Martin Luther is generally seen as the chief propagator of the Protestant Reformation (see for example the article by Werner Klän (2015), where he refers to this "generalization", as well as the problems surrounding "historical facts" in this regard) . Luther was raised in the Roman Catholic Church and was a student of Law when, after a dramatic conversion on account of a life-threatening situation, he vowed to become a monk. As a monk, he pursued a life of holiness which included traditional Roman Catholic practices such as prayer, fasting, penance and the confession of sin. Because Luther practiced these excessively, his mentor, Johannes von Staupitz, distracted his attention from his rigorous introspection and aimed to focus it more on academic

pursuits. Martin Luther studied the Scriptures, the Early Church Fathers, and the biblical languages of Hebrew and Greek. As a monk, he took an oath to take a stand for the authority of the Scriptures. Scripture was his primary source of revelation from God.

As many people of his time, Luther was deeply concerned about his "guilt before God" (see Beutel 2003:3-19). The question was how a sinful person could live a holy life before a holy God. A turning point in his life came when he read Romans 1:17. He came to the realisation that it was not about his own righteousness towards God, but rather about Christ's righteousness. To Luther, the essence of the gospel message was that a person is justified by grace through faith (see Rom 1:17; Eph 2:8-9). Therefore holiness was attained through entering into a personal relationship with God through Jesus Christ. It had nothing to do with appeasing the wrath of God, because Jesus Christ had already done that on the cross on behalf of those who have this saving faith. Therefore, the guilt of not being righteous with God is removed not by any religious works done, but is a gift of grace.

Luther's new perspective on holiness had a dramatic effect on how he viewed the role of the clergy in the Roman Catholic Church. He questioned the regular rituals which he deemed unnecessary and even offensive towards God. For Luther, the role of the clergy in atoning for peoples' sins through receiving penance, was unnecessary. It does not sufficiently respect the sacrifice of Christ. He wrote *Ninetyfive theses* in response to the materialistic abuse imposed by the Roman Catholic Church and made it public, as was customary for someone who wanted to initiate a theological debate (see Karolides, Bald & Sova 2011:278).

On account of the newly available technology of printing, Luther's theses, were translated and widely circulated. Luther considered the church's practice of selling indulgences to people in order to shorten their stay in purgatory, as in opposition to God's grace. It also showed little respect for the hardships endured by the people (see Luther [1566] 2003:315). Indulgences provided people with a false sense of security and was selfish, because they could have donated to the poor rather than buy security for themselves (see Karolides, Bald & Sova 2011:278). Clergy in the institutionalised

church did not need to act as mediators between God and people, because Jesus is the sole mediator (see 1 Tim 2:5). The pope was not the one with authority over the church because Christ is the head of the church. Luther's ideas focused on what it meant to have faith in divine power rather than being "enslaved to earthly power" (Woodhead 2004:159; cf. Whitford 2003:179-191).

Luther was staunchly opposed to idolatry. The Reformation was in a sense a "war against idols" in a passionate pursuit to reclaim piety in the lives of believers, both individually and corporately (Maxfield 2018:23; cf. Hendrix 2004:51, 64). Materialistic pursuits were regarded by the Reformers as being hazardous to the spirituality of the church. Luther and the Reformation shunned materialism as an obstruction to true spirituality and to living a holy life (see Maxfield 2018:23; cf. Karolides, Bald & Sova 2011:279). Luther perceived the consumerism within the church as something that stole from the poor to further develop a rich church system. This brought Christianity as such into disrepute (see Karolides, Bald & Sova 2011:279). For Luther the church should be holy in God's sight and God's people should to be free to worship as God, and not an oppressive system, would want them to.

For Luther, holiness was a promise of freedom (Woodhead 2004:159). He ministered and wrote extensively about this freedom that each Christian could have. It was a freedom from bondage to moral law, from the fear of damnation, from obedience to the pope and the Roman Catholic Church (Woodhead 2004:159). His teachings were based on Scripture. He memorised scriptural passages and wrote commentaries on the Psalms, Romans, Ephesians and Hebrews. He questioned the emphasis on works of the Letter of James. For Luther, holiness was not based on what human beings do for God, but rather what God did on behalf of believers in
Christ. Schwartz (2014:1-10) explains Luther's overall emphasis as that God does not "reward" human beings, since they cannot earn anything and do not deserve anything. Salvation is God's work alone. People cannot pursue holiness through works.

A believer was to trust in Christ and be baptised into the faith community, according to Luther. Strohl (2011:591) explains that the Spirit is poured out into the life of the recipient who is then released from original sin and incorporated into the Christian community and in Christ. Holiness for Luther is therefore not individualistic but

corporate. It means a change of spiritual identity and authority. The other sacrament, the eucharist, embodied the presence of Christ in a special and mysterious way. For Luther holy living therefore meant the entire process of salvation came from God and was appropriated by believers through faith. Trust was placed in God and the merits of Christ rather than in one's own works.

3.2.2 John Calvin

John Calvin, a self-taught theologian, was aware of his lack of righteousness in the sight of God. Like Martin Luther, Calvin considered himself guilty in the sight of God and sought to appease God's wrath in order to experience forgiveness and restitution (Selderhuis 2011:327). Calvin fled to France after having been persecuted along with his fellow Protestants. He ministered to many French-speaking refugees.

Calvin sought to live in wholehearted service to God, as was depicted on his emblem (see Selderhuis 2011:327). According to Packer (2007:9), Calvin was "a man of order and peace born in a world of conflict". Calvin was therefore acquainted with life's challenges personally and interpersonally. The social milieu was challenge. His personal struggles included ill-health and the loss of his wife and child (see Selderhuis 2011:327). In his seminal work, *Institutes of the Christian Religion* (1536), Calvin refers to the work of the Church Fathers and reformers such as Bucer and Luther (see Selderhuis 2011:327). Calvin's spirituality is "centred on the honour of God and the salvation of humanity" (Selderhuis 2011:328). He continued the legacy of the Reformation after Luther. Calvin is known for his "brilliance as a thinker and writer" and was commended for his "learning and piety" (Beza [1564] 2012:13; see Gordon 2009:viii).

Where Luther focused most of his attention on justification by faith, Calvin's theology was more varied (Macedo 2015:90) and his work on salvation and holiness more comprehensive. His *Institutes* are structured as follows: firstly knowledge of God and secondly knowledge of the self. Knowledge of God is "the fount of all truth, wisdom, goodness, righteousness, judgment, mercy, power and holiness … for in him is found all that is good and of which we ourselves are empty and deprived" (Calvin 2014

[1536]:1). Calvin contrasts the holiness of God and that of human beings. All that is holy originates in God and no holiness can be found in humanity apart from or outside of God. Since God is the source of holiness, and understanding God needed in order to understand what growing in holiness would entail. Calvin also emphasised the covenantal relationship between God and human beings. Salvation is God's gift of grace and faith. It is not about works. According to Macedo (2013:90) covenant theology is not central to Calvin's theology. It does, however, appear frequently and emphasises the covenant of grace to the exclusion of works. To Calvin, salvation is a prerequisite to living a holy life, because justification comes before sanctification.

A prominent theme in John Calvin's writings is that of *union with Christ*. This differs from the *imitation of Christ* in the sense that union is about the indwelling of the Holy Spirit through which human beings conform to God's nature by changing inwardly. Holiness is therefore not something that can be attained through following Christ's example, but rather by being "incorporated into Christ" (see Agan 2013:803; cf. Horton 2011:591). Union with Christ differs from imitation of Christ because the former is about God's grace that operates in a believer's life to make him or her holy, whereas the latter is more works orientated (see Agan 2013:802; cf. De Gruchy 2009:163-177; McGrath 1991:296). According to Ollerton (2011:253), Calvin's views are consistent with both the Eastern view of *theosis* and the Scriptural distinction between God and humanity. Although Calvin differs on details of what this *theosis* entails, he nonetheless acknowledges that due to the new life and changed nature of a Christian, this kind of holiness is possible, although not yet in this life (see Ollerton 2011:253). His description of what it means to partake in the divine nature with God is largely similar to the Eastern view, though they differ with regard to the eschatological aspect (see Ollerton 2011:237, 239).

The question is whether the theological issues that were discussed during the Reformation period are still relevant today (see Manesch 2011:185). Calvin wrote in a context of the dominance of the Roman Catholic Church in the Western world.

Much of what he wrote was in opposition to the Church. His Protestant ideas and the doctrines of the Church were irreconcilable on many points. Calvin's idea of holiness and a holy life in practical reality focused on the spiritual wellbeing of believers. Calvin was opposed to "religious legalism". Believers should be able to study Scriptures independent of clergy since they have a free conscience (see Manesch 2011:199-202). In this sense Calvin's theology is compatible with the thought of people of today. Reformed spirituality is based on John Calvin's response to the Roman Catholic Church of his day and his emphasis on the "union with Christ and regeneration of the Spirit" as well as the idea of justification by faith (Vissers 2011:711).

Calvin's focus on *sanctification* was more prominent than that of Luther. In Reformed spirituality, sanctification is seen as a disciplined way of life that involves trust in God who is transcendent and who speaks indirectly through the Scriptures. The Scriptures are central to Reformed spirituality. Scripture is taught in practice through family devotions, hymns, keeping the Sabbath and private prayer (Vissers 2011:711). These disciplines function to align a believer's character and conduct to Scripture. In Reformed spirituality, the exposition of Scripture in the form of sermons is regarded as important teaching. Therefore, listening to sermons, self-reflection and applying the means of grace to one's everyday life, are essential to living out one's faith. The means of grace include the regular attendance of church services where the preaching of the Scriptures takes place and the faith community functions as the body of Christ. In practice, the sacraments of the Lord's Supper and baptism function as outward signs of inward grace. These means of grace help to form one's assurance of salvation.

3.2.3 Jürgen Moltmann

Systematic theologian, Jürgen Moltmann, has had a dynamic influence on theology in the Reformed tradition from the latter part of the twentieth century (see Van Wyk 2017:95-97). In a concentration camp in World War II receiving unexpected kindness from others changed his life and pointed him in the direction of theological studies (Moltmann [2006] 2008:19-34). Areas of theology that Moltmann has influenced

greatly, include Christology, Pneumatology, ecclesiology, Trinitarian theology and political theology.

Moltmann's idea of holiness is holistic and practical in its expression. A main theme of his work on what it means to live a Christian life, is the cross of Christ. This he articulates not in terms of abstract theology, but he explains what the relevance of the cross is for Christian faith and living a Christian life. In his work, *The crucified God*, Moltmann ([1972]1974) explains the central importance of Christ's crucifixion. The freedom to change the world comes only through "the crucified Christ" in that the believer is "no longer afraid of death" (Moltmann 1974:1), because the believer is not alone in death. Rather than emphasising justified by grace through faith, Moltmann reinterprets what the death of Jesus Christ means in practice, for example in an 'Ethics of Hope' (Moltmann [2010] 2012). He presents a concrete theology that is relevant to contemporary society, remains true to the nature of God in light of the resurrection, and goes beyond the traditional interpretation of individualistic salvation (see Moltmann [1972]1974:1). Living in a pluralistic society involves engaging with social and political realities in order for Christianity not to lose contact with present reality (Moltmann [1972]1974:8). Moltmann takes on the challenge of presenting a foundational Christian doctrine that has been taught in a one-dimensional way from the time of the Reformation in such a way that it really translates into practice. He explains the significance of the cross in light of the protesting nature of Protestant Theology, with special reference to "Earth ethics" (ecological ethics and a culture of solidarity) and an "Ethics of just peace" (divine and human righteousness and justice) (Moltmann [2010] 2012:109-157; 169-188). Moltmann reiterates that the person and work of Jesus Christ is the basis of all theology, including everything said about God, creation, sin and the death of Christ (Moltmann [1972] 1974:204; cf. Otto 1991:119).

