

RECASTING THE IMAGE OF GOD:  
FAITH AND IDENTITY IN THE DEEP SOUTH,  
1877-1915

by

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A DISSERTATION

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## ABSTRACT

Individuals construct their own identity in large part through their conceptions of gender. Few historians, however, have explored how religion shaped gender construction in Mississippi, Alabama, and Georgia during the New South period. Scholars have primarily concentrated on the roles various denominations allowed men and women to hold in church leadership rather than how different theological understandings changed the ways individuals understood manhood and womanhood.

My dissertation explores how church officials used Protestant theology in Mississippi, Alabama, and Georgia to argue for new constructions of gender. By using archival sources as diverse as diaries, sermons, speeches, unpublished memoirs, and published works, my research examines three theological groups in the American Deep South between 1877 and 1915. These three groups are the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC); the Methodist Episcopal Church, South (MECS); and the emerging Holiness movement. I argue that these groups had specific theological emphases that changed how they conceived of manhood, womanhood, and family life. While class, race, and regional identities were important for the denominational officials studied, theology was also an influential factor in formulating their personal understandings of self.

## DEDICATION

To Heather, whose sacrifice, support, encouragement, and love has shown me what it truly means to give of yourself. I love you.

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Numerous people have seen versions of this dissertation, providing comments, criticism, and help with analysis. My dissertation committee included Drs. Kari Frederickson, Lisa Lindquist-Dorr, Ted Ownby, and George Rable. Beyond these members, my advisor, Dr. John Giggie has born much of the brunt of the task of reading and re-reading many versions of this dissertation. Additionally, Marilyn Brown, my wife's grandmother, has also gone far beyond the call-of-duty in proof-reading it. They have both vastly improved the manuscript, and any foibles left in it are my own. My family, both the part that I was born into and the one that accepted me when I married into it, has provided incredible emotional, financial, spiritual, and every other type of support. Special thanks should go particularly to Bryan and Kathy Chapell, my parents; as well as Craig and Becky Brown, my in-laws. The one person who has provided more support, more encouragement, and more love than I can ever hope to repay, though, is my wife. Heather, you have enriched my life more than I could have ever thought possible. You have encouraged me when I was down, understood when I had to work late, and helped me to keep graduate school and even the dissertation itself in perspective. You have given so much of yourself in order that I might finish this task. I can never say it often enough: Thank you. I love you.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	ii
DEDICATION	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iv
LIST OF FIGURES	vii
INTRODUCTION	1
<u>SECTION I: THE SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION</u>	54
CHAPTER ONE: BAPTIST FAMILIES AND WOMEN	58
CHAPTER TWO: BAPTIST MASTERY AND MASCULINITY	109
<u>SECTION II: THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH, SOUTH</u>	150
CHAPTER THREE: METHODIST MEN AS AFFECTIONATE WARRIORS	153
CHAPTER FOUR: EVANGELIZING WOMEN IN THE MECS	193
<u>SECTION III: THE SOUTHERN HOLINESS MOVEMENT</u>	224
CHAPTER FIVE: A PECULIAR PEOPLE	228
CHAPTER SIX: PURE AND MANLY LOVE	258
CHAPTER SEVEN: HOLY FEMININITY AND INTIMACY WITH THE DIVINE	295
CONCLUSION	334
APPENDIX: A BRIEF PRIMER ON PROTESTANT EVANGELICAL THEOLOGY	341
BIBLIOGRAPHY	350

## LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE 1	115
FIGURE 2	117
FIGURE 3	130
FIGURE 4	164
FIGURE 5	208
FIGURE 6	209
FIGURE 7	210
FIGURE 8	215
FIGURE 9	309

## INTRODUCTION

*What is gender?*

*Gender is that which shows whether a man is masculine, feminine, or neuter.*

- From Howard College's 1911 *Entre Nous*

In East Lake, Alabama, the editors for the 1910-1911 edition of Howard College's yearbook, *Entre Nous*, included the above question in their "Jokes" section.<sup>1</sup> Though the editors at the all-male school wanted their readers to think that they were taking a lighthearted stance on the questions of masculinity, the very fact that it appeared revealed that there was a level of anxiety and uncertainty in the minds of these young men about what their own manhood meant. The young men at Howard had grown up in a culture that revered the martial honor that their fathers and grandfathers had achieved in the American Civil War. Yet, two generations after the Civil War and a full decade after the official end to hostilities in the Spanish-American War, young Southern men worried about how they could display valor and earn their manhood without a battlefield to prove their mettle. How should the graduating class of 1911 display their own manliness? How might they prove their masculinity to their families and to themselves? These were important questions for such students.

The undergraduates were not alone in asking such questions. Southerners of all ages raised new and often troubling questions about the meaning of gender at the turn of the century.

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<sup>1</sup> From the Howard College (now Samford University) yearbook, *Entre Nous*, (1911), 146.

Religious leaders were often outspoken on the topics of what manhood and womanhood should look like among their parishioners, and how they believed Christian theology should influence those ideas of gender. Church officials from the emerging Holiness movement, the Southern Baptist Convention, and the Methodist Episcopal Church, South competed to define ideal manliness and femininity and cast these images before their congregants. Central to these leaders' shifting ideas about gender were changing ideas about the nature of God and the mission of Christianity in the South.

Specifically, church officials from these three faith traditions believed that Evangelical theology opened up new perspectives on gender identity. To be sure, gender formation was, and is, a complicated process influenced by a multitude of variables. Class, race, region, population density, and generation all modified the ways in which individuals viewed masculinity and femininity. Yet in the South in the early twentieth century, religious ideas were among some of the most powerful influences on an individual's gender identity for church leaders. This meant that religion was not simply a socially acceptable veneer used to hide other motivations, such as economic, class-based, racial or ethnic issues. Rather, denominational officials truly placed their faith in what they said they believed and attempted to live out their theology. This process and experience of "lived theology" meant that church officials tried to center their lives and identities around what they professed to believe, even as they spread these ideas to the laity in churches across Mississippi, Alabama, and Georgia. As religious scholar Carlos Eire writes, "the concept of a 'lived' set of religious beliefs acknowledges the two-way symbiosis that constantly takes place between the abstractly conceived and concrete realities of life in the material world." This "two-way symbiosis" can occur, Eire posits, because "Lived religion is always in sync with specific environments, responding directly to certain circumstances and at the same time giving

shape to its environment, in a constant exchange.”<sup>2</sup> Thus, for southern church leaders who felt that religion really “encompass[ed] the deepest level of what it means to be human,” it made sense that faith would have a profound impact on “human genderedness, [as] a primary source of individual and social identity.”<sup>3</sup>

In one sense, these church leaders thought this was a logical outgrowth of Christian faith.<sup>4</sup> Southern Christians thus had to sort through a number of questions about God and the relationship of humanity to the divine. Some of the relevant questions included: Did God use families or individuals to fulfill divine tasks? Did God desire all people to be converted, or just the elect? Did God want Christians to live without sin here on earth? If so, would God give divine power to believers that would enable them to live sinless lives? Was Jesus the conqueror of sin and death, or was he the tender shepherd that wooed the hearts of his people? These were just some of the queries that southern Evangelical leaders worked through as they tried to develop and disseminate theology. In answering such questions, church leaders constructed theologies that would fundamentally alter their ideas of gender.

As women worked through queries about what it meant to have a relationship with God and how that should affect the way that person lived, they learned what an identity as a “true” woman was from the families they grew up in, the faith communities they worshipped with, the

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<sup>2</sup> Carlos M.N. Eire, *A Very Brief History of Eternity*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010), 18-19. For more on the ideas and concepts of “lived theology” see the University of Virginia’s Project on Lived Theology, [www.livedtheology.org](http://www.livedtheology.org); as well as the work of some of its scholars. For example, Albert J. Raboteau, “Holy Ordinary: Locating the Sacred in Literature and Life,” The Sixth Annual Capps Lecture in Christian Theology at the University of Virginia, (4 November 2009); and Charles Marsh, “What is Lived Theology?,” Unpublished Paper presented at the Conference on Lived Theology and Civil Courage, (12-14 June 2003).

<sup>3</sup> Ursula King, ed., *Religion & Gender*, (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1995), 4, 6.

<sup>4</sup> Most Christians believed that all humanity was made in the image of God based on Genesis 1:26-27.

church officials that preached to them every week, and the teachers and professors they studied under at school. The communities that had influence over an individual believer's perception of herself were all a part of the "specific environments" in which process of lived theology took place. In order to get a better sense of the process and ideologies of personal identity, this dissertation examines the ways church officials envisioned the relationship between theology and gender throughout Mississippi, Alabama, and Georgia from the end of Reconstruction to the founding of the second Ku Klux Klan and the beginnings of Southern migration before the First World War.

Each faith group studied had a specific theological emphasis that changed how denominational leaders wanted adherents to conceive of manhood, womanhood, and family life. While the clergy never created entirely new understandings of gender, their ideas of the divine did alter how they constructed gender ideologies and understood "appropriate" expressions of gender. Class, race, and region were all important markers of identity for the believers and denominational officials studied; yet, another influential factor that historians have not investigated fully in the formation of personal understanding of identity was theology. Adherents believed that they were made in the *Imago Dei*, the image of God, and so their different understandings of the sacred profoundly changed how they constructed gender.

In order to show how theology influenced ideas of gender across the South, this dissertation is organized by denomination. Section I (chapters 1 and 2) examines how the Southern Baptist Convention's (SBC) emphasis on individuality altered or reinforced ideas of gender in the South. Chapter 1 looks specifically at the ways in which this individualistic theology interacted with conceptions of family life and appropriate expressions of femininity among some of the denomination's leaders. For some officials, this meant that the entire

purpose of the family was to benefit individuals within it. Baptist officials also felt that women could be reduced to specific traits. This meant that various officials had different ideas about which character traits made the “essential” woman. Chapter 2 turns to the ways in which Baptist theology influenced ideas of manhood. Here, I demonstrate that the idea of mastery created the basis for all other conceptions of manliness among Baptist officials, as well as the other minor ways that were appropriate expressions of one’s manhood.

Section II argues that while the Methodist Episcopal Church, South (MECS) allowed a large number of theological views, the idea of conversion (the giving of one’s life to Jesus in the belief that His sacrifice was the only way for a sinful, broken person to approach a holy God), and the various interpretations of Jesus’ example had greater influence on gender construction for MECS leaders than other elements of Methodist theology. This meant that though other doctrines may have led to changes to the ways in which officials formulated masculinity and femininity, the need to convert the world to Christianity combined with different understandings of the person of Jesus to create new avenues for expression of manhood and womanhood. Chapter 3 examines Methodist manhood and shows that the different interpretations of Jesus allowed the adoption of martial imagery into MECS thought. While some historians have argued that the aggressive, rough-and-tumble masculine culture in the post-bellum South was opposed to quiet, self-controlled evangelical ideals of the church, this chapter demonstrates how Methodist leaders appropriated ideas of the hyper-masculine warrior to form the ideal of the Christian soldier conquering the world for Christ.<sup>5</sup> Yet, MECS bishops, itinerant preachers, and

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<sup>5</sup> Historians Ted Ownby and Ann Douglass have both argued that at the turn-of-the-century, evangelical culture was, in some sense, opposed to many models of masculinity and viewed as the domain of women. See Ted Ownby, *Subduing Satan: Religion, Recreation, and Manhood in the Rural South, 1865-1920*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1990); and Ann Douglass, *The Feminization of American Culture*, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1977).

even Methodist collegiate officials tried to show how an understanding of Jesus as the conqueror of death and sin meant that Christian men were part of the grand army of Christ engaged against the forces of evil. While this martial model of masculinity was popular among many in the MECS, other officials in the denomination believed that Jesus exemplified a tender shepherd that wooed the hearts of his flock, and so wanted to model their ideas of manliness around affection for their families. At the same time that different interpretations of Jesus' characteristics led to different understandings of manliness, the importance of conversion also had important implications for Methodist women. Chapter 4 shows how MECS officials based their ideas of femininity on the notion that women were the foundation for a Christian home, and would thus nurture the impressionable souls of children and lead them to Jesus. Because of this belief, Methodist women were encouraged to receive full liberal arts educations. This education would then combine with the supposedly greater moral authority of "the fair sex" to prepare women to advance the kingdom of God in their homes.<sup>6</sup>

Section III provides a stark contrast to the previous chapters. While theology was very important for both Methodists and Baptists, leaders of these denominations did not define themselves by their understandings of one singular doctrine. However, for preachers, pastors, and evangelists in the Holiness movement at the turn of the century, the theology of Christian perfection became the most important marker of personal identity. Attempts to live out the implications of their radical theology changed the ways in which the sanctified perceived the world and their roles in it. Because for the leadership of the movement theological beliefs superseded gender constructs, the theology of entire sanctification enabled women to take

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<sup>6</sup> See Ursula King, "Introduction: Gender and the Study of Religion," in King, *Religion & Gender*, 16 for more on moral versus institutional authority.

positions of authority within the church that other groups would not allow. This led to very hostile opposition from many other groups, both religious and secular, in the South.

Holiness theology did not simply have implications for gender roles and institutional authority; it altered the very ways in which people conceived of and expressed gender. Because of the radical nature of Holiness theology, this movement provided a clear example of a group whose understandings of personal identity were dramatically different from other Protestant groups. Section III of the dissertation thus examines how Holiness leaders attempted to use theology to influence formulations of gender. Chapter 5 briefly looks at the theology and culture of the Holiness movement. It shows the multiple steps an individual had to go through in order to be recognized by officials as part of the group. The radical nature of Holiness theology and the long process that preceded a believer's experience of sanctification demonstrate how deeply leaders held these theological ideals and how important they were to an individual's identity. Self-identifying as a part of the Holiness movement was a dangerous undertaking in the South, one that promised derision and opposition. Thus, by exploring how different leaders talked about their theological journey and the risks they took to gain this new identity, one can get a sense of how important these theological ideas were to how Holiness leaders understood themselves and the world around them.

The ways in which leaders believed that Holiness doctrines influenced and altered ideas of manliness is the subject of Chapter 6. This chapter demonstrates that preachers and evangelists used the theology of entire sanctification, or perfect love, to transform traditional Southern ideas of manhood and create space for highly emotive and affectionate expressions of masculinity. Yet, Holiness officials did not throw out all contemporary notions of masculinity, and frequently used martial language to talk about their mission to the world. Next, Chapter 7

shows that while Holiness theology led to ideas of femininity that encouraged women to take positions of authority within the church, certain sins were still portrayed as unique to women, thus demonstrating tensions in the relationship between sacred understandings of gender and those ideas of femininity that adherents learned from the broader culture. Chapter 7 also examines how Holiness theology pointed to marriage as a analogue of the relationship between God and the sanctified believer, allowing both men and women within the movement to consider themselves as the bride of Christ. Additionally, Holiness leaders often stressed the idea that their faith was a communal one to be passed through the generations, and so felt that families were vitally important to the community of believers. The communal identity of the Holiness movement was important, in part, because of the fact that Holiness adherents were a distinct religious minority whose theology was radically different from the MECS and the SBC. Due to their distinctive theology, Holiness leaders' ideas of gender, while still influenced by the culture in which they lived, looked different from the dominant formulations of personal identity among Southern Evangelicals.

The leaders of the SBC, MECS, and Holiness movement are important groups to study when looking at the influence of theology on gender construction in the South. First, though the influence of Christianity has been a noted feature of the American South for many years, Baptists and Methodists made up the vast majority of self-identified Christians during the period under study.<sup>7</sup> This meant that they had a greater influence in Southern culture than other religious groups. Second, because of the fact that Methodists and Baptists composed such large groups in

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<sup>7</sup> See Paul Harvey, *Redeeming the South: Religious Cultures and Racial Identities Among Southern Baptists, 1865-1925*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997), 1; and Department of Commerce and Labor, Bureau of the Census, E. Dana Durand, Director, *Bulletin 103 (Second Edition, Revised and Enlarged): Religious Bodies: 1906*, (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1910), 42-47

the South, they were able to establish religious colleges designed to pass down theological ideas to the students who attended them. At the same time, these institutions self-consciously taught boys to be men and girls to be women. Finally, the choice of the Holiness movement may seem odd when held against the MECS and SBC. Holiness groups were dramatically smaller than the other denominations; they were prone to schisms and thus had less of a unified voice; and they had radical views of theology.<sup>8</sup> Yet, it was exactly because of these radical theological views that the Southern Holiness movement provides such an effective foil to the theological dominance of the SBC and MECS. Holiness theology, as will be explained in detail later, had a unique focus on the idea of sanctification. In fact, so overwhelming was the focus on this one doctrine that evangelists in the Holiness movement believed that if a person had received sanctification, that individual, whether male or female, was fully qualified for positions of church leadership – an outrageous idea in the South at the turn-of-the-century. Thus, while the SBC and MECS provided a baseline of the interactions between theology and gender construction, the Holiness movement provided an effective foil to show how religious concepts radically changed ideas of gender.

Mississippi, Alabama, and Georgia are the three states that can best show the ways in which theology influenced gender construction during a period of political and social change.<sup>9</sup>

The industrialization of the New South deeply influenced both Georgia and Alabama, as

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<sup>8</sup> So schismatic were these groups that I do not attempt to delve into the many splits and specific theological differences. However, it is important to note that I do not attempt to use sources from the Pentecostal movement, which, along with an emphasis on entire sanctification, believed that speaking in tongues was a sign that a believer had been baptized by the Holy Ghost.

<sup>9</sup> C. Vann Woodward, *Origins of the New South, 1877-1913*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1951, 1971), 124, 126-129, 136-138; and Edward L. Ayers, *The Promise of the New South: Life after Reconstruction* 15<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Edition, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 56, 59, 75, 110-112.

Birmingham and Atlanta each epitomized the burgeoning industry alive in the region. At the same time, Mississippi and parts of rural Alabama were struggling amidst rural poverty and the problems of sharecropping and the crop lien systems.<sup>10</sup> These states were also important to study for religious reasons. Georgia and Mississippi were important centers for Methodism. Emory College in Atlanta was home to two of the MECS' best known bishops, Atticus Haygood and Warren Candler, while Mississippi had its own influential bishop, Charles Galloway. Both states were also centers of the MECS' teachings on entire sanctification and the Holiness movement, though at different times. The Mississippi Conference of the MECS was one of the few places in the South where Holiness teachings had had any significant numbers in the antebellum period, while the Georgia Holiness Association was the first Southern Holiness association to form after the American Civil War.<sup>11</sup> Together, these three states, Georgia, Mississippi, and Alabama, with their similarities and differences, provide a unique opportunity to see how sacred ideas influenced the construction of gender in the American Deep South.

The period from 1877 to 1915 is also a vital time to study to see shifts in gender construction. During these decades, Southerners began to reconstruct their identity as a distinct region within the United States. The starting point marks the end of the time that United States Federal troops took any role in Southern political life.<sup>12</sup> This meant that Southerners no longer had a constant reminder of the fact that they were a defeated region. In effect, they could choose

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<sup>10</sup> Ayers, *Promise of the New South*, 25, 163, 219-220; and Woodward, *Origins of the New South*, 177, 206-208.

<sup>11</sup> For evidences of Holiness teachings in the Mississippi Conference prior to the Civil War, see Chapter Five of this dissertation. Briane K. Turley's *Wheel within a Wheel: Southern Methodism and the Georgia Holiness Association*, (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1999) documents the rise of the Georgia Holiness Association after Reconstruction.

<sup>12</sup> Eric Foner, *Reconstruction: America's Unfinished Revolution, 1863-1877*, (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 2002; originally published by Harper & Row, 1988), xxv, 582.

to remember a version of history in which they were no longer a conquered people – and many did just that. As David Blight, Edward Blum, and others have shown, it was during this time that the mythology of the Lost Cause developed.<sup>13</sup> These years of historical reconstruction also saw other markers of identity that were undergoing severe stress. For example, the period is called the nadir of race relations and the industrialization of the New South meant increased class antagonisms. While historians have looked at the ways in which these markers of identity changed during the period, they have focused less on questions of gender; however, gendered ideals were also changing in the South. How were Southern men to construct ideal masculinity? Were Southern women supposed to remain belles? The political and social upheaval in the region transformed all of these ideas and many more.

By 1915, some of the ideas about what masculinity and femininity meant to white southerners were beginning to coalesce. One of the ways in which this happened was through the founding of the second Ku Klux Klan. The reincarnation of this terrorist organization amplified existing white understandings of gender while at the same time it provided new avenues for both men and women to express idealized forms of white manhood and womanhood.<sup>14</sup> It was also during the 1910s that dramatic migration from the South began to occur. During this period, hundreds of thousands of Southerners (both black and white) moved

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<sup>13</sup> David W. Blight, *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in American Memory*, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2001); Edward J. Blum, *Reforging the White Republic: Race, Religion, and American Nationalism, 1865-1898*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2005); Katherine Du Pre Lumpkin, *The Making of a Southerner* with a Foreword by Darlene Clark Hine, (Athens, Georgia: Brown Thrasher Books, University of Georgia Press, 1991), 111-147; and Charles Reagan Wilson, *Baptized in Blood: The Religion of the Lost Cause, 1865-1920*, (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1980).

<sup>14</sup> For the most well-known study of the Klan's interaction with gender construction and identity, see Kathleen M. Blee, *Women of the Klan: Racism and Gender in the 1920s*, (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1991). See also Nancy MacLean, *Behind the Mask of Chivalry: The Making of the Second Ku Klux Klan*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994).

out of the region, bringing with them food ways, racial identities, religious practices, and formulations of gender. In addition, towards the end of the time under study, Southerners were increasingly interacting with a growing national consumer culture.<sup>15</sup> (The question of whether the nation was growing more Southern or the South was losing its distinctiveness is not significant, but what is germane was that the unique constructions of theology and gender in the South during the period of this dissertation began to interact with other ways of understanding personal and religious identity.) Thus, this dissertation examines the period from the removal of Federal troops from Southern political life to the re-founding of the Klan and the outmigration of significant numbers of the South's population. It asserts that theology and religious belief helped many Southerners to make sense of the puzzle of gender identity during a period of intense political, social, and religious change that deeply affected how men and women understood their own identities and roles in society.

This is also an important period to study because of the increasing numbers of religious periodicals established, read, and distributed throughout the region. Randall Stephens, an historian whose work chronicles the late nineteenth and early twentieth century Holiness and Pentecostal movements in the South, notes between 1870 and 1900, the number of daily newspapers published did not merely double, they actually quadrupled in number. Publishers

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<sup>15</sup> For more on both the Black and white out-migrations from the South, see James N. Gregory, *The Southern Diaspora: How the Great Migrations of Black and White Southerners Transformed America*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005), especially 13-15; Steven Hahn, *A Nation Under Our Feet: Black Political Struggles in the Rural South from Slavery to the Great Migration*, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2003); William Cohen, *At Freedom's Edge: Black Mobility and the Southern White Quest for Racial Control, 1861-1915*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1991); and John M. Giggie, *After Redemption: Jim Crow and the Transformation of African American Religion in the Delta, 1875-1915*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008). See also Ownby, *Subduing Satan*, 194-212 and Ted Ownby, *American Dreams in Mississippi: Consumers, Poverty, and Culture, 1830-1998*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999).

were not just producing more papers, however, readership was also soaring as sales of daily publications grew six times during those thirty years.<sup>16</sup> This dissemination of printed materials was vitally important for religious figures who attempted to find as large an audience as possible for their messages during a time of change in the South.

Because this was an important time for religious publications, a brief note on methodology is also important here. This dissertation focuses on the formation of gender ideologies. I am primarily concerned with the ways in which gender was perceived and constructed during this time. This does not mean that the ways that gender conceptions played out in the realities of life are unimportant, but that they largely do fall outside of the purview of this study. The examination of the process and ideology of gender, as well as the ways in which they work, is an important subject. This dissertation opens up areas for study by examining the ways that personal identity, as related to religious belief, was articulated and expressed by religious authorities. The church leaders whose voices appear in the dissertation encouraged their parishioners to change the way they thought about manhood and womanhood, and argued for conceptions of gender more in line with what they thought about the sacred.

Studying these leaders is important because during times of change, those in positions of defined leadership are sometimes able to best articulate new understandings of identity. Though a mix of voices appears throughout the dissertation, one way to examine how theology influenced gender construction is to study those who could best articulate their own theological beliefs as well as those who could best present prescriptive ideas to others. For those reasons, most of the voices in this dissertation are from officials within the SBC, MECS, and Holiness

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<sup>16</sup> Randall J. Stephens, "There is Magic in Print: The Holiness-Pentecostal Press and the Origins of Southern Pentecostalism," 194-230, in Walter H. Conser, Jr. and Rodger M. Payne, eds., *Southern Crossroads: Perspectives on Religion and Culture*, (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 2008), 217 n. 8.

movement. Preachers, pastors, evangelists, college and seminary professors, and even Sunday School workers were all in positions of influence and left evidence of the ways that their sacred beliefs shaped the ways they conceptualized gender, and how they wanted to pass on these ideas to others.

These church officials spoke to, and for, many people throughout the Deep South. While various historians have documented the low numbers of Evangelical Christians in the South before the American Civil War, after Reconstruction, these numbers rose.<sup>17</sup> When the U.S. Census Bureau released their report on the numbers of religious bodies in the United States, Mississippi, Alabama, and Georgia each had a large percentage of people who identified themselves as religious – thirty-eight, forty-one, and forty-two percent respectively.<sup>18</sup> Even when looking specifically at the numbers of Baptists and Methodists, these numbers remain large. In Mississippi, which had the lowest number self-identity as Baptist, just over one-fifth of the population were congregants of that denomination. This number rose to almost one-quarter of the population in Georgia. Methodist numbers were lower, but still held consistent between twelve and fourteen percent of the total population in these three states.<sup>19</sup> The rise in these denominations from 1890 does not necessarily mean that they gathered the same numbers from

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<sup>17</sup> See For three examples, see Christine Leigh Heyrman, *Southern Cross: The Beginnings of the Bible Belt*, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1997), Monica Najar, *Evangelizing the South: A Social History of Church and State in Early America*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), and E. Brooks Holifield, *The Gentlemen Theologians: American Theology in Southern Culture, 1795-1860*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 1978).

<sup>18</sup> Department of Commerce and Labor, Bureau of the Census, E. Dana Durand, Director, *Bulletin 103 (Second Edition, Revised and Enlarged): Religious Bodies: 1906*, (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1910). Total population numbers for these states appear on 38, while total numbers of parishioners appears on 39. The rise of churchgoers from 1890 to 1900 is demonstrated on 54.

<sup>19</sup> *Religious Bodies: 1906*, 42. Across both the MECS and the SBC, women outnumbered men (142 and 146).

all people groups. The Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and the Southern Baptist Convention were both denominations that drew primarily from the white population of the South.

Though I have focused on the denominations that were, and still are, predominately white, I do investigate the status of African American's and the idea of black identity when they appear in the writings of SBC, MECS, and Holiness leaders. This includes how the language of mastery excluded African Americans in the turn of the century Deep South, and how some within the Holiness movement talked about African-American believers as an example of how God could lift up the humble yet rarely mentioned the ways in which segregation and racial violence went against the ideas of perfect love.<sup>20</sup>

In fact, many Southern whites used theology to construct formulations of gendered ideals that were exclusively white. Southern Baptist ideas of manhood were intimately tied to the idea of mastery – a concept that held overtly racial overtones in the forty years after Reconstruction.

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<sup>20</sup> For examples of work that concentrate more fully on issues of race and gender during the period, see Gail Bederman's *Manliness & Civilization: A Cultural History of Gender and Race in the United States, 1880-1917*, with forward by Catherine R. Stimpson, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1996); and Martin Summers, *Manliness & Its Discontents: The Black Middle Class & the Transformation of Masculinity, 1900-1930*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004). In the volume edited by Craig Thompson Friend entitled *Southern Masculinity: Perspectives on Manhood in the South Since Reconstruction*, (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2009), there are several chapters that deal with race and masculinity. See Rose Stremlau, "In Defense of 'This Great Family Government and Estate': Cherokee Masculinity and the Opposition to Allotment," 65-82 and Edward J. Blum, "A Subversive Savior: Manhood and African American Images of Christ in the Early Twentieth-Century South," 150-174. Similarly, in *Black and White Masculinity in the American South, 1800-2000*, (Newcastle upon Tyne, England: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2009), editors Lydia Plath and Sergio Lussana juxtapose Parts I and II, showing white and black perceptions of masculinity, respectively. Interesting discussions are also in Jacquelyn Dowd Hall's *Revolt Against Chivalry: Jesse Daniel Ames and the Women's Campaign Against Lynching* Revised Edition, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993); Laura Edwards, *Gendered Strife and Confusion: The Political Culture of Reconstruction*, (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1997); LeeAnn Whites, *The Civil War as a Crisis in Gender: Augusta, Georgia, 1860-1890*, (Athens: UGA Press, 1995); Patricia A. Schechter, *Ida B. Wells-Barnett and American Reform, 1880-1930*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001).

Similarly, the militarized public persona of Methodist masculinity was an idea that most Southerners would have never allowed to be applied to African-American men. These ideas would have dramatic consequences on the ideas of gender in the decades to follow as whites routinely denied that African Americans could achieve manhood. Additionally, the individual emphasis led to a resistance to attempts at structural changes that were necessary to combat the institutional racism of the South.

Similarly, the ideas of femininity prevalent in both the SBC and MECS necessarily excluded huge numbers of African-American women in the South. Both Methodist and Baptist understandings of southern womanhood emphasized that femininity flourished in the home – and that only those women who stayed in the domestic world of *their own home* were truly ladies. This automatically excluded the huge numbers of African-American women who labored as laundresses, nannies, general domestic help, and farm hands. Although these African-American women were clearly doing their best to provide loving homes for their families, to many Southern whites, they did not live up to the theologically based ideas of womanhood.

Few scholars examine how theology and sacred ideals influenced gender construction in the South.<sup>21</sup> Many that have looked at the interplay between religion and gender have focused on the roles and positions denominations or theological traditions allowed men and women to

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<sup>21</sup> There are notable exceptions to this statement. For examples, see Anthea D. Butler, *Women in the Church of God in Christ: Making a Sanctified World*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007); Margaret Lamberts Bendroth, *Fundamentalism & Gender, 1875 to the Present*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993); Betty A. DeBerg, *Ungodly Women: Gender and the First Wave of American Fundamentalism*, (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1990); Bill J. Leonard, “Baptist Women and the South: From the ‘Woman’s Sphere’ to the Pulpit,” in Conser and Payne, *Southern Crossroads*, 303-317; and Joe Creech, “The Price of Eternal Honor: Independent White Christian Manhood in the Late Nineteenth-Century South,” in Friend, *Southern Masculinity*, 25-45; and William H. Becker, “The Black Church: Manhood and Mission,” *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 40 (September 1972): 316-333.

take within the church rather than the process and ideology of gender itself.<sup>22</sup> Of course, the ways that individuals perceive and express gender is limited by both geographic and cultural boundaries.

This dissertation focuses on the American Deep South, and the history of the southeastern region of the United States has been a major field of study for many scholars, and there are specific works and arguments that have been foundational to the field. In 1941, W.J. Cash published his classic work, *The Mind of the South*, which presented a vision of the American South as an immutable region that had little tolerance for non-conformity.<sup>23</sup> One of the scholars

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<sup>22</sup> See David T. Morgan, *Southern Baptist Sisters: In Search of Status, 1845-2000*, (Macon, Georgia: Mercer University Press, 2003); Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham, *Righteous Discontent: The Women's Movement in the Black Baptist Church*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993); Gail Bederman, "'The Women Have Had Charge of the Church Work Long Enough': The Men and Religion Forward Movement of 1911-1912 and the Masculinization of Middle-Class Protestantism," *American Quarterly* 41 (September 1989): 432-465; James R. Lynch, "Baptist Women in Ministry through 1920," *American Baptist Quarterly* 13 (December 1994): 304-318; Elizabeth Hayes Turner, *Women, Culture, and Community: Religion and Reform in Galveston, 1880-1920*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998); M. Jean Heriot, *Blessed Assurance: Assessing Religious Beliefs through Actions in a Carolina Baptist Church*, (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1994); Betty A. DeBurg, *Ungodly Women: Gender and the First Wave of American Fundamentalism*, (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1990); and A. Gregory Schneider, *The Way of the Cross Leads Home: The Domestication of American Methodism*, (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1993). Scholars in other fields have sometimes explored gender construction more thoroughly. For examples, see Dale B. Martin, *Sex and the Single Savior: Gender and Sexuality in Biblical Interpretation*, (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 2006). For a few examples of pertinent works from other fields and periods in history see, Janet Martin Soskice, *The Kindness of God: Metaphor, Gender, and Religious Language*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007); Charles H. Lippy, *Do Real Men Pray? Images of the Christian Man and Male Spirituality in White Protestant America*, (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 2005);. In the volume edited by Ursula King, *Religion & Gender*, (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1995), see Penelope Margaret Magee, "Disputing the Sacred: Some Theoretical Approaches to Gender and Religion," 101-120; and Felicity Edwards, "Spirituality, Consciousness, and Gender Identification: A Neo-Feminist Perspective," 177-191; and David G. Hackett, "Gender and Religion in American Culture, 1870-1930," *Religion and American Culture* 5 (Summer 1995): 127-157.

<sup>23</sup> For more, see Bertram Wyatt-Brown's excellent introduction to the 1991 Vintage Books edition of W.J. Cash's *The Mind of the South* with a New Introduction by Bertram Wyatt-Brown, (New York: Vintage Books, 1991), vii-xli.

able to break away from Cash's vision of a static American South was C. Vann Woodward. His monumental work, *Origins of the New South*, helped to redefine the field of Southern history in 1951. In it, Woodward posited that the period he studied, 1877-1913, was a time of tremendous change in the South.<sup>24</sup> As impressive as Woodward's take on the New South was, however, not all historians have agreed that the period was a time of change throughout the region. Among the most persuasive works that argue against Woodward's version of change throughout the South is Edward Ayers' volume, *The Promise of the New South*. While Ayers acknowledges that there was dramatic change going on through many parts of the South at the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, he carefully noted that, in many quarters, there were significant amounts of continuity with the past; or, at the very least, the South moved forward at different speeds in different places. This meant "archaic structures" were "often amplified, [or even] made more entrenched."<sup>25</sup>

The varying levels of change in the South is dramatically displayed in Don Doyle's work, *New Men, New Cities, New South*. In this study, Doyle examines the ways in which men in four very different cities both changed the world around them and adapted to those changes. To examine the ways in which southern life changed after the Civil War, Doyle researches how life in Atlanta and Nashville compared to the cultures of Charleston and Mobile. Doyle's work showed how the boosters of the New South joined together ideals of "urban growth and

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<sup>24</sup> For a discussion of the legacy of *Origins*, see *The Journal of Southern History* 67 C. Vann Woodward's "Origins of the New South, 1877-1913": A Fifty-Year Retrospective (November 2001). For other discussions of the New South, see James Tice Moore, "Redeemers Reconsidered: Change and Continuity in the Democratic South, 1870-1900," *Journal of Southern History* 44 (1978): 357-378; Micheal O'Brien, *Rethinking the South: Essays in Intellectual History*, (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2003); Jonathan Wiener, *Social Origins of the New South, Alabama 1860-1895*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1978).

<sup>25</sup> Ayers, *Promise of the New South*, 442.

economic development to an agenda for social progress. The New South vision cast business leaders in the role of benefactors to former slaves and poor whites, not just as employers but also as civic stewards who promoted voluntary charities and government programs to aid health and education in their communities.”<sup>26</sup> Such a combination could bring together old ideas of patriarchy with social and economic reform. Thus, change and continuity could be paired to present a renewed vision of what the South could become.

Throughout my own research into the gender and religious history of the Deep South between 1877 and 1915, Doyle and Ayers’ pattern of variable levels of change fits. While adherents of the Holiness movement pushed for new understandings of affectionate masculinity and preaching roles for sanctified women that conflicted with gendered ideals in the broader culture, officials in competing traditions argued all the more forcefully for women to stay in the domestic sphere and men to march forward as Christian soldiers conquering the world for Christ. This means that my own work demonstrates that though the surrounding culture had significant influence on religious adherents, they were not captive to it.<sup>27</sup> The fact that theology, ideas of

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<sup>26</sup> Don H. Doyle, *New Men, New Cities, New South: Atlanta, Nashville, Charleston, Mobile, 1860-1910*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1990), 260.

