

CHAPTER TWO  
THE LIFE OF LOVE

The intention in the first part of this treatise was simply to describe the raw materials of the natural constitution of man. Human beings, however, are not merely natural animals; they are moral or spiritual creatures as well. This is to say that these powers can and must be oriented and organized in one fashion or another, properly or otherwise. The discussion of this moral and spiritual nature of man is the task of the next two sections.

It has been noted that Wesley believed that man was made for God and that this involves proper faith or knowledge of God, proper virtue or love for God, and proper happiness or joy and peace in God. Any understanding of Wesley's view of moral psychology entails a careful analysis of the nature and inter-relation of these three aspects of his thought. In the present section, virtue and happiness, because they are inseparable, will be considered together.

Virtue, for Wesley, is the proper orientation and excellent functioning of the powers and faculties of the soul. This is perfection, the essence of which is love. This means that love is understood both as the basic attitude of the heart and as the total ordering of soul and life which flows from the central thrust. It is "the glorious spring of all inward and outward holiness"<sup>279</sup> And it is this love alone which issues in permanent and genuine peace and joy.

This love we believe to be the medicine of life, the never-failing remedy for all the evils of a disordered world, for all the miseries and vices of men. Wherever this is, there are virtue and happiness going hand in hand. There is humbleness of mind, gentleness, long suffering, the whole image of God; and, at the same time, a peace that passeth am understanding, and a Joy unspeakable and full of glory. Here eternal sunshine of the spotless mind; each prayer accepted, and each wish resigned; desires composed, affections ever even, tears that delight, and sighs that waft to heaven. Long to see established in the world, a religion of love, joy, and peace, having its seed in the inmost soul, but ever showing itself by its fruits, continually springing forth, not only in all innocence, (for love worketh no ill to his neighbor) but likewise in every kind of beneficence, spreading virtue and happiness all around.<sup>280</sup>

The procedure in discussing the life of virtue Will be to begin with love as the active principle in the soul and then discuss the life of holiness

and righteousness as an expression of love and finally the happiness which is the inseparable consequence of a life of love.

### I. Love as the Spring of Action

Man, for Wesley, is an end-seeking animal. He is a desiring, seeking, pursuing being. Behind, above, beyond, underneath all the powers of his being is a primordial thrust which involves all his powers. There is a root lack, a radical incompleteness in him which propels him toward that which completes and satisfies his being. This elemental drive is termed by Wesley, as we have seen, instinct or appetite or propensity for happiness. To seek our happiness in one object or another is "to unite our soul with" it, to "give our heart to it" to "cleave to it as our only good". It is to seek and enjoy something above all else, to habitually desire and delight in an object for its own sake. This is what Wesley means, in the deepest sense, by love. And to love an object for its own sake is to love it ultimately, that is, with the whole heart, mind, strength and soul. This is the deepest response of the human soul. It is the religious response. To love, desire and delight in an object for its own sake is worship.

Love in this sense is the core or the spirit of a man, which principle and spring of action determines all qualities of character and actions, Regulating all the tempers, and governing all the words and actions".<sup>281</sup> "It is the great moving spring both of. . .desires, designs, words and actions."<sup>282</sup> The way we see and are present to life depends on the fundamental orientation of the souls upon what we love. Love is both the guide and motivating force of the soul its "ruling principle; and Spring of action". It is a mistake to understand love in Wesley simply or primarily as a feeling or an emotion, although it is that, for it involves the whole man. It might better be called a rational propensity in that it has to do with understanding as well as will. Love is at once the cardinal principle by which we rule ourselves and the motivation by which we act. It both illuminates the mind as to ends and means and propels the will toward them. It is the center in relation to which all our powers function. It is the fountainhead from which all our thoughts and feelings, all our tempers and habits and all our words and actions flow.

Although we cannot love what we do not know, knowledge which is not mixed with, which does not issue in love is no genuine knowledge at all. We only attend to perceptions and images, judge between good and evil, and reason from one proposition to another according as we love. Love is the desire and disposition which orders all desires and dispositions. It is the enjoyment which gives meaning to all delights and pains as well. It is the affection of the soul which is the parent of every affection. We think, we feel and desires we choose, we act, as we love. Love is the spiritual dimension, the religious ground upon which, be it "genuine religions or "damnable idolatry", all the rest of life is founded.

Every man exists, then, in some essential relationship. He is determined, it is his nature to have some object or objects to which he unites his being in desire and delight. The object of such love is a man's good or, as Wesley says, his God. Whatever a man ultimately attaches himself to or seeks his happiness in is properly speaking his god. Men are worshipping beings. The question of the direction of the final thrust of man or the question of what is his god is the first and last question in Wesley's conception of the moral life of man. The individual may not love the one true God, by whom and for whom he was made, but he must and actually does love some object which, by virtue of that love, is his God. This is to say that, while it is possible not to love God, it is impossible not to have some god. Man is always a committed being; if not to the ultimate good, then the relative, if not the Creator, then some creature.

This does not mean, on the other hand, that one object can serve as our good and our god as well as another. The one true end of man is He who made both man and his little gods. We have already seen that the human constitution is such that no other good

can satisfy the appetite of an immortal soul. Nay, all of them together cannot give rest, which is the lowest ingredient of happiness, to a never dying spirit, which God created for the enjoyment of himself. The hungry soul, like the busy bee, wanders from flower to flower; but it goes off from each, with an abortive hope, and a deluded expectation. Every creature cries, (some with a loud and others with a secret voice) "happiness is not in me".<sup>283</sup>

So does all experience prove the justness of that reflection which was made long ago. "Thou hast made us for thyself; and our heart cannot rest, until it resteth in thee."<sup>284</sup>

The task of the moment is, in the first place, to make clear the ruling principles which possess the spirits of men. As has already been noted, the object of man's love is either the Creator or the creature. The drive of life is directed either toward the One or the other. Man seeks his happiness in the world or in God. The spirit in man, then, is either the spirit of the world or, better, the spirit which is love of the world, or it is the Holy Spirit, the spirit of the love of God. Therefore, the love of the world and the love of God will be the initial consideration of this section after which love of neighbor in relation to the love of God will be dealt with.

A. LOVE OF THE WORLD AND LOVE OF GOD

1. The Orientation Toward the World

Although man was made for God, no man as we actually encounter him in our neighbors and in ourselves naturally loves God. By "nature" we are atheists in the world.<sup>285</sup> Again, natural man does not come to self-consciousness in a state of neutrality. He awakens to a heart already given, to a will already committed. There is no choice here; man does not live without some object or objects in which he seeks his happiness. He is a worshipping being and cannot exist without a god. If he does not ultimately desire and delight in the final good, he loves some relative good. If his subjective good is not the Creator, it is then the creature. "He that does not love God, (which is his proper, and his only proper worship) will surely love some of the works of his hands; will love the creature, if not the Creator."

<sup>286</sup> Such a one, and this is every man born of woman, is, in his natural state, a lover of the world. Such a manner of life is termed love of the world.

Wesley's idea of love of the world is a dual movement. It has both a positive and negative aspect. It is a turning away from our proper end as well as a turning toward that which was never intended to be our ultimate concern. It is a set against God as well as a set toward the world.<sup>287</sup> Love of the world is both practical atheism and practical idolatry. Negatively, it is a lively indifference to and an active enmity against God. Behind and within man's attraction to the material and temporal realm is human pride, independence of God and self-will. Love of the world is in itself, or at least ultimately

associated with, a lack of faith and unbelief issuing in a fundamental enmity toward God. "As the love of God is inseparable from faith, so is the hatred of God from unbelief."<sup>288</sup> Positively, love of the world is the movement in which we make some relative good our ultimate good. It is desiring and delighting in some created good for its own sake. It is to rest in or enjoy (*frui*) that which was intended to be used (*uti*).

Wesley refers to love of the world as "damnable idolatry" of which there are many forms. This love of the world is the spring of action and ruling principle of man's soul. It is the spirit within true; it is the organizing center of his total life - influencing his mind, what he sees and attends to, what he designs and judges; ruling his will, what he is affected by and what he affects in fleeting dispositions or fixed habits; determining his principle of liberty, what and how he chooses. Every power of his soul is directed and interrelated by this inner spirit of the world and, consequently, so is his whole pattern of external activity. Whatever "we seek our happiness in outside of God is our god"<sup>289</sup> or idol, and the enjoyment of it or seeking happiness in it is idolatry and the gods of this world are almost beyond reckoning. "In a word, so many objects as there are in the world, wherein men seek happiness instead of seeking it in God, so many idols they set up in their hearts; so many species of idolatry they practice."<sup>290</sup> Theoretically, any object in man's experience can elicit his worship: natural or artificial objects, ideas, relationships, systems of thought, animals, human beings, societies, religious practices, forms of work, hobbies, and so on without end. Any object that man is naturally capable of knowing and for which he has a natural desire or taste can "usurp the hearts which are due to God".<sup>291</sup>

Wesley uses his arrangement of the natural desires, described in Chapter One, to classify the various kinds of idols and "species of idolatry" or "kinds of love of the world" common to mankind.

These idols, these rivals of God, are innumerable: but they may be nearly reduced to three parts. First, objects of sense; such as gratify one or more of our outward senses. . . . Secondly, objects of the imagination; things that gratify our fancy, by their grandeur, beauty, or novelty. All these make us fair promises of happiness, and thereby prevent our seeking it in God. . . They are, thirdly, what St. John calls, "the pride of life". He seems to mean, honour, wealth, and whatever directly tends to engender pride.<sup>292</sup>

If we have other natural desires as the social or sympathetic, the objects of these also can "take the place of God" in our lives. Wesley especially warns against idolatrous attachments to those individuals and communities with which we are intimately associated. "how frequently is a husband, a wife, a child in the place of God! How many that are counted good Christians fix their affections on each other . . . not in the Creator. . . Now if this is not flat idolatry, I cannot tell what it is."<sup>279a</sup>

The same is true of the objects of mixed and secondary desires. Knowledge or learning, for instance, although impotent values, become false gods when we "give ourselves wholly to them". In speaking of learning being an idol, Wesley says

I allow that most of these studies have their use, and that it is possible to use without abusing them. But if we seek our happiness in any of these things, then it commences an idol. And the enjoyment of it, however it may be admired and applauded by the world, is condemned by God as neither better nor worse than damnable idolatry.<sup>280a</sup>

Wesley, as is well know, saw the loving and seeking of "money for its own sake" as perhaps the most "damnable idolatry". He made the accusation that "the whole city of London uses the words, rich and good, as equivalent terms".<sup>281a</sup> Time and again he expressed his fears that the power of riches to capture the souls of men would destroy the Methodist Revival if not the whole Christian movement.

Finally, it is most interesting to note that religion itself can become an idol.

If, by the grace of God, we have avoided or forsaken all these idols, there is still one more dangerous than all the rest; that is, religion. It will easily be conceived, I mean false religion; that is, any religion which does not imply, the giving the heart to God. Such is first, a religion of opinions; or what is commonly called, orthodoxy. Into this snare fall thousands of those, who profess to hold "salvation by faith:" indeed all of those who, by faith, mean only a system of Arminian or Calvinian opinions. Such is, secondly, a religion of forms; of barely outward worship, how constantly soever performed; yea, though we attend the church service every day, and the Lord's Supper every Sunday. Such is, thirdly, a religion of works, of seeking the favour of God, by doing good to men. Such is, lastly, a religion of atheism; that is, every religion whereof God is not laid for the foundation. In a word religion wherein "God in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself", is not the alpha and omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last point."<sup>282a</sup>

Literally, every object that man was created to know, and constituted to enjoy, is capable of becoming - yes, threatens to become -- his god, luring him into atheism and idolatry. "We are encompassed on all sides with persons and things that tend to draw us from our centre. Indeed every creature, if we are not continually on our guard, will draw us from our Creator".<sup>283a</sup>

Wesley frequently summarizes this total mode of existence as love of created being. All who do not seek their happiness in God are "lovers of themselves, lovers of the world, lovers of pleasure".<sup>284a</sup> Such an individual, as we have seen, is wholly concerned with the material, temporal, natural world which is mediated by the natural senses. He does not "think of, relish" things of the spiritual, eternal, divine realm. His thoughts and desires and feelings are consumed by "the things that are seen - men, money, things of the earth; [rather than] the things that are not seen - God, grace, heaven."<sup>285a</sup> His concern is for pleasure and the joys of this world. The set of his soul is toward the immediate satisfaction of his many desires, toward the physical, aesthetic and personal thrills of the moment. The voices of conscience, duty, reason are set aside or stifled as pleasure is sought for its own sake.

