

A DIALOGUE BETWEEN WESLEY AND CONFUCIUS ON THE THEME OF SANCTIFICATION¹

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Introduction

How can a man live a holy life in this world? This seemingly simple question was of supreme interest to John Wesley (1703-91) who was an Anglican priest in the eighteenth century and a "*homo unius libri*" (a man of one Book). The theme of sanctification is the consistent teaching of the Old and New Testament of the Bible, and naturally, it was the focal teaching of Wesley, for the Bible was the "*sola*" authority of his life and ministry as well as theology.

Sanctification has also been one of the prime goals of education and ethics in Confucian schools and society since Confucius (551-479 B.C.). The Confucian culture has remained predominant not only in China, the cradle of Confucianism, but also in many other Asian countries, including Japan and Korea which socially and economically have been rapidly Westernized. While these countries have changed in many dimensions of life in modern times more than in any period of their history, the people are still accustomed to think, speak and behave in the Confucian way of life.

How, then, can Wesley's "gospel" of holiness be preached to people living in a culture which has been dominantly influenced by Confucian "ethics" of holiness? The question is important to an Asian Christian minister who regards John Wesley as his theological and spiritual teacher. This paper has been prepared to address the issue in the context of Christian ministry and mission.²

Wesley's Teachings on Sanctification

The biblical metaphor for the image of God is central to understanding Wesley's ideas about holiness and humanity as well as salvation.³ Therefore, we employ this metaphor to explore Wesley's concept of sanctification from an anthropological point of view rather than from a hamartological perspective which usually focuses on "personal holiness" as indicated in *John Wesley's Concept of Perfection* by Leo George Cox⁴ and *Wesley and Sanctification* by Harald Lindstrom.⁵ We also omit addressing a socio-ethical perspective which normally stresses "social holiness" as discussed in *John Wesley's Social Ethics* by Manfred Marquardt⁶ and *Sanctification and*

¹ Most of the first and second chapter of this paper was read at the World Methodist Society Conference, in Rome, Italy, in 1994. And this was read at Asia Pacific Region Theology Conference of the Church of the Nazarene in 2003.

² The paper relies mainly on primary references from both Wesley and Confucius, even though secondary sources are sometimes used. The theme of sanctification is approached from an anthropological perspective rather than religious, philosophical, social or ethical one. It is not because the other themes are less important but because the first one is basic to dealing with the others and fundamental to attempt a dialogue between Wesley and Confucius on the theme of sanctification for the effective ministry of the Church of the Nazarene in an Asian context. Our doctrine of sanctification should be treated both academically and spiritually from religious, philosophical, social, ethical, and psychological as well as theological perspectives to be comprehensively understood, spiritually experienced, ethically lived and psychologically sound in an Asian context and culture.

³ Albert Outler makes this point clear when he comments on the phrase, the image of God, in Wesley's sermon, "Salvation by Faith," by saying: "This metaphor from Gen. 1:27 is the basic one on Wesley's anthropology. . . . The restoration of our corrupted and disabled 'image' to its pristine capacity is, indeed, the goal of Wesley's *ordo salutis*." John Wesley, *The Works of John Wesley*, ed. Albert C. Outler (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1987) I. 117-18. Hereafter it will be abbreviated as WJW. According to Wesley, the image of God consists of three dimensions---the natural, moral and political image. This paper deals with only the first two, for when a particular issue of sanctification is examined from an anthropological perspective, the political aspect seems non-essential in comparison with the other two images.

⁴ Leo George Cox, *John Wesley's Concept of Perfection* (Kansa City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1964).

⁵ Harald Lindstrom, *Wesley and Sanctification*, Grand Rapids: Francis Asbury Press, 1980.

⁶ Manfred Marquardt, *John Wesley's Social Ethics*, Nashville: Abingdon, 1992.

Liberation edited by Theodore Runyon.⁷ Furthermore, in this section, sanctification will be briefly reviewed under three stages--the primitive, fallen and restored one, for each stage shows sanctification's distinctive nature, and we can thus gain a holistic picture of it.

Sanctification in the Primitive Stage

In his sermon, "On the Fall of Man" (WJW, II. 6), Wesley compared the necessity of "holiness" in humanity to "the stock of a tree." In the same sermon, he affirmed that holiness in humanity is God's enthusiasm toward humanity so that He endowed the first humans, Adam and Eve, with three faculties of the natural image--understanding, will, and, especially, liberty.⁸ When God created the first humans, He intended them to be capable of "virtue or holiness." The uniqueness of humanity, for Wesley, is not seen in the fact that humans are endowed with the three faculties, for they are given even to the other creatures to some degree.⁹ Instead, the dignity of humanity is found in the fact that only humanity can become like God who is holy.¹⁰ Adam and Eve rightly exercised the three faculties to have a perfect relationship with God so that they were holy and happy.¹¹

However, Wesley said, the ground for the holiness in humanity was not the natural image of God which was implanted in it, but the moral image or "righteousness and holiness."¹² If the natural

⁷ Theodore Runyon, *Sanctification and Liberation*, Nashville: Abingdon, 1981.

⁸ Wesley made it clear that the main reason why God endowed Adam and Eve with these three faculties was to help them retain their holy state: "God did not make him mere matter, a piece of senseless, unintelligent clay, but a spirit like himself (although clothed with a material vehicle). As such he was endued with understanding, with a will, including various affections, and with liberty, a power of using them in a right or wrong manner, of choosing will would have been to any purpose; for he must have been as incapable of virtue or holiness as the stock of a tree." "On the Fall of Man," WJW, II.6. It is worth noting that Wesley distinguished between the two faculties, "liberty" and "will," unlike Augustine and Gregory of Nyssa who were the first Christian anthropologists in the Latin Western and the Greek Eastern Christian tradition respectively. For Wesley, "will" was basically related to the attributes of emotion rather than the conventional understanding of "free-will." He primarily meant a faculty of "exerting itself in various affections and passions," rather than "a power of choice" which is the typical function of liberty. "The General Deliverance," WJW, I.1 & I.4. If "will" is a power of self-disposition of the human affections or heart, "liberty" is "a power of self-determination" of the human mind. "What is Man? Psalm 8:4," WJW, 11. Cf: "The Repentance of Believers," WJW, I.4. Thus, Wesley said, the two faculties, "liberty" and "will," were conventionally misunderstood as interchangeable synonyms: "This liberty is very frequently confounded with the will, but is of a very different nature. Neither is it a property of the will, but a distinct property of the soul, . . ." "What is Man? Psalm 8:4," WJW, 11.

⁹ Wesley described the original state of the brute creatures as having the three faculties as follows: "Again: they [the brute creatures] were endued with a degree of understanding . . . They had also a will, including various passions . . . And they had liberty, a power of choice, a degree of which is still found in every living creatures." "The General Deliverance," WJW, I.4.

¹⁰ Wesley found the specific difference between humanity and the brute creatures in its unique relationship with God on the basis of its unique capability of Him: "What then makes the barrier between men and brutes? . . . It is this: man is capable of God, the inferior creatures are not. . . This gulf which they cannot pass over. And as a loving obedience to God was the perfection of men, so a loving obedience to man was the perfection of brutes." "The General Deliverance," WJW, I. 5.

¹¹ In his sermon, "The End of Christ's Coming" (WJW, I.7), Wesley wrote: "As his [Adam's] understanding was without blemish, perfect in its kind, so were all his affections. They were all set right, and duly exercised on their proper objects. And as a free agent he steadily chose whatever was good, according to the direction of his understanding. In so doing he was unspeakably happy, dwelling in God and God in him, having an uninterrupted fellowship with the Father and the Son through the eternal spirit; and the continual testimony of his conscience that all his ways were good and acceptable to God." As indicated above, for Wesley, holiness and happiness are twin sisters which cannot be separated as an ultimate goal of God's creation of humanity or a final purpose of the existence of humanity in this world.