Another emphasis of Moltmann (see 1993:171-175) is the Holy Trinity. He relates his view of the Trinity to three views on freedom. The core of his understanding is based on the Trinity (God) as a "broad place" (cf. Moltmann [1980] 1981; Moltmann 1993:171-175; [2006] 2008:285-293), in which the persons of the Trinity "cede" each other living space. This broad spatial relation is reflected in God's relationship with the world and humanity and is an imperative for Christian ethics. The first view is that God

has all the freedom because this freedom is found in God's supremacy over creation. Creation then exists solely to serve God. This is not how Moltmann understands "freedom". The second view on freedom is that it can be found in the loving communion between God the Father and God the Son and human beings. A third view is that freedom can be found in a spiritual relationship between God and human beings, where God regards them as friends and guides them. Moltmann concurs with the second and third views on freedom.

Focusing on Christology, Moltmann argues that Jesus had to become the perfect human being in order to rescue human beings who had become dehumanised (Moltmann [1972]1974:231; cf. Otto 1991:123; cf.). Jesus became poor, hungered and ate with public outcasts to show what it is to be truly human, yet transcended humanity in divine love and lordship (see Moltmann [1972]1974:231). In this way Jesus demonstrated what it means for human beings to live a holy life, namely a loving involvement in the challenges that confront humanity. Suffering is a human reality, not a necessary quality of the Christian life. It can be diminished by the power of the Spirit. In this Moltmann differs from the earlier kinds of spirituality that propegated that human beings should suffer, even make themselves to suffer, in order attain holiness.

Moltmann is universalist in his view of salvation (see Moltmann 1996:235-255; cf. Wright 2012:33;). Salvation is graciously extended by God through Christ. His perspective is radically inclusive. It includes those who are yet to come to faith. In this respect he differs from reformers such as Luther and Calvin. For Moltmann, Holiness is something that all people can enter into and pursue throughout their lives. They can have the assurance that they too are holy, based on God's universal redemption of humanity. Holiness in this sense means that God and human beings are reunited. This is the saving act of God. Wright (2012:37) explains that this justifying work, "for Moltmann, must include all human beings through all time". Holiness does not involve keeping oneself aloof from areas of life that at first glance appear non-theological. God is present also where people are faced with trials and temptations in life. Through all of human experience, people are preserved by God so that they can serve God in faithful perseverance (Wright 2011:345). Holiness comprises an integrated approach

to be a transforming agent of the gospel and be moved by God's dynamic relational and life-giving Spirit. Oden (2009:263) considers

Moltmann's "holistic perspective on pneumatology" as contributing towards a "holistic theology" that is needed in the present-day world.

3.2.4 Miroslav Volf

Miroslav Volf was educated in the Reformed Tradition, which he mergers with insights/experience from his Pentecostal background. In his work, *Free of charge,* Volf (2006), he discusses the major systematic theological themes, similar to Luther, of justification by faith, reconciliation, forgiveness and the death of Christ on the cross. However, his approach is socio-political rather than systematic theological. His aims to build bridges between the religions, in particular between Islam and Christianity. Volf views *life as an interpretation* of theology, with no tension between the private and public or sacred and secular. He has a high regard for Scripture, but does not regard it as infallible. Holiness is a quality that can be pursued in the workplace, among people of different religions and through practical life experience. His major concern throughout his career has been to represent theology as being integrated into life through the application of Christian convictions. In his work, *A public faith: How followers of Christ should serve the common good*, Volf (2011) cautions against extreme Christian approaches that involve isolation and coercion. He explains that Christian believers should be willing to learn from culture and challenge culture, while remembering their freedom and the Golden Rule.

For Volf, holiness in faith practice involves *reconciliation* between different groups of people. For instance, when a million people died in the Rwandan genocide, Christians were accused of not only not taking a stance against the violence but of participating as perpetrators. Holiness is about working for God through learning from others. The focus should be on "crafting individuals as well as institutions" in order to contribute to God's work in this world (Volf 2005:393). Volf explains that God is not only at work in the church but also in the world and therefore cares a great deal about what goes there

(see Volf 2005:381). Both worship in a congregation and being being actively involved in issues in the workplace are necessary and are service to God.

God is worshipped through living a devoted life of *integrity*. God calls people to Godself to serve as servants and to adore as friends in "holy love" (Volf 1991:207). This goes beyond the the Reformed and Puritan tradition where the Sabbath is esteemed above other days. Volf's theology is relevant in a busy humanistic world and to the many people who are do not spend their lives in full-time or formal.

Miroslav Volf's idea of holiness in faith practice is evidenced in his passion for reconciliation, love for non-Christians rather than judgment, and a willingness to humbly challenge and confront issues of justice in the world. Whereas Protestants have been confronting social issues over the ages, Volf does so with particular sensitivity and tact with the aim of creating unity among people in a pluralistic society. This is inspirational in a time of religious plurality. Seeking the common good of humanity through reconciliation and making a contribution to solving complex issues is what holy living is in this present-day world.

3.3 Puritan spirituality

3.3.1 John Owen's "mortification of sin"

This study shall explore Puritan spirituality with the purpose of demonstrating how holiness is not something confined to the church, but also is to be integrated into families and deeply within the core of Christians lives. The quality of holiness was further practiced through the Puritan Movement, which shall be traced back to its roots and its application through centuries to follow. In later sixteenth and seventeenth century England (1564-1660), the Puritan movement sought to expand the influence of Reformed spirituality in society through inspiring a deeper and more consistent holiness among ministers. The Puritans were an ambitious clergy-led group known for their commitment to pursuing godliness as part of the Christian life.

Their aim was to generate renewal and to "glorify God by completing the reformation of English church life, by discipling the nation and Christianising all public life" (Packer

2011:702). In 1689, however, the Toleration Act marginalised Puritanism by classifying them as “non-Anglican” and they became known as “Dissenters”. The Puritan movement was “Bible-based, Christ-centred, conversionist and churchorientated”. Individual and family devotion were central and personal piety was developed through “expository evangelical preaching and disciplined prayer” (Packer
2011:702). For Puritans holiness in a Christian’s life involved becoming more godly in every sphere and situation that a person might face. This godliness was cultivated first individually within the context of the family. Packer (2011:703) put it as follows:
“Home was to be in effect a mini-church, with the man of the house as pastor.” Collective reflection on Scripture and the cultivation of relationships took place in the local church. Their efforts centred on a desire to individually and collectively grow in unity and holiness. Through studying the Scriptures and disciplined prayer, holiness was to overflow into the work sphere.

Baxter’s ([1657] 1974:43) seventeenth century work, *The Reformed pastor,* was intended to influence the pastor to “reform indeed” and “make true godliness a commoner thing”. This was a resource for training pastors to exemplify a holier lifestyle. John Bunyan’s ([1678] 2005) well-known work, *The pilgrim’s progress,* aimed to influence readers to identify with the main character, Christian, a pilgrim on the journey of life “with a Book in his hand, and a great burden upon his back” (Bunyan 2005:15). Puritan spirituality sought to purify the church of Catholic practices and pursued holistic holiness (Campbell 1991:44; cf. Packer 1990:24; Woodhead 2004:212). The Puritan practice of salvation and holiness entailed moving through stages which differed from the Catholic views of the time. Whereas the Catholics stages were “purgation, illumination, and union”, the Puritan stages were “justification, sanctification and glorification” (Wang 2010:44; cf. Owen [1674] 2000:136).

John Owen (1616-1683) is an example of what Puritan thought and way of life were about. His father was a devout Puritan minister. John Owen followed in his father’s footsteps and likewise became a devout minister. He was an extremely hard worker. He entered into tertiary education at the age of thirteen and in his twenties he came to a deep realisation of his own sinfulness. He was a brilliant scholar and thorough thinker. His great number of writings on theological themes testify were influential. He

would plumb the depths of spiritual realities and expound on difficult and unpopular subjects such as sin and temptation. His book, *The mortification of sin* was published in 1656. His writings emphasise the hard truths associated with holiness in a practical, polemic, yet realistic way. According to Trueman (2010:13), Owen's major contribution was "his practical work on the psychology of indwelling sin in the life of a believer".

John Owen's writings were aimed at Christian believers who were committed to maturing in their faith. He demonstrated this own holiness by living a life of humility, contrary to the intellectual pride of his earlier life. The source of his humility was the realisation that God was the sovereign Creator and that all humanity was filthy in sinfulness. Only the transforming work of the gospel could change human lives (see Packer 1990:193). This is a continuation of Reformed theology and its emphasis on creation, the fall of humanity, and salvation. Owen's theology fits within the theological framework of the Reformed Orthodoxy of the pre-Enlightenment era.
Owen's work is systematic, with spiritual depth and spiritual focal points, similar to the work of Calvin. Like Luther and Calvin, Owen experienced much guilt for his sinfulness and a deep need to be made right in the sight of God. For Owen, it was important to have the correct judgment of oneself: as a person who is directed by one's mind but moved around by one's affections, polluted by sin, yet redeemed from bondage to sin and regenerated to live an obedient life (see Packer 1990:194197).

For Owen, sanctification is a central component of Christianity. Holiness has to do with the positive aspect of maturation through vivification and putting sin to death through mortification (see Packer 1990:199). This vivification involves communion with the Trinity and the mortification involves rigorous combat against all that is hostile to the spiritual life of a Christian. Both vivification and mortification lead to sanctification. Vivification involves holiness being developed as "the implanting, writing and realising of the gospel on our souls" and conformity to the Scriptures throughout one's life (Packer 1990:198; cf. Owen [1850] 2000:370, 470). This transforms a Christian by grace and changes them from the inside through a deep work of the Holy Spirit applying Scripture.

Mortification involves a Christian putting to death the sin in their life. This involves being ruthless against sin in one's life. It is an inward battle that Christian believers fight for

the remainder of their earthly life. Although Christ won the victory on the cross and sin has been atoned for, “the Christian is to spend his lifetime draining its lifeblood” (Packer 1990:200). This is not something unique to Owen or the Puritans, but rather characteristic of early Reformed spirituality. The grace of God makes it possible to obey God’s holy law more fully and live in light of God’s promises. Obedience in these difficult matters is what leads to Christians becoming holy. But this is the negative side of what the Puritans commonly called “The Covenant of
Grace”. This has also been referred to as the Covenant of Redemption, which is “paralleled with the covenant of works” (Trueman 2008:62). The former refers to the New Testament covenant and the latter refers to the Old Testament covenant. For Owen and Puritans of his time, their spiritual lives were enriched by having an understanding of both covenants. Holiness was complex in that it involved understanding parallels between the two covenants and how each of these covenants function. In the Covenant of Grace communion with God was central to a Christian life, with the cross and the Holy Spirit as the core of Puritan spirituality.