The idolatrous individual lives a self-centered existence. Wesley is not opposed to proper self-love as we shall see a bit later. In this context he is thinking of selfishness in relation to the neighbor and self-will in relation to God. The man who loves the world places himself in the center of his universe. All idolatry is partiality to the larger or smaller self -- my pleasure, my group, my nation. Genuine disinterested universal benevolence has no place here. The neighbor becomes merely a means to his own ends and delights. And, as indicated earlier, seeking satisfaction outside of God involves rebellion against God, a pride of independence of God, a wild self-will in rebellion against God.

Indeed it may be said, that every man is by nature, as it were, his own god. He worships himself. He is, in his own conception, absolute Lord of himself. Dryden here speaks only according to nature, when he says, "myself am king of me". He seeks himself in all things. He pleases himself. And why not? Who is Lord over him? His own will is his only law; he does this or that because it is his good pleasure. In the same spirit as the "son of the morning" said in old time, "I will sit upon the sides of the North," he says, "I will do thus or thus." And do we not find sensible men on every side who are of the self-same spirit? who is asked, "Why did you do this?" will readily answer, "Because I had a mind to it."<sup>285a</sup>

Finally, this mode of existence has consequences as we shall see more clearly later. The love of the world is an unnatural and foolish, a dissipated, disordered, vicious and unhappy way of life. It is against the grain of the universe and man's nature for man was made for God. It brings disunity and strife into his soul. Viewed objectively, this is to say that "natural man" is a polytheist. If we do not worship the one true God, we worship not one but many idols, although one of the many may be the chief among the others.<sup>287a</sup> Subjectively, this is dissipation, and the powers of the soul are pulled in all directions. Wesley used the word "dissipated" to indicate this state. All of our thoughts and desire and passions are "dissipated, when they are unhinged from God, their proper centre, and scattered to and fro among the . . . things of the world". The love of the world also fills the soul with pride and passion, impurity and inhumanity. This issues in dissatisfaction and misery. There is always a discontent in the man who is turned toward the temporal realm. "No thing, no person under the sun, no, nor the amassment of all together, can give any solid, satisfactory happiness to any child of man."<sup>289a</sup> To be sure, there is a kind of joy in love of the world, but it is neither permanent nor satisfying. Such a one, says Wesley, "may be merry; but he cannot be happy".<sup>290a</sup>

It is true, that while we are in the vigor of youth and health; while our blood dances in our veins; while the world smiles upon us, and we have all the conveniences, yea, and superfluities of life, we frequently have pleasing dreams, and enjoy a kind of happiness. But it cannot continue; it flies away like a shadow; and even while it does it is not solid or substantial: it does not satisfy the soul.<sup>291a</sup>

Man cannot sustain himself in this manner of life, but is left with a deep spiritual hunger which, sooner or later, drives him to call upon God.

## 2. The Orientation toward God

The true active principle of man is the soul's orientation toward God. Wesley saw three ways for men to be present to life. Since God is the source and end of all beings, each of these ways involves an attitude toward God; one negative and two positive, only one of which is proper even though the other is nowise to be despised. The love of the world, as we have seen, assumes an attitude of indifference and enmity toward God. The two positive relations are



fear of God and love of God. In a later section the fear of God will be dealt with at some length. It needs to be only briefly mentioned here.

The fear of God is an intermediary state between love of the world and love of God. Most men dwell here at some time; indeed, every lover of the world perhaps passes in and out of this state. This is a positive attitude toward God as he can be and is known through reason and tradition outside the Christian revelation. It is a desire for the eternal but a fearful desire, because the object is seen only as the final lawgiver and ultimate judge. Externally he is the frowning providence; internally, he is the stern voice of conscience. Thus, one who lives in fear of God desires and shuns God at the same time. He desires but does not delight in Him; he fears God. His mode of life is to appease this stern and frowning deity by external obedience in order to avoid his punishment and win his favor. Such an individual delights in the world but his fearful desire of God enables him to struggle against the tug of idolatry. The resulting tension makes this a miserable existence which is relieved only by moments of promise of and hope for relief. The worldly man has a false peace and merriment; this man has none. In the end the battle of the one who fears God is lost, leaving him in despair. This last stage is, for Wesley, repentance where man is left naked before God, guilty, sin-filled and helpless. And this repentance is the final bridge to man's proper manner of life. For in the midst of this experience it is given to men to understand, in and through Christ, that the One they feared is truly their Father. Such an awareness, as we shall see in the next section, enables them to love God, the only true spring of action and ruling principle of the soul.

It is necessary to have an idea of man's bondage to the love of the world, and of the struggle of the man who fears God, in order to understand how Wesley conceived of the love of God. He has two different views of the love of God: the love of complacency and the love of gratitude. One might rightly think that they are so utterly different that they could never be brought into any kind of harmony. Yet for all practical purposes Wesley did bring them together and does not appear to have been consciously aware of any fundamental incompatibility. By the love of complacency he meant delight in and desire for the excellencies, beauty, perfections of an object which moves

the beholder to strive to imitate these perfections and hence to possess them in himself, which activity when complete, brings that love to its fruition. The second, the love of gratitude, is thankfulness directed toward a subject for gifts received which impels the receiver out of gratitude to please the giver by striving to fulfill his desire or will. Both of these views have been mixed together in the thought of churchmen ever since the early Christians met the Greek mind.

The love of "delight or complacence" is the more basic view in Wesley. It was his earliest understanding of the love of God which he received, immediately, from the Mystics, and, more remotely, from the whole stream of Greek thought in the church. Although this was radically qualified after his Aldersgate transformation, it remained the backdrop upon which the filial<sup>292a</sup>, the grateful<sup>293</sup>, the thankful<sup>294</sup> love of God was superimposed. Wesley came to this latter view at the time of his 1738 conversion when he indirectly met the thought of the Reformers.

Although we have called the love of complacency the fundamental view in Wesley's thought, there is no doubt that the love of gratitude was the revolutionary principle in his thought and life and was the compelling idea of the revival. In a letter to Dr. Robertson in 1753, Wesley points to these two views and to his change of mind concerning them although he overstates, in a way, his case.

The doctrine of pure love. . . (the loving God chiefly if not solely for His inherent perfections) I once firmly espoused. But I was at length unwillingly convinced that I must give it up or give up the Bible. And for near twenty years I have thought, as I do now, that it is at least unscriptural, if not anti-scriptural; for the Scripture gives not the least intimation, that I can find, of any higher, or indeed any other love, love of God, than that mentioned by St. John - 'We love Him, because He first loved us'. And I desire no higher love of God until my spirit returns to Him."<sup>295</sup>

As long as one thinks primarily of man as an end-seeking animal and of God as an object embodying infinite perfections, he will hold to some idea like the love of complacency.

The problem is that the soul in man, as we find him, is not turned toward the final good. Man's delight is captured by a relative good. He does not naturally love God. He is in bondage to love of the world.

No man loves God by nature, any more than he does a stone, or the earth he treads upon. What we love we delight in: but no man has naturally any delight in God. In our natural state, we cannot conceive how any one should delight in Him. We take no pleasure in Him at all; He is utterly tasteless to us. To love God is far above, out of our sight. We cannot, naturally, attain unto it.<sup>290</sup>

If help is to come, it must come from outside. Wesley saw that it takes a special act of God to liberate man from his gods and to direct him to his true end. But this demands a different view of God. He is no longer merely an object of infinite perfection who is to be contemplated. He is now an active subject who does mighty acts. Being indebted both to the Greeks and to the Hebrews, Wesley constantly thought of God in both ways, as goodness and as power. This special act of liberation God performed in Christ and performs again as he reproduces it in the individual. "As Satan turned the heart of man from the Creator to the creature, so the Son of God turns his heart back again from the creature to the Creator."<sup>297</sup> This gracious act is the source of the love of gratitude. "The chief ground of this love, as long as we remain in the body, is plainly declared by the apostle, 'We love Him, because He first loved us.'<sup>298</sup> This is a central emphasis in Wesley as will be obvious even to the casual reader. God, then, becomes the center of our being because we were loved by Him. Our-relation to God is not only one of desire and delight but also of gratitude and thankfulness.

Wesley brought together these two views of love, complacency and gratitude, in the term "grateful love". The meaning is grateful complacency or thankful desire and delight in God. This unites his two views of God and the two corresponding attitudes toward God. The God Who has acted in bestowing benefits upon us and to whom we are grateful, is the final Good who is infinitely delightful in himself, calling forth our complacency. Or, again, the finally perfect object is the subject which acted in our behalf. There are two ways in which grateful delight in God may be understood. First, we delight in God out of gratitude. We aim at Him because He aimed at us. Because He did something which enabled us to delight in Him, our love is ever accompanied with attitudes of thankfulness. Second, the complacency we have is for the loveliness of the One who was in Christ. It is in the loveliness of the mercy of God for us in Christ that we delight. This is to say that man cannot and does not in this life enjoy the infinite perfections of God directly; that is

for the world to come. He does enjoy His beauty which He has graciously revealed in Christ, given us as a gift. "I aim at the one end of my being, God; even at 'God in Christ reconciling the world unto himself.' He shall be my God forever and ever, and my guide even unto death!"<sup>299</sup> This is the only love of man for God while he is in the body.

The Mystics, who early influenced Wesley, held that only the pure in heart and life could behold God. Man's task then was to become perfect in himself and benevolent unto others that he might see God. In the 1738 experience, this view was radically altered for Wesley, but not entirely cast aside. He then saw that the gift of the vision of God in Christ Jesus (although not the total unveiling of the essence of God) enabled man to become pure, internally and externally. This given purity, when brought to maturity beyond death, would make possible the pure love of God or the vision of his total perfections. Man may move toward purity and the final vision in the here and now but it is never to be realized this side of death. In this life he is ever dependent on the gift of the vision of God in Christ, of the merciful love of God in Christ. Any delight he now possesses is a gift and is accompanied by gratitude. The relationship of man to God is one of grateful complacency.<sup>300</sup> Pure enjoyment of the infinite perfections of God is reserved for the future life to which we look forward in hope.

The union of these two views of love is seen further in the way Wesley conceives of the life which flows from them. The love of complacency issues in the imitation of the perfections of God in which we delight.

. . .the most acceptable worship of God is to imitate Him he worships, so he is continually labouring to transcribe into himself all His imitable perfections; in particular, His justice mercy, and truth, so eminently displayed in all His creatures.<sup>301</sup>

The love of gratitude, on the other hand, results in the desire to obey the one to whom we are indebted.

. . .thankfulness, gratitude, and love for benefits received are almost if not quite the same. Accordingly, in this world (whatever be the case of the next), we love Him because He hath first loved us. This love is undoubtedly the spring of all inward and outward obedience. But we delight to do what He has commanded for that very reason, because He has commanded it.<sup>302</sup>

Grateful delight, then, is obedience and imitation. Wesley sees no tension here: to obey God is to perfect the self and love the neighbor and to imitate

God is to embody in the self His virtues, the essence of which is His merciful action in Christ. The problem of the relation of man to his neighbor will be discussed some detail immediately after the following paragraph of summary.

The concern of the last few pages has been to analyze the proper ruling principle and spring of action in the soul of man. The task has not been completed but thus far it has been seen to involve a fundamental relationship to God which Wesley defined as grateful delight and which is initiated by God and issues in a total transformation of heart and life. The completeness of this revolution, which will be understood more fully as we progress, is clearly indicated in a passage from Wesley's New Testament Notes.

. . . 'there is a new creation' - Only the power that makes world can make a Christian. And when he is so created, the old things are passed away' - Of their own accord, even as snow in spring. Behold! The present, visible, undeniable change! All things are become new - He has new life, new sense, new faculties, new affections, new appetites, new ideas and conceptions. His whole tenor of action, conversation is new, and he lives, as it were, in a new world. God, men, the whole creation, heaven, earth, and all therein, appear in a new light, and stand related to Him in a new manner, since He was created anew in Christ Jesus.<sup>303</sup>

#### B The Love of God and Love of Man

Man is not only confronted by the Creator but with the fellow-creature, and he must respond to or take attitudes toward both. We are to love God and we are to love man and, according to Wesley, these relationships cannot be finally separated. Neither of these principles singly, but both together compose the proper "active principle" of the heart and life of man. this is to say that the proper spring of action in the soul is a dual principle. Wesley consistently treats it as such. "It is", he says, in two words, gratitude and benevolence; gratitude to our creator and supreme benefactor, and benevolence to all our fellow-creatures. In other words, it is the loving God with all our hearts, and our neighbour as ourselves!"<sup>304</sup> Therefore it is necessary in understanding man's center of gravity to discuss the love of neighbor in its relation to the love of God.