<sup>27</sup> For other interpretations of religion in the South, including the idea that Southern religion was held captive by the larger culture, see Samuel S. Hill, *Southern Churches in Crisis Revisited*, (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1999); and John Lee Eighmy, *Churches in Cultural Captivity: A History of the Social Attitudes of Southern Baptists*, (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1972). See also Donald G. Mathews, “Lynching Is Part of the Religion of Our People: Faith in the Christian South,” 153-194; Daniel Woods, “The Royal Telephone: Early Pentecostalism in the South and the Enthusiastic Practice of Prayer,” 125-152; and Beth Barton Schweiger, “Max Weber in Mount Airy, Or, Revivals and Social Theory in the Early South,” 31-66 in Beth Barton Schweiger and Donald G. Mathews, eds., *Religion in the American South: Protestants and Others in History and Culture*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004). See also James B. Bennett, *Religion and the Rise of Jim Crow in New Orleans*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005); Ruel W. Tyson, James L Peacock, and Daniel W. Patterson, eds., *Diversities of Gifts: Field Studies in Southern Religion*, (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1988); Daniel Stowell, *Rebuilding Zion: The Religious Reconstruction of the South, 1865-1877*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998); Wayne J. Flynt, *Alabama Baptists:*

the sacred, and perceptions were constantly interacting and in flux is a part of the narrative of understandings of gender between 1877 and 1915.<sup>28</sup>

While understandings of manhood were in flux at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century in the Deep South, old understandings of white manhood did not simply disappear. Understandings of manhood based in honor-driven violence (often used to enhance white manhood at the expense of African Americans) were still relevant in the New South.<sup>29</sup>

Perhaps the best work portraying the ways in which honor functioned in the culture of the Old South is in Bertram Wyatt-Brown's work. Wyatt-Brown's *Southern Honor* and *Honor and*

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*Southern Baptists in the Heart of Dixie*, (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1998); and Ralph E. Luker, *The Social Gospel in Black and White: American Racial Reform, 1885-1912*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1991). For more broad interpretations of religion in American life, see Mark A. Noll, David W. Bebbington, and George R. Rawlyk, eds., *Evangelicalism: Comparative Studies of Popular Protestantism in North America, the British Isles, and Beyond, 1700-1900*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994); and Nathan O. Hatch, *The Democratization of American Christianity*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989).

<sup>28</sup> For a few examples of other types of investigations into Southern religious history, see Paul Harvey, *Redeeming the South: Religious Cultures and Racial Identities Among Southern Baptists, 1865-1925*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997); Paul Harvey, *Freedom's Coming: Religious Culture and the Shaping of the South from the Civil War through the Civil Rights Era*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005); Donald G. Mathews, "Lynching Religion: Why the Old Man Shouted 'Glory!'," in Walter H. Conser, Jr. and Rodger M. Payne, eds., *Southern Crossroads: Perspectives on Religion and Culture*, (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 2008), 318-353; George C. Rable, *God's Almost Chosen Peoples: A Religious History of the American Civil War*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010); and Randall J. Stephens, *The Fire Spreads: Holiness and Pentecostalism in the American South*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2008); Samuel S. Hill, *One Name but Several Faces: Varieties of Popular Denominations in Southern History*, (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1996); Rufus B. Spain, *At Ease in Zion: Social History of Southern Baptists, 1865-1900*, (Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 1967); Christine Leigh Heyrman, *Southern Cross: The Beginnings of the Bible Belt*, (New York: 1997); and Hunter Dickinson Farish, *The Circuit Rider Dismounts: A Social History of Southern Methodism, 1865-1900*, (Richmond, Virginia: Dietz, 1938).

<sup>29</sup> For an excellent example of the ways in which honor, violence, race, and understandings of manhood interacted, see Kris DuRocher's "Violent Masculinity: Learning Ritual and Performance in Southern Lynchings," 46-64, in Friend, ed., *Southern Masculinity*.

*Violence in the Old South* demonstrate some of the ways in which the culture and prescriptions of honor dictated the ways in which identity formed in the antebellum South. Wyatt-Brown notes that “The chief aim of this notion of honor was to protect the individual, family, group, or race from the greatest dread that its adherents could imagine. That fear was not death, for dying with honor would bring glory. Neither was it the prospect of damnation in the life hereafter.... Rather, the fear was of public humiliation.”<sup>30</sup>

The culture of honor that developed in the antebellum South, and remained after the Civil War and Reconstruction prescribed specific normative ideas for both masculinity and femininity in order to stave off public humiliation.<sup>31</sup> For men, even for young boys, this meant aggression was highly prized.<sup>32</sup> Relationships between men and women were often fraught with an intensely competitive edge.<sup>33</sup> Even the glorification of the “Southern Lady” had its role in upholding the cult of honor in the South.<sup>34</sup> Though Wyatt-Brown does not specifically delve into the ways in which religion and religious attitudes offered competing ideas of personhood, his exploration of the antebellum South’s honor-driven culture demonstrates the power of an ideology to transform identities. Though my work does not look at the ways that theology led to specific actions, it picks up on Wyatt-Brown’s emphasis that ideology had the power to alter

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<sup>30</sup> Bertram Wyatt-Brown, *Honor and Violence in the Old South*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), viii.

<sup>31</sup> Wyatt-Brown, *Honor and Violence*, ix. For the most extreme examples of how these violent, honor- and race-based cultural values worked in the New South through spectacle lynchings, see DuRocher, “Violent Masculinity,” 46-64.

<sup>32</sup> Wyatt-Brown, *Honor and Violence*, 80.

<sup>33</sup> Wyatt-Brown, *Honor and Violence*, 85-86.

<sup>34</sup> Wyatt-Brown, *Honor and Violence*, 91.

understandings of personhood. Additionally, my work demonstrates that for many southern clergymen, the idea of honor was still a salient feature of their ideas of proper manliness.

While notions of honor and violence were often dramatically enforced in the New South era by both Christians and non-believers, I do not argue that the reinforcing of southern gendered ideals ever reached the point that southern churches were held captive to the larger culture. This argument runs counter to the ideas put forward in Samuel Hill's classic 1966 work on religion in the American South, *Southern Churches in Crisis*. In it, Hill asserts that, among other salient traits of southern Evangelicalism, there was a "peculiar relation which exist[ed] between the southern church and its surrounding culture. Tersely stated, it has been a long and happy union."<sup>35</sup> This union with culture, Hill posits, occurred over a long period of time, but that the two have a nearly complete identification with each other.<sup>36</sup> While this argument was an important one that forced historians of religion in the South to reexamine the ways in which culture and religion interacted, my own research finds that this was not the case in the turn of the century Deep South. There were certainly times when religion bolstered some of the dominant gender ideologies; however, there was not a complete identification with the culture. Religious leaders worked hard to make it clear that they perceived a bifurcated world – split between those who were part of the Kingdom of God and those who were not.

Though my work contradicts some of the arguments put forward in *Southern Churches in Crisis*, some of Hill's other emphases find validation in my work. Hill argues, "All of the affirmations of popular southern Protestantism grow out of one concern, the salvation of the individual. The various religious groupings are not equally intense in their implementation of

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<sup>35</sup> Samuel S. Hill, Jr., *Southern Churches in Crisis*, (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1966), 30.

<sup>36</sup> Hill, *Southern Churches in Crisis*, xv.

this concern...nevertheless this is the foundation upon which assumptions are made, doctrinal systems constructed, and church programs based.”<sup>37</sup> Throughout my own work studying Southern Baptists, the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and the Southern Holiness movement, Hill’s position on the individualistic nature of southern religiosity rings true.

Neither all the denominations nor all religious leaders studied in this dissertation responded in the same ways to this southern emphasis on individual salvation. However, they all preached the idea that each individual had to respond to the call of God, and would face judgment based on that fact alone. Thus, they divided the world into a dichotomy between the saved and the lost. Individual identities were supposed to find their foundation in Christianity. This meant that even denominational histories written before the advent of gender theory unconsciously connected right belief with appropriate expressions of gender and personal identity among church leaders.

One example of this tendency is Marion Lazenby’s compilation of the history of Methodism in Alabama and West Florida. In it, the author continuously notes the manliness of the bishops, circuit riders, and pastors of that denomination.<sup>38</sup> Lazenby’s account of Methodism, written in a specific mode of denominational and ecclesiastical history, does not put forward an argument other than that God has used the denomination to further his kingdom. Indeed, the volume reads more as an edited collection of conference statistics, memorials, and eulogies. However, throughout the book, Lazenby’s sources make it clear that the Methodist leaders he talks about wanted their manliness remembered. Sometimes this was done in unusual ways. For

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<sup>37</sup> Hill, *Southern Churches in Crisis*, 76-77.

<sup>38</sup> Marion Elias Lazenby, *History of Methodism in Alabama and West Florida: Being an account of the Amazing March of Methodism through Alabama and West Florida*, (Nashville: Parthenon, 1960).

example, Lazenby quotes the memoir of a J.E. Collins as saying, “In personal bearing he was nature’s gentleman. A dignified man, with courtly manners rendered doubly charming by a pure heart, gave him such rank among his comrades...as calm and gentle as a queenly woman, yet as brave as a knight of old, he met the issues in his work in such a way as to thrill the hearts of those who loved God.”<sup>39</sup> Here, Lazenby remembers Collins not only for his refined manhood, but also for his exceedingly great serenity and tenderness, two qualities that the memorialist explicitly denotes as feminine traits.

Not all traits of manhood were as refined, however. Part of Lazenby’s project was to recount how the North Alabama Conference of the MECS grew after its founding in 1870. He recounts a speech at the fiftieth anniversary of the Conference, at which an address called “The Heroes of 1870” was delivered. Among the many names recalled were:

V.O. Hawkins, “a man’s man;” M.E. Johnston, called “Bush-whack Johnston,” a man whose name “meant to the night riders, outlaws, carpet-baggers, and scalawags of North-East Alabama,” what the name of “Stonewall Jackson meant to the federals of Virginia;... W.C. McCoy, “a man of wonderful resources and marvelous gifts,” a man “who followed Quantrell [sic] in Missouri, Jackson in Virginia, and Christ in Alabama...”<sup>40</sup>

Certainly, no one nicknamed “Bush-whack Johnston,” nor anyone who followed the Confederate guerilla fighter William Quantrill would stand for anyone questioning his masculinity.

Interestingly, though, the memorialist for W.C. McCoy seemed to imply that McCoy’s Christian belief was his greatest demonstration of masculinity. The two Confederate leaders are listed not only in order of McCoy’s service, but of their increasing honor and prestige. To have Christ follow “Bloody Bill” Quantrill and “Stonewall” Jackson suggested not that Christianity was

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<sup>39</sup> Lazenby, *Methodism*, 484.

<sup>40</sup> Lazenby, *Methodism*, 375.

anything easy or refined, but rather that Christianity was a final step in facing the enemy and in fighting the good fight against evil and oppression.<sup>41</sup>

Other passages in *Methodism in Alabama and West Florida* also suggest that Christianity marks the culmination of manhood. In the memoir of J.N. Glover, Lazenby remarks that Glover “was, early in manhood, irreligious, even to the point of speaking lightly of religion. But after he was a full-grown man, ‘he thought on his ways,’ and saw his great error, gave himself to Christ, and was soundly converted.... He died in triumph.”<sup>42</sup> In this account, Glover’s early irreverence is not merely a mistake, but a mark that he had not yet achieved maturity. However, once Glover truly became a man, he “gave himself to Christ.” This movement from boyhood to true manhood is not marked through violence, sexual experimentation, or an elaborate ritual. Instead, Glover’s religious expression affirmed his manliness, which eventually culminated in his triumphal death. While these passages, and many others like them, demonstrate the important role that the idea of manliness played in the religious life of these preachers, pastors, and evangelists, Lazenby wrote his account of Methodism in Alabama long before gender theory became part of the historical profession. Nonetheless, his account of the march of Methodism through Alabama and Florida highlights the importance of preachers and pastors in spreading systems of belief to their congregants. Though my work is grounded in a very different model of historical writing and analysis than Lazenby used, it does still highlight the work of church leaders in disseminating systems of thought throughout the Deep South. This dissertation asks very different questions than those that concerned Lazenby in 1960; yet, his work, and others

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<sup>41</sup> It is also easy to see here how the Lost Cause becomes a Christian cause as Christ tops the list of Confederate heroes.

<sup>42</sup> Lazenby, *Methodism*, 461.

like it that are basically composed of the eulogies of the sainted dead, offer an idealized version of the ways that preachers and pastors understood their role in the Deep South.

While many of the works discussed above offer helpful perspectives, contexts, and analytical frameworks that have become standards in the fields of southern and religious history, scholarship has continued to ask new questions and interrogate sources in new ways. One of the richest avenues of scholarship has been the study of the ways that understandings of gender influenced the lives of historical subjects. Of course, discussions about gender theory within the historical profession owe much to Joan Scott's 1986 article, "Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis."<sup>43</sup> In this article, Scott illuminated some of the many ways in which gender should figure into the historian's task of doing history. Since that time, scholars from a variety of fields have incorporated gender analysis into their studies. Some have noted how gender identities change over time, how linguistic choices can have an influence on gender construction, how gender can influence politics, and how the gendering of nouns in languages change the ways in which people perceive inanimate objects. Scholars have even looked at the ways regional culture can change how people formulate gender.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> Joan W. Scott, "Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis," *American Historical Review* 91 (December 1986): 1053-1075.

<sup>44</sup> Joan W. Scott, "Fantasy Echo: History and the Construction of Identity," *Critical Inquiry* 27 (Winter 2001): 284-304; A.J. Meier, "When is a Woman a Lady? A Change in Progress?," *American Speech* 74 (Spring 1999): 56-70; Nancy McLean, "The Leo Frank Case Reconsidered: Gender and Sexual Politics in the Making of Reactionary Populism," *Journal of American History* 78 (Dec. 1991): 917-48; and Lera Boroditsky, Lauren A. Schmidt, and Webb Phillips, "Sex, Syntax, and Semantics," in Dedre Genter and S. Goldin-Meadow, eds., *Language in Mind: Advances in the Study of Language and Thought*, (Boston: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2003), 61-79. For examples of region-specific studies of gender, see Craig Thompson Friend and Lorri Glover, eds., *Southern Manhood: Perspectives on Masculinity in the Old South*, (Athens, Georgia: University of Georgia Press, 2004); and Linda McDowell, *Gender, Identity, and Place: Understanding Feminist Geographies*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999). See also Angela Boswell and Judith N. McArthur, eds., *Women*

While there are many fascinating ways of exploring human identity through gender analysis, the task that many historians have chosen to engage is the investigation of the multitudinous ways that conceptions and expressions of gender have changed throughout time. Some have done this by focusing on changing ideas of manliness; others have looked at how the ideal woman has varied from culture to culture and throughout time, and a number of other scholars have investigated the ways in which the state can have gendered implications on family and household life.<sup>45</sup> These historians have all produced works that critically engage the ways that gender, as one aspect of a person's identity, was a process that could be influenced by regional and cultural boundaries. Scholars Marjorie Spruill Wheeler, Jane Censer, Rebecca Montgomery, Janet Soskice, Gail Bederman, and Craig Friend all demonstrate different types of investigations into the study of gender as an integral part of human identity.

Marjorie Spruill Wheeler's *New Women of the New South* is an excellent example of the ways in which regional culture created boundaries for the ways individuals fashioned gender during the roughly the same period examined in my work. In her study, Wheeler examines some of the leaders of the Woman Suffrage Movement in the South between 1890 and 1920. She demonstrates how southerners were deeply committed to preserving the ideal of "Southern

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*Shaping the South: Creating and Confronting Change*, (Columbia, Missouri: University of Missouri Press, 2006).

<sup>45</sup> E. Anthony Rotundo, *American Manhood: Transformations in Masculinity from the Revolution to the Modern Era*, (New York: BasicBooks, A Division of HarperCollins Publishers, Inc., 1993); Mark C. Carnes and Clyde Griffen, eds., *Meanings for Manhood: Constructions of Masculinity in Victorian America*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990); Sarah Delamont and Lorna Duffin, eds., *The Nineteenth Century Woman: Her Cultural and Physical World*, (London: Croom Helm, 1978); and Elizabeth Dore and Maxine Molyneux, eds., *Hidden Histories of Gender and the State in Latin America*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 2000); Glenda Elizabeth Gilmore, *Gender and Jim Crow: Women and the Politics of White Supremacy in North Carolina, 1896-1920*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996); and Anne Firor Scott, *The Southern Lady: From Pedestal to Politics, 1830-1930*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970).

Womanhood” not merely as an “isolated, idiosyncratic whim of nostalgic Southerners.” Rather, “it was part of an intense, conscious, quasi-religious drive to protect the South against the ‘ravages’ of Northern culture during a period of massive and often unwelcome political, social, and economic change.”<sup>46</sup> Despite the odds, Wheeler demonstrates that a vigorous woman suffrage movement did spring up in the South; yet, it was not sufficiently powerful to move forward the goal of voting rights for women.<sup>47</sup> Wheeler’s study is helpful for more than just demonstrating the ways that the southern Woman Suffrage Movement evolved. *New Women of the New South* also demonstrates the ways in which the leaders of a defined movement consciously worked to alter visions of gender for others. Additionally, Wheeler’s work explores how gender ideology interacted with ideas of race and the constraints of regional culture.

Though this dissertation does not focus on issues of race, I am aware that throughout this time, racial constructs had a dramatic impact on ideas of gender. However, the white church leaders whose voices appear in my work do not often talk about how race should influence gender, almost certainly because racial categories were an assumed part of their worldview. Most of the religious leaders studied were within the white power structures of the time. This allowed many white religious leaders to ignore the ways that racial ideologies oppressed people, as they were not the oppressed. Thus, Wheeler’s work offers an important reminder of the ways in which racial and gendered rhetoric often went hand-in-hand in the New South as white leaders consciously attempted to reconfigure identities. Additionally, Wheeler shows how white southern women consciously used both ideologies of both gender and race to their own advantage as they challenged the male political power structures of the time.

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<sup>46</sup> Marjorie Spruill Wheeler, *New Women of the New South: The Leaders of the Woman Suffrage Movement in the Southern States*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 5.

<sup>47</sup> Wheeler, *New Women of the New South*, 20.

The ways in which women undermined traditional power structures by using very traditional gender rhetoric is also the subject of Jane Censer's *The Reconstruction of White Southern Womanhood*. Looking at the much of the same period of gendered strife that my work centers on, Censer shows that during the 1870s and 1880s, the "characteristics of the ideal woman were in flux."<sup>48</sup> During this time, interest in women's role in the home had a revival, and many historians "have interpreted this entanglement with domesticity as lessening women's independence." Taking a contrary position, Censer's work posits, "the women themselves saw their ability to master the new machinery of housekeeping as a marker of nondependence. To them, their creations, both indoors and outdoors, stood as tangible and worthy achievements."<sup>49</sup> Indeed, *The Reconstruction of White Southern Womanhood* shows that many elite white women viewed their ability to run "clean, beautiful homes that housed upright men and well-brought-up children" as a form of mastery that was empowering.<sup>50</sup>

Many of the ministers and church officials who appear in this dissertation would have agreed with Censer's assessment. Most male church officials in the turn of the century South believed that women's role was at home – yet viewed this as an important and empowering role that gave women a powerful influence in the lives of their loved ones. During this same period, however, there were also schools founded for young white women across the South, many of which claimed to prepare their students for a life devoted to others. One way that women could live for others was through devoting themselves to the causes of reform; however, women's roles

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<sup>48</sup> Jane Censer, *The Reconstruction of White Southern Womanhood, 1865-1895*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2003), 6.

<sup>49</sup> Censer, *Reconstruction of White Southern Womanhood*, 277.

<sup>50</sup> Censer, *Reconstruction of White Southern Womanhood*, 90.

in these causes was often radically circumscribed by the strictures regarding the archetype of the “Southern Lady.”

Rebecca Montgomery’s article, “Lost Cause Mythology in New South Reform,” deals with the prohibitions placed on women’s attempts to reform their society and the imaginative ways that women were able to carve out a place for their political activity amidst an ideology that placed them on a pedestal. Montgomery records how the Lost Cause mythology actually provided an avenue for women to work for social and political reform. To do so, “women frequently made use of Lost Cause mythology as justification for their public activities. They continued to find meaning in their traditional role as preservers of the southern cultural heritage, only they saw that role as being embodied in public rather than private action.”<sup>51</sup> Many women thus believed that their work for reform could be characterized as an extension of care for their extended families.<sup>52</sup> Montgomery is careful to note, though, that the women who used “Lost Cause mythology in support of New South reforms did so not as a contrived political ploy, but because they genuinely regarded their causes – reconstruction of southern patriotic citizenship and preservation of the past as a source of pride – as having equal value.”<sup>53</sup> Thus, the women who worked so hard to gain the right to speak into the public sphere often did so not because they were deliberately trying to undermine gendered ideals, but because they were trying to live up to them. This was a subtle, but important difference between the women who used Lost Cause mythology and those who were using Holiness theology as the basis of their gendered

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<sup>51</sup> Rebecca Montgomery, “Lost Cause Mythology in New South Reform,” 174-198, in *Negotiating Boundaries of Southern Womanhood: Dealing with the Powers That Be*, Janet L. Coryell, Thomas H. Appleton, Jr., Anastatia Sims, and Sandra Gioia Treadway, eds., (Columbia, Missouri: University of Missouri Press, 2000), 180.

<sup>52</sup> Montgomery, “Lost Cause Mythology,” 181.

<sup>53</sup> Montgomery, “Lost Cause Mythology,” 198.

ideals. Those who used Holiness theology often deliberately claimed the right to speak in public in order to undermine gendered ideals. They did so because the experience of entire sanctification was the primary marker of personal identity in their minds. This contrasted sharply with the women who were trying to live up to gendered ideals and so took public stands that would reinforce them.

These works, and others, on femininity in the New South present a picture of white southern womanhood that was vastly different than what had been the ideal before the emancipation. Southern women were still supposed to fulfill a domestic ideal – managing and watching over the house. Yet, white women could increasingly be involved in political and social reforms outside the home. Certainly this option was not open to every white woman in the Deep South. Increasingly, however, middle- and upper-class white women of the New South took on roles that enabled them to have responsibilities outside the home, and religious groups often formed critical bridges between the home and the public spheres for these women.

While historical studies have begun to present an increasingly complicated view of white southern women in the New South who altered gender conventions in order to have more empowering roles outside the home, these have not been the only studies about gender in the Deep South. Indeed, when scholars first began to explore constructions of gender, there were those who criticized such studies as nothing more than simple investigations into women's history. However, this is not the case. Gender encompasses not only the study of feminine ideals; it encompasses matters of the family as well. Religious scholar and theologian Janet Soskice's volume *The Kindness of God*, demonstrates the ways that gender analysis can be used to investigate the issues of family life. Her work concentrates on the familial language used

throughout Christian scriptures to highlight the relationship of believers to God.<sup>54</sup> Throughout the dissertation, I have tried not only to investigate the ways that church leaders prescribed new avenues for men and women to live in the world, but also how they envisioned marriage and family life based on Christian theology.

Of course, gender analysis also encompasses masculinity, and significant portions of this dissertation look at the ways that members of the clergy envisioned southern Evangelical manhood. These prescriptions for white manliness were rarely divorced from race in the South at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century, and the ways in which race could operate as a gendered ideal is an important component of Gail Bederman's work, *Manliness & Civilization*. In it, she demonstrates that for many men, "whiteness was both a palpable fact and a manly ideal."<sup>55</sup> This insight is important for my work as I recognize that though many religious officials did not talk about race, it was an ever-present part of southern culture at the turn of the century that helped to define manhood for adult white males. Additionally, Bederman's emphasis on the construction of gender being a continual process rather than a static ideal is important to remember as church leaders attempted to envision new understandings of Christian ideals and pass them on to their congregants.<sup>56</sup>

One collected work whose authors demonstrate the process of gender construction specifically in a southern context is *Southern Masculinity*, edited by historian Craig T. Friend. This anthology presents work from a number of scholars whose work directly deals with the vicissitudes of southern manhood – both white and otherwise. The volume challenges readers to

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<sup>54</sup> Soskice, *Kindness of God*, 1-34, 52-65, and 66-83.

<sup>55</sup> Bederman, *Manliness & Civilization*, 5.

<sup>56</sup> Bederman, *Manliness & Civilization*, 7, 24.

reevaluate the monolithic view of white southern men as violent, caustic, and intolerant. While it shows that there were other models of white southern manliness, *Southern Masculinity* does demonstrate, however, that many adult white males were deeply insecure about their roles and identities in the New South. For many of them, their identities as masters of households had been destroyed, and they worked to forge a new sense of self in the New South. Others used violent enforcement of racism to teach ideals of gender to the next generation.<sup>57</sup> Overall, however, the volume demonstrates the picture of white southern manliness as dedicated to the ideal of white supremacy. Yet, even within this model, Friend proposes that two major types of white masculinity emerge – the Christian Warrior and the Christian Gentleman.<sup>58</sup>

My own work demonstrates picks up on these models of white southern manliness. Throughout the dissertation, it is clear that leaders of each faith tradition were worried about presenting the men of their denomination with a martial, masculine ideal. Similarly, leaders of both the Southern Baptist Convention and the Methodist Episcopal Church, South tried to instill the ideal of the gentleman into the men in their congregations. For Baptists, this meant a promotion of self-mastery, while it turned on the rhetoric of building character for Methodists. Yet, the dissertation does not stop with these two models of manliness. Yes, they were the dominant modes of manhood in the New South, but the leaders of the southern Holiness movement presented an alternative – a highly emotive, verbally affectionate, insistently pious model of manliness. Thus, while historians of gender have demonstrated the very important role

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<sup>57</sup> For various understandings of white southern men, see Joe Creech, “The Price of Eternal Honor: Independent White Christian Manhood in the Late Nineteenth-Century South,” 25-45; Kris DuRocher, “Violent Masculinity: Learning Ritual and Performance in Southern Lynchings,” 46-64; and Edward J. Blum, “A Subversive Savior: Manhood and African American Images of Christ in the Early Twentieth-Century South,” 150-173 in Friend, ed., *Southern Masculinity*.

<sup>58</sup> Friend, “Introduction,” in *Southern Masculinity*, x-xii.

of racism, violence, class ideals, and even honor in constructing both manhood and womanhood, this dissertation will show how church leaders envisioned new perceptions of gender.

My dissertation is not concerned with gender as a category divorced from other ideologies, though. It looks at the ways that religion in white southern culture worked, how religious leaders tried to persuade laity to realign gendered ideals, and, most significantly, how theology interacted with conceptions of gender. The interplay between religious ideals and gender constructs was not merely confined to the Deep South at the turn of the century, however. A number of historians have written important works from other regions and periods that examine the connections between religion and gender. These include a volume by Clifford Putney on Muscular Christianity, an investigation into the roles and relationships of clergy in the north during the early part of the nineteenth century by Ann Douglas, and a study of the ways that religious ideals helped Christians in the North understand the American Civil War by Sean Scott.

At the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century, the same period studied in this dissertation, many Christians in the industrialized northeast were also considering the relationship between religion and gender, and more specifically, between religion and manhood. In the northern parts of the United States, these questions coalesced into a movement called Muscular Christianity that emphasized the masculine nature of Christian belief. While denominational officials in the Deep South frequently used religious language meant to highlight their own masculinity, my work asks different questions than does scholarship on Muscular Christianity by historians such as Clifford Putney. The men that Putney discusses in his work did worry about perceptions and expressions of gender, specifically masculinity. However, his subjects were more worried about how to make Christianity masculine rather than how to make

manhood Christian.<sup>59</sup> This may seem like a small difference, but it is an important one. Rather than trying to let theology change ideas of gender, Putney's subjects were deliberately attempting to have their understandings of gender influence theology. Certainly, this happened among the Southern preachers and theologians that appear in my own work; yet, it happened at the subconscious level as officials were trying to reconfigure gender, not theology.

One idea that was very important to these officials was the concept of white southern manhood. They would have reacted strongly against the view of the clergy put forth in Ann Douglass' work, *The Feminization of American Culture*. Douglass documented how religious leaders, prior to the American Civil War, held a unique position in society akin to the role of women in regulating the moral sphere. Those outside the clergy often linked ministers to sickly dispositions, friendships with women, and slight physical statures.<sup>60</sup> While it is acknowledged that her work looked at both a different place and time than my own, the denominational officials whose voices are heard in this dissertation have a very different understanding of their place in society. They often understood their role to be that of the Christian warrior, and consciously used masculine language to describe themselves.

While Ann Douglas looked at the role and influence of denominational officials, many historical studies of religious belief have focused on the laity. Sean Scott's recent volume, *A Visitation of God*, examines the ways in which northern Christians attempted to make sense of the American Civil War – a war that tore husbands, fathers, brothers, and sons away from their loved ones and encouraged violence. Scott's work looks at the ways in which men and women

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<sup>59</sup> Putney, *Muscular Christianity*, 6-7, 73-98.

<sup>60</sup> Douglass, *Feminization of American Culture*, 80-120 and Appendix B of the same. For more on the relationships between women and clergy in particular, see Karin E. Gedge, *Without Benefit of Clergy: Women and the Pastoral Relationship in Nineteenth-Century America*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003).

attempted to interpret the Civil War through their religious beliefs, how women tried to encourage loved ones to make their peace with God before engaging in battle, and how fathers tried to encourage their sons to fulfill “both the secular responsibility to serve faithfully as a soldier and the spiritual discipline to live like a saint.”<sup>61</sup> *A Visitation of God* not only shows how northern Christians attempted to make sense of the most trying time of their lives by turning to faith, it also demonstrates the ways in which those same Christians remade their gendered identities using categories provided by their religion. Scott’s work demonstrates the power of religious belief among the laity to fashioning avenues of gender expression that could function within the everyday world. While this is very similar to my own work, the sections of *A Visitation of God* that deal with sacred understandings of gender are focused primarily on the laity, not church officials, and thus leaves open the question of where these ideas came from and they were disseminated.

The question of how church leaders disseminated theology and who the person was that spread religious messages, could have a dramatic influence on how parishioners received that communication. Indeed, the messenger of religion could have a profound influence on understandings of theology. Both *Aimee Semple McPherson and the Resurrection of Christian America* by Matthew Sutton and *Heaven Below* by Grant Wacker investigate the ways that radical theology spread. Sutton and Wacker take very different approaches and subjects for their studies; yet both are helpful to my analysis of the ways religious officials argued for their parishioners to reconceptualize gender as both historians demonstrate the ways church leaders attempted to persuade congregants of the veracity of their message.

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<sup>61</sup> Sean Scott, *A Visitation of God: Northern Civilians Interpret the Civil War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 72, 95, 139-140.

Sutton's biography of one of the most charismatic Pentecostal evangelists of the early twentieth century takes a fresh look at the charismatic figure of Sister Aimee, the founder of the Foursquare Gospel movement. Throughout the book, Sutton argues that McPherson "took the old-fashioned evangelical message of individual salvation, breathed new life into it, and gave it a positive spin. Her conviction that Jesus Christ is always the same, yesterday, today, and forever, seemed to become a reality in her Foursquare churches, where the blind saw, the lame walked, and the faithful spoke in heavenly tongues."<sup>62</sup> While McPherson may have breathed new life into "old-time religion" and held onto a conservative theology, Sutton clearly demonstrates time and again how Sister Aimee challenged "traditional" conventions of gender as she rose to religious celebrity in L.A.

Some of Sutton's best work, in fact, is when he explores how Sister Aimee deliberately toyed with notions of gender. Sutton's study explores the imagery that McPherson used in her illustrated sermons, the text of articles she wrote in the *Bridal Call* (itself a marker of the ways that Sister Aimee mixed gender and religion), her proclivity to wear white, and her often contradictory views on women's increasingly public roles in society.<sup>63</sup> Sutton is also careful to acknowledge when McPherson deliberately toyed with these constructs, and when such contradictions were, seemingly, unconscious expressions of her private ideals.<sup>64</sup>

In Sister Aimee's life, the conscious redefinitions and reformations of her gender ideology flowed from her religious commitments. Indeed, throughout her life, McPherson repeatedly made clear that she believed that her views on gender came from her understanding of

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<sup>62</sup> Matthew Avery Sutton, *Aimee Semple McPherson and the Resurrection of Christian America*, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2007), 277.

<sup>63</sup> Sutton, *Aimee Semple McPherson*, 13, 55-58, 85.

<sup>64</sup> Sutton, *Aimee Semple McPherson*, 13, 112.

biblical passages. Though it is clear that McPherson's ideas of gender came from her theological beliefs, Sutton does not consistently delve into the ways in which theology influenced Sister Aimee's contradictory portrayals of femininity.<sup>65</sup> Certainly, Sutton acknowledges McPherson's debt to Holiness and Pentecostal theological influences that taught if a person, either man or woman, had the gift of preaching, then that person should preach. What the author does not do, though, is explore how other doctrines of the Foursquare movement may have affected the way that Sister Aimee dealt with issues of gender. Theology may have been very important to McPherson, but it is not the critical issue for Sutton. Instead, his focus remains solidly on Sister Aimee the religious celebrity. While Sutton does not emphasize how theology led to Sister Aimee's views on womanhood, his focus on her message – the ways that she described and rearranged gender – provided a helpful example for my own work and its focus on church leaders and their attempts to provide a new vision of gender for their congregants.

Of course, the theological tradition of various church leaders had a tremendous influence on the visions they provided to parishioners. Sister Aimee, though unique in many ways, was part of the larger Holiness/Pentecostal tradition in the United States. Groups connected with this faith tradition emphasized a radical theology of believer's relationship with God, and numerous scholars have studied different aspects of the Holiness/Pentecostal tradition throughout the country. Almost wherever these adherents of Holiness and Pentecostal theology went, they encountered opposition to their radical understanding of the sacred.

Grant Wacker's volume on the Pentecostal movement in the United States, *Heaven Below*, also demonstrates that there was not only opposition from those outside the Holiness/Pentecostal tradition, there were also tensions within the tradition. The primitivist, or

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<sup>65</sup> Sutton, *Aimee Semple McPherson*, 45-46.

otherworldly, emphasis in Pentecostal theology meant that adherents desired to give themselves fully to God, experience the divine, and be led only by religious precepts.<sup>66</sup> However, this was balanced by the actual day-to-day lives of these believers and the fact that they were people who lived in a specific time, place, and culture. Moreover, the Pentecostals Wacker studies had the amazing ability to figure out “where they were, where they wanted to go, and...how to get there.”<sup>67</sup> The resultant balance between these two polarities gave the Pentecostal movement its tremendous growth and power according to Wacker.<sup>68</sup> He notes, “Pentecostals’ primitivist conviction that the Holy Spirit did everything...bore grandly pragmatic results. It freed them from self-doubt, legitimated reasonable accommodations to modern culture, and released boundless energy for feats of worldly enterprise. At the same time, this vigorous engagement with everyday life stabilized the primitive and kept it from consuming itself in a fury of charismatic fire.”<sup>69</sup>

The emphasis on this delicate balance between the primitive and the pragmatic impulses in *Heaven Below* helps to show some of the tensions that roll throughout my dissertation. The leaders of all the denominational groups that I look at hoped to have sacred, otherworldly impulses to lead their lives; however, this was not easy. For all of these denominational leaders, particularly for those in the Holiness movement, the primitivist impulse provided a powerful pull for their constructions of gender. Here again, Wacker’s study provides a helpful example by demonstrating that Pentecostal theology moved *both* “men and women away from inherited

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<sup>66</sup> Grant Wacker, *Heaven Below: Early Pentecostals and American Culture*, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2001), 12.

<sup>67</sup> Wacker, *Heaven Below*, 13-14.

<sup>68</sup> Wacker, *Heaven Below*, 10-14.

<sup>69</sup> Wacker, *Heaven Below*, 14.

assumptions and thrust them outward. It endowed them with a new and exhilarating freedom to preach the truth, save the lost, heal the lame.”<sup>70</sup> As both Holiness and Pentecostal adherents attempted to live out understandings of their new identities, opposition arose. Holiness and Pentecostal groups faced a hostile culture that was fiercely antagonistic to their ideas of theologically-influenced gender and racial identities. Wacker’s work demonstrates the important tensions within the groups of radical theology in the United States; yet he does not highlight the regional or racial variances within the Pentecostal tradition at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century.

In contrast to Wacker’s lack of focus on racial issues is Althea D. Butler’s examination of women in the Church of God in Christ (COGIC), an African-American denomination in the Holiness tradition. Butler pays close attention to the ways in which denominational theology opened new avenues of identity and expression for Black women, many of whom were in the South. In *Women in the Church of God in Christ*, Butler shows how, by using the rhetoric of motherhood, “the women of COGIC carved a niche of spiritual and temporal power for themselves.”<sup>71</sup> To do so, Butler demonstrates how women combined the idea of sanctification with the role of the church mother to provide opportunities for African-American women to “remake their religious and social worlds within a framework of piety, devotion, and civic life.”<sup>72</sup> For these women in the black Holiness movement, sanctification was more than an abstract theological concept. Instead, the doctrine encompassed beliefs that “pushed followers to

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<sup>70</sup> Wacker, *Heaven Below*, 164-165.

<sup>71</sup> Althea D. Butler, *Women in the Church of God in Christ: Making a Sanctified World*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 2.

<sup>72</sup> Butler, *Women in the Church of God in Christ*, 12.

live a life of holiness, refraining from the sins and pollutions of modern life.”<sup>73</sup> Butler’s study provides an excellent example of the ways in which parishioners remade their lives in accordance with their beliefs. Moreover, it is an example of the ways in which doctrine could open up new opportunities for expression and empowerment. Of course, this is not to say that religious belief was always empowering. At times, it could be stifling. However, *Women in the Church of God in Christ* demonstrates that, at least for some, religion provided an identity that empowered African-American women’s alternatives.<sup>74</sup>

The themes of religion and identity also provide key elements to my work. In a similar fashion to the women in COGIC, many leaders of the white Evangelical and Holiness movements used theology to argue for Christianized understandings of gender. In contrast to Butler’s work, however, this dissertation not only focuses on the official leadership, but it also concentrates on the intellectual foundations that these leaders tried to give their parishioners about new understandings of identity. The leadership of the SBC, MECS, and southern Holiness movement attempted to provide the intellectual framework for Christian alternatives to secular understandings of gender. This is not to say that the women Butler studies were unconcerned about the formal theological ideas that undergirded their ideas of gender; but rather that Butler was more interested in demonstrating the ways that new understandings carved out a “temporal niche” of empowerment than the ideologies behind their actions.