“Communion” is a kind of union with God. The Puritans regarded this union as “the fruit of justification” (Wang 2010:44). One is justified by grace into a gracious union with God. For Owen, a holy life involved not only a battle but also entrance into a devoted relationship with the God who sanctifies.

3.3.2 Bunyan’s *Pilgrim’s progress*

The Puritan minister and author, John Bunyan (1628-1688), was seen as stern, serious, hypocritical and devoid of a sense of humour. It was a difficult time for Dissenters in England. Bunyan was imprisoned twice for not adhering to the rules of the Church of England for preaching. He spoke against the formality of the Church of England and against the Quakers who he claimed were distorting the role of the Holy Spirit (see Schwanda 2011:324). Although Bunyon did not have much formal training due to a background of poverty, he was inspired by two Puritan classics, *The plain man’s pathway to heaven* (1601) and *The practice of piety* (1612). Both heaven and piety (or holiness) became central themes in Bunyan’s life. He himself was a plain man from a humble background who discerned the pathway to heaven even in the midst of

incarceration for having preached the Scriptures according to his convictions. He did not merely preach piety, he also practiced it. He was an example of what it meant to live a holy life regardless of the situations he faced.

As many of the devout people of the time, Bunyan had become convinced of his sinfulness and "eventually found peace and assurance through reading Luther's *Commentary on Galatians*" (Schwanda 2011:324). He went on to write a number of works, most of them during his stay in prison. *Pilgrim's progress* (1678) stands out as a Puritan classic and is still widely read today. It demonstrates the hope that is to be found in serving God. The kind of holiness in faith practice that Bunyan lived out was that of enduring suffering with hope. When he was in prison, he realised that there was more to life than what he could see at the time. Through faith in Christ, he had a reason to hope in something beyond his immediate circumstances, as depressing as they were. In a time when there was much persecution of church groups by the Church of England, he could offer hope to something beyond this life. This hope was the reward for living a faithful, holy life until the end. Although there would be times when Christian believers waver in faith, they should remain on the path of life and they will inherit an imperishable crown.

Bunyan echoed the belief that "the Christian's final duty was to die well" with a prepared heart (Packer 2011:704). It was important to have a pure heart and a clean conscience in God's sight because God is the one who rewards faithful servants.
God sees the a person's life. Nothing is concealed from God. Therefore a life of integrity and holiness is required. Every step of life's journey is important. There are trials and temptations along the way, but also hope and help available. This was the kind of pastoral consolation employed by Puritans. Life was regarded as a journey home where one could feast on the delights of heaven (see Packer 1990:334). The Puritans encouraged their congregants to see a vision of heaven "to resist present discouragements and distractions present circumstances may produce" (Packer 1990:334). Adhering to the Scriptures, being transformed by the gospel and being prepared for "spiritual conflict and conquest" was seen as crucial for a Christian who lived a holy life of sanctification (Packer 2011:704). *The pilgrims progress* portrays heaven as the goal, the prize and the hope of salvation in Christ. Holiness is about

straining to move forward. The power of the gospel and the guidance of the Holy Spirit make it easier to journey to the Celestial City, called heaven. A Christian has sinful tendencies. Satan and demons exploit people's weaknesses. This sometimes make for a steep spiritual climb in life. Keeping a godly perspective on life is the key to moving forward in the process of sanctification. Bunyan inspired a heavenly perspective on life in many of his other writings as well.

Much of what Bunyan wrote about holiness in *The pilgrims progress* has relevance for today. The consequences of sin is judgment, not only for individuals, but also for communities. On the life's toward a holy life a believer should not be distracted. For this a firm resolve to live a holy life is necessary (see Bunyan 2004:11-12). Bunyan's stay in prison is symbolised in his book by a cumbersome bag on Christian's back (see Bunyan 2004:11-12). He bore this burden because he refused to be conformed to the ungodly standards of the world. The consequence was that he had to face judgment. At this point, Bunyon had not attained salvation, but merely been made aware of the dangers of remaining in a lifestyle of sin. As he set on the journey of life beyond the comforts of friends, family and others around him, he found people such as Evangelist who helped him, but people like Obstinate and Pliable who hindered him (Bunyan 2004:13). He encountered many other characters, as all people do along the way. Mr Worldly Wise spoke to Christian about attaining morality and status through living according to the law and reading it for self-promotion rather than with a view to eternal life (see Seidel 2010:514). Christian realised that he could not live a holy life though his own efforts to do the works of the law. He repented of his sin and consented to Evangelist's words. He later found freedom through the gospel.
The Scriptures that contain God's promises and warnings became his guide. The story demonstrate how the Scriptures come alive to those who receive the gospel of salvation and who trust in God alone for their growth in holiness.

3.3.3 Jonathan Edwards' *religious affections*

In the United States in the eighteenth century, Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758), an influential theologian, two revivals during the period of the first Great Awakening (1730-

1755). He contributed toward shaping evangelical Christianity through his prolific writing and preaching. He preached in a time when Calvinist theology was challenged by Arminian theology. Edwards played a significant role in defining "central theological contours of American evangelicalism – revivalism, conversionism and evangelism" (Studebaker 2011:421). The quality of *holiness* was important in each of these aspects of Edwards' spirituality. Edwards was "an heir and proponent of Puritanism" (Cherry 1990:2). Characteristic of revivalism was the focus on Christianising the family and community at large. Like the Puritans, Edwards was not content with seeing the established church revived and thrive. The gospel should transform society from being morally corrupt to being spiritually rejuvenated.

Though Edwards considered revival to be a divine work of God, he actively championed an "aggressive promotion of revivals by using emotional appeal as a homiletic strategy" (Studebaker 2011:422). According to Edwards, revival takes place when people's emotions are stirred in a supernatural way. There are ungodly but also holy affections. The ultimate mark or affection that leads to revival is love.
There is a difference between loving an experience and loving "God above all things and all persons" (McDermott 2009:54). A believer does not merely do the right thing in order to live a holy life, but should also feel the right emotions. Christian believers who are being led by the Spirit enjoy worshipping God and find their happiness in God. They experience "a foretaste of heaven" in their life on earth (McDermott 2009:54). Charles Finney made use of the work of Johathan Edwards to develop his "New Measures" (see Studebaker 2011:422). Edwards, like John Wesley and Finney had a vast influence on many people were inspired to live a holy life with God.

Edwards is remembered best for his sermon *Sinners in the hands of an angry God.* This sermon has led many people to consider Edwards "as a hater of men, a hell-fire preacher, a worshipper of a wrathful God" (Cherry 1990:1). As with many generalisations, it is an exaggeration of Edwards' approach. Yet, his experience of almost dying as a young student, being spared from hell, but consequently failing in the area of self-discipline, holiness and demonstrating love to others would have contributed to this image of judgment (see Marsden 2003:36). Self-discipline is necessary in order for Christian believers to combat sin and honour God in their lives.

Most of Edwards' sermons were about sanctification. Holiness he saw as something that was to be more fully attained over a period of time. It was a process not a one-time event or act (see McDermott 2009:54).

As a Reformed theologian, Jonthan Edwards emphasis doctrines regarding God's sovereign work, such as predestination and election. God, not human beings, was in control (see Cherry 1990:5-7). The sovereignty of God and having a personal relationship with God were core to Edwards' spirituality. To Edwards, God was personal through incarnation into this world by means of which humanity was redeemed. Edwards was both an activist and thinker in his pursuit to make God known to others as a personal loving God (see Marsden 2003:6).

At the age of 19, Edwards wrote 70 practical aims for his spirituality in his pursuit of holiness, which he read over once a week. In *Religious affections* (1746), Edwards describes the important role that the right emotions have in living out a holy spirituality. For Edwards, Christianity is not something static, set and compartmentalised. It is a living faith to be experienced rather than merely understood cognitively. Edwards explained that there were many Christians who experienced the "perfections of God", such as God's grace, love, power, guidance and reprimands, but remain unchanged because they did not have their "affections moved" (Edwards 2013:30). By affections, Edwards meant the virtues imparted by the Holy Spirit, which are not an addition to conversion, but rather the essence of a Christian life (Bingham 2002:141). As a congregational pastor, Edwards did not seek to equip believers either to win arguments or to cultivate emotion (see Strachan & Sweeney 2010:83). The right emotions were not the focus, but rather a by-product of applying the Gospel to one's life. Edwards aimed to communicate truth through the Scriptures and the guidance of the Spirit, with the intention of nurturing a profound love of God in people's lives (see Strachan & Sweeney 2010:83).

Edwards was Puritan in his theology. In his view human beings were completely dependent on a "free omnipotent God". Genuine holiness was "a supernatural gift, dynamic in character and intensely experimental in its outworking" (Packer 1990:311). He also had a Puritan work ethic. He was not a moralist or formalist (see Packer 1990:311). Doctrine was therefore a means by which one could learn to grow in love

and holiness. Obedience and joy follow the commitment to a Christian life, because happiness and holiness are inseparable. The element of joy is different from Puritanism in previous century which tended to be very. Edwards was not confined to the church and the local congregations, but also ministered to those outside the walls of the church.

Edwards' view that conversion and a desire for God and for a holy life do not happen merely by rational consent, because also through people's emotions, differs from early Reformed idea that the mind influences the entire being. For Edwards Christian faith and holiness in faith practice are more than merely intellectual. It is also emotional. It is not sufficient to only suppress ungodly emotions. Godly emotions should be actively produced and should be present in order for a Christian to live a holy life. A person wants what is "desirable, as pleasurable, as best" (Strachan & Sweeney 2010:77). Christian believers should not be hedonistic in seeking worldly pursuits, but should be hedonistic in spiritual pursuits through growing their relationship with God. Hedonism was originally taught by early Greek philosophers and means to "maximise pleasure or happiness" (Matthews 2008:258). It refers to devotion to pleasure.

The term "Christian Hedonism" was coined by John Piper (2003) in his work on Jonathan Edwards, *Desiring God: Meditations of a Christian hedonist*. In this work he highlights Edwards' notion on pursuing satisfaction in God. He describes Christian hedonists as worshippers of God whose affections are set on what glorifies God (see Piper 2003:104). Piper elaborated on this theme of Christian believers finding the source of their delight in God rather than elsewhere. He was, however, criticised for his interpretation of Edwards' work. According to Matthews (2008:259), equating hedonism with a holy Christian life is ethically flawed. It is at odds with Scripture. This criticism, however, misses the intention of John Piper, who goes to great lengths to describe what he means by Christian hedonism. Piper uses it to refer to the highest affection known to God and humanity. This affection for Piper is the glory of God. With this term he aims to articulate Edwards' idea of Christian love as the main affection in a believer's life. Through this affection God receives the glory. God takes delight in "the praises of the saints" (Piper 2003:50).

For both Edwards and Piper holiness was to be rooted in justifying faith and expressed by the working of the Spirit through rejoicing in the Lord. This gives expression to Christian believers's lives and motivates them do live a holy life not just because they ought to, but because they desire to do so from the heart. The mind and the heart therefore play a crucial role in inspiring a Christian believer to live a God-centred holy life for God's glory. The quality of holiness is therefore based on a desire to glorify God and set one's affections towards God.