¹² For Wesley, the moral image is nothing other than "righteousness and holiness": "God created Adam not only in His natural but likewise in His own moral image. He created him not only in knowledge, but also in righteousness and true holiness." "The End of Christ's Coming," WJW, I.7.

image, by which humans are spiritual beings, consists of a triple faculty of the human spirit to "do"--to understand, to will, and to choose God, the moral image, by which humans are moral beings, is nothing other than the substance of the human spirit to "be"--to be holy and righteous.¹³ Thus, the original humanity was substantially holy, not because of "doing" the three faculties of the natural image to "do," but because of "being" full of the moral image of God who is holy by nature.¹⁴

Sanctification in the Fallen Stage

According to Wesley, Adam, unlike Eve,¹⁵ deliberately misused his liberty through his disposition to pride which is the "root of that grand work of the devil."¹⁶ Adam freely preferred evil to good and attempted to find happiness apart from God.¹⁷ Immediately after Adam fell into evil, he completely lost the moral image of God and was no longer righteous and holy.¹⁸ By his disobedience against the "positive law" and the "law of love,"¹⁹ Adam became completely corrupted and sinful. He lost both his holiness and, consequently, his happiness.²⁰

¹³ Precisely speaking, for Wesley, the moral image is not a faculty or power in itself, but a moral substance of humanity. By this moral image implanted in humanity, the spiritual relationship between God and humanity is possible. In this light, the prime meaning of the moral image of God seems to be substantial rather than relational.

¹⁴ However, it does not mean that the moral image is independent from the natural image. Instead, for Wesley, the holiness of the moral image is inseparably related to the faculties of the natural image, just as the fruit is related to the tree. Thus, he affirmed that Adam and Eve were created in the moral image of God because of which humans are moral beings, and exercised the three faculties of the natural image because of which humans are spiritual beings, so that they remained a "little lower than the angels," and "perfect, angel, divine." "The One Thing Needful," WJW, I.2.

¹⁵ "The End of Christ's Coming," WJW, I.9.

¹⁶ "The End of Christ's Coming," WJW, III.2. According to Wesley's description of Eve's Fall, it was a consequence of a series of inner dispositions against God through unbelief, self-will, pride, and worldly pleasure. "The One Thing Needful," WJW, I.9. While Wesley, like Augustine, regarded pride as the primary root of the Fall, the other three characteristics appear throughout his sermons as poison to holy life. According to him, entire sanctification is nothing other than being entirely free from these four dispositions against God.

¹⁷ "On the Fall of Man," II.6.

¹⁸ Here is a brief description concerning the cause and effect of Adam's loss of the moral image: "She [Eve] then 'gave to her husband, and he did eat'. And 'in that day' yea, that moment, he 'died'. The life of God was extinguished in his soul. The glory departed from him. He lost the whole moral image of God, righteousness and true holiness. He was unholy; he was unhappy; he was full of sin, full of guilt and tormenting fears." "The End of Christ's Coming," WJW, I.10.

¹⁹ It is worth noting that these two kinds of laws are important to understanding Wesley's account of the Fall as well as theological issues like God's nature, the biblical concept of the first law, the goal of human existence, etc. According to Wesley, God gave Adam a "positive law" to prohibit him eating the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. "Justification by Faith," WJW, I.3. The primary reason for the "positive law" was not to establish a juridical ground to punish him when he disobeyed the law of love. Instead, it was given to Adam "To secure him from transgressing this sole command." "The image of God," WJW, II. Wesley's interpretation of this first law of God not as a "negative" but a "positive" law implies not only his positive view of the divine commandment, but also his emphasis on the mercy of God, without losing His justice, which is central to his ideas about the restoration of fallen humanity. With respect to the nature of the "law of love," i.e., the obligation of humanity to obey and love God, Wesley emphasized that its final goal is the fulfillment of "holiness and happiness" which are twin themes central to the whole system of his ideas about sanctification: "God required an obedience perfect in all its parts, entire and wanting nothing, as the condition of his eternal continuance in the holiness and happiness wherein he was created." "The Righteousness of Faith," WJW, I.1; Cf. "Justification by Faith," WJW, I.3; "The Love of God," WJW, IV.2.

²⁰ Stressing the fact that Adam willfully broke God's "positive law" not to eat the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, Wesley interpreted Adam's Fall as moral evil. "The Promise of Understanding," WJW, II.1. He went on to say that Adam could not but bring "penal evil, or punishment" which cannot possibly befall anyone unless one willingly embraces sin by choosing it.

By the Fall, Wesley affirmed, Adam lost also the three faculties of the natural image of God. The "understanding" of fallen humanity is too darkened to discern the spiritual aspects of God and the sinful condition of humanity.²¹ The faculty of the "will" of the natural image is so perverted that it is full of the pleasures of the world.²² Fallen humanity is unable to will to love God and pursue the heavenly affections. Since the faculties of "understanding" and "will" are perverted, the faculty of liberty is too powerless to choose what is true and good.²³ Fallen humanity is still free, and yet, it is free from holiness.

All these radical changes took place not only in Adam and Eve but also in the entire human race, for they were "in Adam" when he preferred evil to good.²⁴ "Natural humanity"²⁵ or humanity in the fallen stage is no longer holy because of the inherited sin.²⁶ Fallen humanity which has lost the image of God must be sanctified to recover the primitive holiness.

Sanctification in the Restored Stage

For Wesley, there is only "one thing now needful" for fallen humanity. That is, "to re-exchange the image of Satan for the image of God."²⁷ While strongly affirming the "universal wickedness" of fallen humanity, Wesley argued that fallen humanity may now attain both a higher degree of holiness and a greater happiness than would have been possible if Adam had not sinned.²⁸ With

²¹ Wesley described the faculty of understanding in the fallen stage as completely blind so far as its spiritual condition is concerned: "His [Adam's] spiritual senses are not awake; they discern neither spiritually good nor evil. The eyes of his understanding are closed; . . . Hence, having no inlets for the knowledge of spiritual things, all the avenues of his soul being shut up, he is in gross, stupid ignorance of whatever he is most concerned to know." "The Spirit of Bondage and of Adoption," WJW, I.1; Cf. I.4.

²² "The Spirit of Bondage and of Adoption," WJW, I.5.

²³ Wesley regarded as dreams the freedom that natural humanity believes to have: "It is not surprising if one in such circumstances as these, dozed with the opiates of flattery and sin, should imagine, among his other waking dreams, that he walk in great liberty." "The Spirit of Bondage and of Adoption," WJW, I.6.

²⁴ Wesley is Pauline in his affirmation of universal sinfulness of humanity "in" Adam: "Adam, in whom all mankind were then contained, freely preferred evil to good. . . . And, 'in Adam all died.' He entitled all his posterity to error, guilt, sorrow, fear, pain, diseases, and death" "On the Fall of Man," WJW, II.6. For Wesley's brief but clear account of the origin of sin, see his sermon, "The End of Christ's Coming," WJW, I.8. How, then, did such a thing take place, which was completely *contra* to God's intention that Adam and Eve had been originally created to be like God? In responding to this question, Wesley admitted that this problem of evil cannot be searched out with certainty by human understanding: "And first, we cannot say why God suffered evil to have a place in his creation: why he, who is so infinitely good himself, who made all things 'very good,' and who rejoices in the good of all his creatures, permitted what is so entirely contrary to his own nature, and so destructive of his noblest work. 'Why are sin and its attendant pain in the world?' has been a question ever since the world began; and the world will probably end before human understandings have answered it with any certainty." "The Promise of Understanding," WJW, II.1. But he attempted to answer that question in terms of the "positive law" and the "law of love" as briefly mentioned above.