Yet, even as Butler studied the African-American women of COGIC, she was conscious of the fact that COGIC was a denomination connected with the *southern* branch of the Pentecostal Holiness movement. While both Sutton and Wacker investigate the power of radical

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<sup>73</sup> Butler, *Women in the Church of God in Christ*, 3.

<sup>74</sup> Butler, *Women in the Church of God in Christ*, 12-15.

theology to subvert secular ideas of gender, Butler goes a step further by demonstrating the regional variations that were possible. Butler is not the only historian who has studied the southern branches of the Holiness and Pentecostal movements, though. Both Randall Stephens and Briane K. Turley have produced volumes that specifically interrogate the ways that southerners dealt with radical theology.

Historian Randall Stephens' work, *The Fire Spreads*, looks at how the Holiness and Pentecostal movements became part of the fabric of southern religious life. As he examines individual Holiness proponents, he delves into the movement's theology, demonstrating how it differed from other Protestant groups in the South who generally opposed the movement.<sup>75</sup> Stephens particularly concentrates on how Southern Baptists and the Methodist Episcopal Church, South (MECS) differed from the radical teachings of the Holiness disciples.<sup>76</sup> As Stephens traces the advancement of, and eventual splits between, Holiness and Pentecostal groups, he focuses on individual preachers and leaders while at the same time showing the vital importance of religious periodicals throughout the south.<sup>77</sup> As he does this, Stephens shows the very different roles that women were able to fulfill, particularly within the Holiness movement.<sup>78</sup>

Though these gender roles hint at the different constructions of gender, Stephens does not explore the ways that Holiness theology influenced how people thought about masculinity and femininity. Occasionally this comes as a surprise, as the sources from opponents of the

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<sup>75</sup> Randall J. Stephens, *The Fire Spreads: The Holiness and Pentecostal Movements in the American South*, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2008), 49, 58.

<sup>76</sup> Stephens, *Fire Spreads*, 58, 96-98.

<sup>77</sup> Stephens, *Fire Spreads*, 99-136.

<sup>78</sup> For an example, see Stephens, *Fire Spreads*, 95-97. While Stephens does look at both Holiness and Pentecostal, he concentrates primarily on the Holiness movement and spends much more time on them.

movement virtually yell that Holiness undid a person's gender, particularly that of the women who served as evangelists.<sup>79</sup> While this dissertation deliberately does not explore the differences between the Holiness and Pentecostal movements at the turn of the century, it does go much further in showing the ways in which Holiness leadership tried to convince the laity to take on new identities influenced by their theology. By looking at published and unpublished memoirs, sermons, speeches, and other ephemera, I demonstrate how the leaders of the Holiness movement believed that their theology had a radical potential to remake the identities of individuals and communities.

Not all scholars are concerned about theology's ability to remake ideas of identity, or ask the same questions that this dissertation does however. Another historian of the southern Holiness movement, Briane K. Turley, glosses over the transformative potential that Holiness theology had on identity in the New South. In *Wheel within a Wheel*, Turley examines the growing opposition to the Georgia Holiness Association within its home denomination, the Methodist Episcopal Church, South (MECS).<sup>80</sup> *Wheel within a Wheel* concentrates less on the ways that radical theology could influence its adherents, focusing much more heavily on how opposition to such ideas grew and found greater expression over time. Interestingly, however, Turley does not connect opposition to the Holiness movement in Georgia to its theology. Rather, he argues, "Methodist leadership's primary point of contention with the [Georgia] Holiness Association derived from the organization's close ties with northerners."<sup>81</sup> While it was true that many MECS leaders felt that Holiness groups fraternized far too well with northerners, most of

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<sup>79</sup> Stephens, *Fire Spreads*, 49, 96-98.

<sup>80</sup> Brianne K. Turley, *A Wheel within a Wheel: Southern Methodism and the Georgia Holiness Association*, (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1999), 15.

<sup>81</sup> Turley, *Wheel within a Wheel*, 15.

their writings focused not on this point, but rather on the radical nature of Holiness theology and its potential, dangerous in the minds of Methodist leaders, to undo traditional understandings of self.

This gloss over Holiness theology is striking. The Holiness movement's radical theology gave leaders a new sense of identity, differentiated them from their MECS brethren, inspired them to pass it on to their parishioners, and sparked fierce opposition. Yes, it is true that Holiness leaders in Georgia deliberately tried to ignore regional identities that had become sacrosanct in the South by the end of the nineteenth century. However, such boundaries were easily ignored because of the Holiness leaders' theological understanding that they were a "peculiar people, chosen by God."<sup>82</sup> The Georgia Holiness Association's new understandings of personhood – which were divorced from place – flew in the face of many of the leaders of the MECS, and the denominational leadership quickly found ways to discipline the leadership of the Holiness movement in Georgia.<sup>83</sup> Clearly, the southern Holiness movement faced opposition as they struggled to spread the message that believers could be cleansed of all willful sin.

The radical idea that the experience of entire sanctification would cleanse an adherent of all willful sin was a doctrinal statement at the heart of Holiness theology and identity in the turn of the century South – and leaders believed it was radically transformative. Yet, Holiness was not the only theology that had the potential to transform the thoughts and lives of believers, nor was gender the only marker of identity that religious leaders envisioned anew. Both SBC and MECS leaders saw a world bifurcated by the saved and the lost and encouraged their congregants to do the same, thus imbuing their everyday lives and activities with eternal

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<sup>82</sup> Turley, *Wheel within a Wheel*, 203.

<sup>83</sup> Turley, *Wheel within a Wheel*, 145-148.

significance. This meant that religion could transform mundane tasks into sacred callings, and everyday ephemera, such as newspapers and advertising posters, could have divine importance. Such ideas, even among otherwise prosaic religious groups, had the power to transform individual identities.

Various historians have investigated the power of religion to change the ways that both church officials and lay people view themselves, and of particular importance to my studies have been the works of John Giggie and Paul Harvey. John Giggie's 2008 volume, *After Redemption*, explores some of the ways that religion interacted with conceptions of self and appropriate ways of demonstrating identity among the African-American Holiness movement in the Mississippi Delta.<sup>84</sup> Though my work looks more closely at how individual religious leaders attempted to re-imagine the formation of gender identity through their understandings of theology, Giggie's emphasis on the transformational nature of religion for personal and political identity among African-American communities in the Delta has been important to my own thinking and work.

In a similar fashion, Paul Harvey's continuing work on southern religion has provided a helpful model for my studies. *Redeeming the South* was important for my analysis of how religion can affect personal identity. While Harvey did not plumb the depths of gender construction, his work did uncover the multitudinous dimensions of the interaction between religion and racial identity.<sup>85</sup> Building from this, Harvey's more recent book, *Freedom's Coming* also demonstrates the power of religion in the South, particularly Evangelical Protestantism to deal with the region's pervasive racism. "Religion in the post-Civil War and twentieth-century American South was both priestly and prophetic," Harvey writes. "If southern

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<sup>84</sup> Giggie, *After Redemption*, 96-136, 165-193.

<sup>85</sup> Harvey, *Redeeming the South*, 17-75, 257-260.

formal theology generally sanctified the regnant hierarchies, evangelical belief and practice also subtly undermined the dominant tradition. In one sense, the seeds of subversion were embedded in the passionate individualism, exuberant expressive forms, and profound faith of believers in the region.”<sup>86</sup> This nuanced account explores how believers found both justification for and challenges to the dominant system of racial segregation and oppression in their understandings of theology. Harvey clearly shows the power of religious belief to change the ways in which adherents interact with the world around them. Through the focusing on theological racism, racial interchange, and Christian interracialism, *Freedom’s Coming* demonstrates the ways that religious belief can either reinforce or transform the worldviews of individual believers.

While my work does not concentrate on the ways that southern Christian leaders dealt with issues of race, *Freedom’s Coming* is nonetheless an important work that demonstrates how religious belief provided the “seeds of subversion” for racial ideologies in the South. In a similar fashion, my work argues that theology provided “seeds of subversion” that would inspire preachers to attempt to alter the ideologies of gender for their parishioners. While Holiness theology most clearly demonstrated that ideas of the sacred could inspire church leaders to imagine new avenues of gender expression, in other cases, it could lead to the retrenchment of ideals of gender identity that were common to southern culture. Denominational officials in both the SBC and the MECS demonstrated this tendency in regards to conceptions of white manliness that emphasized both mastery and individualism. Additionally, many clergy in these two groups used formal theology to reinforce ideals that the only proper place for a southern lady was in the home – not in the public sphere.

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<sup>86</sup> Paul Harvey, *Freedom’s Coming: Religious Culture and the Shaping of the South from the Civil War through the Civil Rights Era*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005), 4.

The tension in southern religion between subversion and retrenchment was not unique to the New South period, however. Southern religious historians have demonstrated that the tensions between sacred and secular culture ran throughout the early and antebellum South as well as after the Civil War and Reconstruction. Historians Christine Heyrman, Monica Najar, E. Brooks Holifield, and Ted Ownby have all produced studies of southern religion that recognize the tensions between the ideals of religious adherents and the strains they felt still having to live in secular society.

Though a popular view of the American South is of a heavily religious region, this was not always the case. One of the foremost scholars who have charted the dramatic changes in the southern religious landscape is Christine Heyrman. Her study of the beginnings of the “Bible Belt,” *Southern Cross*, demonstrated that the religious tenor of the modern South was not always the case. Rather, during the early years of the American experiment, many southerners were highly suspicious of both Methodists and Baptists – two groups that would come to define southern religion. These early misgivings about Evangelical religiosity “focused on the prominence of young men and women of every age in Baptist and Methodist churches, the prizing of religious fellowship over the family, the rejection of prevailing ideals of masculinity, and the demand for introspection and self-revelation.”<sup>87</sup> In other words, these early Evangelicals held to radically counter-cultural values. Heyrman’s study of the ways these Baptists and Methodists tried to hold to their beliefs rather than to the prevailing values of culture showed how these believers attempted to live out their faith and shape their everyday lives around what they professed to believe.

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<sup>87</sup> Christine Leigh Heyrman, *Southern Cross: The Beginnings of the Bible Belt*, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1997), 26.

Heyrman's emphasis on the ways in which early southern Evangelicals attempted to live out the ideals of their faith in the midst of a culture that was often hostile has been helpful to my own thinking about the ways that religious leaders tried to persuade their congregants, who could be deeply discouraged, that their faith gave them a new sense of self. Though my work focuses more on the thoughts and ideals of southern clergy than the actions of parishioners, I do show that many church officials thought that their beliefs held transformative power. Though by the end of the nineteenth century neither Baptist nor Methodist blends of Evangelicalism were the radically counter-cultural systems of belief that they had once been in the Deep South, those in the Holiness movement demonstrated that there were systems of belief that were still viewed as deeply subversive.

Similar to themes running throughout this dissertation, historian Monica Najjar's *Evangelizing the South* demonstrates the influence of religious belief on identity formation, and focuses on the subversive nature of Evangelical religion to southern culture. Her work examines the power of religious belief in the everyday lives of Christians, particularly white Baptists, in the early American South. Najjar posits that during that time, "the traditional consensus of the boundaries of the sacred and secular realms broke down.... For Baptists, the solution was clear. Baptist churches consistently claimed authority over *all* aspects of their members' lives, including marriage, slavery, business practices, child rearing, and leisure activities."<sup>88</sup> This meant that the distinctions between private and public spheres were not related to gender; rather, "private" referred to all activities of church members while "public" denoted those actions and activities performed by those outside of church membership.<sup>89</sup>

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<sup>88</sup> Monica Najjar, *Evangelizing the South: A Social History of Church and State in Early America*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 6.

<sup>89</sup> Najjar, *Evangelizing the South*, 10.

This simple split divided the world into two distinct camps: those inside the church, and all others. Sometimes this division was visible, and Baptists “displayed their separateness physically in their demeanor, dress, ornaments, and hair.”<sup>90</sup> Such changes in the visible expression of personal identity helped to mark Baptists in the early South as part of a separate community, and designated their understanding of their new identity. Seeing the world as split between two distinct camps, the saved and the lost, was a focus for all Evangelicals, from the Old South to the New South and beyond. Many of the church leaders whose voices appear in my work also see the world through this dichotomous lens. To them, a correct understanding of a person’s relationship to God was one of the most significant markers of personal identity. While this dissertation focuses on the leadership of Evangelical churches, Najar demonstrates that even the laity saw the world as bifurcated between those who were and those who were not part of the elect.

Najar also notes that the transformation of personal identity created by the division between the saved and the lost went far beyond hairstyles and clothing choices. For Baptists in the early South, their new identity also carried dramatic implications for their identity as men and women. Because Baptists saw “themselves as gloriously different from their peers,” Najar writes “they were willing to consider and craft gender conventions and norms that at times were at odds with the larger society. In Baptist stories of their early era, characteristics associated with manhood and womanhood often were inverted, such that women were praised for their indomitability and men for their meekness.”<sup>91</sup> When Baptists turned notions of Southern masculinity and femininity on their heads, they often encountered violent opposition against

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<sup>90</sup> Najar, *Evangelizing the South*, 52.

<sup>91</sup> Najar, *Evangelizing the South*, 165.

ministers. Nonetheless, their understanding of the sacred led them to undertake new identities – ones that were clearly separate from those outside the church.

*Evangelizing the South* demonstrates the power of religious ideas in transforming understandings of identity in the early American South. By investigating only one denomination, however, Najar leaves open the question of how other understandings of religion may have changed understandings of gender. She does show that opposition frequently came from Anglican/Episcopalian ministers and parishioners; however, Najar also notes that the most fervent opposition came from those who were not members of any church. Does this mean that those opposed to Baptists were opposed to new understandings of gender? Were they offended by the exclusive nature of Baptist theology? Were opponents fighting what they viewed as the imposition of authority into a frontier region? These questions are left open in Najar's account. Nonetheless, Najar's work demonstrates the power of religious belief in the formation of personal identity and the way in which adherents believed that their identity was transformed by becoming a Christian and joining a church.

While the experience of joining a church and learning Christian theology changed and transformed many people's identities, the population and urban growth throughout the South also changed both how and what theology was taught, even in the antebellum South. In *The Gentlemen Theologians*, E. Brooks Holifield demonstrates the theological divisions that developed between men of the cloth in the South. In fact, Holifield notes that two distinct visions of the clergy arose in the South during the antebellum period. One was the image of the yeoman preacher. The rural preacher, according to Holifield, embodied the religious ideals "of the common folk, distinguished by fervor and commitment," and shared with his parishioners a "relationship of emotional warmth that was tempered by authoritarian command." The other

picture of a church leader, though, was of a “minister as a gentleman, exalted and elevated through character, erudition, and professional status.”<sup>92</sup> This division between identities of the church authorities was not without theological consequences, as ideas of orthodoxy were shaped by preachers and ministers attempting to retain their positions and thus having to make judgments about what was “theologically appropriate and necessary” for their congregants to hear.<sup>93</sup>

While Brooks’ study ends with the beginning of the American Civil War, the postwar Holiness movement in the South would have heartily agreed with the assessment that ministers changed their theology to suit parishioners. This was a common theme in their critiques of the Methodist and Baptist churches. Moreover, after the Civil War and Reconstruction, the split between urban and rural church leaders grew as the New South fostered growth in uneven patterns. *The Gentleman Theologians* presents a reminder that not only could theology influence identity, but a myriad of other factors could also influence theology including the cultural gaps between urban and rural life.

The tensions between town, plantation, and church life after Civil War and Reconstruction also appear in the work of historian Ted Ownby. His book, *Subduing Satan*, argues for a split between the secular masculine culture of town and plantation against the sacred culture of both home and church at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century. By looking at this supposed split, Ownby deals directly with the ways that manhood

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<sup>92</sup> E. Brooks Holifield, *The Gentlemen Theologians: American Theology in Southern Culture, 1795-1860*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 1978), 24.

<sup>93</sup> Holifield, *The Gentlemen Theologians*, 36.

and religion interacted in the rural South.<sup>94</sup> By studying parishioners and townspeople, Ownby shows how plantation tournaments, animal fights, and the seasonal activities on the farm encouraged an aggressive masculinity outside the home, while the strictures of evangelical morality did not allow the same unrestrained passion within.<sup>95</sup> Ownby's work has been instrumental in demonstrating some of the tensions and connections that existed between religion, masculine recreation, and the home in the New South era.

This dissertation, while exploring some of the same ground as Ted Ownby's work and being informed by it, does reach different conclusions. One of the substantial differences is that *Subduing Satan* made a strong case for the division of an unrestrained, aggressive masculine culture against the mores of feminized, domestic evangelical culture. Rather than seeing the world split into separate spheres as Ownby's suggested, my work demonstrates how, time and again, church leaders in the South incorporated martial, hyper-masculine imagery into their religious language. The officials I study intimately intertwined ideas about what it meant to be a Southern man or woman with theology. They did not compartmentalize according to whether they were in their homes or out on the town. This meant that they did not see a split between an aggressive male world and their evangelical beliefs. Rather, the broad evangelical worldview permeated every area of life for the officials that I studied.

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While all of the works discussed above, ranging from studies of New South through investigations of gender, from analyses of subversive theology to southern religious studies, have been important to my analysis, this dissertation breaks new ground in the investigation of how

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<sup>94</sup> Ted Ownby, *Subduing Satan: Religion, Recreation, and Manhood in the Rural South, 1865-1920*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1990).

<sup>95</sup> Ownby, *Subduing Satan*, 71, 76-77, 92-93.

white southern theology interacted with the constructs of gender among church leaders. It is the contention of my work that religious belief was a dynamic influence on the personal identities of white church officials in the South. I do not argue that theology created new gender categories; however, sacred beliefs provided alternate avenues for the conception and perception of what preachers, pastors, and evangelists thought it meant to be a man or woman in the Deep South between 1877 and 1915. Thus, even subtle shifts in theology or interpretations of who God was could have resounding effects on what church leaders thought it meant to be human. These men and women connected their religious beliefs to gender in new ways and then spread their ideas to parishioners through sermons, speeches, and texts across the region.

For the officials whose voices appear in the dissertation, the idea of what it truly meant to be a man, woman, or child, was not an academic exercise. They believed that they were made in the image of God.<sup>96</sup> They were not simply cogs in a machine whose individual lives held no meaning; they reflected their creator. Thus, different interpretations of who God was, various understandings of an individual's relationship with the divine, and even relationships with other people were all ways that an individual could demonstrate that he or she was an image bearer. It was important for an individual to know what it meant to be a man or woman. Theology gave church leaders a specific understanding of their identity as a person who bore the very image of God, and they attempted to pass on these insights to their parishioners.

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<sup>96</sup> For an example of this, see James Hamilton Baxter, "Plan of Salvation," n.d., 20, Box 1, James Hamilton Baxter Papers, Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library, Emory University, Atlanta, Georgia, (JHB).

**SECTION I:**  
**THE SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION**

The Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) was founded in 1845 when northern and southern Baptists split over the question of slavery.<sup>1</sup> From that fateful year, the SBC was a denomination that deliberately worked through decentralized polity. Southern Baptists prided themselves on their congregational government, meaning that each congregation had authority only over itself. Local churches could voluntarily join associations and work together, but they had no authority over one another. Even the denomination had no official authority over any local church, denominational officials could only offer suggestions, not binding pronouncements.

This congregational style of church government meant that the theology throughout the denomination could be diverse, but there were a few points that bound Baptists together. One can point to the doctrine of believer's baptism as an area of agreement for the entire SBC. However, the focus on adult baptism was merely a subset of a larger theological emphasis for Baptists across the Deep South. The theological construct that held together this otherwise diverse and dynamic denomination was an emphasis on the individual. While other denominations highlighted the importance of faith and commitment to Christianity, the SBC elevated the importance of the individual to a greater degree than did other groups. Indeed, the SBC's individualistic theology, as demonstrated in the foci of free will and individual

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<sup>1</sup> Edwin Charles Dargan, *Ecclesiology: A Study of the Churches* Second Edition, (Louisville, Kentucky: Charles T. Dearing, 1905), 162.

responsibility before God, believer's baptism, and congregational church government wove its way through the worldview of denominational officials and distinctly influenced their ideas of gender.

The first way in which Baptist theology manifested an emphasis on the individual was through its emphasis on each individual's free will and responsibility before God. For Baptists, free will meant that each individual was responsible for his or her own voluntary response to choose salvation. Seminary professor and Southern Baptist theologian E.C. Dargan made this clear in his 1905 study, *The Doctrines of Our Faith*, as he quoted another Baptist leader in saying, "The Bible makes every religious observance a matter of voluntariness, and hence, of individual responsibility or privilege."<sup>2</sup>

The emphasis on free will was, in some ways, a reaction to the Reformed doctrine of predestination. Predestination was the idea that, since all humanity had sinned and were enemies of God, God chose those who would respond to his plan of salvation and believe in the work of Jesus to reconcile them to God. This doctrine was most clearly articulated in the work of Protestant reformer John Calvin, and was often mentioned as one of the "Five Points" of Calvinism.<sup>3</sup> These "Five Points" of Calvinism received opposition from many other Christians

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<sup>2</sup> F.H. Kerfoot, "What We Believe According to the Scriptures," in E.C. Dargan, *The Doctrines of Our Faith: A Convenient Handbook for Use in Normal Classes, Sacred Literature Courses and Individual Study*, (Nashville: Sunday School Board Southern Baptist Convention, 1905), 231. For more on the influence of E.C. Dargan for Southern Baptist theology, see Walter B. Shurden, *Not an Easy Journey: Some Transitions in Baptist Life*, (Macon, Georgia: Mercer University Press, 2005), 80-81.

<sup>3</sup> Theologians and laity often summarize Calvin's theology using the acrostic "TULIP." This acrostic highlights the reformer's views on the Total depravity of all humanity, the Unconditional election of Christians, the Limited atonement that Jesus accomplished for all who would trust in him, the Irrresistible grace of God's provision for salvation, and the Perseverance of the saints whom God granted salvation. For the classic formulation of these ideas, see the "Westminster Confession of Faith (1646)" in *Creeds of the Churches: A Reader in Christian Doctrine from the Bible to the Present*, John H. Leith, ed., Third Edition, (Louisville, Kentucky:

who believed that they articulated a harsh view of God. Baptists took issue particularly with the ideas of the divine election of sinners to salvation. Instead, SBC officials emphasized that humans chose whether to follow the message of salvation outlined in the Bible or not.

Of course, what Baptists were most known for (and where their name came from) was an emphasis on believer's baptism. This was the doctrine that only those people who have publically confessed their faith should be baptized. In and of itself, this theological stance demonstrated one aspect of individual theology. In contrast to the Baptist stance, those who practiced infant baptism, or as the SBC termed it, "paedobaptism," believed that infant baptism was a sign and seal of God's covenant love for families.<sup>4</sup> A belief that believer's baptism was the only appropriate type of baptism naturally followed from a strong emphasis on the individual in theology.<sup>5</sup>

Even the type of church government which the SBC practiced reflected this emphasis on the individual. The Southern Baptist Convention was composed of local churches that voluntarily associated with each other. These associations could be broken at any point, and the Convention itself had no binding authority over local bodies, except that which each local church

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John Knox Press, 1982), 192-230. Mark A. Noll traces some of the strains of Calvinism in America in his *America's God: From Jonathan Edwards to Abraham Lincoln*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), especially 265-268 and 269-328. For a warmer presentation of Calvinistic theology, see Bryan Chapell, *The Wonder of It All: Rediscovering the Treasures of Your Faith*, (Wheaton, Illinois: Crossway Books, A Division of Good News Publishers, 1999).

<sup>4</sup> See Bryan Chapell, *Why Do We Baptize Infants?* Basics of the Reformed Faith Series. (Phillipsburg, New Jersey: P&R Publishing, 2007), 1-24; also "Westminster Confession," 224-225.

<sup>5</sup> For more on believer's baptism as the only appropriate type of Christian baptism, see Dargan, *Ecclesiology*, 284-483; Dargan, *Doctrines*, 174-177; and Kerfoot, "What We Believe," in *Doctrines*, 231-232.

had voluntarily given over.<sup>6</sup> In this way, each individual church could operate autonomously while at the same time freely associating with other local, regional, or national bodies for the purpose of the “prosecution of great Christian work at home and abroad.”<sup>7</sup> Here, again, in the congregational model of church government, the SBC was deliberately trying to follow what they believed Scripture to teach.<sup>8</sup>

While the emphasis on the individual is commonly seen as a sub-point in Baptist polity, individuality was actually the strongest theme running throughout all Baptist theology.<sup>9</sup> Some of the ways that this could be seen were through congregational church government, in which all members had an equal vote rather than establishing a hierarchy; voluntary associations between individual churches which could be dissolved at any time; and believer’s baptism in which the spiritual emphasis was on individual belief rather than communal identification. The Baptist emphasis on the individual also had powerful implications for how church leaders understood the relationship between gender identity and religious belief.

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<sup>6</sup> Kerfoot, “What We Believe,” in *Doctrines*, 232-233.

<sup>7</sup> Dargan, *Ecclesiology*, 229. For more on the relationships between churches and associations, see pp. 218-230.

<sup>8</sup> Even in a passage debating women’s roles in church, pastors were likely to point out the Biblical nature of congregational government as J.B. Moody did in his book, *Women in the Churches: Their Rights and Restrictions; OR, Paul Harmonized with the Law and the Gospel* Second Edition, (Martin, Tennessee: Hall-Moody Institute, 1910), 51.

<sup>9</sup> For an example, see George M. Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture* New Edition, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 105.

**CHAPTER ONE:**  
**BAPTIST FAMILIES AND WOMEN**

Between 1877 and 1915, many white southerners were still adjusting to a way of life that did not include chattel slavery and the prescriptive ideals of plantation homes. For some, this dramatic change required a reconfiguration of the ways in which households operated.<sup>1</sup> Across Mississippi, Alabama, and Georgia, white households dealt with the changes of the New South. For some families this meant leaving farms and moving to new cities in hopes of a better tomorrow. Other families dealt with the changes of the period by planting more cotton, buying better farm equipment, and going deeper into debt. Of course, there were also families who took neither extreme, but who moved close to county seats while still staying on the land.<sup>2</sup> Yet, often as families decided how best to deal with the changes going on in the Deep South, they turned to

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<sup>1</sup> For more on the disruption of household life after the Civil War and Reconstruction, see Laura Edwards, *Gendered Strife and Confusion: The Political Culture of Reconstruction*, (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1997), 18-20; Elizabeth Hayes Turner, *Women, Culture, and Community: Religion and Reform in Galveston, 1880-1920*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 296; and Jane Censer, *The Reconstruction of White Southern Womanhood, 1865-1895*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2003), 50-51.

<sup>2</sup> For more on the ways in which Southerners dealt with the New South, see Edward L. Ayers, *The Promise of the New South: Life after Reconstruction* 15<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Edition, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).

their pastors for guidance and spiritual advice. For more than a million southerners, this meant turning to Baptist church leaders.<sup>3</sup>

Baptist leaders responded by often offering prescriptive ideas on how Baptist theology interacted with family identity. For these preachers and pastors, seminary and college professors, the Baptist emphasis on individuals extended into thoughts about how families should operate. Thus, though the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) believed that parents and family were important, many officials thought that the family's main role was to nurture individual souls. Many SBC officials believed that godly parents and a loving family created an environment where each person could flourish spiritually and learn about the love of God.

Pastor Rufus Weaver was one of these people: he felt that a proper upbringing was vital to the children of Baptist parents. He did all he could to help parents, including becoming the Corresponding Secretary for the Education Board of the Southern Baptist Convention. Yet, in his 1913 book, *The Religious Development of the Child*, Weaver noted that the greatest “dynamic forces in the religious development of the child” were that child's parents. The parent's ultimate goal, he said, should not be in encouraging the child to gain the high honors that the world had to offer, but rather should be getting their children to “give their hearts to Jesus Christ.”<sup>4</sup> Weaver noted that his own parents and grandparents were very influential for his spiritual formation;

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<sup>3</sup> Department of Commerce and Labor, Bureau of the Census, E. Dana Durand, Director, *Bulletin 103 (Second Edition, Revised and Enlarged): Religious Bodies: 1906*, (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1910), 42.

<sup>4</sup> Rufus W. Weaver, *The Religious Development of the Child: An Evangelical Study from the Scientific View-Point* with an Introduction by John Richard Sampey, (New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1913), 274.

remarking that it was under their training where he learned about his own sinfulness before God, the way of salvation, and of God's power and protection in the midst of the storms of life.<sup>5</sup>

For Weaver, these early experiences helped to cement his own identity in both a spiritual and earthly family. In his recounting of these events, Weaver noted the ways that both immediate and extended family reached out to him, as an individual, to attempt to get him to join the spiritual family. Though Weaver's place in his earthly family was assured, he was not clear about his place in a spiritual family, and Weaver distinctly remembered listening to the sobbing prayers of his mothers as she pleaded with God to give her strength to rear her son. Such prayers for the conversion of sons were not limited merely to southern mothers, though. Historian Sean Scott's work shows that the idea of wives and mothers urging their male loved ones to repent and give their hearts to God was a major theme for women in the north during the American Civil War.<sup>6</sup> In the family that Weaver grew up in, this ideal came to fruition as Weaver explained that hearing these prayers began a three-year spiritual journey for him, which eventually ended with his giving his life to Jesus one night as his grandfather preached.<sup>7</sup> Weaver's conversion experience demonstrated how powerful the identification with family and religion could be. Whether it was his memories of the family gathered after a meal to listen to his father read the Bible, or hearing his grandfather read the Psalms amidst the roar of Southern thunderstorms, religious expression created a sense identity for Weaver – an identity based around the idea that he, as an individual, belonged not only to an earthly family, but a heavenly one as well.

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<sup>5</sup> Weaver, *Religious Development*, 217-221.

<sup>6</sup> Sean Scott, *A Visitation of God: Northern Civilians Interpret the Civil War*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 72, 95.

<sup>7</sup> Weaver, *Religious Development*, 220.

To encourage this identity with a heavenly family, Weaver repeatedly talked about the importance of training children in the way they should go. His own life gave examples of the patriarchs of the family reading Scripture and preaching while the women prayed for family members; and Weaver encouraged similar things in his writing. At one point, he mentioned how children should not be coddled, but rather be made to know the realities of the world and sinfulness of their own hearts at an early age.<sup>8</sup> When teaching children, though, Weaver was careful to note that each child should still have complete religious autonomy; in other words, they must be viewed and considered as an individual with a free will. Weaver wrote that “Every child coming into the world has the right to the opportunity of realizing personal autonomy. We repudiate the reception of any one, child or adult, into the Church upon any other basis than the personal choice of Jesus Christ as Lord.”<sup>9</sup> Thus, though families, and more specifically parents, were vital to his ideas of how one developed personal religious identity, no one should feel coerced into belief by family. Every person’s identity was unique, and Weaver expected parents to respect that even as they taught their children to listen to the voice of God.

This emphasis on early training led Weaver to believe that both parents should be involved in a child’s religious upbringing, and he excoriated fathers who shirked the responsibilities to teach their own children about God.<sup>10</sup> As will be shown in the chapter on Baptist manliness, this was not only because Weaver felt that fathers should take an active role in the nurturing of their child’s faith, but also because men were supposed to be the spiritual

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<sup>8</sup> Weaver, *Religious Development*, 168-170.

<sup>9</sup> Weaver, *Religious Development*, 271.

<sup>10</sup> Weaver, *Religious Development*, 212-217.

masters of their homes. Weaver was not the only one who felt that it was necessary to remind fathers of their role in the family.

T.T. Eaton, a professor at the Southern Baptist Seminary, was another Baptist official highlighted the role of fathers in the spiritual upbringing of their children. As a professor at the SBC's seminary, Eaton's ministry was not in Mississippi, Alabama, or Georgia but in Louisville, Kentucky at the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary there. As such, some would argue that he is not an appropriate subject for a project focused on the Deep South. However, this author believes that Eaton's influence extended well beyond Louisville because of his role as a high-profile pastor, newspaper editor, and professor at the seminary.<sup>11</sup> In one sermon deliberately directed at young men, Eaton told his congregants that the "example of the father is all powerful with them [children] and the seed sown in childhood is sure to bring forth an abundant harvest."<sup>12</sup> Obviously, the influence that Eaton ascribed to fathers was very important, and he was careful to warn his listeners to use that influence carefully. Eaton exhorted them not to describe the sinful days of their youth in glowing terms, lest the sons of his parishioners think it was a "fine manly thing" to be wild in youth and only follow God in old age.<sup>13</sup> Instead, he warned the men in his congregation that God would not hold anyone guiltless who ran from his

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<sup>11</sup> For more on Eaton's influence in Southern Baptist polity, see Gregory A. Wills, *Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1859-2009*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009). Eaton was one of the leading voices that forced President W.H. Whitsitt to resign from his post at the Southern Baptist Seminary in Louisville in 1899. For more on the controversy, see James H. Slatton, *W.H. Whitsitt: The Man and the Controversy*, (Macon: Mercer University Press, 2009).

<sup>12</sup> T.T. Eaton, "Sermon to Young Men," in *Sermon Notebook Vol. VI: 1871-1878*, n.d., 43, Box 1, Thomas Treadwell Eaton Papers, AR. 21, Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives, Nashville, Tennessee, (TTE).

<sup>13</sup> Eaton, "Young Men," 42, TTE.

responsibilities to train his sons to listen to the voice of God.<sup>14</sup> Eaton believed that it was still the responsibility of an individual child to respond to the voice of God in faith; yet, he felt that proper examples needed to be given so that the impressionable souls of children might not make the same mistakes as their fathers.

SBC pastors recognized that the voice of God was not always easy to hear. In one sermon to the 1902 meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention, one pastor from Mississippi, Fernando McConnell, talked about the ways in which God spoke to the elect. Moving against the notion that the moment of conversion to Christianity had to be a specific moment in a believer's life, McConnell said that those who grew up in Christian homes were often unable to remember exactly when they first heard the "low and tender" whisper of God, but it often came "through a mother's prayer." However, he believed that for everyone who came to know God personally, there was a time when the voice of God was no longer a whisper, "but came in thunder tones," which had more masculine overtones.<sup>15</sup> What was clear in McConnell's ideas about the voice of God was the importance of the family in establishing religious faith. In his mind, a mother's prayer could be more than just an expression of sacred hopes; it could be the very voice of God to her children.

Landrum Leavell, another SBC pastor, also believed that the influence of a Christian family, and particularly thought that a mother could be vitally important in the lives of her children. Leavell had grown up in a family with nine brothers, at least three of which found their

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<sup>14</sup> Eaton, "Young Men," 40-41, TTE.

<sup>15</sup> Fernando Coello McConnell, "The Doctrine of Missions," 1902, 3, Folder 46, Box 1, Southern Baptist Convention Sermon Collection, AR. 638, Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives, Nashville, Tennessee, (SBC).

calling in full-time Christian ministry as Baptist pastors and evangelists.<sup>16</sup> While Leavell probably felt that his own family had been a model to him growing up, he was certainly not alone in emphasizing the importance of wives and mothers in the spiritual lives of their children. During the American Civil War, women in the north often tried to persuade their husbands, brothers, and sons to find solace in Christianity.<sup>17</sup> This idea was not just a part of the Union war experience, though. Historian Jane Censer notes that women's roles as the instigator of spirituality was a part of the southern experience in the decades after the Civil War. She writes, "Society at large and young women themselves expected that they would not only reform their fiancés but also inspire religious conversion, or at least more devout religious feelings, in their future husbands."<sup>18</sup> Though Leavell could offer prescriptive commentary to his parishioners as a religious authority, the notion that women should inspire devotion was part of the cultural milieu in the turn of the century South.

In talking about the believing women of the South, Leavell beatified the women who poured themselves into their sons and daughters. By doing so, he also gave one of the counter-examples to those in the SBC with a heightened sense of the individual. His thoughts on a mother's role in the lives of her children clearly showed a more communal aspect of life and faith. Leavell said that the woman who gave her children her own strength, who gave them her noble nature, and who ministered to them throughout her life would not really die, but rather

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<sup>16</sup> See the photograph marked "The 9 Leavell brothers of Oxford, Miss." in Folder 9, Box 2, Landrum Pinson Leavell Collection, AR. 795-180, Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives, Nashville, Tennessee, (LPL).

<sup>17</sup> See Sean Scott, *A Visitation of God: Northern Civilians Interpret the Civil War*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 72, 95.

<sup>18</sup> Jane Censer, *The Reconstruction of White Southern Womanhood, 1865-1895*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2003), 87.

gently fade from the earth. As she poured her strength and soul into her children, her memory will remain with them and their children for generations.<sup>19</sup> It was important, though, to realize that all of the examples of believing parents that these SBC officials gave were supposed to demonstrate how important family was in establishing the faith of individuals. Yet, there was rarely any sense that Christianity was a communal faith, passed down from one generation to the next. Each pastor instead exhorted his parishioners to teach their children about the faith in order that each child might choose Christ on his or her own.