3.4 Pentecostal spirituality

3.4.1 Charles Fox Parham's *glossolalia*

Pentecostal spirituality shall be explored in this study to offer another approach towards holiness that involves experiencing the power of the Holy Spirit. The beginnings of Pentecostal spirituality can be found in the early twentieth century in the Azusa Street Revival (1906). This movement was led by William Seymour (18701922). He was raised in times of intense racial tension (see Mittelstadt 2011:746).

Based on Charles Parham's message on Spirit baptism, he promoted "the Spirit of Pentecost as the great equaliser, thereby breaking racial, ethnic and gender barriers" (see Mittelstadt 2011:747). He was not only the initiator of Pentecostal spirituality, but was also focused on how this should be expressed in practice. The Azusa Street Revival occurred on 312 Azusa Street in downtown Los Angeles. Through Seymour's preaching starting on 24 February 1906, "people of all nations came and got their cup full" (Jacobsen 2006:53). There were, however, issues of racist behaviour which caused factions in the group. Some split off and started their own denominations. Following the revival there was a call to unite on the basis of Scripture and to embrace sound doctrine as a corrective to the division and abuse of Scripture that marred the movement (see Jacobsen 2006:53). The division among them stifled the work of the Spirit even in the early days of Pentecostalism (see Anderson 2005:63-64).

While Reformed spirituality emphasises justification by faith centred on Jesus' work on the cross, Pentecostal spirituality is centred on what was done at Pentecost and accentuates the work of the Holy Spirit to actively transform people's lives. Pentecostal spirituality is largely about the experience of the presence of God and being empowered by the power of God. Pentecostal views are open all who are inspired by the Holy Spirit, regardless of gender or qualification (see Woodhead 2004:395). Puritan spirituality emphasised the role of the Covenant of Grace, while Pentecostal spirituality focuses on the baptism of the Spirit and its consequences.

Pentecostal spirituality was influenced by revivalist views and practices, as well as "the holy emphasis of Wesley" (Bingham 2002:147). Commonalities with orthodox Reformed spirituality include a high view of Scripture and the importance of what was accomplished at Calvary. However, the Pentecostal approach is more emotionally and experience driven with an emphasis being on the work of the Spirit. This spirituality is expressed differently. The role of the Holy Spirit in the Reformed and Puritan traditions is to assure the believer of salvation, make the Scriptures relevant and alive for their faith practice, and to guide believers away from sin and toward godliness. Pentecostal spirituality, on the other hand, emphasises the power of the Spirit to give spiritual gifts, to witness for Christ and also to enable believers to live a holy life (see Macchia 2011:664; cf. Pocock 2009:129).

Pentecostal spirituality shares similarities with John Wesley's emphasis on Christian perfection as perfect love. This involves being transformed by the Holy Spirit to be conformed to the image of Christ. It involves both "purity and power" in being freed from the power of sin and made more into the likeness of Christ (see Del Colle 2009:40). A Christian believer has to make a conscious effort to strive for this holiness in faith practice. Holiness involves experiencing "a deeper awareness of the indwelling presence of the Spirit" (Macchia 2011:664). This is initially made possible when an individual is saved from sin and brought into a new life in the Spirit. Although the Holy Spirit lives inside each Christian, the work of the Spirit in a believer is often stifled by a lack of cooperation of the person. Surrendering to God, as Phoebe Palmer emphasised in earlier times, is an important part of living out the Christian life.

Freedom from sin and victory over evil should be part of the Christian experience. Spiritual gifts are needed to combat evil forces. The Baptism of the Holy
Spirit and the spiritual gifts are central to Pentecostal spirituality and are “in some sense the fulfilment of conversion” (Macchia 2011:664). Holiness is therefore an experience to be pursued, driven by the Holy Spirit based on the promise of the outpouringt of the Spirit.

Charles Fox Parham (1873-1929) is known as “the father of Modern Day
Pentecostalism”. Parham’s parents were devoted Christians, but did not belong to a specific denomination. Therefore, he was brought up without denominational preference. This contributed to his natural slant towards ministering outside of a denominational context. He ministered in North America at a time when Enlightenment thought with its rational emphasis prevailed. Espinosa (2014:41) observes that “rationality and emotional control were key ingredients in the psychosocial makeup of the era”. During this time of Enlightenment, many of the premodern claims of the Bible were being challenged. However, for many, the rationalistic approach to the Christian faith, which excluded the possibility of miracles and divine healing was unappealing and incomplete. Pentecostal spirituality provided an alternative to the two extremes of “the polarities of hyperrationality and ecstatic supernaturalism” by combining “historic and experiential religion” (Esposa 2014:42). Charles Parham and William Seymour maintained the authority of Scripture, but also emphasised the expression of faith under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Parham and Seymour aimed to transcend the rationalism of the day and meet the needs in society for a vibrant, enthusiastic encounter with the living God. Initially Parham and Seymour ministered together, often under-privileged areas, but then parted ways because of racial tension. Parham’s influence on Seymour contributed to the Azusa Street Revival.

For Parham the role of the Holy Spirit was to restore faith to that which the apostles experienced. He is credited as pioneer of the modern-day Pentecostal tradition because of his promotion of the baptism of the Spirit. This is where the Spirit was imparted into a believer’s life. He connected *glossolalia* (speaking in tongues) with the Baptism of the Holy Spirit. He was the first preacher to articulate this connection, expand this movement and spread the claim that speaking in tongues was necessary

evidence to being baptised with the Spirit (see Jacobsen 2006:31). This was revolutionary, because holiness of life involving virtues, love and fruits of the Spirit was ordinarily regarded as evidence preceding conversion. Parham viewed the baptism of the Spirit as providing "recipients with special protection from Satan and also special powers to aid in preaching the gospel" (Jacobsen 2006:32). He claimed that this acted as protection against future judgment, because baptism of the Spirit acted as a seal to set an individual apart for the wedding banquet when Christ returned for the Bride of Christ (Blumhofer 1993:45). Without this seal, a believer would be liable to damnation after death. Baptism of the Spirit and holiness was therefore connected because the former makes the latter possible. Holiness therefore involved being empowered through the baptism of the Holy Spirit to spread the Gospel and be preserved by God against the plans of the devil.

For Parham Christian believers were led by no other authority than the Scriptures and the direct leadership of the Holy Spirit. He left Methodist ministry to start an independent evangelical ministry. He preached the ideas of the Holiness Movement and was well received in Kansas (Blumhofer 1993:45). Building on the ideas of John Wesley, he strongly promoted holiness in faith practice through his preaching (see Menzies & Menzies 2000:17-18). There was less emphasis on healing and on sanctification of the Spirit (see Menzies & Menzies 2000:18). His strong emphasis on the baptism of the Holy Spirit and holiness was more experiential than it had been before. Parham wanted to restore the church to what it was during the first century when the Spirit came on the disciples. Revivals were mushroomed during the late nineteenth century and speaking in tongues had become a fairly common phenomenon around the world (see Menzies & Menzies 2000:16). The Azusa Street Revival was therefore only one of the places of Pentecostal spirituality and Charles Parham only one of the leading proponents (see Menzies & Menzies 2000:16).
However, Parham's movement known as the "Apostolic Faith Movement" was distinct in its advocacy for experience and being filled with the Holy Spirit *before* salvation and sanctification could be received. In this emphasis he moved beyond established orthodox Christian teaching. He was also unorthodox in other views such as his idea that the wicked would be annihilated rather than go to an eternal hell.

Friesen (2009:42) observes that “Parham’s contribution to Pentecostalism should be understood to reside at the level of hermeneutics, not doctrine”. His teachings differed considerably from Reformed spirituality that promoted justification by faith and from Puritan spirituality that focused on the Covenant of Grace. For Parham, the Spirit could enter a person whether they are believers or not.

A few years into his independent ministry, Parham and his son became ill. He refused medicine for himself and his son because, for Parham, “a sanctified body is as much provided for in the atonement of Jesus as is sanctification for the soul” (Blumhofer 1993:46). Both he and his son regained their health. From then on
Parham incorporated praying for the sick and a healing ministry into his services (see Blumhofer 1993:46). He was revolutionary in his thinking when it came to healing and had a broader view on salvation that traditional orthodox theology. This was also contrary to the general exclusive Pentecostal claim that there is no salvation beyond the gospel through Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour. Parham included those of other religions. According to him, they could also enter into a personal relationship with God and become holy and sanctified without even knowing Christ as their Saviour (see Yong 2015:107). Parham sought a balanced approach between accepting the “absolute necessity and necessity of Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour” while being open to the possibility of salvation for those who are not Christian (Yong 2015:107). This inclusive approach to holiness in faith practice is what contributes towards making Parham not only the father of Pentecostalism, but as an open-minded minister and an inter-faith missionary. The promotion of *glossolalia,* healing based on Scripture, and mission towards other religions are the main tenets of his legacy.

3.4.2 A.B. Simpson’s “fourfold gospel”

Albert Benjamin Simpson (1843-1919) was brought up in a Puritan home. Regular family devotions and the Westminster Shorter Catechism were part of his upbringing (see Yount 2016:43). Though Simpson was taught “Christian truths” from an early age, he did not know how to enter into a personal relationship with God. He became so

burdened that he had a breakdown. He encountered Walter Marshall's work, *Gospel mystery of sanctification,* through which he attained healing and salvation (see Yount 2016:44) through Jesus as Saviour. This influenced his work, *The Fourfold gospel* (1887) and became a central term for his ministry. The term, "fourfold gospel", refers to the work of Jesus, the Saviour, who saves people from sin. As "sanctifier", Jesus makes believers more holy in their everyday life and faith practice. As "healer", Jesus provides physical healing to those who are unwell. As "the coming King", Jesus will come to earth and reign victoriously with believers.

Simpson was in disagreement with some key doctrines of the Presbyterian Church. He established his own church, the Gospel Tabernacle, in New York City (see Van De Walle 2011:752). He also founded the Missionary Training Institute, where many Pentecostal preachers and missionaries were trained (see Van De Walle 2011:752; cf. Pocock 2009:132). In this way he greatly influenced the further development of Pentecostalism. His goal was to promote deeper Christian living and to evangelise the world, claiming that, if the gospel was preached everywhere in the world, the world could come to an end in his lifetime (see Van de Walle 2011:752). This was part of his incentive to for preaching the gospel and to motivate others to believe in the gospel. Simpson was passionate about achieving his objective of "the evangelization of the world in this generation" (Pocock 2009:132). He therefore regarded preaching as crucial for bringing people into relationship with God. His main writings were *The gospel of healing* (1885), *The four-fold gospel* (1887) and *Wholly sanctified* (1890). These works were pivotal to his ministry and also explained his views on holiness. His emphasis on healing put him at odds with mainline denominations. He claimed that healing was a part of the gospel by pointing to Jesus as "the fountain of healing and cleansing" (Simpson 1890:153). His healing brought about change in his life. He was determined to spread the gospel to many people. His message was not only about spiritual salvation, but also about divine healing. He founded the Christian and Missionary Alliance. He was a passionate missionary whose dynamic communication through hymns, poems and books attracted many followers from a range of denominations (see Nienkirchen 1992:1). He reached out to those whose lives had not yet been touched by the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Simpson's work which had the most significant impact was *The four-fold Gospel* (1887). The focus of the book is on Jesus Christ as the one who provides for every human need. He also connected sanctification with healing in the book (see Van De Walle 2011:752). In his work, *The four-fold gospel*, he refers to Jesus as the Saviour, Sanctifier, Healer and the coming King. The order in which the titles are presented in his work indicates the order in which Jesus is revealed to people. The purpose of *The four-fold gospel* was to "chrystallise and convey publically the distinctive doctrinal convictions of his movement" (Nienkirchen 1992:2). It provided a systematic explanation of his understanding of the work of Christ in a coherent spiritual and practical way. The titles for Jesus indicate of how Christian believers can become holy, not by doing the right things, but through having a personal relationship of trust with Jesus Christ. This is only possible for human beings if the Spirit makes it an experiential reality for them. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, Christ is made "present and contemporary to us" (Cross 2009:22). Jesus fulfils all the needs that people have. In Simpson's work, *Wholly sanctified* (1893), he emphasises that Christ is the centre of a blievers life to hold on to Christ is the way for a believer to be sanctified. Simpson was therefore Christocentric in his theological approach.