²⁵ Wesley classified humankind after the Fall into three categories--natural humanity, legal humanity, and evangelical humanity. "The Spirit of Bondage and of Adoption," WJW, I-IV, 4. This triple categorization of humanity in this life is central to understanding Wesley's account of the process for fallen humanity to be sanctified or to become perfect. However, it is worth noting that each of the three stages is not totally independent of the other two.

²⁶ "The Imperfection of Human Knowledge," WJW, III.1. Here Wesley rhetorically asked about the doctrine of the original sin: "Why is it then that a majority of mankind are, so far we can judge, cut off from all means, all possibility of holiness, even from their mother's womb?"

²⁷ "The One Thing Needful," WJW, I.5.

²⁸ "On the Fall of Man," WJW, II.10. In another place, Wesley stressed this positive aspect of the Fall as follows: "And, first, mankind in general have gained by the fall of Adam a capacity of attaining more holiness and happiness on earth than it would have been possible for them to attain if Adam had not fallen." "God's Love to Fallen Man," WJW, I.1. Furthermore, Wesley described the Fall from a positive view in terms of God's attributes and humanity's holiness and happiness: "This (Adam's abusing liberty and the entrance of pain and death into the world) God permitted in mercy, by bestowing on all who would receive it an infinitely greater happiness than they could possibly have attained if Adam had not fallen." "God's Love to Fallen

respect to the possibility of restoration of the lost image of God, Wesley firmly taught "universal holiness."²⁹ He was so convinced of the triune works of God that he was optimistic about the possibility of restoration of the primitive holiness.³⁰

First, then, how can "natural humanity" be sanctified? Wesley emphasized that restoration of the image of God is possible only by grace. Salvation "begins" with "prevenient grace,"³¹ which is universal in the sense that it is given "free in all" and "free for all."³² It is carried on by "convincing grace,"³³ and the image of God once lost is fully restored by "sanctifying grace" by which God's children are enabled to give Him "their whole heart."³⁴ According to Wesley, there must be a second instantaneous change, by which spiritually regenerated humanity is sanctified.³⁵ Thus, the grace of God is a unique ground for the restoration of the primitive holiness, "inward holiness" or "entire sanctification"³⁶ (or the full restoration of the image of God), which is fulfilled both gradually and instantaneously by the works of preventing, justifying and sanctifying grace.

What, then, is the nature of restored sanctification? From the standpoint of the biblical metaphor of the image, the first distinguishing mark of sanctification is the restoration of the moral image in terms of perfect purity of the human heart.³⁷ For Wesley, sanctification, in a broad sense, begins with regeneration. Then the spiritually re-born humanity grows to be "wholly" cleansed even from "inward sin" which remains in the heart of the regenerated.³⁸ While admitting that fallen humanity

Man," WJW, II.15.

²⁹ "Dives and Lazarus," WJW, III.1.

³⁰ As indicated in his early sermon, "The One Thing Needful" (1734), Wesley's emphasis on the necessity of restoration of the original humanity is grounded in the trinitarian works of God. In this sermon, he stressed three divine works as foundation for the restoration of the primitive holiness: God's creation of humanity in His image could not be in vain; the atonement of Jesus Christ is for the entire humankind; and the work of the Holy Spirit restores the image of God.

³¹ "On Working Out Our Own Salvation," WJW, III.1.

³² Wesley affirmed that the prevenient or preventing grace is universal: "No man living is entirely destitute of what is vulgarly called 'natural conscience'. But this is not natural; it is more properly termed 'prevenient grace.'" "On Working Out Our Own Salvation," III.4. Cf. "Free Grace" in which Wesley affirmed that grace is "free in all" in the sense that "It does not depend upon any power or merit in man," and that grace is "free for all" by refuting the doctrine of "predestination."

³³ "On Working Out Our Own Salvation," WJW, III.1. Wesley employed the biblical term "repentance" in order to explain the nature and function of his own theological term "convincing grace." If "natural man" becomes "legal man" by prevenient grace," the "legal man" becomes "man under grace" or "a baby in Christ" by "convincing grace," through repentance of his past sins. For Wesley, the first transformation of humanity was a "partial change," by which he meant the inner change of fallen humanity or traditionally speaking, regeneration, new birth, new life, etc. "On Living Without God," WJW, IV.12. Wesley taught that a second transformation of humanity takes place after the first one. This is a crucial to understanding Wesley's teaching on sanctification. It is theologically called "entire sanctification" which brings out an "entire change" or "universal change" of fallen humanity by the second blessing of God.

³⁴ "The Imperfection of Human Knowledge," WJW, III.5.

³⁵ The necessity of the second instantaneous change is stressed by Wesley as follows: "But if there be no such second change, if there be no instantaneous deliverance after justification, if there be none but a gradual work of God (that there is a gradual work none denies) then we must be content, as well as we can, to remain full of sin till death." "The Repentance of Believers," WJW, I.20.

³⁶ "On Patience," WJW, 9-10.

³⁷ From the standpoint of the image of God, Wesley pointed out two things as the most distinctive marks of restored humanity: the perfect purity of the human heart as the full restoration of the moral image of God, and the perfect love of God and neighbor as the full restoration of the natural image of God. While perfect happiness of humanity is of importance as the consequence of the full restoration of the moral and natural image of God, here we will focus only on the first two notable marks--perfect purity and perfect love, for the third one--perfect happiness--seems not immediately related to the present issue.

³⁸ According to Wesley, the regenerated humans are sanctified in the sense that their past sins are forgiven and they are enabled to overcome the power of sin. However, he said, the regenerated humans are not yet "wholly" sanctified, for "inward sin" still remains in their heart. From this perspective, for Wesley, the doctrine of "the remain of inward sin" or "the dwelling sin" is important because those who are not convinced of the deep corruption of their hearts

is regenerated and delivered from the "dominion of outward sin" and the "power of inward sin," Wesley affirmed that "entire sanctification," by which fallen humanity is "wholly transformed" from "the image of the brute" into "the moral image of God," is fulfilled only when the human heart is fully purified or when "inward sin" is "entirely extirpated."³⁹ Thus, from the standpoint of the moral image of God, "entire sanctification" or "full sanctification"⁴⁰ means the whole restoration of the moral image which was once "totally" lost. This indicates a new condition of the human heart, the perfect purity of the heart which is "full" of "righteousness and holiness" or the moral image of God.

The restoration of the faculties of the natural image is the second mark of holiness, even though this restoration is but partial even in the state of the whole restoration of the moral image. If sanctification means the state of divine holiness re-implanted in humanity, this moral condition of the new humanity can be retained only by the right exercise of the three faculties of the natural image. And, for Wesley, this is best expressed in terms of loving God and neighbor.⁴¹

Love is the perfect goal of the faculties of reason, will, and liberty: "Love is the health of the soul, the full exertion of all its powers, the perfection of all its faculties."⁴² Love is the synthesis of the three faculties of the natural image. Understanding, willing, and choosing God are the distinctive tasks of humanity which are not given to other creatures. They are a unique condition of maintaining the moral image or holiness, and an ultimate goal of human existence. Perfect love is "the sum and perfection of religion."⁴³ Thus, for Wesley, "perfect love" is the crown of the natural image and represents the second mark of "entire sanctification" or "full sanctification" which is restored by "perfect purity" of the heart of fallen humanity.

have little concern about "entire sanctification" and no great hunger or thirst after it. "The Repentance of Believers," WJW, III.2. The "entire sanctification," thus, is Wesley's own theological expression of the biblical terms like the "circumcision of the heart" which he thought emphasizes the heart totally cleansed from all filthiness and sin.

³⁹ "The Repentance of Believers," WJW, III.1-2

⁴⁰ For Wesley, the doctrine of "entire sanctification" or "full sanctification" is more than his theoretical articulation of the biblical teaching of Christian perfection. rather, it is a crucial foundation, a departing point and a final goal of his ministry to the Methodists, as clearly indicated in a letter to "Brother D." (1790): "I am glad Brother D_____ has more light with regard to full sanctification. This doctrine is the grand depositum which God has lodged with the people called Methodists; and for the sake of propagating this chiefly he appeared to have raised up." John Wesley, *The Letters of John Wesley*, ed. John Telford, (London: The Epworth Press, 1937), Vol. VIII, 238 (September 15, 1790).