However, the language that Leavell, and a few others, used to talk about faith emphasized kinship ties.<sup>20</sup> Utilizing the language of kin and family was a major way in which some SBC officials provided a counter-current to the denomination's individualistic theology. Pastors sometimes used the term "sonship" or "divine sonship" to recognize those who had accepted Jesus.<sup>21</sup> While the term had its origin in Scripture, it worked well for Baptists who emphasized both the familial and individual nature of Christianity. Kinship terms could be used for other sacred purposes as well.

Many SBC pastors wanted to emphasize God's love for sinners and found the language of the family useful in conveying this idea to their parishioners. T.T. Eaton, a pastor and professor whose influence extended far beyond his home in Louisville, Kentucky, through a

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<sup>19</sup> Landrum Pinson Leavell, Untitled Hillman College Commencement Address, 1905, 10, Box 1, LPL. Hillman College was a women's college that was eventually bought and absorbed into the SBC-affiliated Mississippi College in Clinton, Mississippi. See the history of Mississippi College at their website: <http://www.mc.edu/about/history>.

<sup>20</sup> For more on the ways in which kinship ties are expressed through Christian theology, see Janet Martin Soskice's *The Kindness of God: Metaphor, Gender, and Religious Language*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), especially 1-34, 52-65, and 66-83.

<sup>21</sup> William Owen Carver, "The Word Made Flesh," 1904 Sermon Notebook, 7, Box 12, WOC.

denominational paper he edited called the *Western Recorder*, even addressed one sermon specifically to “Babes in Christ.”<sup>22</sup> In this sermon, Eaton talked repeatedly about the joy one first experienced upon conversion to Christianity and being brought into the “Father’s house;” about the growth from babes to “full manhood” that members of Christ’s family had; and about a “loving Father who watched and guarded every step” so that Christians might live “as free from worry and anxiety as a happy child in a father’s house.”<sup>23</sup> Throughout this sermon, Eaton tried to show his parishioners the ways that he believed God modeled the perfect father for believers. Eaton clearly thought that God created a new identity for believers as the divine extended bonds of kinship to new converts, accepted them into his house, and brought them into his family. Eaton made this familial connection clear in the sermon as he talked about the need for a believer’s character and actions to change to match that new identity.<sup>24</sup> Eaton recognized that changing old habits would not be easy, and so talked about the process of growth that would have to take place as a believer’s faith matured – and in fact that sense of maturation was exactly what Eaton noted as he mentioned the growth of believers as they moved from children in the faith to attaining “full manhood.” What Eaton most tried to convey as he preached, though, was a sense of God as a father, ever watchful and able to protect those he loved. New believers were supposed to be able to rest in an identity that was based on the power and love of God the Father.

Another influential Baptist leader, E.C. Dargan, also emphasized the ways in which God watched over his people. Dargan, like Eaton, was based in Louisville, Kentucky, but his influence was felt throughout the South as Dargan trained students in homiletics, or preaching, at

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<sup>22</sup> T.T. Eaton, “Babes in Christ” in *Sermon Notebooks: Vol. VII, 1883*, n.p., Box 2, TTE.

<sup>23</sup> Eaton, “Babes in Christ,” Vol. II, n.p., TTE.

<sup>24</sup> Eaton, “Babes in Christ,” Vol. II, n.p., TTE.

the Southern Baptist Seminary from 1892-1907. In his book, *The Doctrines of Our Faith*, Dargan spent an entire chapter focused on the providence of God. In the chapter, Dargan reminded his readers of God’s loving, wise, and “tender care” for humans as well as for the rest of the universe.<sup>25</sup> The author then continued and talked about the specific Scriptural references which talked about God’s care for his people, highlighting the use of fatherly images for believers.<sup>26</sup> Dargan also used maternal imagery to attempt to show his readers another aspect of God’s love. He compared God to a “good mother [who] loves her wayward son, though with all her pure soul she hates his evil ways.”<sup>27</sup> Again, male readers would sense their own identity in his passage – they were the sons who continued to hurt their mother through their actions. This was not where Dargan left his readers, though, as a few chapters later, he explained their new relationship to the God by using language of reconciled kinship ties.<sup>28</sup> Throughout this volume on the beliefs of the SBC, Dargan tried to impress upon his readers the ways in which their identity should be based on a familial relationship to an all-powerful God who tenderly cared for them.

Dargan was certainly not the only SBC pastor who wanted his parishioners to have a new identity based in the Fatherhood of God. In 1912, B.W. Russell, a Baptist circuit-rider from Georgia, wrote to an old friend of his, E.C. Dargan, trying to clear up a point about prayer and God’s providence. In the letter, Russell was concerned with the phrase “Thy will be done,” and

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<sup>25</sup> Edwin Charles Dargan, *The Doctrines of Our Faith: A Convenient Handbook for Use in Normal Classes, Sacred Literature Courses and Individual Study*, (Nashville: Sunday School Board Southern Baptist Convention, 1905), 55-56.

<sup>26</sup> Dargan, *Doctrines*, 58-59.

<sup>27</sup> Dargan, *Doctrines*, 122.

<sup>28</sup> Dargan, *Doctrines*, 154-157.

the fact that a Christian might actually pray for things that were outside of the will of God. Russell wanted to know if Dargan agreed that God, in his “Fatherly love” would change the believer’s heart and get that person to start praying for other things.<sup>29</sup> In this instance, Russell’s idea that God’s love would change the believer’s desires pointed to kinship bonds and a new identity. Russell suggested that God’s love, as well as the believer’s love for God, would encourage individuals to change their actions in order to please the divine. While the idea of the Fatherhood of God has been a part of Christianity since time immemorial, the term gained popularity at the beginning of the twentieth century as Social Gospellers in both the north and South, as well as various groups of theologically-liberal Christians, began using the term the “Fatherhood of God” to push for specific understandings of the world.<sup>30</sup> Many leaders of the Southern Baptist Convention would have been appalled at the theology that many adherents of the Social Gospel used. Nonetheless, the swing toward Social Gospel ideas throughout the country at the beginning of the twentieth century did change the ways theological terms were used, and created an atmosphere that highlighted the Fatherhood of God and the divine’s love for the elect.

The love of God was also the message of William Owen Carver’s 1904 sermon, “The Word Made Flesh.” In this address, Carver repeated the early twentieth century emphasis on the love of God, and told his congregants that Jesus was the highest expression of God’s love to the world. Carver’s audience heard that Jesus was the Christ and the “love of God bringing the light

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<sup>29</sup> B.W. Russell to E.C. Dargan, 22 February 1912, 2, Box 4, E.C. Dargan Collection, AR. 203, Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives, Nashville, Tennessee, (ECD).

<sup>30</sup> For an example of this, see Lyman Abbott, *The Rights of Man: A Study in Twentieth Century Problems*, (London: James Clarke & Co., 1901), 343.

of life” to the world.<sup>31</sup> Carver also affirmed the idea of the divine sonship to those who believed in Jesus.<sup>32</sup> Once again, an SBC official tried to tell his congregants that their identities were intimately connected to God through the bonds of kinship and love.

While there were Southern Baptist officials at the beginning of the twentieth century who were concerned about the ways in which their parishioners would understand their identities as rooted in the love and bonds of family offered by God through Jesus, and thus de-emphasized the role of the individual; other officials stressed what they believed were the ideal characteristics that individual men and women should exhibit. Some of the ideals that SBC pastors thought that women should have were a purity of heart, a loving temperament, and an educated mind, among other things. Yet, these same pastors recognized that not all women had these things and felt that there were sinful, evil elements in all of humanity – women included.

### **Pure Baptist Womanhood**

One of the first major traits that many SBC officials believed characterized all women was an almost angelic purity of heart. This was very similar to many ideas current in Southern culture at the turn of the century. At the time, in the South, many people celebrated women as the measure of “moral excellence.” These ideas often “reflected an ideology that conflated ideas about femininity with ideas about morality itself.”<sup>33</sup> Various historians have shown that the

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<sup>31</sup> Carver, “Word Made Flesh,” 4.

<sup>32</sup> Carver, “Word Made Flesh,” 7, 9.

<sup>33</sup> Lori D. Ginzburg, *Women and the Work of Benevolence: Morality, Politics, and Class in the Nineteenth-Century United States*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990), 1.

paradigm that shaped this idea of women as the arbiters of virtue and morality was one that could provide either a cage or a key for women.<sup>34</sup>

While many male Baptist officials thought that they were empowering women, they often circumscribed the roles that women could take or the particular type of femininity that they approved of. For example, when speaking about feminine purity, one Baptist pastor from Columbus, Mississippi, mentioned the various types of people he had among his parishioners. Among the “fathers and mothers growing old” and the “young men with hearts...strong and true” were young maidens with “thoughts as pure as the milk.”<sup>35</sup> Here the author, John L. Johnson clearly demonstrated that he believed that purity was inherent among young women. Though this could easily be dismissed as merely a rhetorical set piece, Johnson essentialized features of other groups. Young men were strong and true of heart; fathers and mothers were growing old in their “simple life and loves,” and throughout the countryside, people with “primitive manners” worshiped in “board chapels” and “log meeting houses.”<sup>36</sup> Johnson used rhetorical devices to paint a picture of a rural church; nonetheless, he still attempted to say what he believed to be true about such a meeting, and in doing so tried to distill each group of parishioners down to its essential characteristic. For young women, then, he believed that what defined them and gave them their identity, was their innocence and purity of thought.

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<sup>34</sup> The tension can be seen in Nancy F. Cott’s now classic volume *Bonds of Womanhood: “Woman’s Sphere” in New England, 1780-1835*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977).

<sup>35</sup> John L. Johnson, “Emotionalism in Religion” *Proceedings of the Eleventh Baptist Congress, Held in Augusta, Ga., December 1893*, (New York: Baptist Congress Publishing Co., 1894), 20, Baptist Congress Proceedings Collection, AR. 40, Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives, Nashville, Tennessee, (BCPC).

<sup>36</sup> Johnson, “Emotionalism,” 20, BCPC.

Johnson was not the only one who believed that purity defined young women. William J. Holtzclaw, a pastor and author from Georgia, wrote an entire book attempting to define women, appropriately titled *The Women of To-day*.<sup>37</sup> In it, Holtzclaw repeatedly talked about the ways in which women's purity had both social and sexual components, and how he believed that this dual nature of women's purity would help society. Holtzclaw would have applauded the reform efforts that the women of Galveston, Texas began after a hurricane destroyed their town in 1900. Historian Elizabeth Hayes Turner has recorded how, after the storm, the women of the town began to rebuild and reform Galveston society.<sup>38</sup> Texas was not the only southern state to see public reform efforts headed by women however. Lori Ginzburg, Rebecca Montgomery, and Jane Censer are just a few of the historians who have chronicled the ways that white southern women used the ideas of moral authority in order to institute reform in the South and across the United States at the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth century.<sup>39</sup> A generation earlier, however, such women would not have been able to engage in public reform efforts.<sup>40</sup>

Though Holtzclaw was clearly not aware of all of the ways that women were using the ideology of morality, throughout his book he did suggest that women should receive suffrage because of their moral authority. At one point, Holtzclaw asked his readers: "[Can] any nation

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<sup>37</sup> William J. Holtzclaw, *Women of To-day* with an Introduction by J.A. Leavitt, (Louisville, KY: Baptist Book Concern, Publishers, 1909).

<sup>38</sup> Elizabeth Hayes Turner, *Women, Culture, and Community: Religion and Reform in Galveston, 1880-1920*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997).

<sup>39</sup> Ginzburg, *Women and the Work of Benevolence*; Rebecca Montgomery, "Lost Cause Mythology in New South Reform," 174-198, in *Negotiating Boundaries of Southern Womanhood: Dealing with the Powers That Be*, Janet L. Coryell, Thomas H. Appleton, Jr., Anastatia Sims, and Sandra Gioia Treadway, eds., (Columbia, Missouri: University of Missouri Press, 2000); and Jane Censer, *The Reconstruction of White Southern Womanhood, 1865-1895*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2003).

<sup>40</sup> Censer, *Reconstruction of White Southern Womanhood*, 50-51.

fail to be benefited by the franchise of pure and cultured women?”<sup>41</sup> Nonetheless, he worried that some women could lose their character through poor marriages, and wanted them to require “purity for purity” and “honor for honor.”<sup>42</sup> Clearly, Holtzclaw was one of the men who believed that a woman’s purity was an essential part of what truly made her a woman.

This innate purity was not an unusual idea at the time; however, Holtzclaw ended up applying it in some unusual ways. For instance, because of this feminine purity, he believed that women should vote since they would help to clean up politics – and whenever he talked about giving women the right to vote, he talked about it in a national context. This was not a popular opinion when Holtzclaw published his book in 1909. Rather, many Southerners lagged a generation behind their northern counterparts in supporting women’s suffrage. Those who did support woman suffrage, and there was a sizeable minority who did, often did not support a national movement, but instead wanted states to be allowed to write their own woman suffrage amendments. By doing so, each state would be able to decide how it would regulate voting, thus keeping the boundaries of white supremacy firmly fixed.<sup>43</sup> By advocating for woman suffrage at the national level, Holtzclaw was thus ahead of many of his readers as he argued for women’s political rights.

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<sup>41</sup> Holtzclaw, *Women of To-day*, 32.

<sup>42</sup> Holtzclaw, *Women of To-day*, 64-66.

<sup>43</sup> For more on the suffrage movement in the South, see Elna C. Green, *Southern Strategies: Southern Women and the Woman Suffrage Question*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997); Evelyn A. Kirkley, “‘This Work is God’s Cause:’ Religion in the Southern Woman Suffrage Movement, 1880-1920,” *Church History* 59 (December 1990): 507-522; Anne Firor Scott, *The Southern Lady: From Pedestal to Politics, 1830-1930*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970); and Anne Firor Scott, *Making the Invisible Woman Visible*, (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1984), 212-221.

Yet, as much as he believed that women's essential character was purity, Holtzclaw worried that women could lose that quality if they married men who had not kept themselves chaste before marriage. Women could purify politics simply by voting, by performing their public duty. However, if a woman performed her "wifely duty" with a husband who was not a virgin when they married, she lost that purity and claim to moral authority.<sup>44</sup> A woman's individual purity could be displayed in public and used for the general welfare, but intimate acts of immorality – even those which a woman did not herself commit – could be combined with what happened inside marriage and instantly take that purity from her.

Sex was not the only way that Holtzclaw warned women they might lose their individual purity, though. He worried that dancing and the life of the ballroom threatened young women's purity by arousing jealousy and rivalry. He believed that the ballroom's "dazzling lights and excited passion" was dangerous to "the soul of a pure woman."<sup>45</sup> Again, though purity might define a woman, she could easily lose it through actions. A woman's pure character, her identity, could be lost simply through what she did. Additionally, according to Holtzclaw, an individual woman's purity could be lost not only through her own actions, but through the actions of those she was connected with, whether a husband or the people she interacted with at dances. Holtzclaw's essential woman, and the purity she embodied, was thus imperiled and fragile.

Despite this imperiled identity, Holtzclaw believed that it was still a woman's "duty to bring her influence" into every aspect of life and society which needed purification. Holtzclaw believed that women had a particular transcendent moral authority. It was their job to bring

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<sup>44</sup> Holtzclaw, *Women of To-day*, 65.

<sup>45</sup> Holtzclaw, *Women of To-day*, 115.

purity to every avenue of life.<sup>46</sup> Indeed, he felt that it would be through a woman's purity that "the whole human race [would be saved] from the corrupt swamps of social and political life."<sup>47</sup> It was important that here Holtzclaw used the feminine singular in an attempt to place all women into one woman. This was a clear sign that the author attempted to define essential characteristics that defined all women, and condense the complexities, nuances, and unique individuals that composed half of all humanity into a few "essential" traits.

One of the ways that Holtzclaw believed that women could fulfill their purpose and fit into such idealized traits was through a divinely ordained purpose to rescue society. During this time, when postmillennialism was on the rise, and many liberal Protestants looked to the burgeoning Social Gospel movement to bring about the Kingdom of God, Holtzclaw looked to women to bring redeem secular society. Postmillennialism is the idea in Christian theology that the world was gradually getting better, and that eventually the Kingdom of God would appear on earth.<sup>48</sup> While this idea had remarkable influence in the northern mainline denominations before

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<sup>46</sup> For more on the idea of feminine moral authority, see Ursula King, "Introduction: Gender and the Study of Religion," in Ursula King, ed., *Religion & Gender*, (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1995), 16.

<sup>47</sup> Holtzclaw, *Women of To-day*, 145. For more on the subject of essentializing gender see Victoria Pruin DeFrancisco and Catherine Helen Palczewski, *Communicating Gender Diversity: A Critical Approach*, (Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications, Inc., 2007), 18-20; Andreas G. Philaretou, *The Perils of Masculinity: An Analysis of Male Sexual Anxiety, Sexual Addiction, and Relational Abuse*, (Lanham, Maryland: University Press of America, 2004), 39; and for how this might work in the political realm, see Deborah Alexander and Kristi Anderson, "Gender as a Factor in the Attribution of Leadership Traits" *Political Research Quarterly* 46 (September 1993): 527-545.

<sup>48</sup> For more on postmillennial thought and its secular offshoots, see Jean B. Quandt, "Religion and Social Thought: The Secularization of Postmillennialism," *American Quarterly* 25 (October 1973): 390-409.

the First World War, it generally did not have as large of an influence in the South.<sup>49</sup> Despite this, Holtzclaw felt that women should work to help redeem humanity from its downward spiral because women were “better equipped for moral and religious work than men. They are endowed with natures more tender, emotional and sympathetic than men. They are strong in faith and zeal, and their will-power is far in advance of men.”<sup>50</sup> Here, the author showed that he believed that there was something innately religious about women that made them better at serving others than men. Interestingly, though, Holtzclaw also seemed to insinuate that women had more self-control, better mastery over one’s self, than did men. As will be shown later, Holtzclaw was rare in attributing ideas of mastery to women, as it was often described as a masculine trait.

However, the idea that women, because of their moral and religious nature, were better equipped to rescue and reform society was not unusual during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Frequently women themselves used the paradigm of feminine purity or religiosity to implement reform. The idea that feminine moral authority should be used in public reform efforts was a change in the way southern culture thought of women, and it opened up new roles for women in society between 1877 and 1915. A generation earlier, women were encouraged to use their moral authority, but only within the spheres of their own families –

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<sup>49</sup> For works that examine postmillennial thought in northern mainline denominations in America see Christopher Hodge Evans, *The Kingdom is Always But Coming: A Life of Walter Rauschenbusch*, (Cambridge: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2004); and Wendy J. Diechmann Edwards, “Manifest Destiny, the Social Gospel and the Coming Kingdom: Josiah Strong’s Program of Global Reform, 1885-1916,” in *Perspectives on the Social Gospel: Papers from the Inaugural Social Gospel Conference at Colgate Rochester Divinity School*, ed. Christopher H. Evans, (Lampeter: The Edwin Mellon Press, 1999): 81-116.

<sup>50</sup> Holtzclaw, *Women of To-day*, 146.

virtually never in public settings and never in political ones.<sup>51</sup> Yet, in the New South at the turn of the century, religious leaders like Landrum Leavell and William Holtzclaw were encouraging women to go into the public, even the political, realm and exert their purifying influence. Southern white women did just that. Whether through their local churches, foreign mission boards, the Women's Christian Temperance Union, or in the burgeoning woman suffrage movement, southern women tapped into the idea of purity and used it to open up new avenues of power and authority in the South<sup>52</sup>

### **Selfless Baptist Womanhood**

Beyond the redeeming purpose that flowed from southern white women's pure hearts, Holtzclaw thought, "Woman is a born sufferer, and she counts not her life dear to herself if only she can accomplish her purpose."<sup>53</sup> Once again, the author turned the ideas of an individualistic theology around to create an essential woman, making an idealistic model with which he tried to describe all women. Here, Holtzclaw explained to his readers that women were made to suffer, and came close to insinuating that it was only in suffering that they would attain their true femininity.

Beyond this, however, Holtzclaw's ideas belittled injustices that were done to women, as they

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<sup>51</sup> See Censer, *Reconstruction of White Southern Womanhood*, 6-7, 50-51; as well as Cott, *Bonds of Womanhood*, 8, 64, 199-204.

<sup>52</sup> For examples, see Montgomery, "Lost Cause Mythology in New South Reform;" and Censer, *Reconstruction of White Southern Womanhood*; Green, *Southern Strategies*; Kirkley, " 'This Work is God's Cause' "; Scott, *The Southern Lady*; and Marjorie Spruill Wheeler, *New Women of the New South: The Leaders of the Woman Suffrage Movement in the Southern States*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993).

<sup>53</sup> Holtzclaw, *Women of To-day*, 146.

were simply “born sufferer[s].” Moreover, he combined this idea of suffering with a type of martyr-like selflessness in which a woman would be willing to lay down her life for any worthy purpose. Though certainly meant in praise of women, he did not say that this was a trait that women might choose; but something that was inherent in all women. Holtzclaw’s sentiments also seemed to echo the ideas of the Biblical book of Isaiah, who, when speaking of one who would come to rescue God’s chosen people, talked about a suffering servant.<sup>54</sup> Though there was no proof that Holtzclaw had this passage in mind as he penned his ideas that women were “born sufferer[s],” he likely would have recognized the Biblical language of the suffering servant.

One of the characteristics that many Baptists believed defined true femininity at the turn of the century throughout Mississippi, Alabama, and Georgia was self-sacrificing love. As already noted, Holtzclaw included this trait as one of the ones that flowed out of a woman’s pure heart. Other Baptist preachers also talked about a woman’s unique ability to love, though most often it appeared as a part of what it meant to be a mother. For example, in 1905, E.C. Dargan noted that he thought mothers could easily love their wayward sons, while at the same time hating their actions.<sup>55</sup> Dargan noted how hard this was for mothers; yet, how they willingly sacrificed for their sons.

In a similar expression about the loving nature of women made in 1910, J.B. Moody, Dean of the Hall-Moody Institute (an SBC school in Martin, Tennessee), made much broader claims. He mentioned in one of his books, “God made women to love and to be loved. Man is

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<sup>54</sup> See Isaiah 52:13-53:12, Holy Bible.

<sup>55</sup> Dargan, *Doctrines*, 122.

the head, but the wife is the heart.”<sup>56</sup> Moody carefully noted that he fell into a trap that men have made from time immemorial – he called the husband by the universal name of the sex, man, while at the same time calling the woman by her married title, wife. Moody was progressive enough to realize that in doing this writers “bind the woman, but leave the man free.”<sup>57</sup> Even as he realized (and repented) that he bound women, he nonetheless made claims about the essential nature of women. He argued that affection was one of the very reasons why women had been created – that it was part of what made them female and gave them a gendered identity.

Using traits such as love and purity to define the essential part of one’s being may seem relatively benign. However, such attempts became corrosive when character traits defined not just an individual, but also an entire sex. In other words, these male officials were using personality traits from individual women and applying them to all females. Using ideas such as purity and love put all women on a pedestal, and created a model up to which no woman could fully live. This meant that through the process of essentializing all women from the traits of individuals, these Baptist officials set up a dichotomy in which women were either virgins or whores.<sup>58</sup> There was virtually no middle ground for those that did not live up to expectations; yet, this was the message that preachers disseminated to their parishioners. For some Baptist

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<sup>56</sup> J.B. Moody, *Women in the Churches: Their Rights and Restrictions; OR, Paul Harmonized with the Law and the Gospel* Second Edition, (Martin, Tennessee: Hall-Moody Institute, 1910), 42.

<sup>57</sup> Moody, *Women in the Churches*, 42.

<sup>58</sup> For more on the trope of the virgin or the whore, see Phyllis Marynick Palmer, “White Women/ Black Women: The Dualism of Female Identity and Experience in the United States” *Feminist Studies* 9 (Spring 1983): 157-159. For a Southern perspective, see Betina Entzminger, *The Belle Gone Bad: White Southern Women Writers and the Dark Seductress*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2002), 1-31.

ministers, once this process began it became all too easy for them to believe that certain character traits marked evil and defilement in a woman.

The process by which white southern women were placed on a pedestal was not restricted merely to those within the Southern Baptist Convention. Many historians have demonstrated that at the end of the nineteenth century, and beginning of the twentieth, white society in the South had a bifurcated view of women. They were either pure and passive virgins who needed violent protection from the ravages of the world; or, they were defiled, “low-class” women who could not expect to receive safe haven from white society.<sup>59</sup> Yet, the protection offered to paragons of purity was not necessarily empowering. Rather, it emphasized a cycle of dependence in which women were passive creatures.<sup>60</sup> Those who did not fit into this often fell outside the “protection” of southern white men.

Different Baptist preachers throughout Mississippi, Alabama, and Georgia approached the problem of the bad, evil, or sometimes simply “impudent” women differently. Rufus Weaver, an SBC pastor who moved around the South, left few full sermon texts, leaving instead a list of the titles of the messages that he preached to the laity attending his churches. One of these announced a dystopian view of family by proclaiming that he preached on the topic of “The woman who thought herself better than her husband.”<sup>61</sup> Clearly, Weaver thought that it was wrong for a woman to consider herself better than her husband; so wrong that he felt he

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<sup>59</sup> More on the ways in which white women’s sexuality was protected, see Stephen Kantrowitz, *Ben Tillman and the Reconstruction of White Supremacy*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000), 105.

<sup>60</sup> For an example of this, see Kris DuRocher, “Violent Masculinity: Learning Ritual and Performance in Southern Lynchings,” 46-64, in Friend, ed., *Southern Masculinity*, 55.

<sup>61</sup> Rufus W. Weaver, “Sermon Subjects,” preached in February 1913, 7, Box 11, Rufus W. Weaver Collection, AR. 99, Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives, Nashville, Tennessee, (RWW).

needed to preach a sermon on the subject. Merely reading the title left the impression that Weaver believed there to be a hierarchy established between men and women, with women clearly lower than men. For though he preached on the subject of women who might think themselves better than their husbands, he left no record telling men that they should consider their wives as equals.

William Owen Carver, a student and eventually professor of missions at the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, also felt that women could overstep their appropriate roles, and thus degrade their husbands through their bad examples. Thus, rather than women serving to uplift humanity through positive moral authority as Holtzclaw suggested, Carver worried that some women might have a negative influence on those around them. For example, Carver complained to his diary about his stepmother, saying that his father “married a woman beneath him and with an ungovernable temper.”<sup>62</sup> This immediately followed a passage where his stepmother complained about his father to Carver, and Carver noted that she was a woman who had “nothing to love in character or reputation or finance.” He then mused, somewhat disingenuously, “I will not say I am sorry Father married her though I have always wished it otherwise.”<sup>63</sup> Carver’s complaints about his stepmother stemmed from her temper, and colored all of his interactions with her. Even times when Carver did not see his stepmother’s temper, his interactions with her were colored by the knowledge that her temper was formidable.<sup>64</sup> Though he tried to remain on amiable terms with his stepmother, it was clear that Carver felt that she was

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<sup>62</sup> William Owen Carver, *Diary 1893*, 39, Box 11, WOC.

<sup>63</sup> Carver, *Diary 1893*, 39, WOC,

<sup>64</sup> See Carver, *Diary 1893*, 40, and *Diary 1897*, 9, Box 11, WOC.

wrong for his father and a severe drain on the patriarch's energy.<sup>65</sup> Furthermore, this one trait of his stepmother became all-encompassing, and defined her in his own mind. While it was likely that there could have been other problems between Carver and his stepmother based more on the strain of a woman coming to take the place of his birth mother at his father's side, the one issue that Carver returned to in his diary was her temper.<sup>66</sup>

More often, when SBC pastors needed an example of a vile woman, they turned to the Biblical example of Jezebel. Jezebel was the murderous wife of one of the worst kings in Biblical history, and E.C. Dargan used her as the ultimate example of evil in his sermon, "The Story of a Man Scared by a Woman."<sup>67</sup> The title of the address itself seemed to suggest that something was not right with the world as southern white men were not supposed to be afraid of anything, but particularly not women. Within the first few sentences, though, Dargan made it clear that Jezebel was no normal woman; rather, he suggested that she personified evil, and remarked that "when a woman is bad she is very bad."<sup>68</sup> This SBC official once again made the assumption that a woman could be classified by an essential trait. When that trait was love or purity, Dargan put women up on a pedestal; but if a woman could be classified by something he considered bad, he believed that she became a powerful force for evil. Granted, the Biblical character Jezebel was known for her temper, idolatry, and murderous ways; yet Dargan used her

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<sup>65</sup> See Carver, Diary 1893, 39, WOC

<sup>66</sup> There is, however, some evidence that Carver was well aware that his diary would be read by others, even if not in his lifetime. See Diary 1893, 116-117 where Carver talks about visiting the World's Fair in Chicago and not being able to find words to convey the grandeur of the buildings to anyone else.

<sup>67</sup> E.C. Dargan, "The Story of a Man Scared by a Woman," n.d., Box 6, ECD.

<sup>68</sup> Dargan, "Man Scared by a Woman," 1, ECD.

as merely one example of what happened when women went wrong.<sup>69</sup> He even claimed that the history of the world showed that evil forces were often controlled by the “figure of a strong, bad, vindictive woman.”<sup>70</sup> For Dargan, such a figure represented the pinnacle of depravity as a strong woman led others to their doom.

Certainly not all Baptist officials viewed strong women with a measure of suspicion, though. Landrum Leavell from Oxford, Mississippi, felt that a uniquely selfless religious character and purity defined all women. In 1905, Leavell was asked to give the commencement address at Hillman College, a school for young white women in Mississippi. At the beginning of the twentieth century in the Deep South, many ideas of women’s education held onto notions of white southern women rooted in ideologies of class, race, and gender that either had their foundations in the plantation ideals or Lost Cause mythology. Both held to ideals that typically relegated southern white “ladies” to educations concentrating on the “domestic arts.”<sup>71</sup> Additionally, many male supporters of women’s education expected women to “conform to chivalric images of womanhood.”<sup>72</sup> As will be made clear, Leavell expected that the women listening to his address in Mississippi would conform to specific ideals of white southern ladies.

This does not mean that Leavell thought that women should simply be passive objects. In fact, the pastor reminded his listeners that “women were among the most heroic of the martyrs”

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<sup>69</sup> See 1 Kings 19 and 21; and 2 Kings 9, Holy Bible.

<sup>70</sup> Dargan, “Man Scared by a Woman,” 1, ECD.

<sup>71</sup> For more on white women’s education in the New South, see Amy Thompson McCandless, *The Past in the Present: Women’s Higher Education in the Twentieth Century South*, (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1999), 18-57.

<sup>72</sup> McCandless, *Past in the Present*, 18.

and then proceeded to list some of them.<sup>73</sup> Throughout his list of women martyrs and saints, one of the words that Leavell used continually was “virgin,” marking again the ways in which some SBC pastors related spiritual and sexual purity.<sup>74</sup> Though Leavell’s list of women “saints” included many who would be pure, he did not consider this single trait to essentialize appropriate female identity in the same ways that John Johnson and William Holtzclaw did, and Leavell listed many other characteristics that he felt helped to define true womanhood. In his list, Leavell included many women who were not official saints in the Roman Catholic or Orthodox churches (these two groups officially recognize saints). Rather, Leavell gave examples of women whose faith, self-sacrifice, and noble example personified the specific characteristics he listed.

In Leavell’s list of devout women, he noted a number of strong Christian women. The women that Leavell mentioned had a number of characteristics that he admired. Beauty, gentleness, and devotion all figured heavily among them.<sup>75</sup> However, when Leavell mentioned Queen Elizabeth I of England, his description of her was dramatically different. The author told his audience that “the virgin Queen Elizabeth who whatever may have been the vanities and frailties of the feminine side of her character yet displayed as a monarch a masculine energy and decision that insured to her reign the respect of all surrounding nation [sic].”<sup>76</sup> Here, Leavell showed what he truly thought of women’s character. Though he was in the midst of praising Christian women, he decided to describe one of his female heroes by pointing out what he

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<sup>73</sup> Leavell, Untitled Hillman Commencement Address, 7, LPL.

<sup>74</sup> Leavell, Untitled Hillman Commencement Address, 7-9, LPL.

<sup>75</sup> Leavell, Untitled Hillman Commencement Address, 7-9, LPL.

<sup>76</sup> Leavell, Untitled Hillman Commencement Address, 8, LPL.

thought were her *masculine* qualities. These qualities were Elizabeth's energy and decision-making abilities, and were juxtaposed to the "vanities and frailties of the feminine side of her character." Elizabeth I became an androgynous being in Leavell's mind. She had all the shortcomings of a woman's character, combined with a few of the supposedly male virtues. In Leavell's mind, it was not the feminine side of her character that deserved admiration; it was the male side that guaranteed the "respect of all surrounding nations." Thus, in Elizabeth I, character traits actually seemed to skew her gender identity. This was the virtual mirror image of encapsulating someone through their character traits. Rather than praise Elizabeth I for her femininity as he did for most of the other women, Leavell praised her for "masculine" traits despite her femininity.

In contrast, Leavell next talked about the Holy Roman Empress Maria Teresa, and declared that in a time of need, it was her "words together with her beauty majesty and sorrow [sic]" that gathered Hungarian nobles to her side.<sup>77</sup> Thus, in comparison to Elizabeth I's masculine qualities, it was Maria Teresa's feminine ones that insured that the loyalist nobles of the Holy Roman Empire would come and fight – thus demonstrating their own chivalry. Again, though Maria Teresa may have been an eloquent speaker, it was not her wise governance or her strength of character that Leavell praised. Instead, it was the qualities that she used to awaken Hungarian chivalry that the speaker felt were worth imitating. These male nobles were roused by her feminine traits; her beauty, majesty, and sorrow thus enabled the men around her to better prove their own manliness.

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<sup>77</sup> Leavell, Untitled Hillman Commencement Address, 8, LPL.

Leavell next praised American women, whom he felt were “unequaled in beauty, grace, and varied accomplishments.”<sup>78</sup> Though this appeared to be a fitting tribute to the women of the United States, Leavell was still making a claim about women’s character. Rather than noting how wise women were, how strong they were, or how wonderfully they contributed to the society as a whole, he simply remarked that their beauty and grace were unparalleled in the world. Though he did remark that they had “varied accomplishments,” when preceded by beauty and grace, it gave the impression that the accomplishments he was so proud of were solely aesthetic ones. This becomes even clearer when Leavell continued and specifically praised the women of the American South who:

achieved triumphs far greater by rendering homes happy by physical comforts, by books, by music, by flowers, and delightful conversation; who diminished sorrow by their sympathy, heightened joy by gayety soothed aching hearts by tenderness, dignified those about them by their intelligence and elevated all by their devotion [sic].<sup>79</sup>

Here, Leavell moved slightly from women’s characters to the “triumphal” roles of women in the South. These roles centered on the home and were concerned with emotional and aesthetic activities. While these were, and are, important things that must take place in healthy families, Leavell assumed that it would be the place of the woman in the family to take them, and granted few other options for those who did not feel like they wanted to take up these tasks. Those families who were of a lower socio-economic class and needed to have two incomes just to scrape by without any comforts or luxuries were denigrated as Leavell thought that true womanhood could only come through the lifestyle exemplified by middle- and upper-class femininity. Even for those of elevated social status, Leavell questioned the femininity of those

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<sup>78</sup> Leavell, Untitled Hillman Commencement Address, 8, LPL.

<sup>79</sup> Leavell, Untitled Hillman Commencement Address, 9, LPL.

women who did not want to adorn their homes with aesthetic refinement or who were not gifted in the decorative arts.

Certainly, white women were having to learn more about domestic affairs in the turn of the century South. Historian Jane Censer notes that domesticity did not always have negative connotations, though. Rather, white “women themselves saw their ability to master the new machinery of housekeeping as a marker of nondependence. To them, their creations, both indoors and outdoors, stood as tangible and worthy achievements.”<sup>80</sup> Far from being relegated to a world of domesticity, these women perceived their new roles as a way of demonstrating mastery over their own worlds.<sup>81</sup> Leavell would have approved of this interpretation of his commencement address: one that provided white women, particularly the social elites who would have been attending college, with mastery over their homes.

Though Leavell did not specifically mention it, his ideas of true femininity were bounded not just by ideas of class, but also by race. Founding his thoughts of womanhood on the home meant that those who had to work outside of their own house were at a dramatic disadvantage in his mind. This instantly excluded most African-American women across the South who worked as domestics or even as field hands in order to put food on the table for their families. Yet, historians Glenda Gilmore and John Giggie, as well as others, have demonstrated that even as whites attempted to deny full femininity to black women in the Deep South at the turn of the century; African Americans highlighted the important roles that women took in the home and fully imbibed the idea that the home was a feminine sphere of influence.<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>80</sup> Censer, *Reconstruction of White Southern Women*, 277.

<sup>81</sup> Censer, *Reconstruction of White Southern Women*, 90.