The impact of Simpson's work can be seen, among others, in how *The four-fold gospel* inspired the popular Pentecostal leader, Aimee Semple McPherson, who established the International Church of the Foursquare Gospel. She was a pioneer in the use of modern media and known for her faith healing demonstrations, works of charity and ecumenical endeavours. She strongly emphasised the Spirit and referred to Jesus as "the Baptizer of the Spirit" (Van de Walle 2009:21). Other Pentecostal leaders that followed likewise substituted the idea of "Jesus the Sanctifier" with the idea of Jesus as the "Baptiser in the Holy Spirit" (see Nienkirchen 1992:27; cf. Van de Walle 2009:21).

Simpson's emphasis on sanctification in *The four-fold gospel* was similar to that of the Holiness Movement. He left a heritage for the Pentecostal movement that continues to emphasise aspects such as "sanctification and enthusiasm" in the practice of holiness (see Faupel 2012:15). An important feature of the Holiness Movement was that Jesus was regarded as the Saviour who saved people from judgment and

sanctified them by making them pure from sin. The aspects of Jesus as healer and coming King were added in the later Pentecostal development.

Simpson taught that the aspects of Jesus healing and also returning "had a sanctifying influence on the believer" because it encourages a believer to expand God's kingdom and to turn away from evil in this world (Yount 2016:50). The coming of Christ as King is when Christ physically comes back to earth. It is the final stage of a believer's life. It is then that believers will come to a full realisation of holiness. Divine physical healing is part of atonement. When every Christian believer has attained atonement, then every Christian believer should be healthy. This is when Jesus will return as King. Therefore, Christian believers should examine the purity of their hearts and lives and look to eternity.

Simpson treated the matter of speaking in tongues "with candour and caution". He therefore preferred to use the term, "sanctification" rather than "Spirit baptism" (see Richmann 2016:8; cf. King 2006:280-286). Christ was the model and source of holiness. The Spirit made this sanctification possible. Sanctification, a matter that was at the heart of Simpson's work, *The fourfold gospel*, occurs throughout a believer's life, although Simpson concedes that it could be lost (see De Walle 2009:62, 78). Only after the return of Christ as King, would a believer become fully holy. Until then, the four-fold gospel should be ministered to people through the power and witness of the Spirit. Holiness is a practical quality. It changes lives not only on a spiritual level, but also emotionally through bringing hope and excitement to a believer's life, as well as on a physically level through divine healing.

3.4.3 Kenneth Hagin's Faith Movement

Hagin was influenced by E.W. Kenyon (1867-1948) who, though Pentecostal, was an orthodox, conservative Christian who adhered to foundational beliefs. An exception to this was his belief that Jesus died not only physically but also spiritually (Burgess & Van der Maas 2002:820). This idea exhibits some Gnostic influence. Yet, his promotion of positive confession, which involves a person speaking words that they believe or want to believe, is what contributes towards his distinctive role in the

Faith Movement. The Holiness Movement influenced Kenyon's views and life. This influenced Kenyon to confess do some introspection and realised his unworthiness in God's sight and that his life was outside of God's grace. Teachers in the Holiness Movement emphasised the Second Blessing, but warned that salvation could also be lost through sin. Kenyon's ideas regarding Jesus' physical and spiritual death, as well as of the pivotal role of the Spirit in sanctification, were influenced by Simpson, among others (see Atkinson 2007:178; cf. McIntyre 1997:45). Kenyon came to the realisation that believers are made holy by the Holy Spirit who lives in their life (see McIntyre 1997:45). The invisible divine person of the Holy Spirit makes it possible for human beings to live a holy life. Therefore, holiness depends on the guidance of the Spirit's in everyday life. The quality of holiness is personal and inspired by a loving God. It is not to be pursued out of guilt. McIntyre (1997:354) describes the Holiness and Higher Life Movements as "a crisis experience of sanctification or victory over sin". Kenyon did have a crisis experience. He could identify with this particular aspect of the teachings regarding holiness. Kenyon's own teachings about faith, divine healing, identity in Christ, victorious living, confidence in prayer and the authority of a believer, became widely popular. The emphasis on prosperity is a more recent development (see McIntyre 1997:354).

North American Pentecostal preacher Kenneth E. Hagin (1917-2003) was the father of the Faith Movement. It is also known as the Word of Faith Movement and is often infamously connected with promoting a "health and wealth" or prosperity gospel. The Faith Movement has attracted a large number of followers around the world over the past several decades through its television broadcasts, numerous churches and well-publicised ministries. Hagin founded the Kenneth E. Hagin Evangelistic Association, which later became called Kenneth Hagin Ministries. His radio broadcast was called Faith Seminar of the Air. He founded RHEMA Bible School, The Word of Faith magazine and RHEMA Praise as a weekly television program. His central message was that people should have faith in God and through that faith anything is possible (see Mk 11:22-24).

Hagin's teaching on divine healing has been controversial. According him, healing is part of the atonement in Christ. Therefore, believers who have received atonement

also have the right to healing. Disobedience to God and a lack of faith can prevent healing from taking place (see Warrington 2000:127). To take medicine rather than confess to God, amounts to a lack of faith (Warrington 2000:125). If healing from sickness is part of the atonement that Jesus has made possible, then a believer should not only repent of sin, but also of sickness. Christian believers who feel guilty about their sinfulness, should also feel guilty about their sickness. Yet, through Christ's atonement and the work of the Holy Spirit, believers are able to live a victorious life.

The Faith Movement is criticised for "distorting the model of Christ the Victor" that comes from the Early Church (Pugh 2014:38). While early Pentecostals claimed that Jesus is the Saviour who took the penalty of sins upon himself and healed people, Hagin takes it further. To Hagin, prayer in the name of Jesus has limitless potential because believers have a right to receive from Jesus whatever they ask for from Jesus (see Warrington 2000:132). Holiness in effect means being led by the Holy Spirit and living a healthy life. Holy living is a life of faith that is evidenced in holistically vital wellbeing. According to Atkinson (2007:184), the doctrine of the spiritual death of Jesus is something that has "undermined" the Faith Movement. It creates questions as to whether Jesus was a sufficient substitute for humanity's sins (see Atkinson 2007:184). If Jesus was not holy during the time of crucifixion, then it would be impossible for human beings s to become holy on the basis of Jesus' death.

3.5 "Authentic discussions" in a postmodern world

3.5.1 Emerging Church Movement

The Emerging Church Movement shall be considered as a part of this study with the purpose of introducing discussions regarding holiness in faith practice. This demonstrates that holiness is something that can be embraced by many people regardless of their differences to apply holiness in a relevant way in the world today. Interreligious Dialogue is a global application of these "authentic discussions". The Emerging Church Movement (ECM) has been advancing as a movement since around

the time of the new millennium. Youth workers observed a change in the cultural landscape and sociological studies indicated that “the next generation coming of age was undergoing a fundamental philosophical shift rooted in postmodernity” (Burge & Djupe 2014:637). The Emerging Church Movement is a post-evangelical movement in a post-Christendom society which originated in response to a dramatic sociological change that is taking place around the world. A new kind of culture is emerging in Western societies. If the church does not “emerge” and evolve along with Western culture, it will no longer have an impact on the “new generation” (see Carson 2005:12).

To understand the Emerging Church Movement (ECM) and the contribution it can make to living out holiness effectively in today’s world, its background and development should first be traced. The ECM started in a response to sociological changes in society and some challenges that the church has had in terms of its relevance to and effectivity in society. In order to effectively foster a faith community in a postmodern word, something “new” is required – a new approach to church, the theological framework, spirituality and the Christian lifestyle as a whole (McLaren 2006:18). A new approach was necessary also because, since 1960s, a distinction has increasingly been made between being spiritual and being religious. It was now entirely possible to be spiritual without necessarily being religious (see Tickle 2012:77). New ideas often compromised traditional moral standards and the authority and relevance of the institutionalised church has been questioned both on a personal and a societal level.

The ECM does not propagate an extreme deconstruction of the Christian faith, but rather aims to adapt what Christianity is about in order to reach people in this postmodern era. The ECM aims to engage effectively with the postmodern world. By becoming more like the culture it hopes to have an impact on culture. This movement embraces “diversity and inclusivity”, though the majority of the followers of the ECM are from mainline denominations (see Burge & Djupe 2014:649). Many of the persons who choose to affiliated with this movement are more “liberal” both on a spiritual and a political level. This makes them more likely to interact effectively with people outside of mainline denominations. The ECM strives for authenticity. In such an atmosphere people from all walks of life should be able to come to faith and experience a sense of

belonging. The ECM acknowledges the contribution of the institutional church, but aims to reimagine, reinvent, redefine and reconstruct
Christianity to “promote a healthful, whole, hearty spirituality” (McLaren 2006:18). It is clear that the Emerging Movement strives for an authentic and substantial change in the spiritual life of Christians.

The Holiness Tradition and spiritualities such as the Ascetic, Reformed, Puritan and Pentecostal strains have all, through the ages, sought to redirect and refocus Christian believers in order that they can have a significant impact in the broader community. Where these, have in different ways, have turned away from the world in order to become more holy, the ECM is not counter-cultural, but rather sides with culture against the institutional church.

Emerging Church spirituality provides “new cultural waves of change” that reach many outside of the institutional church and even outside of the Christian faith (Kimball 2003:29). This movement crosses and transcends theological boundaries. Many left the institutionalised church as a result of divisions in the church. Others joined the ECM because they had the need to discuss their faith and seek answers to pertinent questions. The EMC with its focus on authentic discussion met that need (see Tickle 2012:78-79). This did not mean that the Christian faith was abandoned. It was an attempt to tap into what is spiritual and relevant rather than just adhere to routinised practices and focus on rational content as the mainline churches tend to do (see Tickle 2012:79). This movement is therefore conversational and relational rather than doctrinal and structural.

The Emerging Church Movement has developed a decentralised character and is open to dialogue across denominations. The exclusivist nature of some Christian traditions has preventing open and honest conversations from taking place. The ECM is open to listening to a range of perspectives before stating or defend their own position. Due to the fact that the ECM is not based on theological imperatives and is focused on unity, they are able to engage with others on a relational and conversational basis. Form them, salvation is not about belonging to a group or
“having the right labels; it’s about becoming fully and truly human” (Chalke & Mann

2003:154). For the ECM views Christianity is about collective unity. Their conversational approach makes the movement dynamic, engaging and truly "emerging". For this movement to work effectively, it requires people who are willing to listen to others' testimonies, ideas and concerns without bias. This inclusive approach is a way in which a faith practice of holiness can be realised. Effectively listening, striving to understand in an open-minded way and loving all people despite differences about religious views, is an active expression of holy living. It adheres to the gospel message of putting others above oneself, and seeking harmony and unity in community. It is not only about *what* is communicated, but about *how* it is done. If spiritual realities are communicated in a humble and not an arrogant or condescending way, then bridges can be built. Effective communication includes the willingness to learn from others, because to reach the heart, "one has to know the heart" (Sweet 1999:214).