Wesley made use of the "frui-uti" formula: God alone is to be "enjoyed" in a final sense; all other beings are to be "used". Our love is to be "of God, for his own, and of man for God's sake".<sup>305</sup> To love God for His own sake and man for God's sake means, first of all, that man is not God. The Creator alone is to be worshipped and the human heart must not finally delight in,

must not attach itself in absolute devotion to, any other being, man included. To allow any creature whatsoever to be our God or to share our heart equally with God is to be guilty of naked idolatry. Secondly, it means that, although man is not God, he is to be loved in relation to, and only in relation to God, which according to this scheme is to "use" him properly. To value him primarily in relation to, or on account of, or because of, or for the sake of any other being is to "use" him falsely; that is, "abuse" him.

Our interest now is in the meaning of the word "love" in this phrase, "the love of God for His own sake and the love of man for God's sake". Traditionally, love tends to mean the same thing in each case; that is, delight or enjoyment. Both "frui" and "uti" connote complacency, that delight in perfections. "Frui" is ultimate and final delight; "uti" is relative and instrumental delight, depending upon the nature and degree of beauty in the object toward which the love is directed. From this arises the conception of an ordered love; "delight" is due to and elicited by another being according to his place in the scale of perfection or to the degree of perfection he embodies. Although this view has an important role in the thought of Wesley, as we shall see, it is not the entire story.

The term "love", when applied to our relation to God, finally does not mean the same thing as when it refers to love of man. It is not a matter of one "quality" being directed to various objects in varying degrees of intensity. love of man is something essentially different from love of God although it is inseparable from it. These two relations are as different as a filial relation between a son and his father and a brotherly relation between children of a common father. The one love is a whole-hearted devotion of the soul to the one God and the other is a ministering unto the needs of fellow creatures. The love of God is grateful delight in God for His own sake; the love of man, disinterested benevolence to man for God's sake. The present discussion will be divided into an analysis of benevolence and a discussion of the proper grounds and objects of such love.

#### 1. Love as disinterested Benevolence

Wesley is consistent in maintaining that love of neighbor is disinterested benevolence. He insists further that such love is not

essentially complacency although the love of delight and esteem does enter the picture, as we shall see, when the question of determining the neighbor is raised. Disinterested benevolence may be defined, in brief, as a non-self-regarding good will toward another.

Benevolence or good will includes both an internal well-wishing and an external doing good to another, relative to his total being, body and soul. Benevolence is first and always, for Wesley, an "affection of the soul."<sup>306</sup> but it is not simply a passion. It is also a "disposition of the heart", a habit, a virtue. It is an orientation and a regulation of the various powers of the soul: affections, desires, designs. Benevolence, says Wesley, is a "tender good will",<sup>307</sup> "a most earnest and cordial affection, the most inflamed desire", for the neighbor and his good; it is an "invariable thirst after his happiness in every kind"<sup>308</sup>; it is a set design to do him no harm, on the one hand, and to do him every good on the other. Yet, again, benevolence is not merely an internal temper of affection. It is such a temper, but only as it issues in deeds of beneficence aimed at the temporal and eternal well-being of the other. At least, it is never to be thought of as separated from external act, if, indeed, action isn't directly included in what is meant by the word benevolence. Wesley intended always to hold the inner and outer aspects of life together and vehemently opposed all who would neglect either side. He saw the root disposition of benevolence necessarily expressing itself in a man's Earnest and steady discharge of all social offices, of whatever is due to relations of every kind; to his friends, to his country, and to any particular community whereof he is a member."<sup>309</sup> Or again, it is an inner attitude toward others which issues in and establishes every kind of "justice, mercy, and honesty" in all social intercourse, in all the natural orders of existence. Benevolence is the fundamental relation which exists or ought to exist, between the self and fellow creatures. It involves the total self, inner temper and outer act. it is aimed at the total good of the other, present and future, material and spiritual.

Furthermore, this good will is genuinely disinterested. The love of the neighbor which issues from a man who loves God "is in itself generous and disinterested; springing from no view of advantage to himself, from no regard

to profit or praise, no, nor even the pleasure of loving. This is the daughter, not the parent of his affection."<sup>310</sup> Wesley made wide use of two scripture passages: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" and "As I have loved you, so love ye one another." Wesley did not see any radical difference between these statements; in a way, the second simply underscores the first.

The passage concerning loving others as the self is not used by Wesley to justify love of self. He simply assumes that the self always loves the self, that every man necessarily seeks his own happiness. It is used rather, in the first instance, to insist upon the claims of the neighbor as against exclusive self-love; secondly, it is used to illuminate the nature of those claims. Wesley, of course, is concerned here with the Christian man for 'none can love his neighbor as himself, unless he first love God."<sup>311</sup> Such a man must and does fervently pursue his own good, but he is also to pursue just as vigorously and with no reference to the self, the good of the other. This is to say that the principle of proper self-love or holiness and the principle of other-love or benevolence have equal status on a level subordinate to the love of God. Both flow from God, are the fruit of his love for us, and return to God. They are for His glory and in obedience to His will.

Neither relation is to be reduced into or have preference over the other. In this analysis, disinterested love of man means that, although we love the self, we love also and in the same degree, the other and this not for the sake of any direct or indirect profit to ourselves. Benefits to the self do result, to be sure, but these are the fruit, the consequences, "the daughter and not the parent" of other-love. To love others as yourself is "to desire and pursue their happiness as sincerely and as steadily as our own".<sup>312</sup> Self-love then becomes the measure of love of our neighbor. That we desire for ourselves we are to desire for him. As we seek our own happiness, so we are to seek our neighbor's happiness. The accent falls, however, upon his eternal happiness as it does in the case of the self. For both an objective and a subjective reason, we are to be concerned for the realization of the final end of his being. Objectively, since God created all beings for "determinate ends",<sup>313</sup> the greatest good we can do another is to aid him in the realization of his proper perfection, which is his greatest happiness. Subjectively, one



who enjoys God as his own good "cannot but desire that all mankind should partake of the common blessing".<sup>314</sup> Concern for another's final end, however, is never to exclude concern for his temporal existence. We are to seek "his happiness in every kind"<sup>315</sup> which is true in the case of the self - both "temporal and eternal".<sup>316</sup> The neighbor is to be ministered to in all his needs. We are to care for his substance, his body as well as for his soul.<sup>317</sup> We seek neither more nor less for our own self than we do for the other's, and we seek neither the one nor the other with greater zeal.

This points to a rational balance which is to be preserved in every kind and at every level between the self's good and the good of the neighbor. Wesley makes use of the Golden Rule which, if it is not innate as many think it, at least "commends itself, as soon as heard, to every man's conscience and understanding".<sup>318</sup> This is the practical, reasonable guide in loving others as yourself.<sup>318a</sup> To do to another as you would be done by is to "make his case your own".<sup>319</sup> It is to put ourselves in his situation and do to him what we would desire of him if our fortunes were reversed. Wesley adds the term "reasonably" here: "Whatsoever you could reasonably desire of him, supposing yourself to be in his circumstances, that do, to the uttermost of your power, to every child of man."<sup>320</sup> Reasonableness means that we are to do (as we expect to be done by) what we can without injury to ourselves.<sup>321</sup> This is explained as keeping a proper equilibrium between self-love and other-love. that is, "our superfluties [must] give way to our neighbor's conveniences;...our conveniences, to [their] necessities; our necessities, to their extremities."<sup>322</sup> Equality is thus to be maintained at every point concerning temporal good. This can be and is carried even further: our temporal extremities, that is our very physical existence, must bow before the eternal welfare of the other. We are to give up everything to the neighbor save our own good conscience or salvation, but we are to care equally for his good conscience and final happiness. This goes beyond the present principle of disinterestedness and brings us to the next step.

The second scripture Wesley used to speak of disinterestedness, was the "new commandment" of Christ: "As I have loved you, so love ye one another." Frequently, the "love thy neighbor as thyself" principle and this "new

commandment" occur together as expressing the same idea; the latter simply illuminating and strengthening the former. As Wesley says, by use of the second, Christ put the first "still more strongly".<sup>323</sup> This tends to reduce the one into the other and, without doubt, the first principle was for Wesley the primary one and perhaps he did not feel any critical tension between the two. Nevertheless, this new command did introduce into his view of disinterestedness a certain radical quality which was ever a threat to the reasonable balance between self-love and love of other. In this case it is not the love of self but God's love for us that is the standard by which we are to measure neighbor love, and disinterestedness is carried beyond balance to sacrifice. The actions of both the Father and Jesus serve as guides here. We are to be concerned with others in the same way as the Father was concerned when he surrendered what he valued most for man's sake and as the Son was concerned when he obediently tasted death for every man".<sup>324</sup> "If God so loved us, how ought we to love one another."<sup>325</sup> When our love for others is thus determined by God's love rather than by self-love, there is no question about surrendering all temporal advantage, even life itself, for the sake of the eternal welfare of the neighbor, and this not for friend alone but foe as well. "If we feel ourselves ready to do this, then do we truly love our neighbor."<sup>326</sup> Moreover, Wesley can see this kind of disinterestedness carried to the final extreme of total self-forgetfulness where, apparently, self-love, as a conscious principle of action, is wholly set aside. In this case, our "spiritual advantage", as well as our physical, gives way, so to speak, before the eternal welfare of the other whom God loves. One may be so swallowed up by zeal for the "glory of God and the happiness of man" that he will completely forget himself:<sup>327</sup>

he may almost seem, through an excess of love, to give up himself, both his soul and his body, while he cries out, with Moses, 'Oh, this people have sinned a great sin; yet now, if Thou wilt forgive their sin -- ; and if not, blot me out of the book which Thou has written'; or, with St. Paul, 'I could wish that my self were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh!'<sup>328</sup>

For Wesley, to press this view too far would be tantamount to changing his total outlook. It would mean one could so trust the destiny of the self to the God who loves that one could freely go about the business of concern for

the neighbor. It would mean that the moral perfection of the self would be seen as the by-product of serving others and, therefore, need not be a self-conscious principle of action. As a matter of fact, Wesley rarely goes so far toward this "holy nonchalance" but, for the Christian, this is always there in the shadows as a menace to his neat calculations. Such disinterestedness as this in the love of the neighbor "as we love our own souls, is modified by the "new commandment. which adds the immoderate note of laying down one's life for the sake of his neighbor. A balance is to exist between our concern, both for the material and eternal goods of the self and those of the neighbor. The material always gives way to the eternal, even to the physical death of the self. Then the eternal goods of the two parties clash, we are to give up all to the other but our own salvation. To summarize: The reasonable thing is love others as self. The sub-rational view is to love only self; the radical view is to give self for the other. The reasonable way is what Wesley held to and this could not be possible except we love God.

The love of man is disinterested benevolence directed toward the neighbor. But who is the neighbor? This is the question which must now engage our thought.

## 2. Love as Complacency and Compassion.

The second concern in discussing man's love for man is the problem of distinguishing our neighbor. Wesley continually defines the neighbor as the one to whom our disinterested good will is due, but the perplexity remains: to which one is it due? This aspect of the problem is intimately bound up with the question of why another human ought to be loved. This is the question of the grounds of good will, and the answer to this gives the clue for distinguishing the neighbor.

We have already seen that the creature is to be loved in relation to, or for the sake of, God. This, however, can be understood in several ways. It may suggest that the neighbor is to be loved for the sake of the self's love of God. My neighbor is to be valued for the purpose of building up the virtue of love within my self. He is a means to an end, used as a tool. It cannot be

denied that such a response is implicitly present in Wesley's whole view but further discussion of it must be temporarily postponed.

Into other interpretations of the "uti" formula are found quite explicitly in Wesley and constitute two different grounds for good will, and hence two different understandings of the identity of the neighbor. First, the neighbor may be seen as the one who also loves God. For the sake of his love for God he becomes our friend or our brother and merits our benevolence. Good will, in this case, is based on the goodness and loveliness which the other possesses. This is the love of complacency. It is mutual in nature and necessarily limits the conception of the neighbor to those who are virtuous in nature. Secondly, to love man for the sake of God means, for Wesley, to love him for the sake of God's love for man. The neighbor, in this view, is precisely every man. Our good will is to be directed toward every soul God has made, foe as well as friend, the alien as well as the brother, the unlovely as well as the lovely, the wicked as well as the righteous. This is a love of compassion for those in need. Neither the idea of complacency nor that of reciprocity has any place in this conception of fellow-love.