⁴¹ "On Zeal," WJW, II.11.

⁴² "The One Thing Needful," WJW, II.2. When Wesley described the marks of Methodists who are raised up by God to spread the teaching of biblical holiness or full sanctification, he expressed these in terms of love: "The distinguishing marks of a Methodist are not his opinions of any sort. . . . 'What then is the mark? Who is a Methodist, according to your account? A Methodist is one who has the love of God. . . . God is the joy of his heart, and the desire of his soul; . . . He is therefore happy in God, yea, always happy, . . . 'Perfect love having now 'cast out fear', he 'rejoices evermore.' . . . he loves every man as his own soul. His heart is full of love to all mankind, . . . the love of God has purified his heart from all revengeful passions, . . . from every unkind temper or malign affection. . . . so are the principles and practices of our sect; these are the marks of a true Methodist." John Wesley, *The Character of a Methodist*, ed. Jackson, (Kansas: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1739), VIII, 340-46. Hereafter it will be abridged as Wesley, *Methodist*.

⁴³ "On Zeal," WJW, III.7. In another place, Wesley described the supremacy of love as follows: ". . . it [love] is the essence, the spirit, the life of all virtue. It is not only the first and great command, but it is all the commandments in one. Whatever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are admirable or honourable; if there be any virtue, if there be any praise, they are all comprised in this one word--love." "The Circumcision of the Heart," WJW, I.11. The dominance of love over the power of sin, according to Wesley, begins when the "legal man" changes into the "man under grace." All passions like malice and wrath begin to be replaced in the mind of the regenerated by the loving of God and neighbor. Perfect love, nevertheless, comes to be full when the heart is cleansed from inward sin by sanctifying grace. Immediately after describing the cleansing of the heart and the "habitual disposition of soul" of the "fathers in Christ" in terms of virtues, Wesley regarded love as the most honorable one among them.

Confucian Teachings on Sanctification

As shown thus far, it is central to Wesley's ideas about sanctification from an anthropological perspective that holiness is fully oriented to the restored condition of the moral image and to the right exercise of the three faculties of the natural image. The first humans were perfectly holy because they were created in the moral image of God, and remained holy by their right exercising of the three faculties of the natural image of God. The holiness which was lost by the Fall can be restored in all mankind by grace through the restoration of the moral image or perfect purity of the heart. Restored humanity can remain holy and enjoy happiness in God through the restoration of the natural image or the perfect love of God and neighbors. What, then, is the Confucian thought on holiness?

The Concept of Sheng (聖, sanctification or holiness)

If Wesley's concept of holiness is expressed in terms of the perfect state of humanity created in the image of God, the most literally appropriate Chinese term for it is "sheng" (聖; holiness or sanctification). "Qadosh" in the Old Testament and "hagios" in the New Testament which are the most representative words for the biblical term "holiness" correspond to this Chinese character. However, the Confucian concept of "sheng" does not connote any religious idea like the biblical term "holiness." Instead, the term is basically related to an ethical dimension, and signifies "the highest exemplification of virtue."⁴⁴ The terms "sheng" (聖; holiness or sanctification) and "sheng-jen" (聖人, literally meaning "a holy person" or a sage) occur eight times in Confucius' *Analects*, and all of them contain only ethical meanings.⁴⁵ As Mencius (371-289 B.C.), the most notable disciple of Confucius, said, "The Sage is the apogee of the human relationships." The Confucian concept of perfection is based on the virtues of an individual, a family and society in general.⁴⁶ For Confucius, "chun-tzu" (君子, literally meaning "son of the ruler") represents the example of a sage who is characterized by his moral superiority.⁴⁷

The Concept of Jen (仁, benevolent)

With regard to the virtues of an individual, Confucius especially emphasized "jen" (仁, benevolent, or all-around virtues).⁴⁸ For him, this was the display of the perfect moral character of a sage,⁴⁹

⁴⁴ Tu Wei-ming, "The Confucian Sage: Exemplar of Personal Knowledge," in *Saints and Virtues*, ed. J. S. Hawley (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), 75-86, quoting Rodney L. Taylor, *The Religious Dimensions of Confucianism* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1990), 39.

⁴⁵ Rodney Taylor, *The Religious Dimensions of Confucianism*, 40. For the comments on these usages of "sheng" and "sheng-jin," see the references 6:28, 7:25, 7:33, 9:6, 16:8, and 19:12 in William Edward Soothill, ed., *The Analects of Confucius* (New York: Paragon Book Reprint Corp., 1968).

⁴⁶ Fung Yu-lan, *A History of Chinese Philosophy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983), Vol. I, 125.

⁴⁷ According to Wing-tsit Chan, Confucius radically modified a traditional concept of the "chun-tzu." Wing tsit Chan, *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973), 15. According to Chan, the concept of the quality of "chun-tzu" before Confucius had been determined by status, especially a hereditary position. To Confucius, however, nobility was no longer a matter of blood, but of moral character. The term, "chun-tzu," appears 107 times in *Analects*: in some cases it refers to the ruler, but in most cases, Confucius used it to denote a "morally superior man." Ibid.

⁴⁸ The term, "jen," according to Arthur Waley, means "members of the tribe" in the earliest Chinese, and just as the Latin "gens," 'clan' gave rise to the English word 'gentle,' so "jen" in Chinese came to mean 'kind,' 'gentle,' 'humane.' Arthur Waley, ed., "Introduction," in *The Analects of Confucius* (New York: Vintage Books, 1938), 28. He goes on to say that the Confucian concept of the uniqueness of humanity is based on this character, for it teaches that this is not found in beasts. Even though he insists that "Goodness" is the most appropriate term for "jen," many other terms--for instance, humaneness, benevolence, gentleness, kindness, etc.--have been used by other scholars.

⁴⁹ In *Analects*, fifty-eight of the 499 chapters are devoted to the discussion of "jen," and the word appears 105 times. Chan, *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy*, 16.

and was reflected in loving others: "Fan Chih [a disciple of Confucius] asked about 'jen.' The Master [Confucius] said, 'Love your fellow men.'"⁵⁰

For Confucius, the practice of "jen" consists mainly of two virtues: "chung" (忠; conscientiousness to others) and "shu" (施; altruism). The first is a positive aspect of "jen" in terms of doing for others what they need: the other sustains and develops others.⁵¹ On the other hand, the second implies a negative aspect in terms of not doing what they do not want. For instance, when a disciple of Confucius asked about "jen," he replied, "Do not do to others what you would not like yourself."⁵² Thus, "jen" becomes synonymous with all-around virtue, and, in some contexts, it can be translated as "perfect virtue."⁵³

The Way to be a sheng-jen (聖人, holy person)

How, then, does a person become a "sheng-jen," a sage or a holy person? For Confucius, self-cultivation and the human capability were essential for humanity to be holy or perfectly virtuous.⁵⁴ Confucius gave much attention to humanity rather than talking about spiritual beings or even life after death.⁵⁵ Humanity can make "tao" (道; the Way) great rather than "tao" making humanity great. Based on this optimistic humanism, he emphasized the necessity of self-cultivation to be a sage: however good humanity is, if it does not cultivate itself, it cannot but be evil.

From this perspective of self-cultivation based on an optimistic humanism, the daily task of dealing with social affairs in human relations is not alien to the concept of "sheng" (聖; holiness or sanctification).⁵⁶ For instance, filial piety in the family and proper conduct in society are regarded as the character of ideal humanity.⁵⁷ Carrying on this task is "the very essence of the development of the perfection of man's personality."⁵⁸ Thus, the Confucianists believed that the way to be "sheng" does not depend on some mysterious spiritual power, but on humanity itself. This is derived from the Confucian conviction of an optimistic view of the human nature and the stress on the self-actualization of "sheng" through education and practice.