<sup>82</sup> For more on the white idea of African-American woman as a laborer outside the home, see Edward L. Ayers, *The Promise of the New South: Life After Reconstruction 15<sup>th</sup> Anniversary*

In contrast to the idea that women should stay within the domestic sphere, and only four years after Leavell gave his commencement address at Hillman College, William Holtzclaw's *Women of To-day* praised strong, white, "modern" women who refused "to be any longer regarded as a gentler and saintlier type of humanity, who must be petted, revered and protected." He spoke approvingly of the "modern woman, of the advanced type" who faced "men in all branches of business, and in all the professions. They are real competitors."<sup>83</sup> Holtzclaw's sentiment was unusual among SBC pastors in the Deep South, as he deliberately eschewed ideas of femininity that put women on a pedestal. Instead, he praised those women who competitively engaged men in business professions – a realm frequently thought of as a masculine environment.<sup>84</sup> To become competitive in such an environment, Holtzclaw encouraged women to get a strong education, both literary and business.<sup>85</sup> As mentioned earlier, even in these passages where Holtzclaw mentioned the value of women's education, he reduced all women into one woman – the "modern woman."<sup>86</sup> Gone were the complexities within families, town, regions, or even nations. Instead, all strong women who attempted to make their way in business were reduced into the singular "modern woman."

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Edition, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 68-70. For more on the African-American appropriation of the domestic as a feminine ideal, see Glenda Gilmore, *Gender and Jim Crow: Women and the Politics of White Supremacy in North Carolina*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), 108, 138; and John M. Giggie, *After Redemption: Jim Crow and the Transformation of African American Religion in the Delta, 1875-1915*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 139, 148-152.

<sup>83</sup> Holtzclaw, *Women of To-day*, 16-17.

<sup>84</sup> See Nancy F. Cott, *The Grounding of Modern Feminism*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1987), 117-120.

<sup>85</sup> Holtzclaw, *Women of To-day*, 14-15.

<sup>86</sup> Holtzclaw, *Women of To-day*, 16.

Later in Holtzclaw's book, there were disturbing ideas as to why the modern woman should get an education. Holtzclaw claimed that women of "high culture and broad intelligence" were God's "best gift to man." Lest the reader think that Holtzclaw might be referring to humanity rather than simply the male gender, he continued and said, "A well-bred and well-taught woman, who has the additional advantage of good deportment, is in every way capable of filling man's sublimest [sic] wish."<sup>87</sup> Here, the author showed that he believed that all the advances in women's education, women's rights, and in the state of women more generally were to benefit males. Not simply were women supposed to benefit men, but they were to fulfill "man's sublimest wish." Though there was nothing in the text to suggest that Holtzclaw was deliberately alluding to anything erotic, the sexual subtext was impossible to miss. It was unlikely that the author deliberately meant to impose a sexual power relationship into this passage, but Holtzclaw's words did just that. Such language suggested that the education of women; the sum of their learning and years spent in school, as well as the application of that knowledge; the new roles in society that a woman might take up; and a woman's good nature were all for the purpose of fulfilling male desires. Moreover, the language that Holtzclaw used to describe the women he praised suggested an animal condition. The women he referred to did not come from healthy families or the "better classes," instead, they were "well-bred." The same women were not smart, bright, or even well-educated; they were "well-taught." Both phrases suggested that nothing these women had come from within or was of their own doing. They were passive beings whose condition was a result of outside forces working on them rather than their own hard work. This was strikingly different imagery than that used for white men during

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<sup>87</sup> Holtzclaw, *Women of To-day*, 45.

this time. Masculine language often highlighted independent action.<sup>88</sup> In contrast to the language of white manhood, this type of passive language was relatively common in the turn of the century Deep South when whites referred to African Americans and their educational attainments; a connection that Holtzclaw almost certainly would have repudiated. Yet, in both cases, white men referred to an entire people group as passive beings.<sup>89</sup> Then, as if to highlight what Holtzclaw believed was the passive nature of women, he concluded that though a woman might have “ornaments and beauty, if she have [sic] not good behavior” she was a fraud.<sup>90</sup> True femininity, then, was not found in a woman’s inner strength, her ability to care for others, or even her long-suffering when dealing with a difficult husband; it was simply in “ornaments,” “beauty,” and “good behavior.”

### **Educating Baptist Women**

William Holtzclaw seemed to embody some of the conflicts other Deep South Baptist leaders felt in terms of women’s education at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century. Holtzclaw believed that female education was a good thing, and welcomed the ways in which education produced strong individual white women who might compete with men in the marketplace, and the roles it allowed them to take in the New South at the beginning of the

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<sup>88</sup> For examples, see J.B. Hawthorne, “John the Baptist” in *Memorial Catalogue: Fiftieth Annual Catalogue and Register of Howard College*, 1892, 57, Box 4, Catherine Allen Sesquicentennial Collection, SC 4090, Special Collection, Samford University Library, Samford University, Birmingham, Alabama, (CASC); Charles B. Galloway, “Progress of the Twentieth Century Fund,” *Christian Advocate*, 6 April 1899, 91; and Joe Creech, “The Price of Eternal Honor: Independent White Christian Manhood in the Late Nineteenth-Century South,” in *Southern Masculinity: Perspectives on Manhood in the South Since Reconstruction*, Craig Thompson Friend, ed., (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2009), 25-45.

<sup>89</sup> For an example, see “History of the Week,” *Outlook* 109 (12 May 1915): 56.

<sup>90</sup> Holtzclaw, *Women of To-day*, 45.

twentieth century. At the same time, though, he felt that educating women was ultimately for the benefit of men – and he expressly meant males, not mankind. This stood in contrast to many views of women’s education in the South at the time. Historian Amy McCandless records that many southern reformers believed that women’s education was to benefit all of society.<sup>91</sup> Nonetheless, Holtzclaw thought that women’s individuality was subordinated to the benefits that could be provided to men. Some SBC pastors were unclear exactly how they felt about women’s education. For example, William Carver simply expressed surprise when he saw large numbers of female students on the campus of the University of Chicago in 1893.<sup>92</sup> Though Carver did not register any negative feelings in his diary, the very fact that his visceral reaction was so strong that he felt the need to record it was an indication that he was not comfortable with co-education.

Other pastors sometimes supported women’s education in theory, but had a rather hollow view of what it might achieve. Lansing Burrows was one of these. In 1882, the year before he moved to Augusta, Georgia, he gave a commencement speech at the Norfolk (Virginia) Female College entitled “Pansies – A Talk to Girls.”<sup>93</sup> In this address, Burrows noted that education gave pleasure to everyday events that would otherwise go unnoticed.<sup>94</sup> Despite the ways in which Burrows expected young women to enjoy otherwise mundane events because of their education, he also thought that they would enjoy going away from the tough problems of “cracking the philosophical nuts” provided at school and getting to return to their “simple” tasks around their homes. In fact, Burrows was worried that they might experience “occasional attacks

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<sup>91</sup> McCandless, *Past in the Present*, 50.

<sup>92</sup> Carver, Diary 1893, 118, WOC.

<sup>93</sup> Lansing Burrows, “Pansies – A Talk to Girls,” 1882, Folder 206, LBP.

<sup>94</sup> Burrows, “Pansies,” 5, LBP.

of intellectual dyspepsia” at school.<sup>95</sup> Such a statement would certainly never be made at a men’s college during the time, and Burrows clearly thought that the intellectual strain of school might be too much for the young women’s constitution – even as one-quarter of them were set to graduate that day! The idea that women might succumb to dissipation from the overuse of their intellects was not an uncommon view at the end of the nineteenth century in the South.<sup>96</sup>

While Burrows worried that women’s constitutions might be undone through too much education, he was unclear exactly what purpose that education served. He told his audience (remember this was at a commencement service) that if a young woman’s education did not “Make the old homestead inside and outside more attractive and beautiful and pleasant for the whole family, the time and money spent in educating her has been a waste.”<sup>97</sup> Burrows, similar to Leavell, believed that a woman’s education was not meant for her own good, nor was it an end in itself, it was meant for everyone else. Moreover, her education was not to enrich the lives of her family with knowledge or meaning – it was just to make her home more aesthetically pleasing. Burrows made this clear when he told the young women in his audience that it was better to show “true culture” by planting “pansies and sister flowers than to discourse technically about them.”<sup>98</sup> Individual learning was to benefit the family and the community – and if it did not, it was worthless. Certainly, Burrows would not have felt it appropriate for women to go into any of the sciences other than home economics.

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<sup>95</sup> Burrows, “Pansies,” 2-4, LBP.

<sup>96</sup> McCandless, *Past in the Present*, 34.

<sup>97</sup> Burrows, “Pansies,” 12, LBP.

<sup>98</sup> Burrows, “Pansies,” 11, LBP.

Pointing out a few of the Baptist officials who did not have high opinions of women's education does not mean that all SBC pastors had similar ideas. In a denomination that celebrated its history of congregation rule and the freedom of the individual conscience, there were certainly pastors who felt that a deep and meaningful education for young women could be a spiritual boon. As pointed out previously, William Holtzclaw, though he had disturbing ideas about the ultimate goals of women's education, supported it. J.B. Gambrell, a pastor from Mississippi also wholeheartedly supported women's education in a sermon he gave before the 1892 meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention.<sup>99</sup> The sermon was ostensibly about the need to convert the entire world to Christianity, and Gambrell firmly believed that women had a large role in this process. He rejoiced that there were more women being educated and remarked, "Consecrated womanhood is being turned on the heathendom." He then stated that SBC men needed to focus on missionary training as well as academic papers on missions (such as the one he was presenting), but stated that what the denomination really needed was more women to "help us save the world."<sup>100</sup>

Here was a man who obviously felt that educated Baptist women had a large, eternally significant role to play throughout the world. Not only did he feel that women should get an education, but also that that education was meant for more than an aesthetic adornment; it contributed to a divine plan of eternal significance. Gambrell's notion of a woman's education, and what it meant for her role in the world as a "consecrated woman," was expansive indeed. His statements did not merely emerge in a vacuum, however. Rather, they came only two years after the Southern Baptist Convention found itself with an auxiliary: the Women's Missionary

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<sup>99</sup> J.B. Gambrell, "Call to Universal Conquest of the World," Folder 36, Box 1, SBC.

<sup>100</sup> Gambrell, "Universal Conquest," 2, SBC.

Union (WMU).<sup>101</sup> The women of the SBC established the WMU in 1888 as an official auxiliary to the Convention amidst controversy and questions about the appropriate role of women in church life.

### **Southern Baptist Women in the Church**

Many Baptist pastors struggled with just what the role of such a “consecrated woman” should be in the church as well as the world. Most pastors agreed with Landrum Leavell in believing that Christianity had given women the most respect and honor of any major religion throughout the world, and so in response, women had devoted themselves to Christianity.<sup>102</sup> The question remained, though, as to exactly how that devotion should manifest itself. Indeed, William Holtzclaw, in his 1909 book *Women of To-day*, recognized that though there were many women involved in church work, this looked dramatically different depending on the denomination and their interpretation of the Bible. Some groups ordained women to the ministry, others only appointed them missionaries, while still others would allow women to enter theological schools but not grant them an official place in ministry.<sup>103</sup>

William Wilkes, an SBC minister who pastored in Alabama and Texas, wrote about some of these differences in his memoir, *An Alabama Boy*. In it, he described the Primitive Baptist church of his boyhood.<sup>104</sup> There the two sexes were separated by a wide aisle running down the

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<sup>101</sup> For more on the founding of the WMU, see David T. Morgan, *Southern Baptist Sisters: In Search of Status, 1845-2000*, (Macon, Georgia: Mercer University Press, 2003).

<sup>102</sup> Leavell, Untitled Hillman Commencement Address, 7, LPL.

<sup>103</sup> Holtzclaw, *Women of To-day*, 20-21.

<sup>104</sup> Primitive Baptists were, and are, one of the many varieties of Baptists that were not a part of the Southern Baptist Convention. Other religious groups sometimes referred to them as “hyper-Calvinists” because of their emphasis on predestination. This emphasis was so strong

center of the building.<sup>105</sup> This congregation felt very strongly that women should not have active roles in the church, and Wilkes recalled how “Ladies’ Aids were severely denounced and defied.”<sup>106</sup> Nevertheless, women were a part of the church community and routinely practiced what they believed to be their religious duties – including foot washing. For the men in Wilkes’ community, this religious practice was a chance for them to see behold “bare feminine feet” at a time when “women were not supposed to protrude shod feet far enough beyond trailing skirts to show well stockinged [sic] ankles.” Some men and boys were so caught up in their endeavors that they dispensed with decorum and stood on pews in an attempt to catch a glimpse of skin.<sup>107</sup> The contradictions in Wilkes’ church were evident. Women were not supposed to organize for religious purposes, and remained separate from the men. At the same time, though, these women were to faithfully perform their religious duties, even if it meant exposing themselves before the men of the congregation. Wilkes recognized that times had changed and this practice no longer carried the sexual overtones that it did during his childhood. Yet, it was clear from the actions of the men in the congregation that they thought the ways that women exposed themselves during this act, even if only by showing their ankles, was well worth standing on pews and the all-too-obvious leering occurred.

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that they did not participate in evangelistic or missional enterprises because they believed that God would accomplish salvation by calling the elect without human effort.

<sup>105</sup> W.P. Wilkes, *An Alabama Boy: 1880-1902*, (Troy, Alabama: Self-Published, circa 1951), 11. For a discussion of how architecture reflected and informed theology in America, see Louis P. Nelson, *The Beauty of Holiness: Anglicanism and Architecture in Colonial South Carolina*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008).

<sup>106</sup> Wilkes, *Alabama Boy*, 18.

<sup>107</sup> Wilkes, *Alabama Boy*, 19.

While the Primitive Baptists in Wilkes' home church in Alabama did not approve of Ladies' Aid societies at the end of the nineteenth century, many officials in the Southern Baptist Convention did not have such strict views. In fact, the Women's Missionary Union (WMU) was an official auxiliary to the SBC, and had been since 1888.<sup>108</sup> Even so, not all SBC clergy were in agreement over the role that individual women might play in the denomination. Arthur Flake, an itinerant Sunday School official in Mississippi, supported the part that women played in the denomination, yet still wondered if it would not be better to give the space allotted to the women on the last page of *Kind Words*, an SBC Sunday School publication, to the Baptist Young People's Union (BYPU).<sup>109</sup> Thus, though Flake thought that women were doing good things, he believed that other organizations were ultimately more important.

The women of the WMU certainly would have disagreed with Flake's assessment, as even before the establishment of the WMU in 1888, women wanted to do more in the church. Mrs. S.A. Chambers, an Alabaman woman who would eventually help to establish the WMU, delivered an address in 1882, and forcefully argued that women should work "not only for the good and prosperity of the church of which she is a member, but for also for the advancement of the Redeemer's kingdom in the world."<sup>110</sup> Certainly, this was a much more expansive vision of

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<sup>108</sup> *Souvenir of the Golden Jubilee: Women's Missionary Union, Auxiliary to Southern Baptist Convention: Commemorating Fifty Years of Missionary Service, 1888-1938*, (Women's Missionary Union, 1938), 5. For a more in-depth analysis of the ways in which the WMU, and other SBC organizations, influenced gender conceptions in the SBC, see Alyson L. Dickson's ongoing dissertation work "Becoming Insiders: Gender Construction and Institutional Development in the Southern Baptist Convention, 1870-1920," ongoing Ph.D. dissertation in the Graduate Department of Religion at Vanderbilt University, expected defense in 2011.

<sup>109</sup> Arthur Flake to Isaac J. Van Ness, 11 June 1915, 1-3, Box 10, I.J. Van Ness Papers, AR. 795, Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives, Nashville, Tennessee, (IJVN).

<sup>110</sup> Mrs. S.A. Chambers, "Women's Work in the Church," 1882, 1, Mrs. S.A. Chambers, SCB 1249, Special Collection, Samford University Library, Samford University, Birmingham, Alabama, (SAC).

what women might accomplish through church work than the idea that they should just “Go to meeting, sing, and make pies for the preachers.”<sup>111</sup> While Chambers certainly thought that women should help raise money for their local church, she also believed that they should not wait until church buildings had “elegant chandeliers” before sending the “lamp of God’s word” throughout the world.<sup>112</sup> This was indeed a larger idea of what women might accomplish – they would help usher in the kingdom of God. Similar to Holtzclaw in this respect, Chambers believed that women should work hard to see that the people throughout the world put their trust in Jesus.

Women accepted this and worked very hard to see it through, even if it sometimes meant defying pastors who were not exactly enthused at the idea. Lidd Robertson, a female Sunday School worker from Mobile, Alabama, complained to a friend that her pastor had the “impertinence” to try to get her to stop working so forcefully. In response, Robertson told her pastor, “I am an endorsed agent of the Southern Convention. There is no choice, but duty and I propose to fulfill it.”<sup>113</sup> Robertson was so angry over her pastor trying to get her to do less that she told her friend, “We will have our mutiny!”<sup>114</sup> Here was a woman who clearly knew her place in church and believed that it was being threatened by someone who should have supported her. Robertson’s response was not merely to say that she was angry, though she clearly was. Instead, she promised to challenge institutional authority.

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<sup>111</sup> Chambers, “Women’s Work,” 1, SAC.

<sup>112</sup> Chambers, “Women’s Work,” 3-4, SAC.

<sup>113</sup> Lidd B. Robertson to “Dear Friend and Brother,” 20 July 1894, 6-7, Box 2, Frost-Bell Papers, AR. 109, Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives, Nashville, Tennessee, (FBP), emphasis in original. Unfortunately, the sources do not indicate exactly what Robertson did that her pastor opposed, nor do they say what the eventual outcome of her mutiny was.

<sup>114</sup> Robertson, 20 July 1894, 7, FBP, emphasis in original.

J.B. Moody would have gladly supported Robertson.<sup>115</sup> In his book, *Women in Churches*, published at the beginning of the twentieth century, he told readers that he was enraged with the Baptist preachers who tried to impose restrictions other than a prohibition against preaching on women in their congregations.<sup>116</sup> Throughout the entire volume, Moody argued for an enlarged view of women's roles in the church because of his interpretation of the Bible. For example, though he thought that women should not become pastors, he had no reservations against individual women becoming missionaries, and thought that if a Baptist woman had the opportunity to preach to a foreign man, she should go ahead and take the opportunity regardless of what the denominational stance was.<sup>117</sup> Moreover, Moody carefully showed Scriptural references of what he believed were instances of women preaching and proclaiming their faith.<sup>118</sup> Moody noted that many Baptist preachers were already encouraging the women in their congregations to engage in trying to enlarge the kingdom of God. They did so at revivals, where women were exhorted to "go out among sinners, male and female, and persuade them to be reconciled to God."<sup>119</sup> Yet even in this action, women did not have any larger part in the revivals; that is, they were merely individuals going out among the crowds gathered in hopes of helping to persuade sinners to believe in Jesus, and they had no official task. Thus, even in this role, the SBC emphasis on individuality came through.

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<sup>115</sup> In fact, Moody approvingly noted several instances when women stood up to their husband's authority. See Moody, *Women in Churches*, 53-57.

<sup>116</sup> Moody, *Women in Churches*, 24; the injunction against preaching is discussed in the same work on 20-21.

<sup>117</sup> Moody, *Women in Churches*, 27-28.

<sup>118</sup> Moody, *Women in Churches*, 69-72.

<sup>119</sup> Moody, *Women in Churches*, 77.

Throughout the book, Moody made reference to Scripture as well as to the established Baptist congregational polity.<sup>120</sup> Clearly, Moody did his best to base his conceptions of women's roles in the church, and indeed women more generally, on his understanding of the Bible and church policy. Moody, like other SBC officials, then attempted to spread his ideas to the laity through sermons, speeches, and various writings. These Baptist officials tried to envision specific connections between theology and gender, and then persuade their parishioners to realign their identities accordingly. Certainly, Moody was not the only SBC official to try to spread his understanding of women's roles with what he believed about the sacred. Others also linked their theology to their understandings of gender, even when it meant trying to discern what roles women might take in society.

### **Baptist Women in Society**

J.B. Gambrell certainly linked his theology of missions with an idea that Christianity gave women an exalted place in society. As mentioned earlier, Gambrell believed that "consecrated womanhood" would help to bring the message of Christianity to the world, an eternally significant role for women. This also meant that he believed that those women who fit into his idealized model of femininity should play a large role in society in order to help "save the world."<sup>121</sup> Gambrell believed that it was women's role and influence in society that would help to convert those who had not yet heard the gospel.<sup>122</sup>

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<sup>120</sup> Moody, *Women in Churches*, 50-51.

<sup>121</sup> Gambrell, "Universal Conquest," 2, SBC.

<sup>122</sup> Similar sentiments can be found in northern society during the Civil War. See Scott, *A Visitation of God*, 72, 95.

In his commencement address to Hillman College, Landrum Leavell also talked about the ways that women should influence society as he attempted to make all women fit into an idyllic model. He told his audience that what made the United States so moral and good was the fact that “Never was there a country where womans [sic] influence was more widely felt than ours.”<sup>123</sup> Interestingly, though Leavell was trying to talk positively about the influence of women in society, his habit of totalizing women’s traits and characteristics was so ingrained that he talked about women’s influence in society as though a single woman was responsible. This single woman was good and moral to be sure, as in his mind that was where the “growth in goodness” came from, but nonetheless, Leavell reduced all the women in his audience to one essential person. If any of the actual individual listeners did not fit his conceptions of goodness, it can only be assumed that Leavell would have denied them a role in society, disapproved of their influence, may have even denied the idea that they were “ladies” as ladies were supposed to have a moralizing influence on the rest of society.<sup>124</sup>

Simply redeeming society through feminine goodness and morality was not the only way that women might play a role in society, though. G.W. Bouldin, when recalling his childhood, wrote of the many teachers who influenced him. Bouldin wrote that “ ‘Miss’ Ela [Clark] was the only lady teacher in the higher department of the Normal [school] when I was there. But she was a real teacher and the school would not have been the same without her.” Though his recollections of the time were most likely colored by the rest of his life experiences (particularly as he related these events in the midst of the Cold War), Bouldin’s memories of his childhood

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<sup>123</sup> Leavell, Untitled Hillman Commencement Address, 7, LPL.

<sup>124</sup> For more on how the term “lady” epitomizes the feminine, see Robin Lakoff, “Language and Woman’s Place,” *Language in Society*, 2 (Apr., 1973), 45-80; and A.J. Meier, “When Is a Woman a Lady? A Change in Progress?,” *American Speech*, 74 (Spring, 1999), 56-70. For an historical perspective, see McCandless, *Past in the Present*, 12.

experiences reflect a marked difference in the way “Miss Ela” taught. For example, Bouldin described how Miss Ela brought “life into any public programs” that the school produced.<sup>125</sup> Clearly, Bouldin respected his teacher, enjoyed the way that she taught, and the enthusiasm that she brought to all that she did. However, it was equally clear that there were differences in the way that Bouldin, and presumably most other children, interacted with this woman teacher from the rest of the male faculty.

To begin with, the way that the children addressed their female instructor was different from how they talked to the men around them. Mrs. Ela Reed Clark was called “ ‘Miss’ Ela” rather than Mrs. Clark. Those that she supervised called her by her given name rather than her surname as the male faculty were addressed.<sup>126</sup> Moreover, though the title “Miss” was a less formal title than the married title “Mrs.,” the children, and presumably the rest of the faculty as well, continued to call the only woman faculty member the least formal title. This, combined with the usage of her given name, suggested a lower place of honor or respect in the school’s hierarchy. This was something that Bouldin subconsciously acknowledged as he noted that “Miss Ela” was the only female teacher, “*But she was a real teacher.*”<sup>127</sup> The perceived need to describe to his readers that Miss Ela was a “real teacher” denoted the fact that Bouldin was unsure about women teachers more generally.

Not all officials were quite as uneasy about women’s role in larger society, though. William Holtzclaw certainly felt that women should have an expanded role in American culture.

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<sup>125</sup> G.W. Bouldin, *Autobiographical Materials*, 27, written between 1961 and 1963, Box 2, G.W. Bouldin Collection, AR. 193, Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives, Nashville, Tennessee, (GWB).

<sup>126</sup> See Bouldin, *Autobiographical Materials*, 22-28, (GWB).

<sup>127</sup> Bouldin, *Autobiographical Materials*, 27, (GWB), emphasis added.

He forcefully argued for women's suffrage, believing that women should be allowed to engage unencumbered the "industrial, legal, political, and social life."<sup>128</sup> He also felt that God intended that women should be equal with men "in the business world as well as the in the social world."<sup>129</sup> Clearly, Holtzclaw had high regard for women's roles in society, noting even that though some people sneered at working women, he felt that there was no disgrace in work, "but many have become disgraced by idleness."<sup>130</sup> In these passages, Holtzclaw clearly believed that it was time for women to take a larger role in society.

Holtzclaw would have heartily approved the example of the women of Galveston, Texas, who helped to rebuild and reform their city after a hurricane destroyed it.<sup>131</sup> He also would have cheered the efforts of groups of women who started their reform efforts as part of their church and then moved on as they attempted to change the society around them.<sup>132</sup>

### **Baptist Women at Home**

Yet, even as Holtzclaw argued for women to take on more and more in American culture, he felt that they still needed to attend to their "proper" roles in the home. He believed that the home

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<sup>128</sup> Holtzclaw, *Women of To-day*, 32.

<sup>129</sup> Holtzclaw, *Women of To-day*, 8.

<sup>130</sup> Holtzclaw, *Women of To-day*, 23.

<sup>131</sup> Turner, *Women, Culture, and Community*.

<sup>132</sup> For examples of this, see Ginzburg, *Women and the Work of Benevolence*; Glenda Elizabeth Gilmore, *Gender and Jim Crow: Women and the Politics of White Supremacy in North Carolina, 1896-1920*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996); Wheeler, *New Women of the New South*; Montgomery, "Lost Cause Mythology in New South Reform;" and Althea D. Butler, *Women in the Church of God in Christ: Making a Sanctified World*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007).

was where women could best influence their immediate family, and through them, the nation.<sup>133</sup> Holtzclaw's ideas were very similar to the arguments in favor of the ideas documented by Nancy Cott. In her work, *The Bonds of Womanhood*, Cott demonstrated that in the early part of the nineteenth century, women were supposed to remain in very limited roles. There, they could nurture and maintain their families, . . . provide religious example and inspiration, and . . . affect the world around by exercising private moral influence."<sup>134</sup> This model of femininity proposed that women should serve as a purifying influence on their husbands and sons, but not get directly involved in the affairs of society, as the home was the woman's true place.<sup>135</sup> While Holtzclaw was clearly a progressive on some issues, he thoroughly imbibed the idea that the domestic realm was the proper place for women. This meant that though Holtzclaw and other SBC officials emphasized the primacy of the individual in their theology, their emphasis changed dramatically when applied to women. Rather than fostering a notion of individualism, most Baptist officials encouraged a model in which women were responsible for the moral integrity of their family – including their husbands!

For Holtzclaw, a woman's home was her "workshop, and the wares she turns out demonstrates her skill."<sup>136</sup> Even though he championed the idea that women should be equal in society, Holtzclaw thought the best place for women to exercise their influence was in the home.

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<sup>133</sup> Holtzclaw, *Women of To-day*, 81.

<sup>134</sup> Cott, *Bonds of Womanhood*, 8.

<sup>135</sup> Such ideas were also very similar to those promulgated a century earlier in the ideal of Republican Motherhood. For more on this, see Linda K. Kerber, *Women of the Republic: Intellect & Ideology in Revolutionary America*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1980), 265-288; and Rosemarie Zagari, *Revolutionary Backlash: Women and Politics in the Early American Republic*, (Philadelphia: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2007), 5, 19.

<sup>136</sup> Holtzclaw, *Women of To-day*, 88.

He chastised women that he thought were neglecting the home for club activities, as Holtzclaw believed that this would degrade families.<sup>137</sup> He even blamed wives for the sins of their husband saying, “Some women cook a little and scrub less, and then wonder why husband spends so much of his time at the saloon, and why he so often speaks of the ‘good eating’ he gets at the saloon counter.”<sup>138</sup> Suddenly, the individual emphasis that Holtzclaw had been maintaining, and that so many other SBC officials held to, fell away when it came to women’s role in the home. Rather than working for their own good, or doing what they found fulfilling, women were supposed to exercise their “sacred influence” in the home – remaining there lest their husbands become dissatisfied and start to look elsewhere, like the saloon, for comfort at the end of the day. This was a dramatic shift from the theology of individualism. Rather than the idea that “Baptists stand fundamentally on the principle that every man must give acct. of himself oly. [sic],” Holtzclaw held women responsible for their husbands’ time at the saloon.<sup>139</sup> Because he felt that it was a woman’s “duty” to “bring her influence into all these relations where it is needed,” if she did not do so, she was responsible for the transgressions that transpired in her absence.<sup>140</sup>

When considered alongside the fact that Holtzclaw thought that women could lose their own purity through the immoral actions of their husbands, as mentioned earlier in the chapter, this idea that women were responsible for their husbands lingering in saloons, it was clear that Holtzclaw thought women were responsible for their own moral degradation.<sup>141</sup> Following this

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<sup>137</sup> Holtzclaw, *Women of To-day*, 83.

<sup>138</sup> Holtzclaw, *Women of To-day*, 117.

<sup>139</sup> See Carver, “Baptist Opportunity,” n.d., 4, Box 12, WOC.

<sup>140</sup> Holtzclaw, *Women of To-day*, 145-146.

<sup>141</sup> For more on a woman losing her own purity through the actions of her husband, see Holtzclaw, *Women of To-day*, 64-66.

logic, if a woman did not provide for her husband's desires at home, the husband would then spend time at the saloon, which was her fault for her inattention to the domestic sphere. At the saloon, her husband might not only become a slave to drink, but commit acts of impropriety, or at the very least engage in conversation with immoral people. Then, his impure thoughts and actions would threaten his wife's purity. Thus, the entire scenario, the degradation of manliness, and the fallen purity of the wife, were all her fault because she did not take proper care of her home or provide her husband with a decent meal. For Holtzclaw, a woman's character and very identity as a pure woman, were dependent on her upholding an understanding of the domestic sphere as a feminine sphere, and it was her responsibility to uphold her family's moral standing. Clearly, the Baptist theology of individualism changed dramatically when applied to wives and mothers.

Holtzclaw, and others, held women to such a high standard because they believed that women's influence in the home, particularly that of mothers, was so instrumental in children's life and faith. Rufus Weaver talked in glowing terms about the mother's place as the first religious teacher in the home.<sup>142</sup> Though he believed that the father should have a prominent place in each child's spiritual formation, Weaver thought, and apparently approved of the idea, that early in life, the mother would create the first spiritual impressions in a child's mind.<sup>143</sup> He certainly believed that the home was where the earliest religious feelings would make themselves known, and so thought that the home was where women would best fulfill their roles.

Other Baptist officials also felt that women should remain in the home. One alumna of East Lake, Alabama's Howard College, W.L. Sanford, wrote that women were "flower[s] which

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<sup>142</sup> Weaver, *Religious Development*, 150, 219-220.

<sup>143</sup> Weaver, *Religious Development*, 150.

only blooms to perfection in the sunny realms of home.”<sup>144</sup> Sanford would not approve of Holtzclaw’s ideas that it was time for women to take a larger role in society, as he was even upset that women had to work with their husbands in the fields to make farms turn a profit.<sup>145</sup> Sanford’s thought of women’s role in the home was clearly to be an ornament of beauty there – she was too fragile to labor, and would fade, or even wilt, if the conditions at home were not right; i.e., if debt to creditors and liens against the farm piled up so high as to block the sun. This pointed out a contradiction within Sanford’s ideology. Clearly, he believed that white women were to make their homes a haven of virtue; yet, in order to do so, they would have to work hard, often in drudgery in order to provide her family with a clean home. One solution to this problem for white women was to supervise women of color doing all the actual labor for their homes.<sup>146</sup> Yet, Sanford worried not just about the ways that women should become ornaments of beauty and provide their families with virtuous homes, he also noted that there were aspects of society that could choke out a woman’s ability to “bloom.” Sanford’s note came in the midst of a speech on the “Credit System” in 1892. His remarks made it clear that he thought that Southern Populists provided the best environment for femininity to flourish.

In the New South, Populists argued for an overhaul of the credit system. They argued that white men, particularly small farmers, were being emasculated through the cycles of debt

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<sup>144</sup> W.L. Sanford, “The Credit System,” Alumni Oration in *Memorial Catalogue: Fiftieth Annual Catalogue and Register of Howard College*, 1892, 81, Box 4, Catherine Allen Sesquicentennial Collection, SC 4090, Special Collection, Samford University Library, Samford University, Birmingham, Alabama, (CASC). Howard College is now known as Samford University in Birmingham.

<sup>145</sup> Sanford, “Credit System,” 81, CASC.

<sup>146</sup> For more on this and how elite white women attempted to turn the politics of domesticity into an opportunity to gain a sense of mastery in their own homes, see Censer, *Reconstruction of White Southern Womanhood*, 90, 277.

and dependency offered by southern landowners at the end of the nineteenth century. While there were many Populists who were genuinely concerned about the plight of southern farmers, there were also those who used such political language for their own benefit. The most famous example of this was “Pitchfork” Ben Tillman of North Carolina.<sup>147</sup> However, neither Ben Tillman, nor Howard College alumnus W.L. Sanford were alone in their stands against the sharecropping system. Sanford’s speech against crop liens made the point that the cycles of debt in effect in throughout Alabama were bad for women and families. Populists often used this refrain and warned that these systems, which helped banks and landowners to keep tenant farmers in cycles of debt that were remarkably hard to break out of, hurt southern women as well as men. While Populists were able to challenge the white Bourbon Democrats for a time in the Deep South, the inability to rise above racial politics split the Southern Populist movement.<sup>148</sup>

Not all SBC officials agreed with Sanford or believed that women were fragile and needed a reformation of the agrarian economic system in order to flourish, though many Baptists did think that the proper place for women was managing the domestic world. A.M. Jackson, a former pastor from Georgia who had to leave the ministry because of his health, wrote about his wife’s wonderful ability to manage the house and all the family finances alone while he recovered in a sanatorium.<sup>149</sup> Similarly, G.W. Bouldin’s memories of his youth also recalled that

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<sup>147</sup> For examples of this, see Stephen Kantrowitz, *Ben Tillman and the Reconstruction of White Supremacy*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000), 1, 3, 94, 110-111.

<sup>148</sup> For the rest of his remarks, see Sanford, “The Credit System,” *Memorial Catalogue*. For more on the Southern Populists see Steven Hahn, *The Roots of Southern Populism: Yeoman Farmers and the Transformation of the Georgia Upcountry, 1850-1890* Updated Edition, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006); C. Vann Woodward, *Origins of the New South, 1877-1913*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1971), 235-263; and Edward L. Ayers, *The Promise of the New South: Life after Reconstruction* 15<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Edition, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 249-282.

<sup>149</sup> A.M. Jackson to E.C. Dargan, 18 June 1911, 2, Box 4, ECD.

women did a large amount of the daily chores around the house, and he believed that this was appropriate.<sup>150</sup> J.B. Moody's *Women in Churches* also made it clear that he believed that not only was working around the house appropriate, this was the place where women belonged. Moody wrote, "The wife is, or should be, a help-meet, or helper; she doing the house work in her own way while the man works the fields, and milks the cows."<sup>151</sup> As was hinted at here, Moody clearly felt that there was a hierarchy between men and women. The individual emphasis of Baptist theology began to break down here as the author assumed a hierarchy between individuals as the husband automatically assumed headship and the wife became the helper. Rather than emphasizing the autonomy of the individual, these Baptist authors encouraged the notion that wives and individual women needed to subordinate their own desires for the good of their families. The Baptist ideas of the individual clearly changed as it was applied to wives and mothers.

Though most Southern Baptist officials would have said that they emphasized a theology of individual autonomy and personal freedom in their messages to parishioners, it was clear that this was not always the case for women. Officials often obscured individuality by essentializing femininity and distilling it into a few indispensable character traits. Additionally, Baptist leaders talked about the responsibility that individual women had to their families: a woman was the first spiritual teacher of her children, her essential purity was to be used for the good of others, and her education was so that those around her might benefit. Thus, the idea of individuality was subsumed by other concerns for many SBC officials as they attempted to instill new visions of femininity in their congregants. As will be shown in the next section, though, there was a solid

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<sup>150</sup> Bouldin, *Autobiographical Materials*, 2, GWB.

<sup>151</sup> Moody, *Women in Churches*, 43.

emphasis on individualism and personal responsibility in Southern Baptist theology when applied to manliness. However, though there were many ways in which individual men could show their manliness, in prescriptive speeches, sermons, and writings, Baptist officials consistently returned to the idea that mastery was the foundation upon which all other ideas of manhood might rest.

**CHAPTER TWO:**  
**BAPTIST MASTERY AND MASCULINITY**

*There is something grand in manhood, something which bears indeed the image of the Creator. There is no high quality which it does not contain, but chief and greatest and crowning of all is masterhood, its regal right of ruling.*

- T.T. Eaton (1876)

Though Southern Baptist officials were clearly concerned about what womanhood looked like, connected it to their theological emphasis on individualism, and attempted to disseminate their ideas, they were equally concerned about what constituted masculinity. Both manhood and masculinity were vitally important concepts for officials within the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC).<sup>1</sup> Those ideas helped to define who they were and who they wanted to be. As with femininity, the constructions of manliness that Baptist pastors used did not emerge in a vacuum; rather, they were intimately intertwined with ideas of the sacred.<sup>2</sup> As was shown in the above quote from T.T. Eaton, though, mastery provided the basis for all other conceptions of manliness among many Baptist officials. Within these confines, however, officials felt that power,

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<sup>1</sup> On the difference between manhood and masculinity, see Gail Bederman, *Manliness & Civilization: A Cultural History of Gender and Race in the United States, 1880-1917*, With forward by Catherine R. Stimpson, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1996), 18.