These two views of good will toward others might be analyzed in this fashion: (1) particular, complacent, reciprocal, disinterested benevolence and (2) universal, pitiful, "one-way", disinterested benevolence. Both of these are forms of good will but, in the one case, this good will is due to and directed toward the brother or friend in Christ while, in the other case, the object of such love is "every man in the world". Our task at the moment is to look more carefully at each view and to examine how they are related in Wesley's thought.

a. The love of Complacency

The first type of human love, which may be called fraternal or friendship love, has to do in this context with the love of fellow Christians for each other. This viewer occupied a large place in the thought of the Founder of the Methodists. One might say that it threatened to crowd out all other views of creature love. Wesley articulated this particular complacent, reciprocal good will in both Greek and Biblical accents. He, himself, never

really distinguished between them and actually tended to use the Greek idea of friendship to illuminate the Hebrew concept of brotherhood.

The Biblical figure for love of the brother is taken from some natural order of relations, such as the home or the political community. The Christian fellowship is like a family; fellow Christians are brothers, all children of the same father and one naturally cares for those of his own household. Love is naturally directed toward those who love God as we love God, our brothers in Christ. "Everyone who loveth God that begat, loveth him also that is begotten of him - -Hath a natural affection to all his brethren."<sup>309</sup> Even as there is a natural, tender "good will" which exists in some degree between members of a family or a state or a congregation, so there is such a natural relation between brothers in Christ, fellow citizens of the New Jerusalem, companions in the Kingdom.

This idea of in-group love was, for the most part however, interpreted and spelled out with the aid of Aristotle's conception of friendship; that is, mutual good will between men of virtue. Perhaps this was the controlling image in Wesley's reasoning about love of the brethren. "Friendship is one species of love; and it is, in its proper sense, a disinterested reciprocal love between two persons."<sup>330</sup> These two persons are men of moral excellence for "wicked men" it seems, are "incapable of true friendship".<sup>331</sup> The first time the term "love" occurs in the above quotation about friendship it means benevolence; the second time it means complacency or delight in moral beauty as well as benevolence. Friendship love is distinguished from other kinds of disinterested good will by the elements of complacency and reciprocity.

"Complacency" along with "esteem" were widely used terms in Wesley's time and meant an enjoyment of moral excellence, and of those who excel in such virtue. Since for Wesley "real, solid virtue" or moral perfection in man is nothing less than the proper relation to God, the object of our complacency in human love is man's love for God along with all that flows from such love. Wesley points to this in warning against a false and perverted "love of complacency or delight" which is found in ungodliness and ungodly men of the world. He insisted that true complacency is directed toward "the saints . . .

and in such as excel in virtue."<sup>332</sup> The one loved is the one who is in himself lovely, as he, in one degree or another, loves God.

The other essential property of friendship love is reciprocity. Complacency, of course, is a two-way matter. A person does not delight in another's virtue unless he himself is virtuous, and this means that the other also delights in his virtue. only he who loves God loves those who love the good. Therefore, he himself is, because of his love for God, an object of complacency to those who love God. From this mutual complacency flows reciprocal good will. In this relation, each party freely gives to and freely receives from the other "all things needful for life and godliness".<sup>333</sup> I place demands upon my friend and accept his demands upon me. "Whatsoever I claim from him, . . . the same I am ready . . . to give him,"<sup>334</sup> and vice versa. One sole restriction limits this love: "Give up everything to your friend, except a good conscience toward God".<sup>335</sup>

It must not be inferred that this mutual love is not truly disinterested. Aristotle says there is a type of friendship which is based upon the usefulness of another to us or upon the pleasure that friendship gives, but this is not genuine friendship. True friendship is never, in the first instance, a matter either of usefulness or pleasure. We do not simply use the other for our ends, although indeed he is useful to us. Although we may enjoy our friends delight in us and regard for us and we have every right to desire this)<sup>336</sup> it is not, according to Wesley, the primary concern. The basic intention is to do for the friend because he is one in whom we delight and not in order to receive his benefits or for the sake of the joy of his approval. Self-love and love of the other are here balanced as we have seen earlier. I am equally concerned for his good and he, for mine in a reciprocal manner.

What has been said here is that the man who loves God (frui) relatively delights (uti) in all who love God. From this complacency, immediately grounded in the beauty in man and only remotely in God, flows disinterested well-wishing and well-doing to the other. In brief, for Wesley "to love man for the sake of God" in the present context means to have good will toward the other because of the other's love for God. The love of benevolence here is based on

complacency and the neighbor, in this view, is the one to whom our good will is due, is the one who elicits our delight by his own loveliness.

b. The Love of Compassion.

The second type of human love is compassionate benevolence, which we have referred to as "universal, pitiful, one-way, disinterested good will". The term "universal benevolence," so frequently used by Wesley, refers to this inclusive kind of good will. The same is true of the word "benevolence", used without any qualifying adjectives, when it is joined with the idea of gratitude toward God. This is, for instance, whenever Wesley sums up the meaning of love or religion or virtue or righteousness as gratitude toward God and benevolence toward man.

The adjective "universal" identifies our neighbor, the one to whom our good will is due, as exactly every man, be he "'friend or foe, Christian, Jew, heretic or pagan". "If any man ask," says Wesley, "'who is my neighbor?', we reply, 'every man in the world', every child of His, who is the Father of all the spirits.'"<sup>337</sup> This relationship to others, which flows from the love of God, is termed "universal love" for it is

not confined to one sect or party not restrained to those who agree with him in opinions, or in outward modes of worship, or to those who are allied to him by blood, or recommended by nearness of place. Neither does he love those only that love him, or that are endeared to him by intimacy of acquaintance. But his love resembles that of Him whose mercy is over all His works. It soars above all these scanty bounds, embracing neighbours and strangers, friends and enemies; yea, not only the good and gentle, but also the forward, the evil and unthankful. For he loves every soul that God has mad"; every child of man, of whatever place or nation.<sup>338</sup>

It is this inclusive feature that sets this kind of love off from that of the "natural" man, the one who loves the world. Sometimes Wesley seems to hold that every person, whether he be a lover of God or of the world, has good will toward other men, and that the only real problem is whether the neighbor is to be interpreted in a restricted or all-inclusive sense. Love of the world, however, issues in a "false notion of the neighbor".<sup>339</sup> A restricted God means a restricted view of the one to whom our good will is due; while the fruit of the love of the universal God is the true recognition of the neighbor -- a universal view. At other times, Wesley turns this around. He holds that there can be no genuinely disinterested benevolence except where all men are seen as our neighbor. If the view of neighbor is restricted, good will then is

but some form of "reflected self-love".<sup>340</sup> This is to say that the natural man has a kind of good will toward those that love him, agree with him, do as he does, enjoy what he enjoys. This is, however, not true benevolence but "self-love reflected". These are false views of the neighbor and hence false benevolence. Wesley brings together both of these views in commenting on the Good Samaritan Parable.

And he said, He that showed mercy on him - He could not for shame say otherwise, though he thereby condemned himself and overthrew his own false notion of the neighbour to whom our love is due. Go and do thou in like manner -- Let us go and do likewise, regarding every man as our neighbour who needs our assistance. Let us renounce that bigotry and party zeal which would contract our hearts into an insensibility for all the human race, but a small number whose sentiments and practices are so much our own, that our love to them is but self love reflected. With an honest openness of mind let us always remember that kindred between man and man, and cultivate that happy instinct whereby, in the original constitution of our nature, God has strongly bound us to each other.<sup>341</sup>

The ground of this love is not man's love of God but God's love for man, and the neighbor, therefore, is exactly every child of God. It is when man is loved "for his Creator's sake" and "for the sake of his Redeemer"<sup>342</sup> that all final divisions among men are cast down: the unfriendly as well as the friendly become the objects of our kindly affections and of our acts of kindness. Indeed, when we value the creature for the sake of his value to the Creator, every being which He had made, the lower as well as the higher (regardless of what relative scales of value we use), becomes an object of our scorn. No one is beyond the pale of those "to whom this love is due", especially not those who are our enemies -- "those who are now 'despitefully using and persecuting us'".<sup>343</sup> Nor may we except those who are "the enemies, of God and their own souls".<sup>344</sup> It is the "excluded" man, the enemy, the one who is a threat to the self and to what the self loves who receives the attention here.

It was just this enemy which worried Wesley -- the unlovely, the wicked, the ignorant. Here it was that he saw that the love of complacency was inadequate either as the ground or the essence of this love. Universal benevolence, he insists, is quite different from complacent love on several counts. When the love of God in Christ fills our hearts, we love our fellows

"not with a love of esteem or of complacence; for this can have no place with regard to those who are (if not his personal enemies,



yet) enemies to God and their own souls; but with a love of benevolence, -- of tender good will to all the souls that God has made.<sup>345</sup>

Esteem is delight in the virtues of those men who are above us according to one or another scale, while complacency is delight in the excellencies of our equals. But what of those who are beneath us, the unlovely ones, the vicious ones, the enemies? Complacent love is not sufficient. Another kind of love is needed to include them, a pitiful love excited by another's lack or misfortune or need. It is always a "tender" benevolence, for when we were in need, God loved us. Out of gratitude and in imitation of God, we respond to others' needs.

Yet this is not just an "affection" for or a feeling with another. It is a fixed disposition to do good to another which issues in good. It is not a concern for some abstract idea of humanity. Rather we must regard "every man as our neighbour who needs our assistance",<sup>346</sup> whom providence puts in our way. This is to say that the first man we meet who is in need, be he Christian or not, friend or foe is due our good will. The shocking thing was that Christ called all men his brothers and every man his friend, neither the quality of character nor the idea of reciprocity invades this relationship. It may be that this man is a brother in Christ or a man of virtue but, relative to the good will due him, this is quite beside the point. It may be that we will receive or have received good from him; this again is beside the point. The first man we meet who is in need is our neighbor and due our good will. In this sense he is our friend and our brother. We love another not because of our own virtue or his, but for the sake of, on account of, and in relation to, God's love for him expressed in creation, redemption, and providence.

### 3. The Relation of Compassion and Complacency.

We now turn to the manner in which Wesley related these two understandings of the love of man: friendship or fraternal love and universal or neighbor love. For the purpose of clarity, let us review the distinctive elements in each.

(1) Friendship love is complacency which is aroused by the moral beauty which another possesses. It is a response to the completeness of the fellow. Neighbor love is compassion which is elicited by the needs of another. It is a

response to a lack or emptiness in him. (2) Friendship love is grounded indirectly upon God's love for man, but directly upon the self's and the other's love for God. It is a matter of the lovely one loving the lovely one. Neighbor love, however, is grounded directly in God's pitiful love for the self and for the fellow. The needy one who has received compassion from God, out of gratitude offers compassion to the needy one who also is loved by God. (3) Furthermore, friendship love is reciprocal in nature, a two-way relationship while universal love is a sacrificial, unilateral movement from the self to the neighbor. (4) Finally, both of these relations issue in good will, internal and external. From both complacency and compassion benevolence flows but, in friendship love, the object of this beneficence is necessarily restricted, while in neighbor love the object is unlimited.