The ECM is not only conversational, but mission-orientated. In order to be truly mission-orientated it is necessary to acknowledge and respect difference. It also includes finding common ground in spite of boundaries and barriers. The identity of this movement revolves around making a significant difference in the community. As a mission-orientated movement, the ECM seeks to reach people outside the established churches. They aim to engage people in this world in terms of their "culture, philosophy and theology" (McKnight 2006:7). The focus is on empathy and providing an alternative for those who are disillusioned with Christianity, put off by "religious politics" and who want to make a relevant impact in postmodern times (see McLaren 2004:15-18). The ECM is postmodern in its approach. It does not acclaim to have "the answers" based on specific dogmas as church institutions tend to do (see McLaren 2004:24). Salvation is not regarded as something to be earned, but rather as something that is offered. People are invited to enter into God's "grand mission". It is an inclusive invitation. By God's grace, people are given the opportunity to live "as agents of salvation to others" (McLaren 2001:195).

This mission-orientated approach goes beyond listening and empathising with people outside the church and from diverse backgrounds. It also involves actively moving out of one's comfort zone to motivate people to "get nearer to Jesus, for only he can show

any of us how to be truly human" (Chalke & Mann 2003:155). This missional approach presents a different view of who God is and what was accomplished through Jesus Christ on the cross than the traditional views. In both Catholic and Protestant traditions God is often presented as the one who created people, but is then angry with them because of their sins (see Jones 2015:4-8) and needs something quench God's anger. This is a fear-based approach to ministering to others, which drives people further away from God (see Jones 2015:4-8). This also has an impact on how holiness in faith practice is to be lived out. If all people were seen to be under the judgment of God because of their sin, the motive for reaching out to them would be to bring them salvation through Jesus Christ. The motive is not to understand them better or to build bridges, but rather to get them to believe in Jesus and thereby inherit salvation. This exclusive approach is what the ECM seeks to overthrow by presenting a more attractive and relational message.

Because of the disillusionment of many with institutional Christianity, the ECM aims to deconstruct and then reconstruct the Christian message and faith community. The ECM was formed on account of "a reaction and a protest against traditional evangelical churches" (McKnight 2006:7). It is pragmatic and social in its approach, rather than dogmatic and systematic. The ECM is often seen as part of "Emerging Evangelicalism" which takes contemporary cultural seriously. The aim is that this approach will make conservative evangelicalism thrive in the present-day context (see Bielo 2011:5-6).

Though changing traditional thought and practices in Christianity is the aim of the ECM, the and Protestant Christianity are similar in that they have both have their origins in protest against inadequate faith practice, including the practice of holiness. In a study on the Emerging Church Movement, fifteen testimonies of participants have shown that they have come to the Emerging Church Movement from an evangelical background in protest against the modernistic worldview adopted by their congregations (see Carson 2005:14-15, 25-26; cf. Yaconelli 2003:27-39). Protestantism originated from protest against abuses within the established church. This included the protest against the institutionalised church's separatist attitude toward those who were not "churched". Protestant churches in history and the

Emerging Church Movement today both aimed to redefine the identity of the church and approach and, following the gospel message, include those on the fringes. Believers cannot shelter themselves from society, but should rather adopt an intentionally incarnational approach.

Holiness in faith practice is evidenced in the ECM by their genuine concern with the spiritual and holistic well-being of those outside of the "four walls of the church". The finger is not pointed at those outside the church and those who differ from the church's "truth", but rather at the abuses in and by the church towards people on the outside. Like Luther who protested against a church which claimed itself to be "the vehicle" to salvation", the ECM is protesting against a similar arrogance and exclusivism of the institutionalised churches today. The ECM seek to demonstrate what it means in practice to love one's neighbour as oneself (see Mat 22:39; Mk 12:30-31).

The Emerging Church views the contemporary postmodern paradigm as an era of transition. McLaren (2006:16) explains that people having be living in different eras in "a prehistoric world, an ancient world, a medieval world and a modern world, but now all four are being swept up in a postmodern world". This very different world is undergoing devastating change at a rapid pace. It is evolving into a new season in history. Premodern ideas about God found in premodern Scriptures cannot directly and literally govern life today. People's thinking has evolved and become more independent, especially with the rise of technology and globalisation. The church faces many issues today that differ from those of previous eras. A "revolutionary" approach rather than a conventional one will be more apt for today (see McLaren 2006:20; cf. Schafer 1970:81-82).

As a worldview, postmodernity influences this innovative approach to life. A forerunner in postmodern thought describes postmodernity as that which "refines our sensitivity to differences and reinforces our ability to tolerate the incommensurable" (Lyotard 1984:xxv). Subjective experience and sensitivity to context are valued above certainty (see McLaren 2006:168-169). Postmodernity is "incredulity towards metanarratives" and complications in language that make it impossible to explain in words (Lyotard 1984:xxiv). Conniry (2011:681) describes postmodernity "as a constellation of decentralized entities—rather than a static, coherent whole that is united by a single

metanarrative". Postmodernity brings a form of unity across many traditions, religions and even unbelievers, as long as values like tolerance, individuality and inclusivity are upheld. Postmodernity is characterised by
"complexity" and focuses "on both global and local realities together, in mutual complementarity" (Conniry 2011:681). This is contrary to claims of having absolute truth. A postmodern perspective includes "having to relativize nearly everything, including one's own beliefs" (McLaren 2006:183). There is furthermore a lack of coherence of thought and systems to make sense of the way things are done. Postmodernity vastly differs from modernity in that people are experiential rather than rational, spiritual rather than scientific, pluralistic rather than unanimous, relative rather than exclusive, communal rather than individualistic and holistic rather than compartmentalised (see Jones 1999:30-36). This promotes the view that postmodernity has got many positive features that involve a change of mindset and approach. There is also a greater awareness of what is happening globally as opposed to merely locally (see Jones 1999:36-37). The key however is to build relationships with others that takes these features into consideration, as this is the context in which people live.

Some scholars have been critical of postmodernity and of the church aligning itself with postmodern thought. Postmodernity is "created by a specific culture and exists only in that culture", is anti-foundationalist and is "characterised by centrelessness" (McDowell & Hostetler 1998:208; see Yilmaz 2012:779-795; Lugo 2000:226-227).
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Postmodernity brings a form of unity across many traditions, religions and even unbelievers, as long as values such tolerance, individuality and inclusivity are upheld. York (1995:129) points out: "Pagans join all Christians, Muslims, Buddhists,
Hindus, and others who as 'People of Goodwill' are opposed to both 'Fascists and Fundamentalists [who] have no contribution to make to a multiracial, multicultural plenum'". Postmodernity is therefore a subjective, individualistic, and shifting vision of reality. This leads one to believe that "the individual is in charge of his or her life", "which devalues the role of the many in favour of the one" as "togetherness and

community are radically diminished" (Stark & Bainbridge 1985:370; Tchividjian 2012:109).

The fluidity of the postmodern era creates a context where an idea such as "holiness" which hails from bygone eras, can seem like an anomaly. However, even in a postmodern era people still have to deal with the difficulties of the human condition (in old religious language "sin"). There is still "ignorance, bondage, and misery in their lives, individually and socially" (Thorsen 2008:124), which makes an incentive to live a good and whole life for oneself which is conducive to a good and whole life for others and which contributes goodness to the world (in religious language "holiness") utterly relevant still today. The "local church" refers to any church that lives out its intended purpose in postmodern society. The local church should embrace the change that postmodernity brings in order to live out its intended purpose effectively in postmodern society. According to McLaren (2006:24), "the future belongs to those willing to let go, to stop trying to minimize the change we face, but rather maximize the discontinuity". Proponents of this view believe that the church ought to be inclusive, and offer marginalized citizens the opportunity to be "agents of the new church in the new world on the other side" (McLaren 2006:37).

The emphasis on newness often comes at the expense of older, tried and trusted approaches which are regarded as out-dated. Some regard the new values as "too untested and untried to have taken root" and find that they are opposed to "Jesus view of reality" (Cassidy 2005:148; cf. Cassidy 2012:101). For Colson (2008:69) tolerance is "the new god" who is "in the guise of liberalism, an absolute tyrant". Yet others make a connection between the old and the new. For Jones (2014:30, 35) the postmodern world is intricately related to ancient Gnosticism and polytheism, since the focus in upon worshipping created things rather than the Creator. Postmodernity is not so foreign to some ancient beliefs.

The media plays a central role today in the spreading of ideas. If the old idea of holiness could be made relevant today and make a positive difference in the postmodern world, an integrated approach to spreading this idea would be needed. The ECM, for example, aims to have an impact on every aspect of society, similar to the impact of postmodernity as such, but with the specific purpose of bringing a

relevant Christian message which will benefit all. This can be regarded as holiness in faith practice made more inclusive, dynamic and practicable in this postmodern world. The ECM, rather than oppose postmodernity, regard is as an opportunity. At the beginning of the twenty-first century it seemed to have been a vibrant movement.
This is no longer the case. It appears to have run out of ideas or even died.
However, Gilley (2008:1) explains that "the emergent church has not died; it is just morphing". The Emerging Church Movement not only looks to the present world and the future, but also looks back in time to connect with ancient spiritualities. It has also become known as the "Ancient Faith Movement", a reference to its contemplative expression of faith in practice. This reflects the longing of contemporary people for making time for sacred experiences with a holy God in their very busy world. The Emerging Church Movement in its aim to reach contemporary society on a spiritual level, has found that people search for ways to pursue holiness or spirituality in a meaningful way.

3.5.2 Interreligious Dialogue

Where the Emerging Church Movement emphasises reconciliation between different denominations through conversation, the Interreligious Dialogue takes it further. The primary concern of the EMC is the authentic expression of the *Christian faith*. Interreligious dialogue aims to reconcile *different religions* and beliefs through dialogue in an increasingly "unified and globalised" world (Meister 2011:5). Interreligious Dialogue began in 1893 at the Parliament of World Religions where forty-five religions, denominations and organisations came together in Chicago (see Seager 1994:4; Swidler 2013:6). Participants include institutions such as the Evangelical Alliance and the Free Religious Association, as well as Jewish women's groups and African-American Catholics (see Seager 1994:4). The conference not only brought the different religions together, but also minority and fringe groups. Many Protestant groups also attended. The main topic was Comparative Religion (see Seager 1994:477). The philosophy of Interreligious Dialogue is that all religions have their origin in the same God who created the universe and sustains life. The main aim is to create harmony among the different religions. Where the various have different

emphases on core beliefs, discussing these was avoided for fear that it could cause division. This dialogue between different religious groups or individuals
"often involves a delicate and often difficult balance between commitment to one's own tradition and openness to another" (Cornille 2013:xiii).