⁵⁰ D. C. Lau, ed., *Confucius: The Analects* (London: Penguin Group, 1979), XII: 22.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, VI: 30. For instance, we find a positive aspect of "jen" (仁, benevolence) in the following passage: "Now, on the other hand, a benevolent man helps others to take their stand in so far as he himself wishes to take his stand, and gets others there in so far as he himself wishes to get there. The ability to take as analogy what is near at hand can be called the method of benevolence (jen)."

⁵² Waley, ed., *Analects*, XII: 2.

⁵³ Fung Yu-lan, *A Short History in Chinese Philosophy*, New York: The Free Press, 1966, 42-43. For instance, the virtue of "jen" contains the virtue of "yi" (righteousness) which means the "oughtness" of a situation as a categorical imperative. Confucius said that a sage ought to do certain things not for "li" (profit) but for their own sake: "'chun-tzu' takes as much trouble to discover what is right as lesser men take to discover what will pay." Waley, ed., *Analects*, IV: 16.

⁵⁴ Confucius wrote: "It is Man who is capable of broadening the way. It is not the way that is capable of broadening Man." Waley, ed., *The Analects*, XV: 29.

⁵⁵ Chan, *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy*, 15. Chan said that humanism is of importance in Chinese thought and it reached its climax in Confucianism: "If one word could characterize the entire history of Chinese philosophy, that word would be humanism. . . . In this sense, humanism has dominated Chinese thought from the dawn of its history. . . . Humanism, in gradual ascendance, reached its climax in Confucius." *Ibid.*, 3.

⁵⁶ Fung, *A Short History of Chinese Philosophy*, 9.

⁵⁷ Master Yu, a disciple of Confucius, said that "proper behavior towards parents and elder brothers is the trunk of Goodness." Waley, ed., *Analects*, I:2

⁵⁸ According to Chan, with respect to the role of a spiritual being, there was a radical development from the Shang (1751-1112 B.C.) to the Chou (1111-249 B.C.). Wing-tsit Chan, *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973), 3-4. During the Shang, the influence of spiritual beings on man had been almost total, but from the Chou, humans and their activities were given greater importance. This transformation was an outgrowth, not of speculation, but of historical and social changes. That is, the founders of the Chou had to justify their right to rule the people after having overthrown the Shang, and developed the doctrine of the Mandate of Heaven in terms of virtue rather than a spiritual force.

At this moment, it is worth noting that Confucius himself did not clearly teach concerning human nature, but his disciples have shaped a theory that humanity is by nature good.⁵⁹ Mencius was the first disciple of Confucius to introduce into the Confucian school this doctrine.⁶⁰ According to Mencius, evil or failure is not innate but is due to the lack of development of one's original endowment. While Hsun Tzu (298-38 B.C.) opposed this optimistic theory and affirmed the original corruption of humanity, this has been regarded as heresy by the Confucian orthodox tradition. Later Confucianists, especially Neo-Confucianists, devoted much of their deliberations to these subjects, but they have never deviated from the general direction laid down by Mencius.⁶¹

Incompatibility and Compatibility between Wesley and Confucius

We have looked at ideas about holiness from the perspectives of Wesley, on the one hand, and Confucius and his disciples, on the other. How, then, can Wesley's "gospel of holiness" be viewed from the standpoint of the Confucian "ethics of holiness"?

Incompatibility Between Wesley and Confucius

Several points of Wesley's ideas about holiness are incompatible with Confucianism. What are the issues on which Wesleyans and Confucians differ?

The Ground of Sanctification: Theological or Humanistic? While both Wesley and Confucius emphasized the importance of sanctification of humanity in this life, they differed regarding its sources. Wesley's approach to the concept of holiness in humanity is essentially theological in the sense that it is grounded in the nature of God: humanity is holy, for it was created in the moral image of God who is Holy. In contrast to this, the Confucianists' concept of "sheng" (聖, holiness or sanctification) is fundamentally innate in the sense that it is grounded in an optimistic view of human nature. From this point of view, Wesley would be an Augustinian who stresses divine initiative and human passivity, while Confucius would be a Pelagian who regards the human as far more active than just waiting for a divine interruption. While Confucianism does not deny a Supreme Power, it does not relate the divine nature to the "sheng" of humanity. For Wesley, however, the essence of holiness in humanity is not innate but derived from God. It is unthinkable without the holiness of God. He is "the fountain of all holiness."⁶²

⁵⁹ While Confucius can be truly said to have molded Chinese civilization in general, he taught nothing about the nature of humanity and the universe, Chan, *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy*, 14. Tzu-kung, a Confucius' disciple, said that "Our master's views concerning culture and the outward insignia of goodness, we are permitted to hear; but about Man's nature and the ways of Heaven he will not tell us anything at all." Arthur Waley, ed., *Analects*, V: 12. Confucius did not talk about human nature except once, when he said that "men are close to one another by nature. They diverge as a result of repeated practice." D.C. Lau, ed., *Analects*, XVII:2. Here Confucius emphasized that humanity has become mature through practice, but he did not clearly specify whether humanity is by nature good or evil. However, this Confucian theory of human nature has been interpreted by the later orthodox doctrine of the Confucian school that human nature is originally good.

⁶⁰ This doctrine is clearly manifested in the following dialogue between Kung-tu tau and Mencius: "Kung-tu Tzu said, Kao Tzu said that man's nature is neither good nor evil. Some say that man's nature may be made good or evil, therefore when King Wen and Wu [sage-kings who founded the Chou dynasty in the twelfth century B.C.] were in power people loved virtue, and when Kings Yu and Li [wicked kings in the eighth and ninth century B.C.] were in power people loved violence. . . . Now you say that human nature is good. Mencius said, If you let people follow their feelings (original nature), they will be able to do good. This is what is meant by saying that human nature is good. If man does evil, it is not the fault of his natural endowment. . . . This is not due to any difference in the natural capacity endowed by Heaven. The abandonment is due to the fact that the man is allowed to fall into evil." Mencius, 6A: 6-7, quoted in Chan, *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy*, 54.

⁶¹ Thus, Mencius is the most important philosopher on the question of human nature in the Confucian tradition, for he was the first to establish the orthodox theory of the original goodness of human nature. Chan, *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy*, 54-55.

⁶² In the "Sermon on the Mount," WJW, VIII," Wesley said, "While thou seekest God in all things thou shalt find him in all, the fountain of all holiness, continually filling thee with his own likeness, with justice, mercy, and truth."

The Way to be Sanctified: By Divine Grace or By Human Discipline? For Wesley, the rationale that fallen humanity can and must be holy cannot be understood apart from a Christian concept of the gracious works of the trinitarian God: God's creation of humanity in His image, the atonement by His begotten Son, and the works of the Holy Spirit. That is, God created humanity in His image and has intended it to be righteous and holy; Jesus Christ prepared the way for the restoration of the primitive sanctification; and the Holy Spirit fulfills the divine providence. Faith is the immediate "condition," and the triple grace--prevenient, convincing, and sanctifying grace--is the fundamental "source" for the restoration of lost holiness. These theologically oriented teachings concerning the way for humanity to be sanctified may be unacceptable to Confucianism.

For Confucianists, the sanctification through which humanity becomes "sheng" is derived from "a self-existent moral law," which is the "Mandate of Heaven."⁶³ From this perspective, Wesley's theologically oriented ideas about holiness are not humanistic but "supernatural." Becoming a sage, for Confucianists, does not depend on any power other than that innate one in humanity. Confucianists teach that the essence of "sheng" is found both in the ethical disciplines of an individual and in the moral practices of society. For them, human relationships in the family and society are criteria for holiness or sanctification. Thus, Wesley's predominantly "supernatural" understanding of holiness cannot be compatible with Confucius, the first Chinese "Socrates" who advocated virtuous life grounded in an optimistic humanism, self-cultivated virtues, and human relationships.