<sup>2</sup> William Owen Carver, "Baptist Opportunity," n.d., 4, Box 12, William Owen Carver Papers, AR. 76, Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives, Nashville, Tennessee, (WOC).

strength, and limited expressions of manly affection were appropriate ways of expressing one's manhood.

Some of these expressions of Baptist manhood were very similar to conceptions of manliness current in the wider Southern culture at the time. Students of Southern culture have noted the numerous ways in which men used the notions of mastery and independence as markers of white masculinity.<sup>3</sup> In addition, white Southern men frequently asserted their own racialized conceptions of manhood through violent displays of power at the expense of African-American males during this time. Such demonstrations of violence, particularly those evidenced in spectacle lynching, highlighted the mastery of white males over black bodies, over white women as the protector, and over the community as the arbiters of justice.<sup>4</sup> While these popular ideas of southern manhood did not always look dramatically different from Baptist conception, this did not mean that they were rooted in the same concepts and ideas. Baptist leaders were clearly interacting with secular southern notions of white manhood, though the clergy tried to demonstrate that their ideas were grounded in Biblical ideals. Southern Baptists officials based their ideas of Christian manliness on the idea of individual mastery, a concept that clearly had

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<sup>3</sup> For a few examples of this, see Joe Creech, "The Price of Eternal Honor: Independent White Christian Manhood in the Late Nineteenth-Century South," 25-45, and Craig Thompson Friend, "From Southern Manhood to Southern Masculinities: An Introduction," vii-xxvi in Craig T. Friend, *Southern Masculinity: Perspectives on Manhood in the South Since Reconstruction*, (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2009); James L. Roark, *Masters without Slaves: Southern Planters in the Civil War and Reconstruction*, (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1977); W.J. Cash, *The Mind of the South* with a New Introduction by Bertram Wyatt-Brown, (New York: Vintage Books, 1991).

<sup>4</sup> For demonstrations of this argument, see Elizabeth Grace Hale, *Making Whiteness: The Culture of Segregation in the South, 1890-1940*, (New York: Vintage Books, A Division of Random House, 1998); Donald G. Mathews, "Why the Old Man Shouted 'Glory!'," in Walter H. Conser, Jr. and Rodger M. Payne, eds., *Southern Crossroads: Perspectives on Religion and Culture*, (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 2008), 318-353; Kris DuRocher, "Violent Masculinity: Learning Ritual and Performance in Southern Lynchings," in Friend, *Southern Masculinity*, 46-64.

racialized components, but one that was also firmly rooted in the emphasis on the individual in Baptist theology.

For Southern Baptists leaders, the concept of mastery was an important idea. While mastery after the American Civil War did not imply control over slaves, it did have a highly racialized component. Between 1877 and 1915 in the Deep South, mastery was an idea that could only be applied to whites, and many white leaders of the SBC would have approved of this interpretation. It was more than just a way of denoting white manliness; though, mastery was also about control. This control might apply to a man's person. This became a religious issue as pastors scolded their congregations about transgressions to the law of God. Sin was then not just about offending God; it was also about losing mastery over one's passions and desires. The desire not to sin quickly segued into the idea that men needed to have control over their own body and emotions. Alcohol was such an anathema to Baptists as its intoxicating effects could quickly make men lose mastery over their own faculties. Additionally, mastery implied that Baptist men had control over the members of their households. For large landowners, this concept could extend to the sharecroppers who worked their land, but for most SBC leaders mastery over one's household simply extended through their immediate family. The concept of mastery was more than simply a synonym for control; it also denoted a level of independence. Thus, financial independence was very closely related to mastery for many Baptist leaders. Through these various expressions of mastery – racial, personal, domestic, and financial – males could show their manliness by publicly demonstrating the control they had of the different aspects of their lives.

Yet, simply because Baptist pastors worried about manhood and masculinity did not mean they automatically believed that all SBC clergy fulfilled the requirements of manhood.

Rev. J.B. Hawthorne was worried about a declining masculinity in the pulpit, and so preached about John the Baptist. Hawthorne claimed that John was a “man in the noblest sense, before he was a preacher. This is God’s order and our disregard of it has let into the pulpit thousands of ecclesiastical parvenues [sic], dudes, and dead-beats.”<sup>5</sup> Hawthorne worried that there were too few SBC pastors who were fulfilling their roles as men, and cried out to his audience, “Oh, that there were more muscularity in the manhood of christian [sic] ministers!”<sup>6</sup> While Hawthorne clearly had strong opinions about the relative worth of many of his clerical brethren, he was tapping into a larger movement going on at the turn-of-the-century dubbed “Muscular Christianity” by historians.<sup>7</sup> Hawthorne’s mix of religious language and physicality was actually not as common in the South as it was in some of the nation’s leading northern cities.<sup>8</sup> There were remarkably different emphases between the northern Muscular Christianity and its Southern variants, though. In northeastern cities, Muscular Christianity was almost exclusively contained within theologically liberal denominations and those who were part of the movement deliberately attempted to change their theology in order to be more in-line with their constructions of masculinity. Additionally, the northern blend of Muscular Christianity was

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<sup>5</sup> J.B. Hawthorne, “John the Baptist” in *Memorial Catalogue: Fiftieth Annual Catalogue and Register of Howard College*, 1892, 57, Box 4, Catherine Allen Sesquicentennial Collection, SC 4090, Special Collection, Samford University Library, Samford University, Birmingham, Alabama, (CASC).

<sup>6</sup> Hawthorne, “John the Baptist,” 56, Box 4, CASC.

<sup>7</sup> For the standard work on this movement, see Clifford Putney, *Muscular Christianity: Manhood and Sports in Protestant America, 1880-1920*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001).

<sup>8</sup> In fact, the work of historian Clifford Putney, one of the major scholars who has looked at the push for a more muscular Christianity, concentrates almost exclusively on the movement in the Northeast; however, the push for a more muscular Christianity clearly spread throughout the United States.

almost obsessively concerned about the male body. A heavy emphasis on physical strength and stamina defined the movement.<sup>9</sup>

In contrast to the focus on the body that Muscular Christianity took in northeastern cities, in the South, the push for a more masculine religiosity was often expressed through the language of mastery and through hyper-masculine martial imagery. Additionally, whereas northern proponents of Muscular Christianity attempted to fit their theology into conceptions of gender, Southern Baptists generally tried to ground their ideas of gender in theology. This does not mean that Southern Evangelicals were less concerned with gendered constructs, but were more concerned about Christian orthodoxy than many of their northeastern mainline counterparts. Nonetheless, SBC officials were still very worried about the state of manhood in their parishioners and their clerical brethren. Judging from Hawthorne's remarks about "ecclesiastical parvenues [sic], dudes, and dead-beats," he clearly felt that there was something wrong with preachers who were not strong, athletic men who did not live up to their responsibilities. Hawthorne even went so far as to suggest that those who were not physically powerful were not truly men.

Other pastors disputed this charge vehemently. Being described as unmanly or unmasculine was a serious thing for men at the turn-of-the-century. As one pastor recalled of his own childhood, other children called him "sissie" so often that he would frequently strip off all his clothes and "revert to his 'birthday suit'."<sup>10</sup> The idea that one was not manly was so insulting, even to young boys, that some chose to run naked to prove their masculinity to themselves.

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<sup>9</sup> Putney, *Muscular Christianity*, 6-7, 45-72, 73-98

<sup>10</sup> W[illiam] P[ughes] Wilkes, *An Alabama Boy: 1880-1902*, (Troy, Alabama: Self-Published, c. 1951), 9.

Certainly not all Baptist officials felt that the best way they could demonstrate their manhood was through nudity. There were a variety of other ways that they encouraged SBC men to use in order to best express their masculinity. Affection and sentiment for loved ones along with strength and power could all express different aspects of manliness. Yet for Baptist officials, at the heart of manhood was the concept of mastery. Thus, preachers and pastors frequently spoke about the need for the males in their congregations to demonstrate individual mastery over their lives.

### **Baptist Manhood**

One of ways that mastery could be shown was through a man's control over deep religious affections. Thus, for many SBC church officials, piety could be a mark of true manhood. For William Owen Carver, seeing another man who was pious and godly was opportunity to praise God in his diary and note that he had prayed that the other man's preaching would be filled with the Holy Spirit.<sup>11</sup> It was clear through the diary entry that the expression of masculinity in one man did not automatically threaten other men. Baptist manliness was not a contest where everyone competed and only one man won. This was a change in conceptions of manhood from the antebellum honor-driven society so carefully documented by historian Bertram Wyatt-Brown. In his work, it is clear that in many cases, honor was a zero-sum game. There could only be one winner of a fight, footrace, or duel. One man would be the victor and enhance his manliness at the expense of all others.<sup>12</sup> Southern Baptist officials in the New South, however,

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<sup>11</sup> William Owen Carver, 7 April 1898, Diary 1897-1899, 33, Box 11, William Owen Carver Papers, AR. 76, Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives, Nashville, Tennessee, (WOC).

<sup>12</sup> For more on the honor-driven society of the antebellum South, see, Bertram Wyatt-Brown, *Honor and Violence in the Old South*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986).

wanted to instill a new idea of manliness in their congregants, one in which an individual's masculinity was



**Figure 1**

not automatically a threat to others in the group. This marked a dramatic change in understandings of manhood. Indeed, some Baptist preachers even tried to argue that manhood could be a collaborative process in which individual men helped each other. Clay Hudson, a pastor from Decatur, Alabama, wrote about this idea to his friend and mentor, I.J. Van Ness. Hudson remarked that a yearly pastors' conference in Nashville, Tennessee, was of "inestimable value" and helped him become "a better man and a better preacher of the New Testament for having known [those] brethren."<sup>13</sup> The link of becoming a better man and a better pastor was acknowledged and accredited to having participated in a meeting; thus, piety, collaboration, and manliness bloomed together according to Hudson.

Religious affections were not always easily seen, though sometimes men attempted to demonstrate them. Such was the case at a conference of Baptist "Field Workers" who assembled in 1913 (**Figure 1**).<sup>14</sup> They had their picture taken, and the sign noting an evangelistic

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<sup>13</sup> Clay J. Hudson to "Dr. Van Ness," 3 February 1911, 2, Box 15, I.J. Van Ness Papers, AR. 795, Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives, Nashville, Tennessee, (IJVN).

<sup>14</sup> "Field Workers, St. Louis, 1913," Box 2, LPL. The back of the photograph read, "Top Row (Left to Right): Van Ness, Gentry, Hudgins, Joseph Watts. Second Row: Hyman, Rounds,

conference was in the background. Even the fact that this group of leaders would pose together was a demonstration of group cohesion. Since it was an evangelical conference, it was obvious that their shared beliefs centered around the idea that Jesus was the only way in which a person might be reconciled to God. Yet, even as they were demonstrating their shared values, many also expressed their individuality and different aspects of masculinity. When looking at the picture, one immediately saw that this group of men dressed well and probably did not work with their hands. However, the condition of their clothes also suggested that they still did well and mastered their financial conditions, even if the varying sizes of shirt collars demonstrated a difference in ability to keep up with current clothing styles. Moreover, almost all of the men demonstrated a sense of ownership over the very space around them through their body language. With a very few exceptions, most notably the gentlemen third from the right on the front row holding an umbrella, all of the other men spread themselves out to take up the most space possible on the steps where they were seated. They did not close their legs to make room for each other to take the photograph. Instead, they spread out in an attempt to stake out their own space and to declare their mastery over space with their bodies.

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Andrews, L.O. Leavell, C.S. Leavell, F.H. Leavell, L.P. Leavell. Third Row: Strickland, Byrd, Price, Moseley, Middleton, Barnes, Lee, Flake. Bottom Row: Burroughs, Moore, Spilman, Dr. Frost, Foster, Eutzmingen.”

Such group pictures were not the only ways in which men expressed their masculinity in portraiture, though. In 1890, Landrum Leavell's parents paid to have a photo made of their son in his first pair of "long trousers" (**Figure 2**).<sup>15</sup> In this picture, a young Leavell appeared awkward and unsure of himself; yet proud nonetheless. He faced the camera with a steady gaze, weight slightly forward as though walking and mastering the space around him; but he was also gently leaning to the viewer's right on the chair as though he was not sure whether to step forward or stay where he was. The jacket that young Leavell wore was a little too short in the arms and it pinched his shoulders, suggesting that either it was a "hand-me-down" from an older brother (there were nine brothers in his family), or a coat from his own wardrobe that he was growing out of. The watch fob threaded through his waistcoat meant to suggest a level of sophistication and age that Leavell's childish face decried. It also suggested that Leavell was a master of his time, and was aware of the requirements of his role as a man. Additionally, it signaled Leavell's status as a member

**Figure 2**



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<sup>15</sup> "Landrum Pinson Leavell – First Pair of Long Trousers, 1890," Box 2, LPL.

of middle- or even upper-class society in Mississippi. Whatever else may be said about the picture of Leavell, though, it was clear the moment a boy received his first pair of long trousers was the beginning of his introduction to manhood, indeed the very fact that his parents took him to a photographer in 1890 showed how momentous the occasion was. Though he certainly retained elements of boyhood, and some of the things he wore for the picture seemed almost silly, they were all part of a carefully planned portrait designed to demonstrate his budding masculinity. Even the fact that this was a solo portrait suggested that the young Leavell was the master of his own space and thus a man.

The transition from boyhood to manhood, from dependency to independence and self-mastery, was an important time in the lives of young men in the South: a time when they learned the requirements of manhood.<sup>16</sup> This period of budding manhood was also when many Baptist officials offered advice to the younger generations. Yet, even as they dispensed advice to the next generation, many SBC officials also wanted to instill the idea that there was a difference between simple masculinity and something higher – manliness and manhood. Here, historian Gail Bederman’s differentiation between manhood and masculinity is helpful. Bederman noted that for many white American men, there was a difference between manhood and masculinity. For them, “manliness” denoted the highest male virtues, whereas “masculinity” simply acknowledged traits that all males shared. This meant that while African-American men in the South might be portrayed as the paragon of masculinity, they were excluded from the “true” manliness that white men could supposedly claim.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> For an example of the ways in which manliness was passed to the next generation, see DuRocher, “Violent Masculinity,” 46-64.

<sup>17</sup> Bederman, *Manliness & Civilization*, 18.

At the Baccalaureate of the Fiftieth anniversary of Howard College in East Lake, Alabama, (now Samford University in Birmingham) Professor D.G. Lyon talked about the differences he perceived between manhood and masculinity. He told the young men about to graduate that their college education should have strengthened their will “so that it may resist all unworthy impulses and stand firm in all that pertains to manliness and nobility of character.”<sup>18</sup> Additionally, Lyon advised the young men in his audience that they should leave any profession that relied on strength alone to men “whose only capital is their brawn,” and instead choose a career that would enhance character, as a “man’s character is all that he really has.”<sup>19</sup> He clearly linked the elite ideas of nobility of character with manhood in this address; yet, Lyon worried about the type of men that Howard’s graduates would become as they left the institution. He wanted them to focus on their character as they moved into the fullness of their manhood and left their education behind them, and was happy that they had been strengthening their wills as they had pursued their studies.

Lyon’s advice not to pursue jobs focused solely on physical strength suggested not only an elitist position against those who were not educated; but also that he believed that the careers of the working class might imperil one’s character. Certainly, Lyon tried to dismiss this implication by saying that he merely thought that the expensive training one received at Howard could be put to “better account.”<sup>20</sup> Lyon was not saying here that the use of one’s strength might imperil masculinity, but rather the indiscriminate use of brawn could imperil character and

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<sup>18</sup> D.G. Lyon, “The College Man’s Choice of a Profession,” Baccalaureate Address, 8 June 1892, in *Memorial Catalogue: Fiftieth Annual Catalogue and Register of Howard College, 1892*, 71, Box 4, CASC.

<sup>19</sup> Lyon, “College Man’s Choice,” 72, Box 4, CASC.

<sup>20</sup> Lyon, “College Man’s Choice,” 72, Box 4, CASC.

manhood. Thus, Lyon connected character to manhood, not necessarily to masculinity. He tried to convince his audience of the ways that manhood (or manliness) intertwined with character and the strength of one's will to "resist all unworthy impulses." Seemingly then, the ability to resist such desires and impulses, to gain mastery over them, marked the transition into manhood.

Resisting shameful desires and gaining self-mastery over momentary impulses was not the only mark of manhood, though. Dignity and the ability to accomplish one's will also noted the change from childhood to full maturity. In one sermon, William Carver talked about how these principles applied not only to men, but also to entire nations. He told his congregants, "South America is settling down to the dignity of manhood after a century of childish efforts to play the man among the world's forces."<sup>21</sup> There were decidedly racial overtones in Carver's remarks, suggesting that only those nations were ruled by men of European ancestry were truly dignified countries. Yet, it was striking to see the way he used ideas of gender to describe an entire continent. Many of the nations that he referred to were not significantly younger than the United States; yet Carver, as many other Americans of his day in both the North and South, believed that the nations of Latin America were more effeminate than their northern neighbors and lacked the "Anglo-Saxon's level of masculinity."<sup>22</sup> However, Carver did state here that South America was beginning to mature and reach manhood. In his mind, this meant that they

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<sup>21</sup> Carver, "Baptist Opportunity," 3, Box 12, WOC.

<sup>22</sup> For more in-depth studies of the gendered attitudes of Americans towards Latin America, see Frederick B. Pike, *The United States and Latin America: Myths and Stereotypes of Civilization and Nature*, Austin: University of Texas Press, 1992); James William Park, *Latin America Underdevelopment: A History of Perspectives in the United States, 1870-1965*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1995); and John J. Johnson, *Latin America in Caricature*, (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1980). See Lyman Abbott, "Impressions of a Careless Traveler: Teaching the Art of Self-Government," *The Outlook* 83 (21 July 1906): 666 for a primary source on Anglo-Saxon superiority; and William Stivers, "Woodrow Wilson and the Arab World: The Liberal Dilemma," *Colorado College Studies* 20 (1984): 106-23 for a discussion of this idea throughout global politics after World War I.

were no longer merely “playing the man,” but had begun to have real dignity attached to their actions. The idea that the nations of South America now had dignity to their actions suggested that dignity itself was part of manhood for Carver. It suggested a pattern of life that was carefully thought through and controlled, never giving in to one’s passions. These ideas of self-control, dignity, and mastery were essential to many of the ideas of manhood among Baptist pastors.

While dignity was certainly essential to manliness, personal ambition and the desire to move up in the world could also be important. For many Baptists, ambition was a sign that one had mastered the challenges in one stage of life and aspired to move on to the next. Alex Bealer, a pastor from Thomasville, Georgia, believed that his son Frank exhibited ambition and praised him for it. In writing E.C. Dargan, Bealer described Frank as “a very manly boy and is quite timid but he is a good business boy and has always had a job during his vacation.”<sup>23</sup> Clearly, Bealer loved his son and wanted to brag about him. Though it was unusual that Frank was described as “quite timid,” it was clear that his father believed that he was going to do well in the world. Frank’s ambition was hinted at through the fact that he would always work during his vacations from school, and the note that he “had a job” rather than simply worked suggested that it was wage labor rather than simply working the family farm. The ambition and financial mastery demonstrated young Frank’s transition into manhood, and Bealer was certainly not the only one who thought that ambition was part of manliness. In another letter to Dargan from a pastor who was searching for a new post, the correspondent noted, “It is a great strain on a man to work in a small place.”<sup>24</sup> Here, the letter writer clearly believed in his own manliness, but

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<sup>23</sup> Alex W. Bealer to Brother Dargan, 9 September 1908, 1, Box 4, E.C. Dargan Collection, AR. 203, Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives, Nashville, Tennessee, (ECD).

<sup>24</sup> Robert Van Deventer to Dr. Dargan, 30 January 1912, 1-2, Box 5, ECD.

thought that his current station was beneath him and aspired to something greater. His focus was on his own individual goals, and felt that the position he currently held was not good enough. This drive fit well with the Baptist emphasis on the individual; yet, there were times when other Baptist ministers believed that it took greater manliness to stay in a “small place.”

At one point in his career, Dargan needed to hire a personal assistant, and asked pastor Chas. Davison, Jr. to take up the post. Davison noted that it was a wonderful opportunity that would “satisfy [my] personal ambition and a desire to go into large things.”<sup>25</sup> Nonetheless, Davison felt that it would be better for him not to accept the position. He believed that it was not the “proper thing” for him to leave at that point. Davison then made it clear that he felt that it was his duty to remain with his “struggling band of saints.”<sup>26</sup> Clearly, Davison felt that duty must overcome personal ambition. Davison thus subordinated his individual goals for the good of the community; one of the best counter-examples to the ways in which the Baptist idea of individualism might work itself out. As Davison explained his position to Dargan, though, he frequently mentioned that he did not “feel” as though it was the right thing to do to take the job.<sup>27</sup> In contrast to many ideas of masculinity current in Southern culture that emphasized an almost stoic approach to emotions, this appeal to the heart and to the sentiment could be another way of expressing Baptist manhood as long as there was a connection to their faith. In fact, at the time, sentimentality was defined as a feminine characteristic.

Despite the fact that many secular southerners would eschew the idea that emotions could be manly, in 1893, at the Baptist Congress held in Augusta, Georgia, John Johnson mentioned

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<sup>25</sup> Chas. C. Davison, Jr. to Dr. Dargan, 29 January 1913, 1, Box 5, ECD.

<sup>26</sup> See both Chas. C. Davison, Jr. to Dr. Dargan, 8 January 1913, 1, Box 5; and Davison to Dargan, 29 January 1913, 1, Box 5, ECD.

<sup>27</sup> Davison to Dargan, 29 January 1913, 1, Box 5, ECD.

this aspect of masculinity as he spoke on the necessity of emotionalism in religion. Johnson believed that the two theological traditions that had seen the most growth in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the Methodists and the Baptists, were so successful in converting people because of their appeal to the heart.<sup>28</sup> Moreover, Johnson felt that “There is no religion without Christ; and there is no Christ without emotion.”<sup>29</sup> Johnson was not deprecating Methodism or the many varieties of Baptists because of their appeal to emotions; nor was he saying that Christ was not manly because he was connected to emotion. Rather, Johnson appreciated the emotional side of religion and linked it with Jesus Christ who was, for many, the ultimate example of manhood. Johnson posited that religion gave men an appropriate way of expressing emotion in a culture that held a stoic ideal of manliness. In fact, his description of religion was markedly different from the negative ways that many people described emotionalism in religion at the end of the nineteenth century. Johnson’s link of emotion with Jesus removed the pejorative idea of religion as a haven for emotional women and clerics so prevalent at the time.<sup>30</sup> Instead, Johnson used the link positively to relate manly emotion to the example of the masculine Jesus. The manly emotions that Johnson talked about were entirely those that related to the worship and love of Jesus. Having a powerful emotional reaction to a sermon about Jesus’ death would not have been detrimental to a man’s masculinity in Johnson’s eyes, though it was entirely possible

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<sup>28</sup> John L. Johnson, “Emotionalism,” *Proceedings of the Eleventh Baptist Congress, Held in Augusta, Ga., December 1893*, (New York: Baptist Congress Publishing Co., 1894), 24-25, Baptist Congress Proceedings Collection, AR. 40, Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives, Nashville, Tennessee, (BCPC).

<sup>29</sup> Johnson, “Emotionalism,” 23, BCPC.

<sup>30</sup> See Ann Douglas, *The Feminization of American Culture*, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1977).

that a similar reaction in the context of life outside the church would have been viewed with suspicion. Emotion was perfectly acceptable as long as there was a connection to Jesus.

Such a connection between masculine emotion and religious fervor had largely been dropped by the end of the nineteenth century by many Southern Baptists. However, at the beginning of the 1800s, many evangelical groups, and in particular Methodists and Baptists, were known for their emotive revivals and camp meetings. Yet, as Evangelicals became a larger and larger part of society, their unique styles of worship and gendered expressions began to meld with those of the rest of society.<sup>31</sup> By the end of the nineteenth, the transition was almost complete and Evangelicals would criticize Holiness groups for their expressive displays of emotion in worship.

Nonetheless, some Baptist ministers still felt that emotion in church was appropriate at the beginning of the twentieth century. Minister Fernando McConnell demonstrated this by noting the link between emotion and Jesus in his 1902 sermon preached at the meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention. When talking about the necessity of Christ's death to reconcile humanity to God through the willing sacrifice of the only one who was wholly God and wholly man, McConnell notes that this was not an easy thing for Jesus to do. It was something that caused Jesus to turn his "face, saddened and tearful...towards Calvary."<sup>32</sup> The fact that Jesus willingly gave himself for others made him the ultimate example of manliness for many SBC pastors; yet, McConnell wanted to point out that even the supreme example of manliness broke

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<sup>31</sup> See Monica Najar, *Evangelizing the South: A Social History of Church and State in Early America*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 62; and Christine Leigh Heyrman, *Southern Cross: The Beginnings of the Bible Belt*, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1997), 205-215, 252.

<sup>32</sup> McConnell, "Doctrine of Missions," 12, Box 1, SBC.

down in tears and was “grief stricken.”<sup>33</sup> Clearly, in his mind, manifestations of grief and sorrow could be entirely appropriate ways of expressing one’s manly emotions.

However, not all displays of emotion were deemed appropriate. William Carver wrote in his diary for 27 December 1893 that he attended church services where a friend, Posey Grant preached the sermon. Carver recorded that though Grant had “some affection and some embarrassment. The sermon was good.”<sup>34</sup> Thus, though the sermon ended well, Carver seemed to feel that Posey demonstrated too much emotion during the sermon, so much so that there was “some embarrassment.” This probably meant that it appeared that Grant was overcome with emotion and could not master his own feelings while preaching. Thus, while some emotion could be viewed as an appropriate expression of manhood, being too emotional could be a detriment in the perception of an individual’s masculinity. The trick was in balancing these two sides. Baptist men were not to be severe stoics, neither rejoicing nor mourning; yet, they were always supposed to have mastery over their own emotions. Nonetheless, there were some emotions that were more “appropriate” for men to display than others.

One of the sentiments that many SBC pastors seemed to be comfortable displaying was joy. Rufus Weaver, in his book *The Religious Development of the Child*, recognized the joy that a father would feel whenever his child accepted Christ into his or her heart and told readers that the entire cosmos rejoiced as well.<sup>35</sup> Weaver was not the only one that talked about the wonders of joy for Christian men. T.T. Eaton also mentioned how joy, mixed with love, might be an

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<sup>33</sup> McConnell, “Doctrine of Missions,” 12, Box 1, SBC.

<sup>34</sup> Carver, Diary 1893, 136, Box 11, WOC.

<sup>35</sup> Rufus W. Weaver, *The Religious Development of the Child: An Evangelical Study from the Scientific View-Point* with an Introduction by John Richard Sampey, (New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1913), 274.

expression of manly sentiment. In one sermon, he illustrated this point by telling his congregants to think of the homecoming of a loved one after a long journey. He asked his audience to think about “how demonstrative is our joy in the first meeting – the eyes fill, the voice trembles, the face flushes. We hover around them, we cannot compose ourselves to any occupation, we can only look and talk and rejoice.”<sup>36</sup> Here, Eaton took the appropriate expressions of joy and expounded on them. Not only was such joy an appropriate emotion for men to express in the instant of a loved one’s return, but he believed that it was an emotion that men might lose themselves to without jeopardizing their manliness. Indeed, this was the one time when an SBC pastor seemed to say that it might be manly to lose the mastery over something – an expression of joy. However, Eaton’s positive remark that one might not be able to be composed at an occupation because of emotion stood in stark contrast to almost every other comment on self-control and mastery that other Baptists, and even Eaton himself, made.

However, this was not the only time when Eaton seemed to suggest that powerful emotions were entirely appropriate as expressions of manliness. In a separate sermon, he told the members of his church that only once in his life was he aware of a man coming to him and apologizing without an excuse for wrongful behavior. When the offender confessed his sin to Eaton, Eaton told his congregants that “my voice was choked in answering him” and that he loved the offender more than he had before.<sup>37</sup> Eaton did not repudiate his own emotional response; instead, he used it as an example of the way that manly emotion and love might flow from an honest confession.

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<sup>36</sup> T.T. Eaton, “Babes in Christ,” in Sermon Notebook Vol. VII, Thomas Treadwell Eaton Papers, AR. 21, Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives, Nashville, Tennessee, (TTE).

<sup>37</sup> Eaton, Untitled Sermon, 14, Vol. I, TTE

A variety of other pastors also talked about manly love at the turn of the century, and showed their affection for one another in private correspondence. When Charles Daniel, a pastor in Atlanta, heard that his old seminary professor, E.C. Dargan was going to be moving to Macon to pastor a church there, he rejoiced. Daniel quickly penned a letter to Dargan saying that he was looking forward to getting to fellowship with Dargan and professed his feelings for his old mentor saying, “There may be some of the boys who love you more than I, but I do not believe it.”<sup>38</sup> Similarly, in 1912, when Dargan was appointed as the President of the Board of Mercer University, he received a letter from a friend in Cairo, Georgia, who wrote that over the years, Dargan had given him “strength and cheer.”<sup>39</sup> Nor was it unusual for Dargan’s male correspondents to sign their letters “Tenderly.”<sup>40</sup> These were all private signs of love and affection between these men; yet none of them would say that these demonstrations had lessened their own manhood or masculinity. Nor were such expressions entirely unique to Dargan and his friends. I.J. Van Ness received letters from other pastors signed “Yours with Love,” and was even told by one friend, Martin Ball of Mississippi, “I do love you so much for your work’s sake, as well as your own personal, lovable character.”<sup>41</sup>

Though these were private expressions of affection and love from one man to another, Baptist officials were not worried that their emotions would jeopardize their manhood in the eyes of their friends. Instead, these words of love and care for one another were recognition of the

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<sup>38</sup> Charles W. Daniel to Dr. Dargan, 12 November 1909, Box 4, ECD.

<sup>39</sup> B.D. Ragsdale to Dr. Dargan, 11 June 1912, Box 5, ECD.

<sup>40</sup> For an example, see R.R. Acree to Dear Ed., 8 April 1908, 2, Box 4, ECD.

<sup>41</sup> George W. Andrews to I.J. Van Ness, 5 October 1914, 2, Box 1, IJVN; Martin Ball to “My Dear Bro.,” 7 October 1914, Box 1, IJVN.

strong homosocial bonds that these men had created and influence they had on one another.<sup>42</sup> They wanted to acknowledge their care and affection for each other. Such admissions of emotion was not threatening, but rather strengthened the bonds these men had created. Some pastors even celebrated these emotive bonds of manly affection in sermons, as E.C. Dargan did in one address about the Biblical figure Elijah. Dargan recounted that though Elijah was approaching the end of his life; he took on a new disciple, and appointed the young man as his successor. The two men, Elijah and Elisha, quickly developed a close bond, and when it came time for Elijah to be taken to heaven (the Bible records that he did not experience death, but was taken to heaven by a flaming chariot), Dargan believed that Elisha, “the affectionate yet grieving follower,” cried after his “beloved master.”<sup>43</sup> Here, in a sermon, Dargan celebrated the love and care between these two men of God, and gave it as an example that his parishioners might follow. Rather than telling his parishioners that emotion threatened their manliness, Dargan suggested that such expressions were the appropriate results of powerful masculine bonds, and the care that a man might have for his brethren.<sup>44</sup> This type of love between men was very

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<sup>42</sup> For scholarship on homosocial bonds, see Sharon R. Bird, “Welcome to the Men’s Club: Homosociality and the Maintenance of Hegemonic Masculinity,” *Gender and Society* 10 (April 1996): 120-132; and Jean Lipman-Blumen, “Toward a Homosocial Theory of Sex Roles: An Explanation of the Sex Segregation of Social Institutions,” *Signs* 1 (Spring 1976): 15-31. In addition, Jonathan Ned Katz’s work is very helpful in describing the lack of the gay-straight-bi division during the nineteenth century and the way that men would talk about their relationships to other men. See Jonathan Ned Katz, *Love Stories: Sex Between Men Before Homosexuality*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001); as well as Jonathan Ned Katz, *The Invention of Heterosexuality with a New Preface*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007).

<sup>43</sup> Dargan, “Man Scared by a Woman,” 5, Box 6, ECD; for the Biblical account, see 2 Kings chapter 2.

<sup>44</sup> While there were only a few SBC officials who freely used such terms of affection for other men, such expressions were much more prevalent in the Holiness movement and will be discussed in Chapter 7.

different than the prevailing patters of masculinity that eschewed any expression of affection between men.

Homosocial love between men was not the only type of affection that these men expressed. They demonstrated love for their sweethearts, spouses, and children in a number of different ways. William Carver's diary allows a view into all of these. In 1896, he was courting a young woman named Alice, and talked about treasuring the letters that he received from her.<sup>45</sup> Eventually, the two were married, and Carver rejoiced when they had a "dear little daughter" named Ruth whom he loved deeply. Carver confessed that he and his wife prayed "for grace and wisdom to keep her for God" from the time of Ruth's conception.<sup>46</sup> While these expressions were meant for Carver's diary, such expressions of love and care would not have threatened his own sense of manliness. Rather, they were appropriate ways of expressing his manhood as he sought after the best ways of rearing his daughter in Christian faith.

Sometimes expressions of love might come through simple actions and the comfortable relationship between a husband and wife. Such was the case with Rev. L.S. Foster and his wife who ran the Mississippi Baptist Orphanage in Jackson from 1897 to 1903. At one point in their time there, a newspaper came and took pictures of the orphanage and the couple who ran it. In **Figure 3 (next page)**, it was clear that the Foster's had a companionable marriage.<sup>47</sup> They sat on the front porch of their home, both in rocking chairs, seemingly relaxed and comfortable. One of the first things the viewer saw was that Rev. Foster was the one who faced the camera while Mrs.

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<sup>45</sup> Carver, 14 January, Diary 1896, 9, Box 11, WOC; and Carver, 25 March, Diary 1896, 54, Box 11, WOC.

<sup>46</sup> Carver, 3 January 1899, Diary 1897-1899, 38-39, Box 11, WOC.

<sup>47</sup> Untitled Photograph, Mississippi Baptist Orphan's Home Scrapbook, c. 1900, n.p., Mississippi Baptist Orphan's Home, AR. 174, Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives, Nashville, Tennessee, (MBOH).

Foster remained partially obscured by the vines growing around the porch. While this clearly denoted Rev. Foster's place as the master of the house who dealt with people outside the home, the viewer should also recognize that, on closer inspection of the rocking chairs, Mrs. Foster's chair was the more elaborate wicker (or cane) chair with wrapped arms. Rev. Foster's chair, in contrast, was a simple high-backed rocker with a cane seat. While it was possible to read too much into this, the very fact that Mrs. Foster's chair was more expensive than Rev. Foster's suggested that they were partners who wanted each other to be comfortable. Such mundane

**Figure 3**



details suggested love and care for one another that certainly would not have been viewed as detrimental to Foster's manhood.

Sometimes men were so concerned about trying to love, and get love from, their wives and sweethearts they

were willing to do things that might imperil perceptions of their own masculinity. William Wilkes recorded such a situation in his childhood hometown of Josie, Alabama. He recounted that some of his "earliest memories [were] of beards galore. Every he-man wore one."<sup>48</sup> As Wilkes recalled it, in Josie beards were a way of demonstrating masculinity during his youth since every "*he-man* wore one."<sup>49</sup> Indeed, white men throughout the United States wore a wide

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<sup>48</sup> Wilkes, *Alabama Boy*, 37.

<sup>49</sup> Emphasis added.

variety of types and styles of facial hair throughout the middle and end of the nineteenth century. Despite the fashion of the day, Wilkes believed that that expression of masculinity came into conflict with “a growing allergy and consequent resistance of sweethearts and wives to the prickling and tickling sensations experienced in the act of osculation [kissing].”<sup>50</sup> Needless to say, men shaved off their facial hair and kept on kissing. Thus, though men with clean-shaven faces may have initially been looked down upon, as not living up to the fullness of mature manhood, boyishly clean-shaven faces soon won out in Josie, Alabama because it interfered with the expression of sexuality. Thus, though men may have worried that they were no longer presenting a specific outward expression of masculinity, it interfered with a much more potent way of feeling their own manhood – their sexuality.

The sexual side of masculinity also hints at another trait that Baptist officials believed expressed manliness – that of power and strength. These elements were also part of the larger culture’s understandings of white Southern manhood. Throughout the Deep South, racialized violence enforced the notion that only white men were supposed to exercise power in society. Nevertheless, unlike many expressions of white manliness in the South during this time that SBC officials talked about in ways that were overtly racial, the church leaders studied in this work never explicitly related power to racial identity. However, neither did they denounce the racial violence in the region that whites tried to use to demonstrate their power over African Americans. Nor did they denounce lynching as a sign that whites were losing mastery over their emotions similar to Ida B. Wells and northern anti-lynching groups.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> Wilkes, *Alabama Boy*, 37.