Wesley never brought these views together into any real harmony, but neither did he ever separate them. The neighbor for him, the one to whom our benevolence is owed, was every man born of woman. He never digressed, in any instance, from this idea. Thus, he was aware that complacent love was not enough to encompass the evil and unrighteous folk. If these were not to be left out, compassionate benevolence was necessary. On the other hand, there are both good and wicked men in all degrees, friends and enemies, brothers and strangers, lovers of God and haters of God. Our relation to the one group is and must be different from our relation to the other. "To love these [men of the world] with a love of delight or complacence to set our affections upon them [to delight in them] is . . . absolutely forbidden."<sup>347</sup> We are, however, to enjoy and give the hand of fellowship to those whose hearts are right with our hearts;<sup>348</sup> that is, to those who have a faith in God which is "filled with the energy of love", producing obedience and service toward God and complete good will toward man.<sup>349</sup>

Complacent benevolence, then, as Wesley saw it, can no more be set aside than can compassionate good will. Both are legitimate; both are just there as a part of life as we know it. Nonetheless, although he saw them as belonging together, Wesley related them in quite contrary ways, making first one subsidiary to the other then reversing the order. The relationship he assumes is one of balance, in varying degree between the two types of love of

neighbor. Since an even balance could not be achieved, the two aspects remain for him in constant and troublesome tension. As a further consequence, Wesley appears to justify two radically different and contradictory attitudes toward life. When he put the emphasis on complacent benevolence, life tended to become a drawing away from responsibility to the world and a turning in upon the self where all is for the sake of the individual and his own salvation. But when he stressed compassionate good will, quite an opposite mode of behaviour ensued; an outflowing from the self to the world, to the very point of self-abandonment for the glory of God and the happiness of man. In the first instance, life is primarily a matter of seeking after God and salvation with the fellow creature being used as a means to that end. In the second instance, life finds its source in being loved by God and flows out toward the neighbor who is of value because of God's relation to him. In brief, the first approach makes for a defensive, miserly, cautious, exclusive mode of existence; while the second embodies the contrary qualities of openness, generosity, expansiveness, inclusiveness.

In the first suggested approach, all men, friends and foes alike, are our neighbors and we love them with compassion. But then we move to concern for particular good men whom we are to "love in a higher degree". The center of attention is directed here toward the brother but, actually, there are degrees of love toward the neighbor. We are to love the Christian brother "in a higher degree than . . . the bulk of mankind".<sup>350</sup> The love owed to the brother" is different from that owed to the world.

. . . not only as thou lovest all mankind; not only as thou lovest thine enemies . . . not only as a stranger, as one of whom thou knowest neither good nor evil, -I am not satisfied with this, - no; . . . love me . . . as a friend that is closer than a brother; as a brother in Christ, a fellow citizen of the New Jerusalem, a fellow soldier engaged in the same warfare . . . a companion in the Kingdom . . . a joint heir of His glory.<sup>351</sup>

Furthermore, there are differences in this brother love. Some are united to a particular congregation, that of "his nearest, his best beloved brethren . . . ". "These he regards as his own household; and therefore, . . . naturally cares for them, and provides that they may have all the things that are needful for life and godliness."<sup>352</sup> This means that more good will is due to some, the brethren, than to others, We are to be more concerned with the

end of some than others, more willing to equate some men's happiness with our own. Although in this view every man is our neighbor, Wesley has two different objects here because there are two kinds of neighbors: the first-class neighbor and the second-class neighbor. This is a "surplus benevolence" view.

It is his thinking in terms of complacent love which, in part, occasions Wesley's note of withdrawal from the world. He fears that complacency, which is to be reserved for God and the God-like, will be directed toward the world if we associate too closely with it. We must be filled with an "undissembled benevolence"<sup>353</sup> toward the people of the world, that is, toward those "who know not God".<sup>345</sup> But we must ever be careful not to go too far . 'lest we contract . . . a love of complacence or delight in them".<sup>355</sup> For among worldly men is a highly infectious plague which spreads from soul to soul.<sup>356</sup> To have fellowship with them is to run the risk that "they will attach you again to earthly things".<sup>357</sup> Association with sinful folk is necessary, of course, in day-to-day intercourse -- in business activities, and in personal relations with our families and fellow citizens. "Yet we should enter into no sort of connection with them, farther than is absolutely necessary."<sup>358</sup> The Christian is to be civil and courteous to worldly folk yet at the same time "keep them at a proper distance".<sup>359</sup> This is related to Wesley's asceticism: the body is evil and the prison house of the soul. Consequently, the world is evil and must be fled. He implies that the sickness of society is mightier than the power of God's love, that the sickness will overcome the remedy and we are to withdraw.

Furthermore, this complacent good will seems to lend itself to a self-regarding love of others, which is to say that the benevolence here tends to love its disinterestedness. This is evident in the sense sermons quoted above. "The only way to heaven [is] to avoid all intimacy with worldly men".<sup>360</sup> "There can be no profitable fellowship 'between the righteous and the unrighteous."<sup>361</sup> Our ungodly neighbors are to be loved just so far as not to weaken and destroy our own soul.<sup>362</sup> Concerning friends, Wesley declares that he himself resolved to "choose such only, as . . . would help me on the way to heaven".<sup>363</sup> His advice to fellow Christians was to "drop all familiar intercourse" with those who refuse to give their hearts to Christ and "save your own soul".<sup>364</sup> The neighbor here tends to become less than every man, recognized only in terms of

his own goodness, and therefore becomes simply a means to the salvation of the self.

This is not to suggest that compassionate love has no place here. But it is relegated to a minor role, in which it serves as a balance over against the self-regarding activity of man. In summary we are to do good to all men and more especially to those in whom we delight. This is the situation when Wesley majors on brother love and assigns neighbor love the subordinate position.

The second manner of relating complacent and compassionate good will gives principal emphasis to the latter. In the relationship spelled out in the above paragraphs, Wesley moved from universal love back to particular love and centered there. At other times, he moved from particular out to universal love, which then become the focal point. When primacy is given to universal love with brother love assuming the subordinate position, Wesley emerges as the evangelist rather than the conscious preserver of the fellowship. Although perverted, this is our Father's world which we are to enter with healing compassion, rather than a foreign world lost to the powers of evil against which we build an island fortress in order to protect the good. Wesley recognized the naturalness, necessity and value of brother love but complacency is not enough, for all men are our brothers. Complacency cannot, must not become the basis of benevolence nor define the neighbor. We must strive to overcome this natural restricted love of the friend and direct our love to all men, particularly our enemy -- all those who negate our being. The basic concern is for compassion to all.

Wesley held that Christianity offers man the true view of the neighbor, which conquers the false view based on blood, nearness or virtue. He saw that the Christian has "natural affection for" and "naturally cares for" his brethren. This is good and as it should be but our love must not stop there. By nature (actual man) we define our neighbor and hence channel our good will in terms of our friends. But Christianity is a revolution which overcomes this barrier to universal benevolence. Our view of the neighbor is revolutionized: love now flows to every man. We move from the Christian community into the world freely doing good to all. As seen from a secular vantage point, we are tied by blood and geography to a selected group but Christianity breaks down

these walls So that the world is not only our parish where good tidings are proclaimed, but the field in which good words are practiced. Within Christianity, this is true: the "ecumenical man" is he who has overcome narrowness of sect and denomination. A good summary of this second approach is found in the following quotation from a letter to Mr. Middleton.

Above all, remembering that God is love, he is conformed to the same likeness. He is full of love to his neighbors; of Universal love; not confined to one sect or party; not restrained to those who agree with him in opinions, or in outward modes of worship, or to those who are allied to him by blood, or recommended by nearness of place. Neither does he love those only that love him, or that are endeared to him by intimacy of acquaintance. But his love resembles that of Him whose mercy is over all his works. It soars above all these scanty bounds, embracing neighbours and strangers, friends and enemies; yea, not only the good and gentle, but also the forward, the evil and unthankful. For he loves every body that God has made; every child of man, of whatever place or nation. And yet this universal benevolence does in no wise interfere with a peculiar regard for his relations, friends, and benefactors; a fervent love for his country; and the most endeared affection to all men of integrity, of clear and generous virtue.<sup>365</sup>

C. A Summary: The Love of God, Self and Neighbor

In this chapter we have been dealing with love as the basic spring of action and ruling principle of the soul. It was discovered to be a dual principle: the love of God and the love of man. The two aspects of the human spirit do not have, however, equal Status. The love of God is prior both logically and psychologically to the love of man. God alone is to be loved for His own sake, while the neighbor is to be loved for the sake of God. This means that the creature is to be loved in relation to God; that is, in relation to God's relation to him as his Creator and Redeemer. It also means that he is to be loved because of your love for the God who first loved you. One imitates the excellencies of the One he delights in and God loves the neighbor. One obeys the will of the One he is grateful to and God commands love to the neighbor. Moreover, one cannot truly love his fellow unless he loves God with a love born of God's love for him.<sup>366</sup> "Unless we love God, it is not possible that we should love our neighbor as ourselves."<sup>367</sup> God's love for us is the only source of our love for God and both of these are the foundation of neighbor love. Sometimes Wesley speaks of both brotherly love and love to God as flowing directly from God's love to us, yet not in the sense that these principles have equal status. For the most part, however, he claims that

neighbor love springs from our love to God. Actually it is both, for only as God's love creates our love to God, does it become a fountain of universal disinterested benevolence.

Wesley uses strong figures in expressing both the intimate connection between love of God and love of man, and the priority of the first over the second. The one is the "necessary fruit"<sup>368</sup> of the other. Love of God "constrains us" to love our fellow creatures<sup>369</sup>; indeed, we "cannot avoid" loving him if we love God.<sup>370</sup> The love of God "instantly produces"<sup>371</sup> love of neighbor. Furthermore, as our devotion to God increases, there is "increase in the same proportion"<sup>372</sup> in our benevolence to all mankind".<sup>373</sup>

Wesley was vehemently opposed to any ethical or religious thinking that divided religion and ethics or reduced one into the other. There can be no 'separating the love of our neighbor from the love of God\*.'<sup>374</sup> "Call it humanity, virtue, morality, or what you please, it is neither better nor worse than atheism. Men hereby will fully and designedly put asunder what God has joined -- the duties of the first and second table."<sup>375</sup> There is no genuine moral virtue where there is no genuine religious experience.

And as reason cannot produce the love of God, so neither can it produce the love of our neighbor; a calm, generous, disinterested, benevolence to every child of man. This earnest, steady good will to our fellow-creatures never flowed from any fountain but "gratitude to our Creator". And, if this be (as a very ingenious man supposes) the very essence of virtue, it follows that virtues can have no being, unless it springs from the love of God. Therefore, as reason cannot produce this love, so neither can it produce virtue."<sup>376</sup>

The dual thrust of man's being is toward God and neighbor: grateful enjoyment of the Creator for His own sake and compassionate or complacent benevolence toward the creature for the sake of God. These are, according to Wesley, inseparably united although love of man is secondary to and dependent upon love of God.

But there is another element present in this thrust which we have noticed from time to time, namely self-love. Wesley wrote very little directly on the subject of self-love, but it was implicit in all his thinking upon neighbor love. He didn't need to say much about self-love for it was simply presupposed. First of all, his view that every man seeks his own happiness implies a love of self. Of course there is a false or perverted love of self

which is a self-love that turns in on the self. According to Wesley, this is what happens when man seeks his satisfaction in anything less than God. Proper self-love is present when we are rightly directed toward God. To put it in a more Aristotelian form: loving the external object includes loving the activity of loving the object and loving the pleasure which is the necessary accompaniment of the activity of loving the external good. The thrust of man's being, then, is toward the good, toward the perfecting activity and toward the enjoyment which is the fruit of that activity. Love of self is automatically and intimately associated with love of God. As was suggested earlier, the imitation of and obedience to God, which flow from grateful delight in Him, involve a holy concern for the self. 'We are to do all for the glory Of God.

In other words, we are to do nothing but what, directly or indirectly, leads to our holiness, which is his glory; and to do every such thing with this design, and in such a measure as may most produce it.<sup>377</sup>

. . .There is one thing needful, -- to do the will of God; and his will is our sanctification; our renewal in the image of God, in faith and love, in all holiness and happiness.<sup>378</sup>

Far from being a sin, self-love is "an indisputable duty".<sup>379</sup> The rule is "be ye holy" as well as "be ye merciful". Self-love is proper self-love only when man loves God and hence the neighbor. In any other context, it is perversion or self-centeredness. Proper self-love is perfection and happiness. It is a seeking after the most excellent functioning of the highest activity of man which is love of God; it is a seeking after the pleasure which cannot be divorced from that activity; it is a seeking after virtue or holiness or righteousness and the accompanying joy and peace. This is not merely a by-product of love of God and man but a self-conscious aim or thrust of our being along with love of God and man. The movement of the soul was not simply toward God and others but also toward that movement toward God and others. The eye was to be kept not only on God and neighbor but also was to turn in on itself and observe itself observing God and others. Our concern is not only with God but also with our concern for God.