About a decade after the Parliament of the World's Religions, the Christian Ecumenical Faith Movement initiated something similar for Christian churches and denominations (see Seager 1994:xv-xvi; Swidler 2013:4). The method they used was also conversational and the aim was also to set aside differences and find common ground as a basis for unity among Christians. Through the Ecumenical Faith Movement, its promotion of good-will and building bridges across doctrinal differences, Christian believers have been enables to adopt a more inclusive approach toward people who adhere to other religions.

Comparative Theology studies "specific features" of religions in order to find common ground and promote unity among them (see Cheetham, Pratt & Thomas 2013:143146; cf. Roberts 2016:2). A similar approach to the idea of holiness in faith practice can enhance the field by incorporating a variety of views not only from various Christian spiritualities but also from other religions. Though holiness has been described differently in the various traditions, a cooperative approach can lead to an enriched view of holiness in faith practice today. In showing "sensitivity to particularities" in the different religions, it possible to gain a deeper understanding of one's own faith which can lead to a broader impact on the world, both locally and globally (see Roberts 2016:2). The many wars and factions caused by religion have been well documented. Dialogue can contribute to creating greater unity and preventing social evils.

In *Global ethic: A declaration of the Parliament of the World's Religions,* Küng & Kuschel (2006:9) argue for a "global ethic" that applies what is common to all religions in the world to practice. A global ethic does not mean that religions should put their own beliefs and ethics aside in order to participate, but rather that they all contribute to interreligious tolerance and cooperation. When interreligious dialogue is promoted in a carefully thought out and intentional way, it can prove to be beneficial to the world at large. This dialogue finds common ground in various spiritualities that collectively seek authentic relationships between God and people (Smock 2002:xiii).

Interreligious dialogue has the potential to “enhance mutual awareness, foster joint activities and even transform relationships between members of warring groups” (Smock 2002:ix).

Interreligious Dialogue has adopted an approach that aims at the understanding of difference, facilitating teamwork to make the world a better place, and fostering tolerance through sharing emotions (see Swidler, Duran & Firestone 2007:2). Understanding one another and seeking the betterment of the world requires a “hermeneutical effort” (Cornille 2013:xiii). Accepting differences and embracing diversity is challenging, especially if personal identity and religious identity intersect.

In order for complex global issues to be solved, the religions from around the world have a contribution to make. Issues such as violence against women and children, the problem of poverty, issues of terrorism, crime and the destruction of the earth and its natural resources affect a multitude of lives. Creation cannot be abused or taken for granted, but should be managed responsibly. Creation consists of “all beings, all things, the ones we see and the ones we do not” (Fox 1991:7). This means that all people are to take care of not only humanity, but also nature. This perspective on life involves that all of creation is interdependent. Personal well-being and the welfare of others are intricately related. This requires a “respect for the community of living beings, for people, animals and plants and for the preservation of the earth, the air, water and soul” (Küng & Kuschel 2006:14).

Interreligious dialogue emphasises a value-centred life. The values of “mutual respect, understanding and cooperation” are paramount for the success of the movement (Küng & Kuschel 2006:9). Rather than seeking to win arguments, humility and “hospitality to the truth of another” are required (Cornille 2013:xiii). Persons who represent a specific religion at the International Association for Religious Freedom (IARF) is like a religious diplomat who is there to represent others. The aim is to bring peace and unity. This involves a “concillary and constructive attitude” (Cornille 2013:xii).

Comparative Theology and Interreligious Dialogue form two sides of the same coin: the academic and theoretical side on the one hand and the practical and spiritual side

on the other hand. Comparative Theology as a field of study requires engaging with a broad range of theological issues, including the commitments of faith communities, their Scriptures, traditions, practices, values and beliefs (see Clooney 2010:10; cf. Clooney 2013:52). Interreligious Dialogue involves interacting with people who are living out their faith in an authentic way and are applying their traditions to practical life with wisdom (see Clooney 2010:10; cf. Clooney 2013:53). Comparative studies aim at a deeper understanding of the other, which can make living together successfully in practice a reality.

For dialogue to be successful, "incommensurability" is to be avoided and common ground is to be established and developed (Muck 2011:213). Jesus' conversation with the Samaritan woman at the well (see John 4) is an example of successful communication. Instead of stating his point and giving his own perspective immediately, Jesus first listens to her, establishes common ground and genuinely considers what she says (see Muck 2011:213). Interreligious Dialogue also involves discernment given by the Spirit (see Muck 2011:213). Being Spirit-led contributes to personal growth. It can open a person's eyes to viewpoints other than their own that would maybe never have been considered.

Authentic dialogue is only possible where there are values and attitudes such as humility, respect, tolerance, a willingness to understand and love. Though a wealth of knowledge can to be gained from meaningful dialogue with people from other religious groups, it takes time. To learn about another religion involves both patience and a teachable attitude. It involves seeing the bigger picture, that all are created by God and are part of humanity as a whole. For example, differences between Islam and Christianity include that the one group adheres to the Qur'an as their authority whereas for the others Jesus is central. However, both can acknowledge that their religion is from God and they can be united in their practical obedience (Madigan 2013:253). This is an example of how Interreligious Dialogue can contribute towards authenticity when it comes to holiness in faith practice. Authenticity in interfaith dialogue requires acknowledging ones own limitations. Though this makes one vulnerable, it also opens up opportunities to draw closer to one another in a bid to alleviate the problems of the world (Madigan 2013:259). The more inroads are made into developing an authentic

Christian-Muslim dialogue, the greater the peace in this world can be. As Christianity and Islam continue to grow rapidly, there is an increased need for these two groups to become at least more tolerant of one another.

In this world which is becoming “increasingly interconnected and interdependent”, the struggle for natural resources is escalating (Volf 2011:1). Conflicts occur over natural resources, such as that of oil, or over what a group regards as spiritual or holy things (Volf 2011:3-4). All of this challenges unity. Caring about the common good of people and the sanctity of life therefore becomes the by-product of effective interreligious dialogue.

Pope Francis who is known for his inclusive approach, does not shy away from theological truths that are central to Christianity and that could cause division in interreligious dialogue, but rather reinterprets them. Pope Francis describes the gospel as upholding the dignity of *all* people, because in God becoming human, God shows that *all* of humanity is acceptable in God’s sight (see Pope Francis 2013:126). Therefore, Jesus as God in human form, has universal significance and offers freedom to *all* of humanity. The cross also has a liberating effect for *all*. Jesus’ death demonstrates the love that God has for *all* people. This not only unites people with God but also with one another (see Pope Francis 2013:126). The Holy Spirit liberates humanity and restores “divine communion” as part of the Holy Trinity (see Pope Francis 2013:126). Christian believers whose lives are based on this relational rather than individual identity, can contribute positively towards social good in society. If all people are regarded with dignity, if believers spread the gospel not only through words but more through action, then interreligious dialogue can have a greater impact.

Pope Francis is also known for the approach of *mercy for all*. According to him, the Church “does not reject” any person (Pope Francis 2016:8). God does, however, want people to acknowledge their dependence on God. A factor of unity in Interreligious Dialogue is that all acknowledge their dependence on a Higher Power and have some insight into their own weaknesses and need for spiritual input. For Pope Francis, the theme of mercy is central to his teaching. In his work, *The name of God is mercy* (2016), he describes the task of the church in the current time as turning a “motherly face to a humanity that is wounded” (Pope Francis 2016:6).

Mercy is “the divine attitude that embraces” (Pope Francis 2016:8). Mercy is an attitude that all Christian believers ought to adopt, not only towards one another but also to those outside the Christian faith. Through mercy the barriers of an exclusivist approach towards holiness in faith practice can be broken down. Modelling Jesus’ attitude towards those within and outside of the Christian community can be seen as authentic holy living. It is a wholesome and non-discriminatory approach to others and the world.

There are many challenges and criticisms with regards to Interreligious Dialogue. This is largely due to the complexity of the issues involved. In principle, the values of this dialogue are good, but in practice they are difficult to apply. One challenge is when a minority group is not given sufficient space by the majority group for “fear of syncretism” (Grung 2011:27). This results in inequality and a lack of cooperation and respect, which are values to which the organisation subscribes. These are the values that should contribute towards creating an authentic holistic community, but if they are not lived out in practice the goal is not reached. Prevalent issues such as “freedom of speech and equal rights” for sexual minorities, for instance, are regarded by some as “irrelevant Western values” (Grung 2011:27). Feminist perspectives are also not fairly considered in the Interreligious Dialogue discussions (see Grung 2011:28-29). There is “risk of reproducing dichotomies” between the majority and minority and religious men and religious women (Grung 2011:32). These remain barriers to overcome if the dialogue is to be effective. Values of humility, respect and cooperation are important for building bridges across these divides and thereby avoiding a power struggle.

The exclusivist claims of Christian orthodoxy, such as seeing Jesus as “the only way” to God, are an impediment to building bridges between the different religions. This is why Christian believers often struggle to reach out to other religions (see Jn 14:6; Acts 4:12). The idea that a person was either reconciled with God through Jesus or is “without Jesus” and therefore in a state of hostility with God, amounts to what Fox & Townsend (2011:4) call “the unhelpful and often toxic baggage of religiosity”. Because of these problems core issues such as salvation and the cross, the church, eschatology, heaven and hell, and the Holy Spirit are often put on the

"back-burner" in conversations with other religions. A conservative reaction to this is voiced by Pollitt (1996:7, 16), for example, who sees the shying away from core Christian values as "an expression of the spirit of the Antichrist" that is controlled by "the activity of Satan". According to the orthodox view, the Holy Spirit only lives in and enlivens Christian believers and makes people holy through their acceptance of Jesus' death on the cross and resurrection from the dead. Interreligious Dialogue and equivalent movements are therefore deemed futile because only "genuine Christians who have the Spirit" in them can lead a truly spiritual life of holiness. There is also the criticism that conversation with others, such as through Interreligious Dialogue, compromises the "power and potency" of Scripture (DeRuvo & Richards 2012:6). In the discussion about a closer relationship between Christianity and Islam, some worry that it would be Christianity that is asked to change its identity and take on the form of a cult that is less than Christianity (DeRuvo & Richards 2012:8). Any attempt to merge Christianity with another religion is, from this perspective, not only anti-biblical, but goes against what Jesus said and stood for (DeRuvo & Richards 2012:8).

Despite these criticisms and the challenges that are faced by the attempt at Interreligious Dialogue, this conversation does have a contribution to make towards living out holiness in faith practice in today's world. The contribution is similar to that of the Emerging Church, though the scope is more global. The Emerging Church acknowledges the postmodern paradigm and also accepts that living in a post-Christian society requires an adaptation regarding how Christianity is conveyed. A similarity between the Emerging Church Movement and Interreligious Dialogue is that both bring people from different faiths and traditions together in order for them to contribute together to what is socially beneficial and for the betterment of society. This is *faith practice*. Such a holistic effort for social justice and mercy towards the oppressed leads to reconciliation and wholeness for all. This is holy living in the practical every-day life of today. It can be make a difference in this world. Together humanity can contribute to integration, reconciliation and the development of society.