<sup>51</sup> Ida B. Wells often also played on the trope of civilization as she condemned lynching. For an example, see Ida B. Wells, “Southern Horror: Lynch Law in All Its Phases,” 49-72, in *Southern Horrors and Other Writings: The Anti-Lynching Campaign of Ida B. Wells, 1892-1900*

Nonetheless, sometimes references to an individual's strength were merely about physicality. For instance, B.J.W. Graham, the editor of *The Christian Index* (published in Atlanta), wrote his friend, J.M. Frost, that he hoped that a trip would restore Frost's "accustomed vigor."<sup>52</sup> Here, Graham was hoping that his friend's health would be restored; however, by referencing his "vigor," the editor was also loosely referring to an aspect of Frost's ability to carry out his job and responsibilities – a vital part of Frost's manhood. Not all comments about the ability to perform were connected with health, though. For example, when Albert Cummings wrote his friend, E.C. Dargan to congratulate him on being placed as the head of Mercer's administration, Cummings warned that Dargan was now working in a very large field, but he (Cummings) believed that Dargan's "shoulders [were] broad and fully equal to the task."<sup>53</sup> While Cummings relied on this physical analogue, he certainly was not actually meaning that Dargan's shoulders had to be broad in order to become the head of Mercer University. Instead, he was referring to Dargan's strength of character and ability to master any large task set before him – in a word, he was affirming Dargan's manhood was great enough to complete the task set before him.

In opposition to the way in which Baptist individuality worked in the construction of femininity, it was clear that individuality and mastery were the strengths of Dargan's manhood. Thus, his ability to conquer projects allowed him to set the agenda for the new administration. The emphasis on the mastery and individuality in Cummings' theology led him to believe not

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Edited with an Introduction by Jacqueline Jones Royster, (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 1997), 55.

<sup>52</sup> B.J.W. Graham to Dr. J.M. Frost, 28 August 1915, 2, Box 31, Frost-Bell Papers, AR. 109, Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives, Nashville, Tennessee, (FBP).

<sup>53</sup> Albert L. Cummings to "Dear Doctor," 8 June 1912, Box 5, ECD.

that Dargan's identity would be subsumed by those he benefitted, but that those Dargan would lead would only strengthen his standing as an individual. This was an important point and a clear difference in the ways in which individuality was understood for men and for women by Southern Baptist officials.

Similarly, W.J. Bradley wrote Dargan in 1913 to commend him for his command of the meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention in St. Louis. That year, the SBC took the step to form a Social Service Commission. The Social Service Commission was tasked to combat "whiskey traffic," "white slave traffic, and child labor" among other things.<sup>54</sup> Though it is not clear why Dargan would have needed to take command of the meeting, it is possible that the establishment of such a commission that clearly engaged in cultural politics was a contentious issue. Whatever it may have been that so impressed Bradley, he wrote to Dargan saying, "I have heard from several [who] say that you have the best control of a large body of people that they have ever witnessed. It certainly lies in brains and not in bulk of body, tho [sic] I am just guessing at your physical strength."<sup>55</sup> Bradley here was not concerned with Dargan's physical abilities, even hinting that Dargan was not the most physically robust person, but was interested in his power to command a large group of people by the force of his presence. Certainly, Dargan's mastery of this group of people spoke volumes about his masculinity and how he could use his powerful manly attributes in order to lead. Bradley's theological understanding of individuality led him to believe that mastery was a powerful way of expressing manliness, and so

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<sup>54</sup> Jerry Sutton, *A Matter of Conviction: A History of the Southern Baptist Engagement with the Culture* with a Foreword by James T. Draper, Jr., (Nashville: B&H Publishing Group, 2008), 88.

<sup>55</sup> W.J. Bradley to "Dear Doctor," 22 May 1913, 1, Box 5, ECD.

Dargan's ability to control the entire meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention was a powerful sign of manhood.

The ability to master a group of people through character spoke so strongly to Bradley because it denoted Dargan's strong character and influence over others. Strength of character appealed not just to Bradley, it was also a concern for T.T. Eaton. In one sermon to young men, he talked about the need to live pure lives so that they might have the power of God's righteousness in their lives. He compared those Christians who lived in sin to a "stunted, misshapen dwarf" who, though pure in God's eyes through Jesus' work, could not accomplish what a "man in the full glory of mature manhood" might.<sup>56</sup> Eaton felt that living a pure life was what young men needed in order to have a strong character, and he encouraged them to "give to God's service the strength and vigor of [their] prime."<sup>57</sup> Throughout this entire sermon, Eaton assumed that the young men he was speaking to would be living their lives as individuals before God. Though he did counsel them to set good examples before their own sons, the assumption was that they were living for their own ends. Eaton tried to disseminate his views on manhood to the young men listening to him in the pews. Yet, unlike many Baptist messages to southern white women, his encouragement to young men that they should live pure lives before God did not include an exhortation to purify society, to work together for the betterment of others, or even to go out and evangelize to their neighbors. Their lives were lived for their own benefit. There was a clear link between his individualistic theology and his encouragement to these young men to use their manly strength and power for God.

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<sup>56</sup> Eaton, "Young Men," 34, TTE.

<sup>57</sup> Eaton, "Young Men," 47, TTE.

Eaton even went so far as to tell his parishioners that the use of their strength was essential to manliness. In a separate sermon, he stated, “There can be no manhood without strength and courage.”<sup>58</sup> Here it was clear that Eaton believed there to be an intimate connection between strength and manliness – they were so intertwined that one could not occur without the other. He told his listeners that they must be “strong enough to assert your masterhood over your own passions and evil tendencies...strong to labour with manhood’s might for this Saviour who died for you [sic].”<sup>59</sup> Yet, even as he encouraged them to use their strength, he recognized that sin had a powerful tug on their hearts and that they would need supernatural help in their battle to remain pure. Eaton’s message to young men about living pure lives would almost certainly have had sexual connotations. As their pastor, he may have been chiding male parishioners for their inability to conquer sexual sins, and so challenge them to look beyond themselves as they battled sexual urges. In fact, Eaton related their ability to master sin to their reliance on Jesus. While unusual in the broader context of the SBC, this was not the only time that Eaton suggested that Baptist men should look outside of their own resources in order to obtain mastery over the forces of evil.

In a separate sermon first preached in 1883, Eaton turned to martial imagery and exhorted his parishioners to look to the Holy Spirit, who was “ever ready to gird us with his own strength in our battle with our besetting sins.”<sup>60</sup> Eaton was then disappointed that many people (and he included himself in this) did not turn to the Holy Spirit. This lack of reliance on the Holy Ghost

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<sup>58</sup> T.T. Eaton, “Be Strong and of Good Courage,” November 1876, Sermon Vol. VI, 152, TTE.

<sup>59</sup> Eaton, “Be Strong,” 151, TTE.

<sup>60</sup> Eaton, “Babes in Christ,” Vol. VII, n.p., TTE.

left “many weak and sickly ones in Christ’s army where all might be strong and valiant.”<sup>61</sup>

Again, Eaton made the connection between leading a sinless life and strength, adding the element that strength was not simply needed for its own sake, but that these young men were involved in a spiritual battle against the forces of darkness. Though Eaton felt that the parishioners he was talking to would need help, he did not fault them for that, and felt that the only true way that they would become the “noblest men and women” was by using the strength of the Holy Spirit to fight against sin in their lives.<sup>62</sup>

Again, the language that Eaton used suggested that he was worried about the sexual lives of his parishioners. He talked about the “besetting sins” of “weak and sickly ones” in the army of God. During the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, there was the belief that each man had only a set amount of energy, and that all sexual experiences, but particularly masturbatory ones, quickly drained that vital energy, sapping a man’s strength, leaving him sick and weak.<sup>63</sup> The dissipating tendencies of misplaced sexuality, was not just a matter of spiritual discipline in Eaton’s thought. Rather, it was an issue of masculinity.

Not everyone thought that sin would necessarily dissipate one’s manhood. Many young, white southern men were simply expected to have sexual dalliances before marriage. Historian Bertram Wyatt-Brown records that in the antebellum South “sleeping with a woman was an informal rite of virilization.”<sup>64</sup> Such attitudes were not limited to the antebellum South, however, William Wilkes’ memoir of growing up in the late nineteenth century town of Josie

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<sup>61</sup> Eaton, “Babes in Christ,” Vol. VII, n.p., TTE.

<sup>62</sup> Eaton, “Babes in Christ,” Vol. VII, n.p., TTE.

<sup>63</sup> For an example of this, see Bederman, *Manliness & Civilization*, 101-104.

<sup>64</sup> Bertram Wyatt-Brown, *Honor and Violence in the Old South*, 97. For more on the topic, see the also 96.

Alabama recalled that “every youth was expected to ‘sow his wild oats’ before being accounted a man.”<sup>65</sup> Throughout the South, the idea that men should have a wild, rough-and-tumble youth was prevalent.<sup>66</sup> Wilkes fully imbibed these ideas, but was not sure exactly how to earn his manhood. He disliked the taste of whiskey, had no idea how to play cards or gamble, and was too afraid of disease to cavort with the local prostitutes, so eventually Wilkes decided that he would attend dances. Wilkes claimed that he was never very good, and frequently stepped on his partner’s feet. Still, after attending a few, he gleefully exclaimed, “I had finally and fully become a man.”<sup>67</sup> This was one example of the vast differences between the ideas of masculinity and femininity for some Baptist officials during the turn of the century. While women might lose their claims to purity because of the sins of their husbands, effectively cutting off their attempts to be termed a “lady,” males, though encouraged to remain chaste by church officials, were half-expected to “sow their wild oats.” Indeed, their very manhood was in question until they did so. Males had to lose their purity to be accounted men while females could only be ladies by retaining it.

Certainly, not all Baptist officials felt that young men should “sow their wild oats” before being accounted men. William Carver was frequently grieved by his younger brother’s dalliances and felt that it dissipated his manhood. When Carver decided to finally stop paying Alex’s (the brother’s) expenses, he wrote that Alex had “lost the quality of keeping his word and this is a boy’s most fatal loss in character.”<sup>68</sup> Clearly, William Carver felt that this fault was a

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<sup>65</sup> Wilkes, *Alabama Boy*, 21.

<sup>66</sup> Ownby, *Subduing Satan*, 49-50.

<sup>67</sup> Wilkes, *Alabama Boy*, 21.

<sup>68</sup> Carver, 1896 Diary, 25 March, 55, Box 11, WOC.

hindrance to his brother's manhood. Carver also believed that keeping one's word was such an elementary part of masculine character that he called it a "boy's most fatal loss" rather than a man's. In Carver's mind, this character trait was such an integral part of manliness that not keeping one's word rendered that person a boy rather than a man. It revealed a lack of principle, and a lack of mastery over one's own actions.

As should be clear, mastery was an important part of manliness for all of these officials. They felt that it was an integral part of masculinity. T.T. Eaton summed up the feelings of many SBC officials when tried to convince his congregants of the importance of mastery in one sermon by saying:

As God is sovereign in heaven – so he has placed man sovereign upon earth – bound by his allegiance to the King of kings, but under that, supreme ruler. It is a God like power – this masterhood conferred upon man.... It is a duty – this gift of ruling which he is but a coward who endeavours to evade.... [M]an must master his own passions and appetites or he sinks from his high place as ruler into the vilest of slaves. A king who cannot govern himself is but a mockery of royalty, and a man surrenders his manhood and takes his place among the brutes who does not govern with strong hand his lower nature.... *There is no manhood without masterhood.*<sup>69</sup>

Here, Eaton gave a resounding statement on a central trait of southern masculinity and tied it together with a theology of the individual. It needed no analysis for Eaton's parishioners to see the importance of self-control and mastery for manliness in Eaton's mind. Without mastery, Eaton claimed that it was impossible for true manliness to be expressed. Moreover, it was clear that mastery was something given uniquely to males from God, and something that he believed meant that men, true men, were closer to being the image of God on earth than their female counterparts. Men were to be the supreme rulers of their domain – essentially little gods among their families and dependents. Eaton connected mastery to each man's role as an individual.

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<sup>69</sup> Eaton, "Be Strong," 151, TTE, (emphasis added).

There could not be two rulers in a relationship, and Eaton made it clear that those who gave up this rule gave up their manhood in his mind, becoming mere brutes – a word laced with derogatory racial meaning – instead.

The language of mastery clearly had racial overtones each time Eaton preached this sermon (1876, 1885, 1893, and 1900). Eaton then reinforced those ideas when he talked about those who could not master their own “passions and appetites” and sunk from the place of a master to the role of the “vilest of slaves.” This was an image that his parishioners would certainly have understood with racial implications. Mastery meant white racial privilege while slavery, even when mentioned in this spiritual/personal character sense, referred to the status of African-Americans prior to the American Civil War. Even after the Civil War, many white planters still viewed themselves as masters, though they did not have slaves.<sup>70</sup> Beyond this fact, simply using the term “brutes” could have a double meaning – referring either to animals or to the many African-American freedmen whom so many whites still believed made up a lower order of humanity. The double meaning of the term hinted at the idea that many whites believed African Americans had no self-control – particularly on matters of sexuality. In this view, every Black man was a potential rapist, and every Black woman an exotic seductress.

Yet, for whites in the Southern Baptist Convention who believed that mastery was an essential part of manliness, the thought that African Americans could not control their own sexuality immediately excluded Black men from the ranks of manhood. Unfortunately, the idea that African Americans composed a lower part of humanity was not merely relegated to the South during this period. Across the nation, whites used such language to talk about people of

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<sup>70</sup> See James L. Roark, *Masters without Slaves: Southern Planters in the Civil War and Reconstruction*, (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1977), especially 68-108 and 156-209.

color during this time.<sup>71</sup> Thus, Eaton's remarks on the importance of mastery had racial implications as well as gendered ones. He implied that all men who could not practice self control were not only in danger of losing their manhood, they were in danger of trading in their racial privilege and status as a white male. Moreover, the statement that "There is no manhood without masterhood," because of the distinct racial implications of masterhood, would have necessarily excluded Black males from true manhood as Eaton defined it.

Even with these racial overtones, it was clear that manliness and mastery were individual concepts for Eaton, and he gave an example of what he meant. He wrote that Moses was "Great in every aspect of his character...as a master of his own nature, in his strong, pure, true-hearted, kingly manhood."<sup>72</sup> Here again, Eaton linked mastery with manhood, though the emphasis in this passage was primarily on Moses' self-control. Yet, it was this trait that provided the foundation for the rest of his manly attributes to be shown.

Similarly, William Carver felt that self-mastery was an ideal that was intimately connected with his religion. He told his parishioners, "One aim and test of our religion is contentment – the balanced view of life and its relations that gives the unperturbed spirit – the life of mastery of which Jesus is the ideal."<sup>73</sup> Again, this ideal of manhood was based on an

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<sup>71</sup> For examples of other religious figures from the time, see Josiah Strong, pocket notepad from South American tour, section on Rio de Janeiro, 1909, Box 1, Josiah Strong Papers by courtesy of The Burke Library at Union Theological Seminary in the City of New York, Columbia University Libraries; Lyman Abbott, "Impressions of a Careless Traveler: Bermuda," *Outlook* 97 (15 April 1911): 813; Lyman Abbott, "The Message of the Nineteenth Century to the Men of the Twentieth," *Outlook* 102 (19 October 1912): 350; and Walter Rauschenbusch, "The Belated Races and the Social Problems," 1914, Box 4, Walter Rauschenbusch Papers, American Baptist Historical Society, Rochester, New York.

<sup>72</sup> Eaton, "Be Strong," 144, TTE.

<sup>73</sup> William Owen Carver, "The Complacency of Paul as Illustrated in the Philippian Letter," in 1902 Sermon Notebook, 11 April 1903, 54, Box 12, WOC.

individual model, and could only be achieved by an individual. Contentment was not something that could be produced by a community or a family. Instead, it was a state of an individual's heart. Moreover, it was modeled by the ultimate example in Christianity, Jesus. Even this choice of an example suggested an individualistic manhood. Carver did not say that the Apostles modeled contentment, nor that Israel or the early Church did; eschewing these different types of communities, he focused on a single person. As Carver preached to his congregation, his ideal of masterful manhood was connected to his idea of the importance of the individual.

Along with providing what he believed was the ultimate example of masterful manhood, Carver talked about the need for men in the Southern Baptist Convention who were filled with the spirits of Love, Power, and a Sober-mind.<sup>74</sup> Here again, Carver laid out his vision of the connection between individuals and their self-mastery very clearly for his parishioners. Carver believed that the SBC needed men who could control their own emotions, their own desires and serve the denomination with a calm demeanor. In his own diary, Carver resolved at the beginning of the year 1897 to “be a better man” and “gain more control of my life, i.e. to give myself more fully up to the control of God in the Holy Spirit.”<sup>75</sup> Carver used his own life to connect the ideas of self-control, or self-mastery, with the hope of becoming a better man. Yet, he realized that he could not simply will himself to have more self-control and so hoped that he could give himself more and more to the Holy Spirit, who would enable Carver to gain mastery over his desires.

In a similar fashion, when Carver told his congregants about the need for sober-minded leaders within the SBC, he mentioned that there were “Makers of Leaders.” Listed among the

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<sup>74</sup> William Owen Carver, “Future Leadership of the Churches,” in 1902 Sermon Notebook, 6-8 January 1909, 82, Box 12, WOC.

<sup>75</sup> Carver, 1897 Diary, 1 January 1897, 1-2, Box 11, WOC.

ways in which leaders could be made, Carver mentioned the Holy Spirit; yet, he also listed the denominational seminary and the Baptist colleges scattered about the South as makers of leaders.<sup>76</sup> Some of these schools themselves felt that they were there to train boys into men. The Fiftieth Anniversary Catalogue of Howard College made a special point to highlight the moral training that the young men who attended would receive, adding that anyone who wished to stay at Howard must prove himself to be both a gentlemen and a scholar.<sup>77</sup> In order to aid in this endeavor, the college was governed by a series of rules and regulations designed to “inculcate manly virtue, preserve order, [and] require sobriety and morality.”<sup>78</sup> In a word, such rules, along with the requirement that each student was to join Howard’s Cadet Corps so that they could attain an “erect, graceful, and manly carriage,” were designed to help each student learn to master his own body, mind, and emotions.

Such training was essential as many Southern Baptist officials worried about various elements that threatened to undermine each man’s mastery. W.L. Sanford believed that the credit and crop lien system which was appearing throughout the South took away “independence, ambition, and manhood” by constantly driving farmers deeper and deeper into debt.<sup>79</sup> The language of financial independence was a marker of manhood for many Southern men, and so Sanford’s warnings were not merely about keeping track of one’s financial well-being. Rather, they were a warning about the all-too-easy ways in which a man could lose his independence and

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<sup>76</sup> Carver, “Future Leadership,” 83, Box 12, WOC.

<sup>77</sup> *Memorial Catalogue*, 1892, 24-25, Box 4, CASC.

<sup>78</sup> *Memorial Catalogue*, 1892, 30, Box 4, CASC.

<sup>79</sup> Sanford, “The Credit System,” 1892, 82, Box 4, CASC.

financial self-mastery.<sup>80</sup> Essentially, Sanford believed that if a man was not truly the master over his own money, that he was beholden to another, thus he was no longer his own master and had lost his manhood. He had instead become the dependent of another man, thus emasculating him.

The language of manly independence was an important trope during the late nineteenth century.<sup>81</sup> Equally important for politicians, however, was the way in which the idea of dependence could be used as a threat that white men, particularly small farmers, were being emasculated. One of the southern politicians who connected the idea of the independent farmer with white southern manhood most successfully was “Pitchfork” Ben Tillman of North Carolina. Though he did not live in any of the states studied in this dissertation, biographer Stephen Kantrowitz demonstrates time and again how Tillman was able to use the language of independence to his political advantage. He did so by connecting gendered imagery with a version of violent white supremacy that glorified the myth of the white yeoman farmer.<sup>82</sup>

Neither Ben Tillman, nor Howard College alumnus W.L. Sanford were alone in connecting the ideas of independence, manhood, and the Baptist emphasis on individual mastery. Sanford’s speech against the emasculating lien and cropping systems came during the heyday of the Southern Populist movement. The Populist movement was most powerful during the early 1890s when it attempted to reform the agrarian economic system in the South, in particular the sharecropping and the crop lien systems. Populists warned that these systems, which helped banks and landowners to keep tenant farmers in cycles of debt that were remarkably hard to

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<sup>80</sup> Creech, “Price of Eternal Honor,” 25-45.

<sup>81</sup> For an excellent discussion on the language of independence, see Creech, “Price of Eternal Honor,” 25-45.

<sup>82</sup> For examples of this, see Stephen Kantrowitz, *Ben Tillman and the Reconstruction of White Supremacy*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000), 1, 3, 94, 110-111.

break out of, emasculated the men who actually worked in the fields by forcing them to depend on other people. This dependence marked a loss of self-mastery and manhood. Ultimately, however, the inability to rise above racial politics split the Southern Populist movement.<sup>83</sup>

Despite the potent political language that focused on financial freedom, debt and the credit system were certainly not the primary ways that SBC officials were worried that Southern men would lose their manhood. The greatest danger they perceived was the danger of the bottle, and Baptist leaders frequently spoke out against the liquor trade and attempted to bring church discipline against church members who drank or whose businesses sold alcohol.<sup>84</sup> As a warning to his own parishioners, T.T. Eaton described the fate of a pastor whose doctor prescribed a dram of whiskey every day to cure a cough. According to Eaton, the pastor was soon in the clutches of alcoholism and went to a “drunkard’s grave.”<sup>85</sup> Similarly, William Holtzclaw warned that the saloon produced fathers who were “slave[s] to the drink habit.”<sup>86</sup> Even William Wilkes’ otherwise light and playful memoir of growing up in small-town Alabama turned dark when he talked about the men at a local church sneaking off to the woods and staggering back after a few

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<sup>83</sup> For more on the Southern Populists, see Steven Hahn, *The Roots of Southern Populism: Yeoman Farmers and the Transformation of the Georgia Upcountry, 1850-1890* Updated Edition, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006); C. Vann Woodward, *Origins of the New South, 1877-1913*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1971), 235-263; Edward L. Ayers, *The Promise of the New South: Life after Reconstruction* 15<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Edition, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 249-282. For more on specifically Baptist engagement with Populist ideas, see Wayne J. Flynt, *Alabama Baptists: Southern Baptists in the Heart of Dixie*, (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1998), 219-227.

<sup>84</sup> For more on Baptists and temperance, see Sutton, *A Matter of Conviction*, 84-91; Flynt, *Alabama Baptists*, 210-219. See also Joe L. Coker, *Liquor in the Land of the Lost Cause: Southern White Evangelicals and the Prohibition Movement*, (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 2007), 199-231.

<sup>85</sup> Eaton, “Be Strong,” 154, TTE.

<sup>86</sup> William J. Holtzclaw, *Women of To-day* with an Introduction by J.A. Leavitt, (Louisville, KY: Baptist Book Concern, Publishers, 1909), 119.

drinks.<sup>87</sup> For all these men, drinking and drunkenness meant that a man was no longer his own master. Whether a man became a “slave to the drink habit,” simply lost control of his own faculties for a time and had to stagger around, or if he actually lost the ability to control his urges thus giving up part of his white racial privilege in making himself a slave, the point was the same – drinking stripped a man of his masterhood. These SBC officials viewed alcoholic beverages not as something that could be enjoyed in moderation, but as a potential threat to very manhood as it threatened self-mastery.<sup>88</sup>

Manhood and masterhood were obviously interconnected in the minds of many SBC officials. They believed that the concept of self-mastery epitomized the idea of a powerful masculinity and formed the foundation for their ideas of proper manhood. It combined not only ideas of racial and gendered ideas; it also mixed the Baptist emphasis on individualism into a particular type of masculinity. With amazing consistency, white pastors and preachers in the SBC hoped to convince their congregations of the connections between a theology of mastery and constructions of white manhood.

While the masterful Christian male was always supposed to be in control of his emotions, this did not necessarily preclude the use of violence. However, both Baptist clergy and laity could clearly read in their Bibles that Jesus told his followers to turn the other cheek and leave vengeance to God, leaving a gap between the violent predilections of the culture of the New South and its violent enforcement of white supremacy and the religious teachings. Many SBC pastors reconciled the muscular warrior image, so popular in the South at the turn of the century,

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<sup>87</sup> Wilkes, *Alabama Boy*, 19.

<sup>88</sup> Officials in the Southern Baptist Convention were not the only ones who viewed alcohol as a potential threat to manhood. For more, see Elaine Frantz Parsons, *Manhood Lost: Fallen Drunkards and Redeeming Women in the Nineteenth Century United States*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003).

with a self-controlled Christian manhood by talking about battling the forces of evil and conquering the world for Christ.<sup>89</sup> The warrior image and southern Christianity fit together in the image of the conquering church.

### **The Conquering Baptist Church**

Though SBC officials could not look to the American Civil War, still fresh in the mind of the South at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth, for examples of a victorious, conquering army, they nonetheless turned to Christianity in an attempt to forge an image of the conquering Christian Church. A.J. Dickinson, an Alabamian pastor declared furiously, “I belong to the church military, not the church millinery.”<sup>90</sup> Clearly, he felt that the idea of a powerful, martial church was something to be proud of, something to boldly proclaim. Similarly, sermons at the annual meetings of the Southern Baptist Convention sometimes focused on the ideal of the victorious army of Christ, as was the case in J.B. Gambrell’s sermon, “Call to Universal Conquest of the World.” Gambrell told those gathered before him that to “divide and conquer is the doctrine of the New Testament.”<sup>91</sup> He warned that without churches dividing themselves and going out into the world to evangelize “we shall never conquer the world.”<sup>92</sup> Other pastors

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<sup>89</sup> For more on the warrior image in the American South, see Craig Thompson Friend, “From Southern Manhood to Southern Masculinities: An Introduction,” in *Southern Masculinity: Perspectives on Manhood in the South Since Reconstruction*, Craig Thompson Friend, ed., (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2009), xi-xii.

<sup>90</sup> A.J. Dickinson in Flynt, *Alabama Baptists*, 271.

<sup>91</sup> J.B. Gambrell, “Call to Universal Conquest of the World,” 1, 1892, Folder 36, Box 1, Southern Baptist Convention Sermon Collection, Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives, Nashville, Tennessee, (SBC).

<sup>92</sup> Gambrell, “Universal Conquest,” 1, Box 1, SBC.

warned that this division did not mean schism but merely a different order of attack.<sup>93</sup>

Sometimes even a preacher's sermon titles could hint at the way in which he thought of the world as a spiritual battleground. For example, when looking at Rufus Weaver's sermon titles, it was clear that the conquering church was important as he had multiple sermons on "The Conquest of a World" and "The Conquering Christ."<sup>94</sup>

These addresses and sermon titles from various pastors show that they saw their spiritual lives as a battle to be fought and won, and attempted to convince the laity of the same. Church officials were not merely Christians because they felt that it helped their reputation or image in society; rather, they believed that because they were Christians, they were soldiers in an army. Indeed, as pastors, Eaton insisted, they were the officers of Christ's army.<sup>95</sup> Moreover, as officers in the midst of spiritual warfare, Eaton felt that it was their duty to "battle against besetting sins" with the strength of the Holy Spirit.<sup>96</sup> Thus, the one who obeyed "all rightful authority [was] the noble man, the true soldier, the earnest Christian."<sup>97</sup> Eaton here connected obedience, manliness, and service in Christ's army, and suggested that without one, the other two would not hold together just as an army would lose a battle if the orders of their commander were not obeyed.

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<sup>93</sup> Fernando Coello McConnell, "The Doctrine of Missions," 1902, 9, Folder 46, Box 1, SBC; see also Carver, "Future Leadership," 80, Box 12, WOC.

<sup>94</sup> Rufus W. Weaver, "Sermon Subjects," preached in July 1911 and December 1912 respectively, Box 11, Rufus W. Weaver Collection, AR. 99, Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives, Nashville, Tennessee, (RWW).

<sup>95</sup> T.T. Eaton, "Faith as Opposed to Doubt," 1882, 13, Folder 26, Box 1, SBC.

<sup>96</sup> Eaton, "Babes in Christ," Vol. VII, TTE.

<sup>97</sup> Eaton, "Sermon to Young Men," 42, Vol. 1, TTE.

Many SBC officials worried about losing another war – and this one with eternal consequences. Though spiritual in nature, these pastors warned their parishioners that the battles being waged were very real indeed. Eaton warned his congregants that they needed to be ready as the spiritual foes they battled against were not like little children who could be frightened, but great warriors who must be resisted.<sup>98</sup> Interestingly, this meant that those who were able to overcome their spiritual enemies (who were rarely personified and more often were mentioned as besetting sins) were able to prove their manliness through the defeat of these “great warriors.” Spiritual warfare, then, was one way in which men who had not taken to the battlefield during the American Civil War might demonstrate true manhood. Additionally, the language that these Southern Baptists used highlighted the individual nature of their spiritual fight. They were not fighting the army of the devil. Instead, they were fighting great warriors, which implied that they themselves were warriors. Eaton did mention that SBC pastors were the officers in the Jesus’ army, but the emphasis he gave was on the fact that they were officers, not that they were working as a group toward a common goal. Thus, even when using the martial language of spiritual warfare, the Baptist emphasis on individual manliness shone through.

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Whether it was through a focus on the purity of a woman or the mastery of manhood, officials in the Southern Baptist Convention connected their theological emphasis on the individual in unique ways with the construction of gender. Exactly what individuality meant, and how church leaders explained it worked was vastly different for men and women; yet for these pastors, it was clear that they hoped to convince their congregants of the connections between theology and gender. As they preached, they often reduced women’s individuality to specific essential traits

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<sup>98</sup> Eaton, “Be Strong,” 152-153.

that were to be used in the service of those around them – sometimes all but nullifying, their individual identities. In contrast, Baptist leaders told the men that they were supposed to express their masculinity through power and affection, all the while remaining master of their faculties. Yet, for some leaders, even male individuality was subsumed into the larger cause of Christ’s all-conquering army that would march forth throughout the world carrying the message of individual salvation for all. Thus, while not always clear, and indeed to demonstrate too cogently a central theological thrust for a denomination that prided itself on its unity in diversity would be fallacious, an emphasis on the individual ran throughout the ideas of gender that Southern Baptist leaders envisioned at the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

**SECTION II:**  
**THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH, SOUTH**

Baptists in the South clearly placed a heavy emphasis on the individual believer. Yet, the reason that Southern Baptists felt that individual faith was so important was because of their beliefs about who God was and what the relationship between humanity and the divine looked like. They believed that sinful, finite human beings needed to be reconciled to a holy, just God, and this understanding was not unique to the SBC. All Evangelicals believed that humans needed to be converted to Christianity.

The group that placed the highest emphasis upon conversion was the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. In almost all their writings between 1877 and 1915, the emphasis on conversion to Christianity stood out. Even the organization of the MECS was designed to highlight the importance of conversion. While Southern Baptists proudly maintained their congregational church government, the MECS kept the Episcopal style of church government that had long been part of Methodist polity.

The MECS inherited its organizational structure from the Methodist Episcopal Church, having split from the northern branch in 1844. The same years that brought about the split among American Baptists over the issue of slavery, a schism among Methodists occurred over the same issue. The Methodist Bishop James A. Andrew married a woman who owned slaves, and thus became a slave owner himself according to the laws of the day. Northern delegates to

the Methodist General Conference objected to the idea of having a slaveholding bishop in the church, while Southerners felt that if Andrew were forced to resign the bishopric or manumit his slaves, all slave owners would leave the church. In 1844, then, the Methodist Episcopal Church, South (MECS) was founded as a separate denomination. This split, though painful to many in the church, did not negatively affect membership totals, and by the time the American Civil War broke out sixteen years later, the MECS had 749,068 members and attendees – a number that included over 207,000 African Americans – and almost 8,000 additional pastors (both itinerant and settled).<sup>1</sup>

By the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century, the MECS had a powerful presence throughout Mississippi, Alabama, and Georgia. The denomination was a highly organized church composed of lay members as well as settled pastors, traveling (or itinerant) ministers, regular preachers, and bishops. Each group of individuals held separate responsibilities within the church.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, the MECS organized territorial boundaries in order for church officials to better care for the laity. Similar to the organization of MECS church officers, these geographic territories ranged in size and responsibilities. In other words, bishops were in charge of large conferences that were often statewide, and assigned pastors to specific, relatively small, districts within those conferences.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> For an account by a Southern pastor mourning the schism, see John Griffing Jones, “A Brief Autobiography of J.G. Jones and J.A. Jones written for their children,” Vol. II, 80-81, John G. Jones papers MS10, J. B. Cain Archives of Mississippi Methodism, Millsaps-Wilson Library, Millsaps College, Jackson, Mississippi, (JGJ). For statistics on the denomination’s size, see Mark Noll, *America’s God: From Jonathan Edwards to Abraham Lincoln*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 169.

<sup>2</sup> See chapter 3, “Ministers and Church Officers” in Tigert, ed., *Discipline*, 48-88.

<sup>3</sup> *Minutes of the Annual Conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South* for the year 1886, (Nashville: Southern Methodist Publishing House, 1887), 119-120.

Despite the incredible organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, the denomination deliberately allowed a wide breadth of theology at the turn of the century in the Deep South. One writer boldly declared, “There are really no distinctively Methodist doctrines.... There is not a single doctrine held by us as a Church that is not held by some other Church.”<sup>4</sup> Instead, they believed that Methodist system of overlapping geographical boundaries and highly organized church government was not for spreading particular doctrines or ideas, but for the purpose of preaching the message of Jesus and converting people to Christianity. Indeed, each time that MECS church officials met together, districts and conferences were expected to report on the numbers of new converts and new members.<sup>5</sup> In fact, so important to MECS polity and practice was the idea of conversion that Bishop Charles Galloway claimed that the idea “Ye must be born again” was the premier doctrine of the church.<sup>6</sup> Similarly, Alabamian pastor James Madison Crews told his congregants, “The doctrine of regeneration is the most important in all the Scripture.... Without it the Bible would be unintelligible.”<sup>7</sup> While conversion was an incredibly important part of both Baptist and Holiness theology, neither of the other groups elevated it to such a level as the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. This focus on conversion to Christianity in the MECS led to a heightened focus on the person of Jesus and his example as the perfect man.

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<sup>4</sup> H. Walter Featherstun, *What We Protest Against: Epworth League Institute Booklet No. 5*, (Nashville: Publishing House of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, n.d. circa 1910), 3.

<sup>5</sup> For an example, see the numbers of the North Georgia Conference in *Minutes of the Annual Conferences*, 141-142.

<sup>6</sup> Charles B. Galloway, “Christian Experience: Its Supreme Value and Crowning Evidence,” *The Methodist Times*, 5 September 1901, 644.

<sup>7</sup> James Madison Crews, “Regeneration,” n.d. circa 1885, n.p. Box 56, (JMC).

**CHAPTER THREE:**  
**METHODIST MEN AS AFFECTIONATE WARRIORS**

*Onward, Christian soldiers,  
Marching as to war,  
With the cross of Jesus  
Going on before:  
Christ the royal Master  
Leads against the foe;  
Forward into battle,  
See, his banners go.*

- Sabine Baring-Gould  
(1905 Version)

*O Love divine, what hast thou done!  
The incarnate God hath died for me!  
The Father's co-eternal Son  
Bore all my sins upon the tree!  
The Son of God for me hath died:  
My Lord, my Love is crucified.*

- Charles Wesley  
(1905 Version)

Across Mississippi, Alabama, and Georgia at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century, many officials of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South (MECS) connected their visions of manliness with the example they believed Jesus had given them. Yet, not all agreed on the model of manhood that Jesus presented. Thus, different pastors concentrated on different aspects of Jesus' personality. Many found martial imagery in the idea that Jesus claimed victory over the powers of evil, and were thus persuaded that true manliness was best exemplified by Sabine Baring-Gould's hymn "Onward Christian Soldiers."<sup>1</sup> Other pastors, though, thought the love Jesus displayed in his death for the sins of humanity offered the most

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<sup>1</sup> Sabine Baring Gould, "Onward Christian Soldiers" in *The Methodist Hymnal: Official Hymnal of the Methodist Episcopal Church and the Methodist Episcopal Church, South*, (New York: Methodist Book Concern, 1905), 383.

salient example of his personality. It would not be unlikely, then, that they would look instead to Charles Wesley's hymn, "O Love Divine" as their model of what manly affection would look like.<sup>2</sup> These two models of manliness, the victorious warrior and the affectionate savior, were each based in a specific understanding of the person of Jesus. They each offered a specific vision of manhood that Methodist officials tried to impress on their congregants.

For most officials in the MECS, a reliance on these two examples of Jesus emerged as the basis for their ideas of manliness, and each interpretation of the person of Jesus presented a defined vision of manly ideals in the minds of church leaders. There were those who saw Jesus as a warrior battling the forces of Satan, and they displayed this by using the image of the Christian soldier conquering the world for Christ as their paradigm of masculinity. This was frequently the model of masculinity that officials displayed in public. In contrast to the descriptions of masculinity within the Southern Baptist Convention that focused almost exclusively on the individual, the Methodist idea of Jesus as the leader of God's army was one that could be used to foster both individual and communal identities in the MECS. On the one hand, it allowed officials to tell their parishioners about individual Christian warriors who heroically battled sin. Yet, at the same time, this model gave officials the space to highlight the ways that they wanted Methodist men might view themselves as Christian soldiers, part of a grand army of the Lord.