At this point, Wesley was a thorough-going Aristotelian and Scholastic. He did not see that one might realize his being without directly seeking it. Although this idea is, at least, suggested when he speaks of laying down one's life for others and when he defines the law as love for others, Wesley never



finally saw that the perfection of the self would come as a by-product if we centered our attention on God and the neighbor. He did not see that, although Christ embodied all the virtues that Wesley admired in Him, He was not greatly concerned about embodying them. The Greek ideal is never, in the opinion of the writer, quite congenial to the Christian understanding of life and can never wholly be converted to it. Our thrust in life is not to be directed toward our virtues but toward God and the neighbor, the fruit of which is our character. If it is directed toward character, we achieve a character but it is a different character than that which is the fruit of aiming simply at God and man. the subjective good is a consequence of the thrust toward the objective good but, when our subjective good becomes, so to speak, our objective good, we get a subjective good but not that at which we aimed.

This understanding of self-love leads to the conclusion that the spring of action in the soul is for Wesley a three-fold rather than a dual principle. The final thrust which constitutes the spiritual core of man is toward God, neighbor, and self and the three are inseparable. The love of God is on one level. He alone is to be loved for his own sake and with the whole heart. Love of self and love of neighbor are on a subordinate level which is dependent upon the higher. On this lower level perfection of self and good will toward others have an equal status. Man is to will both to the same degree and neither is to be reduced into the other. Both are an expression of the love of God. Glorifying God meant, for Wesley, both holiness and benevolence. There is no final conflict between self-love and social love. "For how is it possible that the good God should make our interest inconsistent with our neighbors?"<sup>380</sup> Although the two loves are never the same thing, as a matter of fact, they reinforce one another. To love the neighbor builds up the virtue of benevolence which is a part of the perfection of our character. On the other hand, it is only when the disposition or virtue of benevolence is established that the love of neighbor flows.

Love of our neighbor is absolutely different from. Self love, even of the most allowable kind; just as different as the objects at which they point. And yet it is sure that, they are under due regulation, each will give additional force to the other, till they mix together never to be divided.<sup>381</sup>

The temptation of any Christian perfectionist is to center upon self-love to the degree that all else becomes simply a means to this end. The neighbor, in this case, is used by and for the self and love for others becomes an exercise through which the self builds up virtue. Overt God tends to become an instrumentality to man's ends. Many examples of such perversions can be pointed to in Wesley. However, this was never his intention. "The love which our Lord requires in all His followers is the love of God and man; -- of God, for his own, and man for God's sake."<sup>382</sup>

Love, then, -- the love of God, man and self -- is the active principle of the soul which, when firmly established, determines all of our moral life. The man who is properly oriented in life gratefully delights in the Creator, is disinterestedly benevolent toward all creatures, and seeks for the perfection of his own being. This is the center of gravity of his spirit which expresses itself in every internal temper and in every external practice. It is with this manifestation of love in the heart and life of man that the next part of this treatise is devoted.

## II. LOVE AS THE MORAL CHARACTER.

In the present chapter the initial purpose is to analyze the meaning of love and happiness in the thought of Wesley and to understand the manner in which they are related. The problem of love is the large task and the main part of that was accomplished in the above section, in which love as the ruling principle was discussed. The remaining work, to which we now turn, is to examine briefly the way the ultimate spring of action in the soul expresses itself in what Wesley designated as internal and external righteousness, and then to note the manner in which joy and peace are necessary consequences of such a life.

### A. The Internal Life of Love.

The active principle of the soul orders and rules the total inner life. Some kind of love regulates the natural constitution of man discussed in Chapter One. If a man's spring of action is love of the world, every class of the spiritual powers is under its tyranny, If the primordial thrust is toward God, then the triple principle - love of God, man and self, or neighbor-love

and self-love under the love of God - controls every faculty and its functionings. It is this ordering of the inner life that Wesley called holiness or righteousness or the mind of Christ or the Holy Spirit within man. The labels he gave to it are manifold. In attempting to analyze this life of love in the soul, the major attention will be directed toward the rule of love in the will for it was the moral virtues with which Wesley was by far the most concerned.

Love, the ruling principle and spring of action, is the final guide and motivating power of the soul. Reason as well as will is under its domination. The power of apprehension is directed by love in what it attends and assents to, and habits of attention "to God and the things of Gods are formed in those who love God. The practical judgement and/or conscience in the spiritual man is given a new rule of piety, benevolence, and perfection by which it judges right and wrong and determines proper means and ends. In the sermon "On the Conscience", Wesley says that the Scriptures form the concrete rule for the Christian. Habits of Christian wisdom and prudence are formed in relation to these practical determinations. Lastly, the powers of ratiocination are transformed by the love of God by being supplied with first principles which are not present to "mere natural" reason.

In his view of the functioning of the soul, traits of both Aristotelianism and Platonism or both Augustinianism and Scholasticism can be observed. Behind both reason and will was love or the basic orientation of the soul. But reason, assisted by the moral virtues, was the proper guide of the desires, affections and passions- "setting them on their proper objects and duly balancing them." It was with these moral virtues and the inner actions of thoughts and feelings which issued from them that Wesley was most interested. Indeed, one might say: most obsessed with. It will be with these moral habits and qualities, called tempers in Wesley's time, which will occupy our attention in the rest of this section.

#### 1. The Nature of Tempers.

The term temper was widely used and popularly understood in Wesley's time. It was frequently employed as a synonym for virtue. Like the term virtue it had both a broad and narrow meaning, referring to the interior moral life

in toto as well as to some particular quality or excellence of that life. In the broad sense temper indicates the over-all bias, tone, disposition, both of mind and heart, as distinct from the outward conversation of life which issues from it. A man's temper is his character, the total orientation and organization of his inner faculties, his tendency or propensity to design and think, to desire and feel in one way rather than in another. This total disposition is determined and summed up in what a man loves or seeks his happiness in. In this sense then there are just two general or overall tempers to be found in mankind: love of God- the direction of both heart and mind toward God; and love of the world- the orientation of heart and mind away from God to things of this world.

Although both the mind and heart are involved in the idea of temper, the primary reference is to the affectional nature. When it is used in a series along with such words as designs and desires it points specifically to the affections and desires and passions as they are rightly or wrongly combined, directed, and regulated. The term always carried connotations of control, balance, moderation, proportion, regulation and evenness of the feelings. This means proper submission of the mind.

Temper was also very closely related to the idea of temperament. At times the words are used interchangeably but for the most part the latter refers to the organization of the vital powers of the body, especially as these affect the soul. Wesley, as did most people in the eighteenth century, held to some form of the ancient physiological doctrine of the temperaments. (See Ch. I) The particular combination of the basic elements or humors of the body found a physical tone or temper which had a corresponding affect upon the soul. This is called a man's animal frame or natural, that is physical, temper and according to the historical classifications, could be sanguine, choleric, melancholic or phlegmatic. These influenced the moral temper making it relatively easy or difficult to mold the various powers of the soul. Indeed, as we saw earlier, there is a close relation due to the laws of vital union, between the body and soul. The animal temper affects the moral and the moral, the spiritual. So in one way the character of a man includes the animal as

well as the spiritual frame. This is one of the reasons Wesley felt that final moral perfection was impossible in this life as long as we are in the body.

“. . . the animal frame will affect more or less every power of the soul; seeing at present the soul can no more love than it can think, any otherwise than by the help of bodily organs.<sup>384</sup>

The natural temper, or our temperament is a matter which is beyond our control and hence we are not responsible for it - not to be praised or blamed for it, be it good or bad. The moral temper - disposition of the soul, we are responsible for, except as it is influenced by powers beyond us,

The term temper refers not only to the over-all character structure but also to particular qualities or dispositions of the soul, such as humility, patience, benevolence or meekness. It can mean either a more or less fleeting tendency or a permanently fixed habit. A temper has to do primarily with the feelings or affections. Sometimes it is used almost synonymously with affection or, more probably, with a definite combination of feelings. Yet the mind is never divorced from it as director or regulator. A temper may be defined as a quality of the inner life including intention, desire, and feeling, flowing from the basic orientation and issuing in an external act. Benevolence, for instance, includes as intention and desire to do good to the neighbor accompanied by a kindly feeling toward him. Even the passive tempers, as we shall see, are not divorced from design, for there is no gentleness except benevolence be present.

The tempers are basically concerned with the affections. An affection, as defined in Chapter I, is a perturbation of the soul and body accompanied by the sensation of pain or pleasure. This disturbance arises when the mind is confronted with an object which it pronounces good or evil and causes the soul to move toward or away from the object.

The practical reason is the director and regulator of these affections. Then they are trained so that with "ease and readiness" they follow reason this is a disposition or temper. When this disposition becomes fixed it is a habit, also termed a temper or a virtue.

Tempers are good or bad, virtues or vices, for Wesley, according to whether they spring from the love of God or love of the world. Wesley also calls the tempers arising from the latter spring of action "unholy",

"unreasonable", "unnatural", "irrational" and "disquieting". The virtuous tempers are of course the opposite. In speaking of the new birth Wesley talks of "an inward change from all unholy, to all holy tempers."<sup>285</sup> These are all falsely oriented and unregulated dispositions - foolish, lustful, passionate, such as envy, jealousy, revenge, vanity, malice, fear, sorrow, rage, evil desire, anger. As we shall see later, they are all included in pride and passion. And as happiness or peace and joy<sup>386</sup> ever follows upon virtue, so all tempers which are holy are also easy while the unholy ones are uneasy.<sup>387</sup> Such tempers (including hatred of God and his creatures) are disquieting, they gnaw at the soul, they are hell within; whereas the holy ones are easy and calm, bringing heaven within.

## 2. The Classification of the Tempers

The tempers of man have been classified in various ways in western thought. Some have used the objects to which they refer as a basis for schematization. For instance, there could be self-regarding, social and religious virtues, or this worldly and other worldly tempers. Others divide them according to their source; that is, as to whether they are naturally acquired, or supernaturally infused. Again, the faculties of the soul with which they are primarily concerned may be used as a principle of classification. Illustrations of this system are: intellectual virtues, and virtues of will; or rational tempers and animal tempers, or, again tempers in the "active" powers of man and tempers in the "passive" powers. There are other schemes that have been or may be suggested. The one chosen depends on the total outlook of a man. Usually several are made use of in the same system and no system of classification appears to be adequate to deal with all that a given age or philosophy considers a virtue or vice. There are apparently always some tempers that just won't quite fit a given scheme.

Wesley, of course, did not work out any detailed systematic scheme relative to the human tempers. For the most part he is content simply to quote the lists of graces or the fruits of the Spirit found in the New Testament. Yet he has an implicit pattern which repeated reading of his works brings to the surface. One can point to two slightly different ways he has of generally organizing these inner qualities of the moral life. Both schemes have their

source and unity in love, but in one there is a threefold list of cardinal or living virtues while, in the other, these three are reduced to two root tempers. The phrase "humble, gentle, patient love" occurs in almost every writing of Wesley, pointing to the unity of virtue in love and to the threefold division of the tempers: humility, gentleness, and patience. In the sermon "On Meekness" the opposite dispositions or corresponding vices are enumerated. Wesley speaks of being saved from all "unholy tempers, from all pride, passion, impatience" and then goes on to describe these by indicating some of the subordinate tempers included in the cardinal ones. "We are saved from all arrogance of spirit, all haughtiness and overbearingness" or pride, the opposite to humility; "from wrath, anger and bitterness" or passion, the counterpart of gentleness; and "from discontent, murmurings, fretfulness peevishness", or impatience us over against the virtue of patience.<sup>388</sup>

In the other scheme there are two parent dispositions: humility and meekness. Both gentleness and patience are here included under meekness, giving two instead of three basic tempers. Wesley frequently sums up the whole inner life of Virtue or holiness as "humble, meek love". This is undoubtedly the prominent schematization in Wesley. Perhaps it is the only one which could be termed systematic at all. A brief elaboration of this scheme will help clarify the various dispositions of the soul in their interrelatedness as these appeared to Wesley.