Is Sanctification Instantaneous or Gradual? When Wesley taught the necessity of the restoration of sanctification, it implied the traditional teachings of Christianity on human nature--total depravity of fallen humanity, sinful nature inherited from birth, evil tendency, etc. This view requires a radical transformation of fallen humanity to be holy. Fallen humanity, Wesley said, both must and can be transformed instantaneously as well as gradually to become "entirely" sanctified.

From the Confucian optimistic view of human nature, there is no need for a radical change of humanity like Wesley taught. Instead, Confucianists stress only the gradual transformation towards "sheng" (聖; holiness or sanctification) through education and ethical practices. Even Hsun Tzu, who affirmed the natural corruption of humanity, insisted on the importance of a continuing practice of self-discipline to become a sage. Confucianists believe that humanity becomes "sheng" gradually by practicing "chung" (忠, conscientiousness to others) and "shu" (施, altruism) which are grounded in the spirit of "jen" (仁, benevolence). This Confucian theory of graduality by self-discipline and self-actualization is hardly compatible with Wesley who taught the necessity of a radical transformation of fallen humanity by divine grace. While Wesley, like the Confucianists, emphasized the importance of gradual growing, he taught that the consistent growing is possible only after a radical transformation, for humanity without a radical experience of divine grace is totally corrupted and incapable of right ethics. Thus, Wesley, unlike the Confucius, stressed a radical inward transformation from the "image of the brutes" of fallen humanity into the "image of God" through faith by grace.

Compatibility between Wesley and Confucius

With respect to the problems concerning "sheng" or sanctification, there are several unbridgeable points between Wesley and Confucius as examined thus far. However, we can find something compatible between them. And if so, what?

Optimistic Potential of Humanity It is worth noting that while Wesley was in the authentic Western tradition centered on Augustine in his stress on the total depravity by the Fall, he was at the same time faithful to the Eastern tradition centered on Gregory of Nyssa in his stress on a positive potential even in fallen humanity. Wesley believed that since God's prevenient grace is implanted "in all" and given "for all," they are enabled to seek not only to be born again but also to be holy.

Furthermore, it is important to note that while Wesley insisted that the moral image was "totally" lost by the Fall, the natural image was only lost "in part."⁶⁴ Even though the spiritual condition of

⁶³ Chan, *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy*, 3.

⁶⁴ "On the Fall of Man," WJW, II.6. When Wesley talked about Adam's "partial loss" of the natural image, his view basically related to the three faculties of the natural image, and not to the substance of the image itself, i.e., the existence of the soul. However much the soul is morally corrupted and spiritually dead in terms of its relationship with God, it still remains in fallen

fallen humanity is no longer moral but sinful, blind to the truth, and enslaved to sin, fallen humanity still holds the "natural conscience" with the abilities of understanding, willing, and choosing. Wesley argued that no one is "entirely without knowledge and independent on our choice!"⁶⁵ While Wesley theoretically classified humanity after the Fall into three categories-- natural, legal, and evangelical humanity, he clearly affirmed that there is practically no "natural man" in this life from the viewpoint of the prevenient grace which is "free in all" and "free for all."

Thus, Confucianists may be interested in Wesley's stress on the possibility for fallen humanity to be sanctified: in these ideas, they could find to some extent the optimistic views of humanity that Confucianism teaches. For instance, Wesley's ideas about prevenient grace, by which "natural conscience" is implanted in "natural" mankind and by which all fallen humans are able to respond to the universal calling of God for their holiness, could be a bridge to the optimistic view of humanity as Confucianism teaches.

Human Responsibility Convinced of his belief in prevenient grace, Wesley taught that since God works in the heart and mind of all human beings, fallen humanity not only "can" and but also "must" work out their own salvation.⁶⁶ When Mencius said "Seek and you will find it, neglect and you will lose it" (6A:6), it may sound like he is a faithful Wesleyan who quotes both Jesus (Matt. 7:7), and Wesley, who rejected the Moravian "quietism" and stressed the Anglican teachings of the "means of grace." Thus, as long as Wesley remains Gregorian in his stress on human responsibility, his followers may find a bridge to reach out to the Confucianists who teach an optimistic humanism and self-discipline to become "sheng" (holy).

Actualization of Perfection in This World Wesley, who had a strongly positive view of humanity, advocated "going unto perfection," and the Confucianists may be interested in these teachings. At this moment, the comparison of Wesley with both Augustine and Gregory of Nyssa can be helpful to understanding this argument. While Gregory taught both the possibility and actualization of perfection in this world, Augustine had a radically pessimistic view of human nature and rejected the actualization of perfection in this world. Augustine had a static view of the "perfected (*perfectus*) perfection," and denied the perfected "actualization of perfection" in this life: Christian perfection is possible only after death. While Wesley, like Augustine, accepted that there is no "perfected (*perfectus*) perfection" in this life, he, like Gregory, interpreted the biblical teaching on perfection as continually growing in perfection toward finality, i.e., "growing (*teleiosis*) perfection." And Wesley's stress on the gradual renewal of humanity is to some extent compatible with that of the Confucianists, for they also focus on the continuing transformation of "hsing" (性; human nature).

The Necessity of Inward Transformation of Humanity Confucianists are usually misunderstood as if they taught only the Augustinian "perfected perfection" focusing on the outward behavior of humanity. They are easily misjudged as giving less attention to the inner motivation of the human heart than the Gregorian "perfecting perfection." Naturally, such kinds of misunderstandings can be considered as incompatible with the Wesleyan teaching of holiness which focuses on the inwardly oriented perfection.

However, it is worth noting that for the Confucianists, the inner disciplines of "hsing" (性, human nature) are of great significance. That is why they emphasize the importance of learning "tao" (道, way or truth) before displaying outward ethical actions. It is by learning "tao," they believe, that humans practice "jen" or all-around virtues to become "sheng" or a sage. "Sheng-jen" is not the one who has perfectly fulfilled "jen" (all-around virtues) but the one who has practiced it continually through learning "tao." They teach that human behaviors are the fruits of an inner change which comes by learning the truth.

humanity. Fallen humanity is still immortal and spiritual. Thus, it is worth noting that Wesley distinguished the substance and the faculty of the natural image. By the natural image Wesley meant two things: the spiritual and immortal substance of humanity, and its three faculties. For him, while the moral image simply indicated that humans are moral beings, the natural image signified that humanity is capable of knowing, willing, and choosing God. By the Fall, Adam wholly lost the moral image or moral state of holiness, but still retained the spiritual substance of the natural image which is immortal even though it may be in dead condition in terms of its relationship with God.

⁶⁵ "Wandering Thoughts," WJW, II.6

⁶⁶ "On Working Out Our Own Salvation," WJW, III.2.

The Universality of Human Transformation Wesley, like the Confucianists, taught "universal holiness", that is, universal possibility of humanity becoming "sheng" (聖, holiness or sanctification). This argument can be illuminated by comparing Wesley with Gregory, Pelagius and Augustine. While Wesley stressed the Augustinian or the Latin Western tradition of the "total depravity" of fallen humanity, he emphasized the Gregorian or the Greek Eastern tradition of the "universal" endowment of God's grace. For Augustine, God's grace to transform humanity was not given to all mankind but only to the elect. Furthermore, unlike Augustine who taught "predestination" in which the theology of the limited election is presupposed, Wesley emphasized a message of holiness which is not limited to the elect but is "universal" to all. In this way, Wesley also differed from Pelagius, who advocated the Gregorian positive view of humanity but limited the actuality of perfection only to the spiritual elites.