With the many global issues and concerns, global solutions should be found through social action (see Knitter 2013:141) that decreases human suffering (Knitter

2013:141). Although religions differ in beliefs, they can unite to improve the condition of the world. Most people in the global world are religious. Most religions focus on transformation and the betterment in society. Successful dialogue can make a significant contribution to help suffering people find hope and wholeness. Therefore, holiness in faith practice from an interreligious perspective means taking a dynamic approach towards complex and particular problems, rather than offering general guidance regarding localised issues. Authentic holiness in faith practice can contribute towards the greater good. Rather than deny brokenness, Interreligious Dialogue aims to bring healing. Holiness in faith practice can therefore be lived out more inclusively through seeking solutions to global problems and taking steps towards restoring humanity to a higher level of dignity. This can be done through utilising aspects of different religions that can contribute towards a more whole, integrated society. This approach towards wholeness contributes towards a more holy world, where holiness is holistic and the Creator works through people to restore creation.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

This study on holiness in the history of faith practice, has shown that, through the different phases of history, the practice of holiness has taken different forms, but has remained relevant up to the present time. Holiness and related concepts such as sanctification have been central to revolutionary change such as the Protestant Reformation and the Wesleyan revival. In these movements prominent men and women took the lead to make their vision of holiness in faith practice accessible to ordinary people. The focus of this study being on holiness in the Wesleyan tradition, this was demonstrated in the evolution of the idea of Christian perfection and how it was explained through sermons, tracts, books, hymns and testimonies. The subsequent Holiness Movement with leaders such as Phoebe Palmer and Hannah Whitall Smith also focused on making holiness and religious devotion practical for believers. Their publications were not academic treatises, but rather books on faith practice that were accessible to people of all walks of life. Palmer and Smith were not highly educated theologians, but were intent on conveying the message of holiness in such a way as to be grasped by ordinary people.

Proponents of holiness traditions before and after Wesley and the Holiness Movement, identified a particular aspect that, for them, constituted the core of what holy living in practice was about. They devoted their life's work to explaining it and teaching others how to put it into practice in their everyday lives. For instance,

Finney, in the Holiness Tradition, developed his "new measures" for a life of holiness in practice. Earlier in history proponents of Ascetic spirituality practised self-denial and self-discipline in pursuit of holy living. Following their heritage the New Monastic Movement centuries later identified the need for community as a crucial aspect of holiness. For them, building an authentic community was the way to maintain the relevance of holy living in today's world. This was the focus of their pursuit of holiness in faith practice. For the Emerging Church Movement the institutionalised church had lost its relevance and was not reaching marginalised people – those who are of particular importance in the gospel of Jesus Christ – effectively. This movement

regards authenticity as central to maintaining holiness. Authenticity can be seen and experienced through living a life modelled on Jesus' example. This would include reaching the marginalised of society and building bridges across the many divisions that exist among people. This trajectory of the idea of holiness or sanctification through history shows that, though an ancient idea which can seem outdated and archaic to some, holy living in itself is not irrelevant for today. Quite the opposite. Living in right relationship with God and others has always been and still remains the focal point of the gospel message. How to live in right relationship with God has been defined and explained differently throughout history and has been adapted to suit different contexts.

Where holiness is practised in an authentic manner, it can led to the transformation of communities and individuals on various levels. Holy living has an impact on people's lives. This is evidenced by the legacy of holiness traditions from different eras and the changed lives throughout history that have been the result of this legacy. An example of individual and social transformation the was the consequence of the holiness legacy is the Azusa Street Revival where people from various backgrounds and ethnic groups were brought together. Through the power of the Holy Spirit this holiness practice of bridging over deeply entrenched social divides changed many lives and pioneered a new direction in the social consciousness of people. The Pentecostal legacy of this spiritual revolution has reached many parts of the world and features prominently on television channels such as the Faith Network through which people continue to grow in holiness today.

The Puritans, although referred to as "dissenters" because of their divergence from the mainline church, focused on holiness in faith practice specifically in family life. One of the ways of keeping families close to God was through devotional reading. The Puritan legacy is an early indication of what is becoming increasingly clear in the spirituality of the people of today, namely that holiness is not confined to institutionalised churches. The quality of holiness or an authentic spiritual life as articulated and witnessed to in the lives of devoted people through history has made an impact on the lives of individuals and communities and continues to change people's lives today.

This study has shown that holiness is not one-dimensional, but takes on many different forms as it evolves over time and is tailored to different eras and cultures.
The idea of holiness has evolved from “being set apart for God and from corruption in the world”, to being authentic in community with others, also with those from different denominations and religions. Holiness is expounded in theological thought on an abstract level and is also experienced in small everyday practices. The aim is to live right before God and to seek to understand, accept and love others, whatever the differences may be. Holiness is complex. It has been described and applied in many ways. In these descriptions and applications connections are even made with qualities that, at first glance, appear to be different or even contradictory to the idea of holiness. Connection are made with, for instance, power, love and dialogue. This diverges entirely from “being set apart” from the world. In the Wesleyan and Holiness Tradition descriptions such as “entire sanctification”, “sinless perfection”, “perfect love”, “relational holiness”, “renovating holiness” were used. The complexity of the idea of holiness is a reason why it has been so widely misunderstood. Finding an apt description of what holiness is, is challenging because holiness in faith practice takes on a great variety of features depending on the context and era in history in which it is practised. Holiness is therefore dynamic practice rather than a stagnant dogma. It evolves and develops as time goes on.

In history the faith practice of holiness has provided comfort and solutions for people who experienced difficult times. Martin Luther in the sixteenth century, for example, brought the comfort of the gospel message to marginalised people who were exploited by the institutionalized church. His model of holiness, justification by grace through faith, communicated to people that they were accepted by God not on account of their works, but because of God’s grace. To that grace they could then respond wholeheartely with faith. Therefore, they did not need be absolved by their priests. They could simply have faith in the redemption granted through Christ.

North American theologian, Jonathan Edwards, in the eighteenth century lived in an era when rationalistic thought was prevalent and religion was more about cognitive ascent to theological precepts than about experience and practice. This cognitive bias contributed to the inception of the Pentecostal movement. Edwards and the

Pentecostal spirituality of the time emphasised the impact and power of the Holy Spirit on people's lives.

In the scientific and technological world of today with its many political and human rights issues, many people are sceptical of the relevance of religion and spirituality. The Interreligious Dialogue Movement focuses on the alleviation of poverty, and eradicating human trafficking and xenophobia as their way of practising holiness. Holiness in faith practice is about receiving the power of the Holy Spirit in order to oppose corrupt practices in church and community. It is about following Jesus' example in order to reinforce virtuous lives and contribute towards solutions to global issues.

The idea of holiness can be found in various forms in Scripture. It has also formed the subject of theological discourse. The study has shown, however, that throughout history holiness has functioned in a dynamic way in various spiritualities and movements, not only as a theological idea, but also as a dynamic social practice. Without practice, holiness remains an abstract idea or becomes a doctrinal regulation which leads to self-righteousness, arrogance and pride. However, when it is seen as a relational dynamic centered on love, as Wynkoop has emphasised, the holiness put into practice has the potential to change lives and contribute towards revival and renewal of people and communities.

In contemporary theologies that focus on the notion of holiness some, like Miroslav Volf, bring Scripture and the real life issues of society into dialogue in a hermeneutical endeavour of understanding. Pope Francis brings tradition and Scripture into dialogue in order to explain what holy living would mean in the contemporary global society. Others, such as the Emerging Church Movement (ECM), place less emphasis on Christian Scriptures. This movement does not refer to holiness or Christian living in a direct way. Jesus is seen as an example of love. The Interreligious Dialogue Movement brings different religions and their spiritual insights into dialogue by means of a Comparative Theology. Commonalities in religions and their scriptures are sought. Holiness is not a central idea to either the ECM or the Interreligious Dialogue Movement. Their focus is conversation and human interaction in a search for common ground. Holiness lies indirectly in unity, peace and understanding among people.

Holiness is not mentioned expressly, but is practiced and applied nonetheless in practical and sometimes more obscure ways.

As it has been accused in the past, holiness can have the connotation of being sterile, dull, boring and perhaps even passive and alien to the real world. This becomes even more of a problem if holiness is seen as something that is unattainable for ordinary people and that is reserved for especially pious people. However, holiness in faith practice need not be lifeless or tiresome. The spiritualities that have been perused in this study are all mission-centred and feature the courage of spiritually motivated individuals to protest against what is perceived as wrong or unjust and take a stand for the good of humanity. This is a dynamic, active and socially involved orientation.

Holiness as a doctrine and holiness in faith practice can be seen as different and even contrasting. This too is not necessarily the case. Holiness as doctrine can remain abstract and alien to the world. However, this abstract enterprise can have the power to transformed people's thinking. This was the case with Wesley who was inwardly changed after having read Luther's preface on the Book of Romans. Inward change often leads to change or transformation in practice. Holiness in faith practice is what motivated people in history and up to the present to action. Some gave up their comfortable lifestyle and devoted their lives to service. Others put aside their personal prejudices in order to better understand "the other", including people of other religions. Holiness of life can bring people to put others before themselves, to engage in global issues and try and make the world a better place. These goals transcend personal inadequacies. Collectively people seek solutions for the problems of the world. The quality of holiness links to values such as courage and justice. Courage is needed to live bravely in a world in where there is much anxiety, fear and horror. Justice is needed in order to uphold the rights and dignity of women, people who are poverty stricken and other vulnerable and oppressed people who find themselves on the margins of society.

Holiness in faith practice can lead to real change that goes beyond being merely emotive. While moralism, religiosity, self-righteousness, pride and arrogance can be disguised as holiness, the faith practice of authentic holiness is transformative. It contributes towards people taking a stance for what is right, even at the cost of their

time and energies. Holiness in faith practice is outwardly focused, seeks to meet other people's needs and therefore counteracts the individualism and narcissism that are so prevalent in many contemporary societies. Holiness that is based on love, would want all people to reach their fullest potential. That was the focus of Hannah Whitall Smith. People who practise holiness are not content with merely "being saved", they continue to grow in sanctification and service to God and others on a moral, social and political level. This was the focus of Finney's work. Those who embrace holiness as contemplative spirituality aim to living meaningfully and in authentic community with a deep respect for all of creation. Hans Küng and the New Monastics are proponents of this approach.

All the various forms, manifestations and emphases of holiness in faith practice have one common core, namely devotion to God. Those who seek to devote themselves to God wholeheartedly in holiness are want God's will to be done on earth as in heaven. This is not accomplished by implementing harsh measures or severe restrictions in an attempt to live a "holy" life. This is rather accomplished, especially in today's world, by building bridges over denominational boundaries, reaching out to other religions and networking with people who are different. Raimon Panikkar is an example of someone who, with his insider experience of different religions, aims to forge unity among people. Holiness in faith practice is pragmatic and not dogmatic. It is therefore dynamic and contextualised, not austere and inflexible. Devotion to God is the practice of holiness which involves one's entire lifestyle. According to Scripture, believers are given a new identity, are freed from the consequences of the human condition through forgiveness and sanctification.

Holiness in faith practice has evolved through the ages. It has become increasingly inclusive. This is evident from Scripture, throughout history and also in today's postmodern world and globalised society. Today holiness in faith practice can take on many forms, such as enhancing relational connections, expressing spirituality in a variety of ways, better understanding and including the social marginalised, and building common ground where religious differences exist.

Holiness in faith practice can be expressed today in dynamic ways, thereby enhancing faith and humanity through loving relationships. Holiness as devoted service to God and God's creation, could contribute toward positive holistic change.

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