Wesley classifies the tempers in terms of the inner powers of man, in terms of the objects to which they refer and in terms of the love from which they spring. The two cardinal virtues, humility and meekness, are closely interrelated. These virtues are in relation to love of God and love of man. Their opponents, the vices of pride and passion are in relation to love of the world. But all four tempers have to do with, or are directed toward, certain object -- God, self and neighbor. Again, Wesley orders the habits according to the powers of the soul. Humility is the parent virtue of all the tempers having to do with active powers, and meekness the original of all that have to do with the passive. Wesley sees all life as a doing and a suffering. We are continually acting and being acted upon. He exhorts his reader: "Be thou a lover of God, and of all mankind. In this spirit, do and suffer all things".<sup>389</sup>

The virtues which have primarily to do with our doing are "active" virtues; those which have primarily to do with our suffering are "passive" virtues. This first is humility; the second, meekness. Speaking generally, one is concerned with the orientation of the springs of action -- the desires and affections; the other, more with the passions -- that is, with their proper balance and control. This is particularly true of the more violent passions of fear, anger, and sorrow, and especially with intense desires and affections which, in high excitement, we generally think of as passions, as we saw in Chapter I. In the exercise of the active tempers, the self is basically the actor; in the passive tempers, it is the patient. In the sermon on "God's Love to Fallen men" Wesley says, "Upon this foundation, even our suffering, it is evident all our passive graces are built; yea, the noblest of all Christian graces, Love enduring all things."<sup>390</sup>

Wesley often speaks of both suffering and doing the will of God. Some of the tempers refer to one and some to the other. In the sermon mentioned above Wesley relates the passive virtues to the evil in the world which causes suffering. He also makes trust and confidence into a passive virtue, that which is relying on God in the midst of adversities which tend to make God appear as unworthy of trust.

When the term temper is used in the plural it refers to particular qualities, excellences or dispositions of the soul, such as kindness and patience. These are the virtues--a term which Wesley uses synonymously with tempers, dispositions and when these become fixed, they are habits of the soul. A temper or virtue or disposition can refer to a particular holy intent and/or feeling in a given situation, or point to a habitual tendency to so design and/or feel in every situation. The latter is what Wesley wants. Perfection or holiness or perfect love is the solidification of these tempers into fixed habits. The tempers are a tendency of the affections to express themselves in a certain way, right-directed and modulated by the reason. Wesley implies that the mind gives some order to the will. The nature of that order is due to the orientation of the mind. But only order given by a mind ruled by the love of God gives genuine order.



There are then two cardinal virtues in man: humility, which has to do with the active powers placing the mind and heart upon their proper objects; and meekness which is concerned with the passive part of the soul, the due control and regulations of the passions. Now Wesley, as noted above, also divides the tempers according to the objects toward which they are directed - God, self, and the neighbor. This means that each of the primary dispositions are broken down into three classes of secondary tempers. Humility in reference to God is dependence or obedience, in reference to the self is lowliness or self-knowledge, and in reference to the neighbor is benevolence or kindness. The same is true when the passive virtue of meekness is considered. Relative to God meekness is resignation; relative to the self it is patience; relative to the neighbor gentleness. In one way of speaking there are six fundamental dispositions: there are active obedience, lowliness, benevolence and there are resignation, patience, gentleness. Or to use another approach, passive. Two of the six are religious virtues' obedience and resignation; two are self-regarding, lowliness and patience; and two are social, benevolence and gentleness. The two virtues in each class are closely related--resignation is passive obedience to: God; patience is passive lowliness; gentleness is passive kindness. You can have one without the other.

Now pride is divided according to the object toward which it is directed, into obedience to God, kindness toward man, and lowliness in our self. Each of these is active. It is active obedience, active kindness, active lowliness. In meekness, we have seen, is resignation before God, gentleness to all men, and patience in ourselves. These are passive. Resignation is passive obedience to God, gentleness passive kindness, and patience is passive lowliness. All the other tempers in the human soul (and they are manifold and complex) can be traced back to the six dispositions or on back to the two primary tempers of humility and meekness and finally back to the fundamental orientation of the soul--love of God and man and self. The sum of all these dispositions constitutes the proper temper or character of the soul and is what is meant by the love of God and of man, and what Wesley meant by the "mind of Christ" which man is to possess.

It is this basic orientation of the soul which divides the tempers into virtues and vices or to say the same thing, holy and unholy dispositions. If a man is present to the world in terms of love of God and man, virtuous tempers are built up in the form described above. If a man "loves the world" he will be of vicious temper which is opposite at every point to the holy dispositions described above. Pride and passion, the opposite to Humility and meekness are the root vices. And each of these vicious tempers can, like the virtuous tempers be sub-divided according to their relevant objects. Relative to God, pride is independence, the opposite to obedience; relative to the self, it is conceit, the counterpart to lowliness; relative to the neighbor, it is malevolence as over against benevolence. The same is true of Passion. It is rebellion against God, fretfulness in the self and anger toward the neighbor, the counterparts of resignation, patience and gentleness. The temper of the vicious man is pride-filled, passion-filled love of the world.

All of this indicates that in "Wesley's thinking there is a basic unity and inter-relation of the virtues. Both the good tempers and vices flow from and move toward the fundamental bent of the soul. What a man loves determines his character. He is filled with either prideful, passionate love of the world or humble, meek love of God and man. Virtue is for Wesley a unity. You have all the virtues or all the vices (and there are infinite degrees of both) in terms of what you finally love - the two can exist together in the same character although one or the other is more prominent. This is the unstable man of the divided will and this is the state of the man who fears God. He has some love for God in him, which brings forth virtue. He also loves the world and hence is filled also with vicious dispositions. The man of God is a man of "humble, meek love." In every action he is ruled and motivated by humble love. This is to say he acts in obedient love, in lowly love, and in benevolent love. And in every action he suffers, he is resigned, patient and gentle. This is holiness of heart and when it becomes a fixed habit is perfect love. This interior structure of the moral virtues is a comparison Wesley made between Christians and non-Christians.

"For Christians are holy; these are unholy: Christians love God: these love the world: Christians are humble these are proud: Christians are Gentle: these are passionate: Christians have the mind that was in Christ:"<sup>391</sup>

Of course under each of these cardinal virtues are secondary virtues which are almost beyond enumeration. All are, however, some form of humble meek love. The last quality of a virtue mentioned earlier was the fact that the tempers are springs of action. They issue in external acts. A right act is the child of a holy temper. External righteousness proceeds out of internal holiness. To this outer life we must now turn our attention.

#### B. The External life of Love

Wesley spoke frequently about the Christian man's having the mind that was in Christ and walking as Christ walked. The first points to the inner life of love as we have described it above. "Walking as Christ walked" indicates the external behavior which flows from humble, meek love. Wesley always insisted that outward and inward religion or holiness must be kept together. "God hath joined them together from the beginning of the world; and let not man put them asunder."<sup>392</sup> He opposed those about him who would neglect either holiness of heart or holiness of life. He wished to give equal emphasis to both and firmly believed that because of the reciprocal action between them it was finally impossible to disjoin them. Still just what did Wesley mean by the Eternal religion?

He talks about Christian action in two ways: first, by speaking of justice, mercy and truth as duties; second, by speaking of works of piety and works of mercy. In the duty approach, the attention is directed toward the neighbor and in the second approach, primarily toward the self. In this last instance, the neighbor is quite a secondary concern and the purpose and intention of action, which Wesley calls the means of grace or good works, is to build up our own perfection. Works of piety include exercises

. . .such as public prayer, family prayer, and praying in our closet, receiving the Supper of the Lord; searching the Scriptures, by hearing reading, meditating; and by using such a measure of fasting or abstinence as bodily health allows.<sup>393</sup>

Works of mercy "wherein God has appointed His children to await for complete salvation" are deeds which minister to the body and souls of men

. . .such as feeding the hungry, entertaining the stranger, visiting those that are in prison, or sick, or variously afflicted; such as the endeavouring to instruct the ignorant, to awaken the stupid sinner, to quicken the lukewarm, to confirm the wavering, to comfort the feeble-minded to succor the tempted, or contribute in anyway to the saving of souls from death."<sup>293</sup>

To these means of grace one can add the works of discipline, upon which Wesley placed much stress, as a means of developing the character. This, then, at first glance might appear to fit our scheme of a relation to God, self and neighbor. This is not the case, however, for all three of these outer activities are performed for the sake of the perfection and happiness of the self. Turning to the other approach, Wesley's listing of the external duties as mercy, justice and truth were the common classification employed in his day. The same is true of the meanings he gives to them. Justice is giving all men their proper due; mercy means benevolent actions; and truth is honest dealing with men. In a letter to Dr. Warburton, he follows his usual practice of finding passages of Scripture to fit his scheme. He calls them the fruits of the spirit which

"consist, 'in all goodness, kindness, tender-heartedness' -- Opposite to 'bitterness, envy, anger, clamor, evil speaking; in all righteousness,' rendering to all their dues -- opposite to 'stealing'; 'and in all truth,' veracity, sincerity, -- opposite to 'lying'." <sup>395</sup>

Now we see the neighbor as the object of the intention. Benefits to the self are by-productive and derivative. But even a casual reader of Wesley would observe that he very seldom speaks in this fashion. On the other hand, his writings are full of descriptions of the works of piety and mercy and discipline, where the perfection of the self is of primary interest, the interest in the neighbor is quite secondary. here is raised again the problem in Wesley which was mentioned in discussing the relation between compassionate and complacent benevolence and in the description of the threefold spring of action in the soul of man. Although Wesley held that love of self, or perfection; and love of others, or benevolence, were to have an equal position unber love of God; the former tended always to appear in the first rank. This means that the internal life of love was exalted over the external; that the disposition of love of the neighbor was more important than the act, which inversion really means that social love tends to be reduced to self-love. A clear example of this occurs when Wesley talks of the necessity for a Christian to remain in the world. he says:

some intercourse even with ungodly and unholy men is absolutely needful, in order to the full exertion of every temper which He described as the way to the kingdom; that it is indispensably

necessary, in order to the complete exercise of poverty of spirit, or mourning, and of every other disposition which has a place here, in the genuine religion of Jesus Christ. Yea, it is necessary to the very being of several of them; that of meekness, for example, which, instead of demanding 'an eye for an eye or a tooth for a tooth,' doth not resist evil, but causes us, when smitten on the right cheek to turn the other cheek'; to turn the other also so that mercifulness, whereby we love our enemies, bless them that curse us, do good to them that hate us, and pray for them that despitefully use us and persecute us; and of that complication of love and holy tempers which is exercised in suffering for righteousness sake. Now all of these, it is clear, could have no being, were we to have no commerce with any but real Christians."<sup>396</sup>

The exterior life was in Wesley's mind to be lived for the sake of the interior life. This is seen in one of the most repeated phrases in Wesley's works "Unto him that bath shall be given". He spells this out in his Notes.

"Whosoever hath -- that is, improves what he hath, uses the grace given according to the design Of the Giver; to him shall be given -- more and more, in proportion to that improvement. But whosoever hath not -- improves it not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath -- here is the grand rule of God's dealing with his children of men: a rule fixed as the pillars of heaven."<sup>397</sup>

He is saying that the inner tempers only develop into fixed habits when they are exercised. "It is use that brings perfectness."<sup>398</sup>

The virtues or tempers for Wesley were both graces and achievements. They are given to us, on the one hand, and at the same time we build them. The holy dispositions flow out and are formed by the love of God which, as we shall see later, is in itself a gift. This love, however, does not create full-grown habits. It plants the seed of the tempers. They only come into maturity as they are exercised. Actions corresponding to the dispositions build up the dispositions. On the other hand, it is the tempers which determine the actions if we will that act. A certain virtue or temper produces an act, which in turn, strengthens or develops that virtue. There is even a further reciprocal action here. Love of God sows the seed of virtue which produces the action, which matures the virtue, which strengthens the principle of love in our hearts. And it is in the service of the development of the self that the external works of piety and mercy are to be understood. So that, when Wesley sees a dual commandment from God, love of self and love of neighbor, it was the first that had the preference. The New Testament conception of radical love for the neighbor never finally found itself at home in Wesley's thought.

Perfection of character always remained the central emphasis in Wesley. Perfection is the mature Christian life where the gift the of the love of God has itself become a fixed attitude of the soul through the various habits it formed now grown strong through external actions. It is a humble, meek love become a fixed disposition.

Christian perfection . . . is only another term for holiness. They are two names for the same thing. Thus, everyone that is holy is, in the Scripture sense, perfect."<sup>399</sup> To understand this more fully one must begin with the ways in which man is present to life. First is the natural man. His ruling principle is love of the world, from which is formed the cardinal habits of pride and passion along with their many offspring that together constitute his character. These fixed dispositions in turn hold him fast to love of the world. The man who fears God is a double-minded man. He is ruled by two opposing principles -- the world and God. The principle of the world conquers in the struggle because of the fixity of the habits springing from love of the world. The Christian or evangelical man loves God. But there are several levels in this stage. Wesley distinguished these with the help of "St. John's threefold distinction of all Christian believers: little children, young men, and fathers."<sup>400</sup> The little children love God but their dispositions are weak and often they fall into love of the world, due to the vicious tempers which remain. In the young men there has been a growth in virtue which has proportionally weakened the unholy tempers. Finally, the fathers are perfected in love. The holy virtues have become fixed habits eliminating those tempers which are the product of the love of the world.