As reviewed above, Wesley's "universal holiness" can be of interest to Confucianists, for they teach the universal possibility of "sheng. For instance, in saying that one is of the same kind as a sage, Mencius formulated two principles of utmost significance: one is that every person can be perfect, and the other is that all people are basically equal.⁶⁷ Thus, the Confucian teaching on perfection is not Augustinian but Gregorian and Wesleyan in terms of the emphasis on the universal possibility of "sheng" or "holiness." In this light, the Wesleyans who teach the universal possibility of holiness in this world may be able to build a bridge to reach out to Confucianists.

The Praxis of Love Finally, and most of all, Wesleyans and Confucianists may find a common ground in terms of their stress on ethical behavior. For both Wesley and Confucius, holiness is not only the continuous inward renovation but also active outward behavior. Inward transformation of humanity by faith through grace or learning tao (道, truth) must be proved by its ethical fruits in personal and social life. Holiness must be expressed in terms of the practice of "jen" or loving others, "chung" or conscientiousness to others, and "shu" or altruism. The holy person is nothing other than one who loves fellow human beings through "chung" and "shu" according to "tao." For Wesley, "perfect love" is one of his favorite terms from among many synonyms of sanctification or Christian perfection. The moral image of God is holiness, and holiness is nothing other than love. The natural image of God consists of the earlier mentioned three faculties, and loving God and fellow is the crown of the faculties. Thus, "Love your neighbor" is the essence of Wesley's "biblical holiness" and Confucius' "ethical holiness." Love is the Great Commandment of Jesus Christ, in whom there is a solid bridge between John Wesley in the West and Confucius in the East.

Conclusion

We have briefly discussed the ideas of sanctification taught by Wesley from a perspective of the image of God, and by Confucius from that of three core concepts: sheng (sanctification), jen (benevolence), sheng-jen (sage). What, then, are the incompatible and compatible points? And, what can we learn from the two sets of teachings?

Incompatible Points

While Wesley's teaching on sanctification is predominantly theological and ecclesiastical as well as ethical and social, Confucius' idea of sanctification is humanistic, ethical, and social as well as metaphysical and religious to some extent. While both emphasized the importance of holy life, they differed regarding the source and the way for humanity to be sanctified. For Wesley, the Triune God is the center of his ideas on sanctification: God's prevenient grace, the universal atonement of Christ on the Cross, and the initiative work of the Holy Spirit in our mind and heart. For Confucius, however, sheng (sanctification) is possible only by the learning of tao (truth) and practicing of jen (benevolence). The center of his teachings on sanctification is not divine grace but human discipline.

Wesley claimed that purity of heart is more important than ethical behavior in the sense that the former is the source of the latter; if the former is the root of a tree, the latter is its fruits. Wesley stated that the inner motive is more important than outward actions. He taught that even a sage is not perfect in understanding, judging, and moral actions in this world. Christian perfection is neither divine nor angelic. Christian perfection is not the same state with that of the resurrected. Rather, it is centered on the love-motive of human heart which the omniscient God recognizes. There is a critical time of an instantaneous transformation of the heart, and thereafter a gradual growing of the human personality and nature toward maturity. All of these ideas would embarrass

⁶⁷ Chan, *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy*, 56.

Confucius who had a basically humanistic concept of ethics, stressing moral behavior and relationships by the self-discipline of learning and practicing. Since Confucius' concept of perfection has no room for human mistakes and divine initiative. Wesley's arguments above would not be acceptable to him. Thus, from these perspectives, mutual dialogues between them would have been basically incompatible.

Compatible Points

However, as discussed earlier, we could find some points of agreement between them. Both have stressed the positive aspects of human nature, the potential for human transformation, the need for human responsibility, and ethical obligations to the family, society, and country. While Confucius' teachings have been generally understood in terms of personal, social, and political ethics, they have been discussed from the perspective of metaphysical and religious views to some extent. Confucianism has its own rituals. Most of all, for Confucius, learning and practicing of jen (仁, benevolence) were the ways toward sheng (聖, sanctification). For Wesley, love or jen is the synonym for sanctification or sheng. Confucius taught that yi (義, righteousness) is a significant element in human life and that it must be accompanied with le (禮, propriety), which is jen.⁶⁸ At this point, Wesley would fully agree with him as the Bible teaches it (I Cor. 13). Thus, for both, sanctification is nothing other than the praxis of benevolence (jen) with righteousness (yi) and propriety (le). And from these perspectives, Christians, especially Wesleyans, and Confucianists could sit down at the same table to talk about sanctification. Confucianists would expect Wesleyans to become "ethically" holy or to act "ethically." Since Wesley once argued that there is no personal holiness without social holiness, and emphasized compassionate ministry throughout his whole life, he would be in agreement with Confucius who emphasized the importance of jen in this world. *The Relevance of Confucius' and Wesley's Teachings*

At this moment we need to keep in mind that the fundamental roots of compatibility between Confucius and Wesley are not found in ethical issues but in their relevance to contemporary problems. Both Confucius and Wesley were people of "the here and now" as well as "a place and time" like the prophets of the Old Testament who addressed their people's life situations. John Wesley was so concerned about the Anglican Church and the industrial society of the 18th-century England that his theology and ministry are still relevant to us in the Asia-Pacific region today. He was truly concerned about his people in terms of "the gospel of holiness" and "present salvation." Confucius, too, was very concerned about the people, society, and nation in his life-time. Like those of other thinkers in the East and West throughout human history, his teachings that were once purely local and provincial, have become global and permanent today. Confucianism was the production of his time and place but it produced a culture which has influenced us in the present time.⁶⁹

The Compassionate Heart of Confucius and Wesley

Both Confucius and Wesley emphasized "jen" or love. Even though the concept of "jen" has been interpreted differently among scholars, all of them have agreed that "jen" is the core of Confucius' teachings.⁷⁰ Wesley was always concerned about people just as Confucius. He gave great attention not only to the purity of the heart and a life of ethics, but also to physical and mental aspects of the human life. His theology of holiness is holistic. God wants us to do the triple ministry of Jesus Christ: not only teaching and preaching, but also healing the weak and diseased (Matthew 6:35-36). Wesley's theology is a "here and now" theology as well as "there and then." He was concerned about the physical body and psychological state as well as the intellectual mind and spiritual purity. He especially loved the "plain people"--- the poor, miners, prisoners, slaves, etc. Once he read Luke 4:17-19 in his first air preaching in Bristol (April, 1739), and kept it in his mind for the rest of his as shown in his last letter sent to William Wilberforce (February, 1791).⁷¹

⁶⁸ Jean Songbae Ri, *Confucianism and Christianity* (Seoul: Bundo Press, 1979) 130-31.

⁶⁹ When we emphasize our given culture and context, however, it does not mean that we should be indifferent to the issues beyond them. Christian theology and ministry should not be exclusive but inclusive. The Christian Church is both local and universal as Augustine taught. We must also see the world outside of the Asia Pacific region, for Jesus Christ has called us to a universal mission to go to the "remote parts of the earth" (Acts 1:8) for the unsaved as well as to our region.

⁷⁰ Ri, *Confucianism and Christianity*, 239-48.

⁷¹ In this letter Wesley wrote, "Dear Sir, Unless the divine power has raised you up to be as *Athanssius contra mundum*, I see not how you can go through your glorious enterprise in

According to him, Christians can be entirely sanctified and yet fragile while they live in this world. He taught that even the sanctified people need to be taken care of.⁷²

Wesley and Syncretized Confucianism with Shamanism and Buddhism

Confucianism, once a national ideology and, to some extent, religion of the last Korean dynasty (Yi dynasty), has developed in the context of Shamanism and Buddhism which had come to Korea before it. Since each of these three traditions had been a national religion or ideology during the periods of the three Kingdoms, Sila Unified Kingdom, Korea Dynasty, and Yi Dynasty, respectively, they are culturally rooted in Koreans' hearts and minds at least at the subconscious level.⁷³ They have emphasized spiritual gifts, emotional feelings, materialistic prosperity, national security, etc. All of these teachings may have been easily accepted by Korean Christians without serious questions. It has been easy to rationalize their validity on the basis of Bible passages related to material prosperity, blessings of offspring, spiritual gifts and signs, victorious life against evil spirits, etc.

We know it is dangerous to generalize in characterizing one particular people. With recognition of this point, I would dare to say that, overall, Koreans are religious, spiritual, emotional, and outward-oriented people as well as philosophical, realistic, rational, and inward. That is, in Korea, when we deal with the biblical, Wesleyan, and Nazarene teachings on sanctification, we must consider each of the dimensions mentioned above such as experiential, psychological, ethical, and religious dimensions.

In this light, when Wesley's theology of sanctification is taught in the context of Shamanism, Buddhism and Confucianism, these backgrounds should be seriously considered. However, Wesley's doctrine of sanctification has been approached mainly from a theological perspective centered on the doctrine of the original sin with giving less attention to the traditional culture. In dealing with the doctrine of sanctification, no matter how important the original sin is, it is still one among many issues of Wesley's theology of sanctification. The doctrine of sanctification must deal with humans' physical, emotional, and psychological state as well as freedom from the power of sin. We need to know that his theology is basically not an "either-or" pattern but a "both-and."⁷⁴ If we deal with these issues regarding human nature and life from Wesley's holistic and comprehensive perspective of salvation, his theology of sanctification could be meaningfully related to the syncretized Confucianism with Shamanism and Buddhism. As mentioned above, the three traditions have given sincere and existential concerns to these areas of human nature and life in this world. Christianity must be relevant to, and rooted in, a given culture; otherwise Christians cannot actively and effectively work to save people and impact society with the "gospel of holiness" now or in the future as manifested in Church history.

We, Nazarenes, believe that the doctrine of holiness taught by Wesley and our Church is biblical and historical. Yet, it needs to be taught with understanding of the cultural environment centered on Confucianism as well as Shamanism and Buddhism. From this perspective, Nazarene ministers, theologians, and missionaries working in these fields must be conscious of the local environment and culture as well as being faithful to the global Nazarene tradition, that is, biblical, apostolic, and Wesleyan teachings as taught in our Manual.⁷⁵

opposing that execrable villainy, which is the scandal of religion, of England, and of human nature. . . . Go on in the name of God and in the power of His might, till even American slavery (the vilest that ever saw the sun) shall vanish away before it. . . . That He who has guided you from youth up may continue to strengthen you in this and all things is the prayer of, dear sir, Your affectionate servant." Wesley, *Letters*, VIII, 265 (February 24, 1791).

⁷² Recently it was reported nationally that the suicide rate is higher than death rate through car accidents. Korean churches have faced critical socio-economic and political problems such as divorces, teenagers' suicides, abandoned young children and aged people, economic crisis, unemployment, issues concerning unification of the peninsula, nuclear weapons threat, etc.

⁷³ Dong-shik Yoo, *The Christian Faith Encounters the Religions of Korea*, Seoul: 1965. According to him, Shamanism has shaped Korean nature (Chapter 1), Buddhism has shown Korean's an ideal world (Chapter 2), Confucianism has taught Koreans the life of a sage (Chapter 3), and Christianity is the future of Korea (Chapter 5).

⁷⁴ It may be appropriate to evaluate whether Wesley's theology should be called comprehensive and synthetic theology rather than eclectic, which Outler preferred.

⁷⁵ At this moment, we may need to ask ourselves: "Has our theology and ministry been conscious of our situation and culture as well as faithful to the global teachings of the Nazarene

Final Thought

Christian theology must be centered on the God of the Bible but also be conscious of and relevant to the present situation of the people." The first works of the Spirit of God were not apart from but in the midst of the "earth." the Spirit of God was working when the "earth" was formless, empty, and dark (Gen. 1:2-3). Life situations must be the womb of Christian theology, for God works in the "earth." When Christian theology concerns human needs, it can be firmly rooted in the field where the Church teaches, preaches, and heals. Then Christian ministry can be sound, authentic, and biblical. Nazarene churches must be influential in the society and country where they are located not only by saving souls but also by taking care of people's physical and mental needs.⁷⁶ When the Church helps people in need as shown in Jesus' meeting the Samaritanian woman, the Gospel and Life of Jesus Christ can be effectively delivered to all humankind whom God loves. Servants of God in the Bible and in Christian history have concerned themselves with the situation in their life times and communities. Moses in Egypt, Paul in Asia Minor, John Wesley in England, P. F. Bresee in the United States of America, and David Paul Cho in Korea have all cared about the life circumstances of their people like Jesus did in Israel. They have given attention to emotional, spiritual, psychological and material state as well as ethical and theological matters. Christian theology and ministry should be synthetic and holistic like Wesley's. In this light, we may ask ourselves, "Have our ministry and theology been relevant to the culture and social situation of the Asia Pacific region?"

We, Nazarenes, have firmly believed that the doctrine of holiness is a major Bible theme for our Church. This doctrine has been regarded as the core of our identity, if not the identity itself. The triple ministry of Jesus Christ (teaching, preaching and healing) is holistic and has been taught in the forms of education, evangelism, and compassion ministry as clearly mentioned in our Manual. This triple mission must be related to our doctrine of holiness. Holiness must be not only taught, but also experienced and practiced in education, evangelism, and compassionate ministry. This is our vision, mission, and goals. We need to consider if all of these as well as the triple ministry of Jesus Christ have been carried out in the Asia-Pacific region. We may need to ask if our ministry has been conscious of our area's "educational environment, evangelical vitality, and compassionate ministry," the three representative missions of the Church of the Nazarene from its birth up to now.

The writer of this paper is asking himself: How can I who hold the "'gospel' of holiness" (kadosh or hagios) carry out our Church's threefold mission of teaching (education), preaching (evangelism), and healing (compassionate ministry)' in a field influenced by the traditional culture of syncretized Confucianism with Shamanism and Buddhism which holds to "ethics" and "prosperity" of "sheng-jen" (聖人, sage)?" On the one hand, it emphasizes the practice of "li" (義, righteousness), "jen" (仁, benevolence), and "le" (禮, propriety). On the other hand, it is seeking after spiritual gifts and empowerment, material blessings, and national security. Both Confucius and Wesley, who are my teachers, can give their student ethical and theological wisdom. First and foremost, however, I would like to be a disciple of Jesus Christ who is my Master. I want to obey Him who once told his disciples, "Therefore beseech the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into His harvest" (Matthew, 9:38). Finally, I would like to pray with you. Let us pray together: "How gracious and jen our God is. We praise and worship You, for You have loved and saved us from the power of sin. Master, thank You for sending us out to the harvest of the Asia-Pacific region. Thank You for working for us, with us, and in us. We need Your help. Please come, our Helper, the Spirit of God, who had worked in the earth from the beginning. Give us faith, hope, and love. Lead us with Your wisdom and power to those people in the Asia-Pacific region where it is "formless,

Church?"

⁷⁶ One of the clear differences between Nazarene churches and the other main denominations, such as Presbyterian and Methodist churches, is that they have actively ministered in Korea in terms of hospitals, schools, orphanages, refuge centers and so on, but we have not. This type of compassionate ministry has been recognized as an important factor in church growth and impact on society. Some time ago, I attended a Korean Church History Conference, where one person read a paper regarding the evangelism, education, compassionate ministry of Korean churches in the 1960s. The reader mentioned many denominations but not the Church of the Nazarene. Later it was said that our churches did not concern themselves about the people in need or the socio-economic problems in that period, and that naturally they were not recognized in Korean society and history.

empty, and dark." Please sanctify and use us for them. We pray in the name of our Lord, Master, and Helper, Jesus Christ Amen."

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