This is humble, meek love brought to its fullness. It is the life of genuine virtue, the only kind of "righteousness" which issues in "peace and joy".

#### C. Love and Happiness

Wesley believed that happiness and virtue were united by the very nature of things. But it is from righteousness that joy and peace naturally flow. They are the consequence of genuine holiness and can never stand alone. Man is to seek both virtue and happiness for these are the aspects of self-love which, as we have seen earlier, form a part of the ruling principle of the

soul. Yet virtue has the priority. In using his favorite Scriptural formula, Wesley says, "first 'righteousness' then 'peace and joy' in the Holy Ghost."<sup>401</sup> Although these cannot be separated, one is dependent upon the other. In the moral life, our first aim is to be toward the perfection of our character. Since happiness is a fruit of virtue, "real, solid, substantial happiness" is found only in those who love God. And "as our knowledge and love of Him increase, by the same degrees, in this same proportion, the kingdom of an inward heaven must necessarily increase also."<sup>402</sup> Neither the man who fears God nor the man who loves the world can have genuine happiness. Those who have turned from the eternal toward the realm of temporal things may have a certain sense of merriment", a certain sense of false peace, but they have neither permanence nor depth. "While we are at enmity with God, there can be no true peace, no solid joy in time or in eternity."<sup>403</sup> On the other hand, the man who merely fears God has no peace for there is no unity in his soul. He is torn between obeying God and obeying the world. "So that, by halting between both, he loses both, and has no peace in either God or the world." "He is a motley mixture of all sorts of contrarities; a wheel of contradiction jumbled into one."<sup>404</sup>

It has become obvious that Wesley thought of happiness in terms of joy and peace. This breakdown parallels the conception of inner virtue as right orientation and proper balance of the powers of the soul. Joy has primarily to do with the direction of the soul; while peace is, in the first place, the fruit of the proper harmony of the powers.

The quality of joy in the life of the man who loves God is of two types. First of all, it is the joy of present delight and, secondly, the joy of future hope. The present joy is the direct fruit of, or an aspect of, our love of God. It is the root affection of delight which is there in the contemplation of the excellence of the supreme Good; that is, God. It is also a delight in present salvation a man's feeling "of solid Joy, which arises from the testimony of the spirit that he is a child of God."<sup>405</sup>

Joy is also, as noted above, the delight which is associated with the temper of hope. "Joy in the Lord. . .cannot but attend a hope for immortality"; or "a confident expectation of Glory."<sup>406</sup> When an individual has

a future and is free of anxiety concerning his ultimate destiny, he has the joy of hope. The opposite to this is "fear which hath torment"<sup>407</sup> from which the lover of God is delivered. Hope is a quality of life which "banishes fear . . . fear of the wrath of God; fear of hell; fear of the devil; and in particular fear of death."<sup>408</sup> Stated positively it is the joy of the hope of both "perfect holiness and everlasting happiness."<sup>409</sup> which constitute the final and proper perfection of man. In summary, men of true holiness

rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. God is shed abroad in their hearts, through the Holy Ghost, which is given unto them. And hereby they are persuaded (though perhaps not at all times, nor with the same fullness of persuasion), 'neither death, nor life, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, should be able to separate them from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.'<sup>410</sup>

This happiness which "goes hand in hand with virtue" is peace as well as joy. Peace is that even quality of spirit which is the consequences of a soul whose powers are unified and harmoniously balanced. In speaking of the original perfection of man, Wesley wrote that "from this right state and use of all his faculties, his happiness naturally flowed."<sup>411</sup> The virtues of humble and meek love, especially the latter, make for a "tranquillity of spirit" and "evenness of mind." On the other hand the vicious man is a restless soul for "all unholy tempers are uneasy tempers."<sup>412</sup> They create a present hell in the breast<sup>413</sup> and are "general sources of misery."<sup>414</sup> "As long as these reign in any soul, happiness has no place there."<sup>415</sup>

Peace and joy are the possessions of the righteous man and precisely because he is righteous. But the tempers of happiness are not simply the "reward"<sup>416</sup> of virtue. They also react reflexively upon holiness for its upbuilding. "Peace and joy" Wesley said, "should never be separated from righteousness, being the divine means of both preserving and increasing it"<sup>417</sup> Or, again, "There is scarce a greater help to holiness than this, a continual tranquillity of spirit and evenness of mind."<sup>418</sup> This idea of interaction of virtue and happiness is just one more instance of Wesley's seeing all powers of the soul and all aspects of the proper moral life admirably fitted together and acting and reacting in a wonderful harmony.

This idea of harmony is an excellent note upon which to bring this chapter on the life of love to a close. We have found that the true active



principle of the soul-love of God, neighbor and self, all holy tempers and righteous practices, and the happiness of joy and peace, are intimately related and bound together constituting that life of love, which is the proper moral and spiritual being of man and the essence of genuine religion. Many excellent summaries of this life are to be found in Wesley. The following is almost picked at random.

True religion is right, in two words, gratitude and benevolence; gratitude to our creator and supreme benefactor and benevolence toward our fellow creatures. In other words, it is loving God with all our heart, (notice that Wesley stresses here exclusively right tempers and not actions) hence our knowing that God loves us, that we love Him, and love our neighbor as ourselves. Gratitude toward our Creator cannot but produce benevolence toward our fellow creatures. The love of Christ constrains us, not only to be harmless, but to do no ill to our neighbor, but to be useful, to be "zealous of good works" as we have time, "to do good to all men"; of true, genuine morality; of justice, of mercy and truth. This is religion, and this is happiness; the happiness for which we were made. This begins as soon as we begin to know God, by the teaching of His own spirit. As soon as the father of spirits reveals His son in our heart, and the sun is shed abroad in our heart; then, and not until then, we are happy. We are happy, first, in the consciousness of his favor, which indeed is better than life itself; next, in the constant communion with the Father, and with His Son, Jesus Christ; then, in all the heavenly tempers which he has wrought in us by his spirits; again, in the testimony of His spirit, that all our works please Him; and, lastly, in the testimony of our own spirits, that "in simplicity and godly sincerity we have our conversation in the world." Standing fast in this liberty from sin and sorrow, wherewith Christ made them free, real Christians "rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, and in everything give thanks and their happiness still increases as they grow up in the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ."<sup>412</sup>

## Chapter II

- 279 New Testament, p. 547.
- 280 Works, VIII, pp. 3-4. The same quotation appears in Letters, II, pp. 269-70 in Wesley's 1746 discussion with Thomas Church.
- 281 Letters, VI, p. 266.
- 282 Letters, I, No. 14.
- 283 Works, II, p. 448.
- 284 Works, II, p. 228.
- 285 Works, II, p. 192.
- 286 Works, II, p. 399.
- 287 Works, II, p. 192.
- 288 New Testament, p. 259.
- 289 Works, II, p. 431.
- 290 Forks, II, p. 188.
- 291 Works, II, p. 186.
- 292 Works, II, p. 431.
- 279a Works, II, p. 189.
- 280a Works, II, p. 188.
- 281a Works, II, p. 399.
- 282a Works, II, p. 432.
- 283a Works, IN p. 192.
- 284a Standard Sermons, I, p. 535.
- 285a New Testament, p. 456.
- 287a Works, II, p. 189.
- 288a Works, II, p. 193.
- 289a Works, II, p. 189.
- 290a Works, II, p. 182.
- 291a Works, II, p. 181.
- 292a Standard Sermons, I, p. 95.
- 293 Standard Sermons, II, p. 235.
- 294 Standard Sermons, II, pp. 72-83.
- 295 Letters, III, p. 106.
- 296 Standard Sermons, II, p. 72.
- 297 Works, II, p. 73.
- 298 Works, II, p. 44.
- 299 Works, II, p. 406.
- 300 See Sermon CXIV, "Or., What is Man?", Works, II, pp. 402-406.
- 301 Works, V, p. 753.
- 302 Letters, VII, pp. 37-38.
- 303 New Testament, pp. 451-58.
- 304 Works, VII, pp. 269-70.
- 305 Works, II, p. 521.
- 306 Standard Sermons, I, p. 293.
- 307 Works, II, p. 281.
- 308 Standard Sermons, I, p. 152.
- 309 Works, V, p. 754.
- 310 Works, V, p. 753.
- 311 Standard Sermons, I, p. 531.
- 312 Works, VII, p. 495.
- 313 Works, VII, p. 443.
- 314 Standard Sermons, II, p. 225.
- 315 Standard Sermons, I, p. 152.
- 316 Works, VI, p. 347.
- 317 Works, II, p. 444.
- 318 Standard Sermons, I, p. 530.
- 318a It is, however, truly exercised only when the love of God is in our hearts.
- 319 Standard Sermons, I, p. 530.
- 320 Loc. cit. 321 Loc. cit.

- 322 Standard Sermons, I, p. 531.
- 323 Standard Sermons, I, p. 293.
- 324 Standard Sermons, II, p. 497.
- 325 Works, VII, p. 243.
- 326 Standard Sermons, I, p. 293.
- 327 New Testament, p. 436; Standard Sermons, I, pp. 348-49.
- 328 Standard Sermons, I, p. 349.
- 329 New Testament, p. 638.
- 330 Works, II, p. 778.
- 331 Loc. cit.
- 332 Works, II, p. 199.
- 333 Standard Sermons, II, p. 144.
- 334 Standard Sermons, II, p. 142.
- 335 Works, VI, p. 778.
- 336 Standard Sermons, I, p. 531.
- 337 Standard Sermons, I, p. 62.
- 338 Works, V, p. 753.
- 339 New Testament, p. 169.
- 340 Wesley does not always, if ever,  
see that this is true in brother  
love.
- 341 New Testament, p. 169.
- 342 Works, II, pp. 348-49.
- 343 Standard Sermons, I, p. 293.
- 344 Standard Sermons, I, p. 62.
- 345 Works, II, p. 281.
- 346 New Testament, p. 169.
- 347 Works, II, p. 113.
- 348 Standard Sermons, II, p. 136.
- 349 Standard Sermons, II, p. 137.
- 350 Standard Sermons, II, p. 140.
- 351 Loc. cit.
- 352 Standard Sermons, II, pp.  
144-45.
- 353 Works, II, p. 347.
- 354 Works, II, p. 198.
- 355 Works, II, p. 199.
- 356 Works, II, p. 201.
- 357 Works, II, p. 202.
- 358 Works, II, p. 199.
- 359 Works, II, p. 210.
- 360 Works, II, p. 203.
- 361 Works, II, p. 207.
- 362 Works, II, p. 203.
- 363 Works, II, p. 211.
- 364 Loc. cit.
- 365 Works, V, p. 753.
- 366 Standard Sermons, II, p. 81.
- 367 Standard Sermons, II, p. 197.
- 368 Standard Sermons, I, p. 293.
- 369 Standard Sermons, I, p. 104.
- 370 Standard Sermons, II, p. 80.
- 371 Works, VI, p. 43.
- 372 Works, VI, pp. 234-35.
- 373 Loc. cit.
- 374 Works, VII, p. 271.
- 375 Loc. cit.
- 376 Works, VI, p. 359.
- 377 Works, VI, p. 616.
- 378 Works, VI, pp. 615-16.
- 379 New Testament, p. 500.
- 380 Letters, I, p. 167.
- 381 Works, V, p. 753.
- 382 Works, VII, p. 495. -
- 383 See Chapter I.

- 384 Letters, IV, pp. 3-4.
- 385 Works, VII, p. 205.
- 386 See below, p.
- 387 Works, VI, p. 385.
- 388 Works, VII, pp. 54-55.
- 389 Standard Sermons, I, p. 422.
- 390 Works, II, p. 45.
- 391 Standard Sermons, II, pp. 91-92.
- 392 Standard Sermons, I, p. 392.
- 393 Standard Sermons, p. 45.
- 394 Standard Sermons, II, pp.  
455-56.
- 395 Letters, IV, pp. 347-48.
- 396 Standard Sermons, I, pp. 384-85.
- 397 New Testament, p. 47.
- 398 Letters, VI, p. 138.
- 399 Standard Sermons, II, p . 156.
- 400 Letters, VI, p. 146.