Sometimes denominational leaders also reinforced this communal image through the second interpretation of Jesus's example. In this interpretation, Jesus was a tender shepherd who loved and cared for his followers. Following this model, preachers and pastors tried to persuade Methodist men to live out the ideas of manly affection in their families in order to woo

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<sup>2</sup> Charles Wesley, "O Love Divine" in *The Methodist Hymnal*, 153.

others to the heart of Jesus. MECS leaders encouraged this model of manhood; yet for many of these same leaders, this type of manliness was most frequently displayed within the confines of family life. Historians have often noted that different types of masculinity seem to prevail in different spaces, sometimes suggesting that the public/private distinction also denoted the differences between sacred and profane interpretations of manhood. Ted Ownby's study of the connections between religion and manly recreation in the New South is particularly helpful in showing how different geographic spaces were cordoned off from various models of manhood.<sup>3</sup> However, unlike previous historians have suggested, it was clear that MECS officials throughout the Deep South consciously connected disparate models of manliness to their religious ideals. Though they did display different types of masculinity in their home and public lives, Methodist leaders believed both visions of manhood were based on sacred ideals. Officials in the MECS consistently tried to tell their congregants that every aspect of their lives was sacred. Thus for the leaders themselves, both public and private expressions of masculinity were infused with the idea that they were fulfilling a holy calling. Whether preachers and pastors tried to conquer hearts or woo them to the tender shepherd depended on how they understood the example set by Jesus; yet, officials founded both on this divine model.

### **Onward Methodist Soldiers**

One prominent way that officials tied together the importance of Jesus' model of godly living and masculinity was through a rejection of secular amusements. Methodist leaders viewed many of these activities as dangerous pitfalls and traps that would lead congregants away from the Jesus, and repeatedly tried to warn their parishioners about the dangers of secular recreation.

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<sup>3</sup> See Ted Ownby's *Subduing Satan: Religion, Recreation, and Manhood in the Rural South, 1865-1920*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1990).

The 1902 edition of the MECS book of standards, *The Doctrines and Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South*, made this point clear as it continued a decade-long tradition of including an “Address on Worldly Amusements” in its appendix. In this address, the bishops of the church argued that pastimes such as theatre-going, card playing, race-track attendance, and modern dance corrupted true worship, and must be guarded against because of the “peril which they bring to the souls of men.” The bishops worried that these pastimes, in their “multiplied and insidious forms are a source of perpetual temptation and damage” to followers of Jesus.<sup>4</sup> In other words, the pastors did not think that these were small distractions that could be left up to the individual’s conscience; rather, they were weapons of violence that evil used to keep people from the church. In fact, according to one pastor, so serious was the threat of dancing to the people of God that those who encouraged or simply tolerated it would stand before God with their “skirts bloody with the blood of your children and friends” who have lost their faith through such amusements.<sup>5</sup>

Such martial language was not unique to the MECS during this time. For example, at the ecumenical International Sunday School Convention, the program schedule listed not only the various events of the day, but at the top of each page, participants could find inspiring quotes and relevant passages of Scripture. When the convention was held in Atlanta in 1899, one of the quotes reminded attendees, “The church is not organized for comfort but for conquest.”<sup>6</sup> Though the Sunday School convention contained panels on proper lesson planning, grading, and

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<sup>4</sup> Jno. J. Tigert, ed., *The Doctrines and Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South*, (Nashville, The Publishing House of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, 1902), 347.

<sup>5</sup> James Madison Crews, “Dancing,” n.p., August 1884, in Sermon Book, Box 56, JMC.

<sup>6</sup> Ninth International Sunday School Convention program, n.p., April 26-30, 1899, in Box 3, Asa Griggs Candler Papers, Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library, Emory University, Atlanta, Georgia, (AGCP).

classroom management, it was clear that participants should remember that they engaged the enemy as they sought to conquer the world for Christ. The idea that the manly church was not meant for comfort also hinted at the notion that the church was not meant to replicate home life; an area that was thought to have feminine connotations. Though the conference program never attributed the quote, it is entirely possible that it was a reaction against the idea that religion somehow “feminized” its adherents, or that Christianity was a religion for women – not active and aggressive men.<sup>7</sup> Additionally, this quote had particular resonance as the U.S. Senate had only ratified the treaty ending the Spanish-American War a few months earlier in Washington, and there was still fighting going on in the Philippines.<sup>8</sup> Though the delegates to the International Sunday School Convention were clearly not involved in the fighting themselves, they could still appropriate a martial image by encouraging a martial vision of Christianity.

As hinted at by the International Sunday School Convention, the American South was not the only place where the ideal of the martial Christianity came up. The Church Militant had long been a term used to signify the spiritual warfare in which Christians believed they were engaged. This term can clearly be seen in Christian practice dating back several centuries before the MECS. For instance, in 1662, the Church of England, in *The Book of Common Prayer*, instructed priests to make the sign of the cross over newly baptized infants and proclaim that the sign was a token that the children would not be afraid to “manfully fight vnder his Banner,

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<sup>7</sup> For more on the idea of Christianity as a “feminizing” force in American life, see Ann Douglass, *The Feminization of American Culture*, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1977).

<sup>8</sup> For more on the Spanish-American and Philippine-American wars and their influence on gender in the United States, see Kristin L. Hoganson, *Fighting for American Manhood: How Gender Politics Provoked the Spanish-American and Philippine-American Wars*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998); and Matthew Frye Jacobson, *Barbarian Virtues: The United States Encounters Foreign Peoples at Home and Abroad, 1876-1917*, (New York: Hill and Wang, 2000).

against sin, the world, the devil, continue Christs faithful souldier, and servant vnto his lives end. [sic]<sup>9</sup> Clearly, spiritual warfare was a serious issue for those believers, who felt that even infants should be part of the church's conquering army.

At the end of the nineteenth century, in the Deep South, such language increased importance with the loss of the Confederacy in the American Civil War. Historian Charles Reagan Wilson has documented how Lost Cause mythology built upon religious language. The mixture of Christian theology with Confederate desires led to a unique understanding of the reasons for the Civil War – and the South's defeat. Numerous religious and political leaders claimed that the reason for war had been not simply to provide examples for the continuing crusade against evil, but in fact, to purify Southern society through the shed blood of its soldiers.<sup>10</sup> While the Confederate armies did win on the field of battle, the use of such religious language to explain the defeat of the Confederate States of America provided the South with a more important victory – one that give them virtue and purity in the spiritual realm. Thus, the language of spiritual warfare allowed Southern men an outlet for their valor in battle that would end with victory assured by God rather than defeat at the hands of the enemy.

One of the MECS' most well-known bishops and one of the most popular religious proponents of the Lost Cause in the beginning of the twentieth century, Charles Galloway of Mississippi, certainly felt that the church must remember its victorious, conquering mission.<sup>11</sup> In a speech on the progress of the Twentieth Century Fund (a fund-drive for MECS educational

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<sup>9</sup> The Book of Common Prayer from the Original Manuscript Attached to the Act of Uniformity of 1662, and now Preserved in the House of Lords, (London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1892), 264.

<sup>10</sup> Charles Reagan Wilson, *Baptized in Blood: The Religion of the Lost Cause, 1865-1920*, (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1980) 36-57; especially 44.

<sup>11</sup> See Wilson, *Baptized in Blood*, 109 for more on Galloway and Lost Cause mythology.

facilities), he described to his audience how “The martial spirit [was] the native air of Methodism.” Galloway’s picture of the church was not a vision of elderly women quietly supporting an itinerant minister. Nor was Galloway’s idea of Christianity of a quiet faith opposed to the rough-and-tumble world. Rather, he incorporated hyper-masculine imagery into his vision of the Christian church, and told those gathered before him that he envisioned an army of bold Christian men who loved “the notes of the bugle – the intrepid movement of a flying column – the fearless charge upon an entrenched foe.” In short, the Mississippian saw the MECS engaged in a war in which an invigorated, masculine clergy led the charge against the powers of evil in the world.<sup>12</sup>

Galloway’s views on the mission of the church, as well as the imagery of the many crusading warriors within it, would have gathered a large following because of his position in the bishopric. The MECS’ episcopal style of church government (meaning that the church was organized by bishops who placed pastors and evangelists in specific districts), as well as its long-running and influential publishing house, would have ensured that Galloway’s message reached many readers.<sup>13</sup> Many of his readers in the South at the end of the nineteenth century would have also approved of Galloway’s message because of the ways in which the bishop frequently espoused Lost Cause sentiments. In fact, Galloway was one of the most foremost clerical supporters and propagators of Lost Cause ideology from 1900 until his death in 1909.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Charles B. Galloway, “Progress of the Twentieth Century Fund,” *Christian Advocate*, 6 April 1899, 9.

<sup>13</sup> For a brief comparison of Baptist (congregational) and Methodist (episcopal) styles of church government and the resultant ways in which organizations were able to thrive in the two denominations, see Anne Firor Scott, *Making the Invisible Woman Visible*, (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1984), 200-203.

<sup>14</sup> For more on this point, see Wilson’s *Baptized in Blood*, 109.

According to Galloway, however, it was not the Lost Cause's vision of the Old South, nor the sacrificial service of Confederate soldiers, but Methodism itself that supplied weapons for the fight against evil. He told his listeners that the MECS was "not a museum for mummies, but [was] at once an arsenal for weapons and an army to use them."<sup>15</sup> Clearly, Galloway worked hard to spread his vision of Methodism that connected theology with a distinctly martial ideal of white manliness. Even when recounting the history of the Methodists in America, the bishop used powerfully masculine imagery. He recalled that within the borders of the United States, the Methodists had functioned as a "spiritual cavalry" that moved swiftly over the fields of battle to win souls to Christ.<sup>16</sup>

At the start of the twentieth century, Galloway's vision of the Grand Army of Christ was not merely a regurgitation of Baptist notions of the individual Christian warrior or a repetition of the secular idea of the individual "hell-of-a-fellow." Rather, Galloway hoped to rearrange these notions and replace them with a vision of righteous white men working together. In order for this to happen, the bishop from Mississippi tried to convince his listeners that the men who fought these battles were not to rely on their own resources and good works. Instead, each man, and particularly each member of the clergy, was to have a "spiritual reconstruction – a perfect self-surrender to the will and work of our Lord."<sup>17</sup> Elsewhere, Galloway counseled that an aggressive clergy, one that would turn the world upside down, must stand on faith. He was not content with devotion that gave way at the first sign of opposition. For Galloway, "Men of might and majesty believe strongly. Heroes stand for something. Faith is the fibre of a

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<sup>15</sup> Charles B. Galloway, "Methodism of Tomorrow: An Address Delivered by Bishop Galloway," 11 January 1904, 2, in Box 3, AGCP.

<sup>16</sup> Galloway, "Methodism of Tomorrow," 3.

<sup>17</sup> Galloway, "Twentieth Century Fund," 9.

conqueror.”<sup>18</sup> In Galloway’s eyes, Methodism was not opposed to aggressive masculine culture, nor was it a calm, quiet, domesticated faith.<sup>19</sup> Rather, it was one that would challenge men to be more masculine – to exert their manhood and become conquerors for Christ. Yet Galloway did not propose that martial Methodist men should set out on their own; they must bow their personal wills to that of God, similar to how each soldier in an army would bow to his personal desires to the will of his commander.

The martial imagery that Galloway and other MECS officials presented certainly spoke to the idea that one prominent mode of white southern masculinity at the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth century was through the presentation of a warrior image.<sup>20</sup> The use of this warrior imagery allowed a presentation of manhood that could focus on either individual or communal masculinity, rather than the image of the individual, masterful manhood that the Southern Baptists emphasized.<sup>21</sup> For example, Galloway’s visions of the “flying column” and “spiritual cavalry” evoked a communal manhood in which individual preference became secondary to the needs of the whole. Individual identity was subsumed by that of the group. When promoting a communal vision of masculinity, no longer were these Methodist men mere individuals striking

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<sup>18</sup> Galloway, “Christian Experience,” 644.

<sup>19</sup> See Ted Ownby, *Subduing Satan: Religion, Recreation, and Manhood in the Rural South, 1865-1920*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1990) for more on the idea that Evangelical Christianity was opposed to rough-and-tumble masculine culture; and Ann Douglass, *The Feminization of American Culture*, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1977) for the idea of Christianity as a domesticated faith.

<sup>20</sup> Craig Thompson Friend, “From Southern Manhood to Southern Masculinities: An Introduction,” in *Southern Masculinity: Perspectives on Manhood in the South Since Reconstruction*, Craig Thompson Friend, ed., (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2009), xi-xii.

<sup>21</sup> For further examples of the ways in which communal and individual masculinity was used in the American south at this time, see Joe Creech, “The Price of Eternal Honor: Independent White Christian Manhood in the Late Nineteenth-Century South,” in *Southern Masculinity*, 25-45.

out on their own. Rather, they were part of Christ's brigade, and sought to win the world for their king. Martial imagery did not just present a communal identity, though. It allowed for individual manhood to be encouraged at the same time it promoted community. Again, turning to Galloway, one can see that he tried to encourage individual men not to think that they could simply let others take all the responsibilities of fighting evil. Instead, Galloway promoted the need for individuals to have a strong faith in his 1901 address and article on Christian experience. After all, Galloway wrote, "Heroes stand for something."<sup>22</sup> Heroes were those who stood apart from or above their community. They were individuals with their own agenda, preferences, and identity. The ideal Christian soldier marching as to war could then be perceived either as an individual hero or part of a large community. In this way, the Christianized martial masculinity of the MECS allowed for both of these paradigms of manhood to work in conjunction with each other.

The militarized paradigm was also one that many Methodists would have understood to be an exclusively white ideal. In the turn-of-the-century South, it would be dangerous for African-American men to foster a martial image that could suggest they were out of "place."<sup>23</sup> Across the South, whites had a complicated way of interpreting the image of African Americans in uniform, and they frequently tried to argue that "dressing up" black men in uniform only served as a demonstration of the absurd.<sup>24</sup> Yet, donning martial uniforms was one way in which

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<sup>22</sup> Galloway, "Christian Experience," 644.

<sup>23</sup> For more on the ways in which images of African-American soldiers began to work into black culture, see Andrew Amron's "From Soldier to Street Corner: Martial Imagery in Working Class Black Culture during the World War I Era," Ph.D. Dissertation in Progress, University of Alabama, Anticipated Defense Spring 2013.

<sup>24</sup> For more on how this happened in North Carolina, see Glenda Gilmore, *Gender and Jim Crow: Women and the Politics of White Supremacy in North Carolina, 1896-1920*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), 78-82.

African American men fought back against the many dehumanizing aspects of white supremacy. Whether wearing the uniform of the U.S. military or one of the many fraternal orders in the South, taking on the image of the warrior was a powerful, and dangerous, way to demonstrate manliness for black men.<sup>25</sup> The danger that accompanied this statement of African-American manhood was very real. Only a year after the end of the First World War, the *Chicago Defender* recorded that a group of whites lynched a young black veteran in Blakely, Georgia, for refusing to take off his military uniform.<sup>26</sup> Seeing black men appropriate a militaristic identity was a frightening thought for whites, one so powerful that whites were willing to kill in order to erase that image.

The warrior image was so powerful even for whites that prominent MECS lay members sometimes got involved in organizations that heightened this projection of themselves. Asa Griggs Candler, one of the founders of Coca-Cola and brother of Georgia MECS bishop Warren Candler, was a member of the Armory Governor's Horse Guard in Atlanta, and for a time was even an officer.<sup>27</sup> **Figure 4 (next page)** shows a picture of a glass slide that portrayed Candler as a colonel about to address a Sunday School class.<sup>28</sup> This presentation of Candler's masculinity fit both the communal and individual molds. He was the sole speaker addressing the class for the day, and presented himself as an individual officer (and a relatively high-ranking one at that). However, the fact that he was coming dressed as an officer in uniform also signified that he was

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<sup>25</sup> For more on the uniforms and martial parades of African-American fraternal order, see John Giggie, *After Redemption: Jim Crow and the Transformation of African American Religion in the Delta, 1875-1915*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 70-73.

<sup>26</sup> "Negro Veteran Lynched for Refusing to Doff Uniform," *Chicago Defender*, 5 April 1919, quoted in Ralph Ginzburg, *100 Years of Lynching*, (Baltimore: Black Classic Press, 1962), 118.

<sup>27</sup> "Notice of Appointment," in Box 3, AGCP.

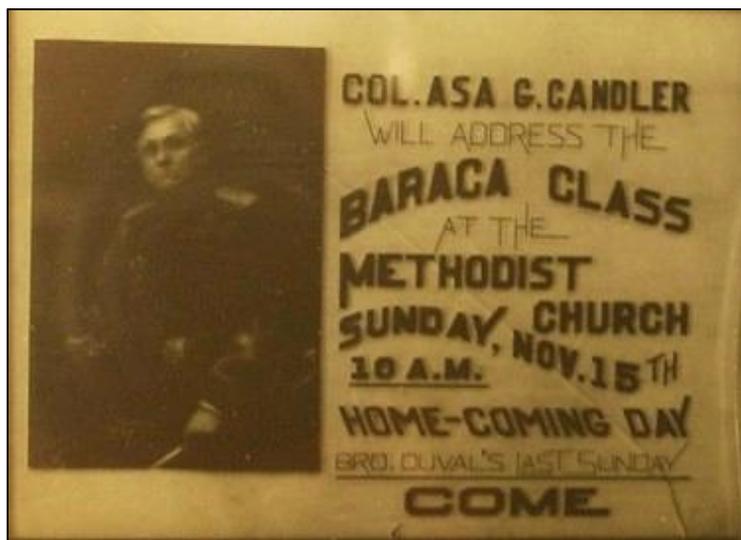
<sup>28</sup> Glass Slide in Box 15, AGCP.

a part of a larger community; a community in which he submitted his own preference, even on things as seemingly insignificant as clothing choice, for the sake of group identity and cohesion.

Candler's martial image worked well with the interpretation of the Christian warrior that many MECS officials tried to present to their congregants. In order to keep their Christian soldiers in line, various officials reiterated the idea that they were fighting for a cause greater than themselves, and must follow

**Figure 4**

the orders of their commander – Jesus. Bishop Galloway of Mississippi even reminded ministers that they required “a perfect self-surrender to the will and work of our Lord” and that that was the only way in which they would have the “victory which will overcome the



world.”<sup>29</sup> The “self-surrender” that Galloway talked about meant that men had to develop their character in order to better serve their commander. In fact, both Candler and Galloway, and a host of other Methodist Episcopal Church, South officials in the Deep South at the turn of the century, were just as concerned about trying to develop appropriate character in male parishioners as they were about presenting a martial masculine image. The language of character development became another way in which theology interacted with class ideals and gender construction within martial Christian masculinity.

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<sup>29</sup> Galloway, “Twentieth Century Fund,” 9.

## Manly Methodist Character

At the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century, Georgia businessman Asa Candler, one of the prime examples of New South leaders, felt comfortable portraying his own manhood through martial imagery, as demonstrated in the image above. However, Candler also wrote letters to his family, and in particular to his sons, dispensing patriarchal advice. This was not unusual during the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century. In fact, historian Sean Scott documents the ways that fathers in the North during the Civil War sent letters to their sons urging their children to develop moral character in the midst of war.<sup>30</sup> Though Candler was not unique in dispensing fatherly advice, he continuously exhorted his sons to develop their character and become “honorable, good, wise men.”<sup>31</sup> As he encouraged his sons to mature to “perfect manhood,” Asa Candler had specific qualities that he thought embodied this ideal.<sup>32</sup>

In his letters, Candler repeatedly mentioned that he prayed for virtue as he exerted his patriarchal influence on his family.<sup>33</sup> Beyond a simple desire to influence his family in a positive manner, Candler repeatedly extolled his sons to develop virtue. In one letter written in 1894, he told his college-age sons that they were to respect their Uncle Warren (both sons were at Emory College when Warren Candler was president there before being elected to the bishopric), and learn to practice habits of integrity in private.<sup>34</sup> While Asa Candler did not elaborate as to what

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<sup>30</sup> Scott, *Visitation of God*, 139-140.

<sup>31</sup> Asa Griggs Candler to Charles Howard Candler, 21 February 1896, Box 1, AGCP.

<sup>32</sup> Asa Griggs Candler to Asa Griggs Candler, Jr., 30 April 1900, Box 1, AGCP.

<sup>33</sup> AGC to Warren Candler, 20 July 1904, Box 1 AGCP; AGC to “My Dear Man,” 24 November 1914, Box 1, AGCP.

<sup>34</sup> AGC to “My Dear Son,” 11 October 1894, Box 1, AGCP.

exactly those habits meant, he certainly believed that his sons should live out their faith in daily activities.<sup>35</sup> Candler even conflated one of his sons' masculinity and religiosity in one letter, telling him that the family still worried about his (the son's) success in school, but what mattered most was that he needed to "be a Christian, be a man."<sup>36</sup> Methodist officials would be pleased to see that their connection of religious belief to gendered ideals had struck a chord in one of Georgia's most influential members of the laity. According to one of the founders of Coca-Cola, it would be impossible to reach true manhood without Christian belief. Yet, a foundation in faith was not the only part of manliness that the Georgia businessman tried to impart to his sons. Another part of Candler's idea of manly character traits was that his sons should go forward through life confident and steadfast, not being consumed by the latest fashions or swayed by the changing ideas of what was popular.<sup>37</sup> As an example of his aversion to fads, Candler even advised his oldest son Howard not to get an automobile for the New York Coca-Cola office as they were merely a trend whose novelty would soon pass.<sup>38</sup> The New South businessman may not have always had the most accurate ideas of cultural trends; yet, he greatly admired those who he knew he could rely on. In one letter to Bishop Warren Candler, Candler praised his brother for his unwavering sense of purpose, going so far as to state that his brother was his pillar of strength.<sup>39</sup> For Georgia businessman Asa Candler, being a man meant having a steadfast purpose that would reflect his faith and commitment to God.

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<sup>35</sup> AGC to "My Dear Son," 3 November 1894, Box 1, AGCP.

<sup>36</sup> AGC to "My Dear Son," 24 September 1894, Box 1, AGCP (emphasis in original).

<sup>37</sup> AGC to "My Dear Son," 8 January 1900 or 1901, Box 1, AGCP.

<sup>38</sup> AGC to Charles Howard Candler, 29 May 1902, Box 1, AGCP.

<sup>39</sup> AGC to Warren Candler, 11 May 1906, Box 1, AGCP.

While Candler consistently wrote to his sons about “developing into good – perfect manhood” at the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth century, he was by no means the only Methodist who was concerned about developing manly character.<sup>40</sup> MECS pastors frequently spoke about the proper character of Christian men from their pulpits, something that was rare in Baptist congregations as they tended to focus on the eternal while Methodists were more concerned about living in the here and now. The tension between an otherworldly and a “here and now” perspective was not unique to the differences between the SBC and the MECS. Historian and religious scholar Grant Wacker documents that this tension was a significant part of the Pentecostal movement’s success in the early part of the twentieth century. While Wacker’s study does not concentrate on this tension in the Deep South, it is clear that there were similar ideas current throughout Mississippi, Alabama, and Georgia, and that different denominations leaned took different approaches in resolving this tension. For leaders in the Methodist Episcopal Church, South at the turn of the century, the emphasis on building character was a clear sign that they leaned heavily towards trying to persuade individual congregants how to live in their communities and the world. Thus, manly character was another way that Methodist men displayed both the individual and communal traits of manhood.

Building character was a personal endeavor; yet the results of this character building could only be displayed within the context of community – and particularly a community of a particular class status. Methodist men could thus blend ideas of both individual models of masculinity with communal ideals of manhood through the trope of character. Thus, Methodist ideas of manliness, while still having an individual component contrasted with Baptist models that focused solely on the individual. This also combined with the particular language of class

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<sup>40</sup> Asa Griggs Candler to Asa Griggs Candler, Jr., 30 April 1900, Box 1, AGCP.

current at the time. Middle- and upper-class white men frequently used the tropes of both character and civilization as markers of true manhood.<sup>41</sup> Using such language could enable them to differentiate themselves from working-class white men, thus claiming a higher level of manhood while still affirming a common masculinity. Historian Gail Bederman writes, “middle-class parents taught their sons to build a strong, manly ‘character’ as they would build a muscle.... By gaining the manly strength to control himself, a man gained the authority, as well as the duty, to protect and direct those less manly than himself – whether his wife, his children, his employees, or his racial ‘inferiors.’”<sup>42</sup> This was exactly what Chandler encouraged his sons to do. Clearly, character, as an important part of middle- and upper-class manhood, balanced both the individual aspect of person control over impulses with power and authority over others.

The tension between individual and communal models of manhood could be seen in one of Alabamian James Madison Crews’ sermons from the end of nineteenth century. In it, Crews talked about devoting oneself to God, suggesting to his parishioners that the men and women the Church needed and desired were those “who [were] willing to do or suffer anything for it.”<sup>43</sup> Similarly, the itinerant minister Barney Lewis repeatedly preached a sermon entitled “The Search for a Man” during the early years of the twentieth century throughout rural Mississippi.<sup>44</sup> In this sermon, Lewis told his parishioners that God looked for a man who could answer to His

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<sup>41</sup> For more on the discourse of civilization, see Bederman, *Manliness & Civilization*, 31-41, 48.

<sup>42</sup> Bederman, *Manliness & Civilization*, 48.

<sup>43</sup> James Madison Crews, “Consecration to the Service of God,” n.p., circa 1884, Sermon Book, Box 56, JMC.

<sup>44</sup> Lewis gave this sermon thirty times between June 1912 and July 1927. Barney Washington Lewis, “The Search for a Man,” 9 June 1912, Folder 2, BWL.

“ideal of manly perfection.”<sup>45</sup> The minister then traced some of the answers that he believed defined a “true man.” Clothes, money, and physical beauty were all on Lewis’ list of false manliness.<sup>46</sup> Instead, Lewis said that “Deeds and words reveal the man,” and that “The real man is one who seeks to know the truth and do the right” all the while being aware of heaven and his future place in it.<sup>47</sup> The minister wanted to convince the laity in his church that true manhood did not come from the adulation of the culture of the world. Instead, Lewis argued that it came from a singular focus on accomplishing the will of God. Lewis then hinted that this might lead to opposition from some, as he asked the men in his hearing to keep their focus on their future place in heaven rather than their current circumstances. The heavenly focus that Lewis encouraged in his congregation was different from many other Methodist leaders, who were frequently more concerned about how to live Christian lives on earth than their Baptist brethren who were more often worried about ethereal issues. Nevertheless, for both Crews and Lewis, manliness could be an individual ideal that was fulfilled within the context of community.

James Osgood Andrew Clark, a pastor from Georgia, also preached about what it meant to be a real man in the New South. According to one of his sermons, “delight in the law of the Lord” signified true manhood.<sup>48</sup> While numerous Methodist ministers described the ideal man in their sermons, these pastors did not suggest to their congregations that any man would be able to fulfill such high ideals on his own. Similar to Bishop Galloway’s statement that Methodist men must bow their will to God’s, many pastors told their congregations that though each individual

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<sup>45</sup> Lewis, “Search for a Man,” 1, BWL.

<sup>46</sup> Lewis, “Search for a Man,” 3-5, BWL.

<sup>47</sup> Lewis, “Search for a Man,” 6, 3, BWL.

<sup>48</sup> James Osgood Andrew Clark, “They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength,” n.d., 11, Box 3, JOAC.

man must make the first step, but then God would enable them to do that which they could not, and would provide the strength to resist temptation; thus, it would be only through divine help that they would master sin and become ideal men.<sup>49</sup>

While most Methodists would not ascribe to the idea that they could ever entirely be without sin in this lifetime, the language of mastery over sin helped link Christianized masculinity to Southern manhood. One way that this occurred during the post-Reconstruction era was through the argument that chattel slavery and submission to an earthly master had made African-American slaves more willing to submit to the will and mastery of God, and thus the lack of an earthly master led to spiritual chaos in the African-American churches. The mirror of this argument about African-American spirituality was the idea that spiritual mastery over sin could replace the temporal mastery that white Southern men lost after the demise of chattel slavery.<sup>50</sup> While these models of temporal mastery relied on racial identity, Methodist leaders thought that spiritual mastery could only be achieved by acknowledging one's own limitations and leaning on the supernatural power of God, the ultimate master of the universe.

Once again, manhood, as defined by Methodist leaders across Mississippi, Alabama, and Georgia at the turn of the century, was a quality that could be achieved – but not alone. Instead, the “real man” was the one that recognized his limitations and submitted to God's will. Mississippian Lewis explicitly told his congregants that it would only be in this way that men could attain the strength necessary to live as they should; that is, by focusing their attention on heaven. Similarly, Clark offered his Georgia congregation the Biblical example of Shadrach,

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<sup>49</sup> Barney Washington Lewis, “The Wise Men Worship Christ,” 16 February 1914, 3, BWL; and Clark, “They that wait,” 3-5, JOAC.

<sup>50</sup> For more on the argument about African-American spirituality, see Charles Reagan Wilson, *Baptized in Blood*, 103.

Meshach and Abednego. In the Bible, the Israelite captives refused to bow down to the Babylonian King Nebuchadnezzar's idol, though they knew that the consequence was to be thrown into a furnace. The Bible recorded that though the men were thrown into the fire, they were not harmed.<sup>51</sup> Clark used the story of these young men as examples of faithful men who submitted their lives to honoring God, and God responded by delivering them from being consumed by fire.<sup>52</sup> The example of these three young Israelites demonstrated the limitations of human power while at the same time inferring that manliness meant being willing to sacrifice one's own life for a cause or belief. Thus, Clark tried to persuade his congregants that true masculinity was only available to those who were willing to live out their ideals, acknowledge their own limitations, and call on a higher power for help in times of need.

One minister who frequently acknowledged his own limitations in letters to his wife was the pastor Isaac D. Borders. Borders began his ministry in Mississippi, and then moved out to California with his wife and children. Eventually, Borders moved back to Mississippi and for five months, Borders and his wife were apart as she and the children stayed in California. During this time, the two corresponded every few days, and though only Isaac's letters survived, they provide an interesting glimpse into the intimate family life of an MECS pastor.

In one of the first letters, penned at the end of November, 1912, Borders admitted to his wife that he was unsure whether to resume the life of an itinerant minister in the Mississippi Conference or not and desired to have her candid opinion. However, he said that he would take full responsibility for whatever decision was reached and would never blame her for her opinion either way. He ended his thoughts on the matter by saying that in taking full responsibility, he

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<sup>51</sup> See Daniel chapter 3, Holy Bible.

<sup>52</sup> James Osgood Andrew Clark, "Shadrack, Meshack, and Abed-Nego," n.d., 5, Box 4, JOAC.

would “try all the harder to be a man!”<sup>53</sup> Borders was one of the rare MECS officials who ever even hinted at doubts about his own masculinity. Here, he seemed to suggest that he had not yet fully become a man in his own estimation; yet, for Borders, manhood was not achieved in a vacuum. Men were part of families and so Borders believed that they should take into consideration the opinions of their loved ones in making decisions. However, the ultimate responsibility was on the man for the outcome of those decisions. Borders’ expression of manliness here demonstrated his attempts to continue a patriarchal model even when he was separated geographically from his family as he tried to show that he was careful to account for the feelings of those under his care. In the next epistle he sent from Mississippi to his wife in California, Borders talked about the fact that he realized that there would be goals and accomplishments that he would not achieve in this life – and yet he desired to be a changed man and reorient his priorities *for the sake of his wife*.<sup>54</sup> Borders continued this admission of his own limitations and, talking about Jesus, cried, “I am so weak – so pitiably weak and helpless, so lonely and so sinful, without Him!”<sup>55</sup> Once again, it was only through the supernatural that manhood could be truly found.

The longer that Borders and his wife were apart, however, the more despondent he became, and the more he doubted his call to be a minister in the MECS. At a low point in February of 1913, Borders broke down and wondered why he ever became an itinerant Methodist minister, complaining, “God never made me to be that contemptible, pale-blooded, near-man, a conventional, itinerant Methodist parson.” This was one of the few times when a

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<sup>53</sup> Isaac D. Borders to “My Beloved,” 26 November 1912, 14, IDB.

<sup>54</sup> Isaac D. Borders to “My Well Beloved Wife,” 13 December 1912, 2, IDB.

<sup>55</sup> Borders, 13 December 1912, 4, IDB.

pastor seemed to suggest that a life of religious duty was actually less manly than other jobs. Indeed, Borders' statements implied that those who were itinerant Methodist pastors imperiled their own masculinity. Despite his obvious dislike for his current station in life, Borders prayed that he would do his duty in Aberdeen, Mississippi "fearlessly, firmly, faithfully [and] fully."<sup>56</sup> His dislike of pastoral duties seemed even more clear as he told his wife that before he took up this position, he used to have "the manhood and the spunk" to pursue God, and was once close to the kingdom of heaven. While Borders thought that he had moved away from the kingdom of God and lost some of the "manhood and spunk" he had earlier in life, he thought that God still had things to teach him; and so he would try to be a "brave, stout-hearted, dutiful, patient, manly fellow."<sup>57</sup> Though Borders was clearly suffering from doubt about his calling as a pastor and his own manliness, there were still characteristics that he believed exemplified manhood. Strength and bravery, in particular, were traits Borders valued; and yet, he ascribed to the idea that these were not inherent characteristics. Rather, these were things that Borders prayed for repeatedly in the hope that God would grant them to him.<sup>58</sup> In fact, his theology led him to believe that God could enhance his own manliness. Yet, despite his position as a pastor, perhaps even because of it, Borders did not believe that being part of the clergy equated to having spiritual manhood. As noted above, it was clear that Borders actually looked down on MECS itinerants, and struggled with doubts about his own manhood even though he thought that being a minister was the only way he would learn the lessons God had for him.

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<sup>56</sup> Isaac D. Borders to "My very tenderly beloved sweetheart," 8 February 1913, 12, IDB.

<sup>57</sup> Borders, 8 February 1913, 13, IDB.

<sup>58</sup> For more on Borders desire that God would grant him manly qualities, see Borders, 13 December 1912, 4; Borders, 8 February 1913, 13; and Isaac D. Borders to "My Precious Sweetheart Wife," 18 December 1912, 4, IDB.

James Hamilton Baxter of Georgia also worried about the lessons God had for his people and frequently preached about the ways that God instilled character. In Baxter's sermons, he emphasized "that the present life is the schooling period of our existence."<sup>59</sup> Baxter told his parishioners, "the object of this present life is to develop character," and all of life's trials had this one great purpose.<sup>60</sup> In another sermon in 1882, Baxter even proclaimed that the purpose of the church was to "help men make holy character."<sup>61</sup> Thus, Baxter envisioned one more way that the idea of character development joined together gendered and theological constructs. He argued that one could not have true character without the refining work of the church in one's life. Baxter blended both individual and communal aspects of manhood here. Manliness itself was still an individual attainment, but the community of believers could help refine manhood. Though Baxter's language may have seemed innocuous to the lay members of his church, the belief that the church's work was to "make holy character" was a significant theological shift from Methodist orthodoxy. The 1898 MECS *Discipline* talked little about building "holy character." Instead, it noted that the Church, in its individual congregations, was to promote worship among believers, evangelize those who did not yet believe, and disciple those who came to a saving faith in Jesus (it was this last aspect into which the building of character fit).<sup>62</sup> More specifically, the church was to focus on preaching and the administration of the sacraments (the

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<sup>59</sup> James Hamilton Baxter, "The Active and the Passive in Religious Life," n.d., 3, Box 1, James Hamilton Baxter Papers, Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library, Emory University, Atlanta, Georgia, (JHB).

<sup>60</sup> Baxter, "Active and Passive," 5-6, JHB.

<sup>61</sup> James Hamilton Baxter, "The Church's Care of the Young," 31 January 1882, 5 (page added to end and re-paginated), JHB.

<sup>62</sup> Tigert, ed., *Discipline*, 233.

Methodists practiced baptism and the Lord's Supper).<sup>63</sup> Yet, the idea of a character-driven church was not unique to Baxter in the MECS during the New South era.

For many of the MECS leaders who preached on personal character, one's character was intimately intertwined with Christian manliness. Charles Galloway made this clear throughout his time in the bishopric. In a speech entitled "Inflexibility of Purpose," Galloway talked about the moral fiber of the Biblical character Daniel. According to Galloway, Daniel came from a pious family and had been reared in "sturdy virtues" that included not only the ability to see that he had a holy mission, but "infinite tact" that enabled him to remain in the court of several dynasties. All the while, Daniel kept his faith and was steadfast in his belief in God. This was pivotal for Galloway as he posited that in the obstacles and strain of daily life, "steadfastness [is] the highest test of character."<sup>64</sup> Even in a speech ostensibly about Suzanna Wesley, the mother of John and Charles Wesley, the founders of Methodism, Galloway spent almost four of twenty pages telling his audience about the virtues of Suzanna's father and his quiet strength and consistent faith.<sup>65</sup> At another time, he preached entirely on "Stability of Character," remarking that it was not only the "surest guarantee of success" but also the best "foundation for happiness."<sup>66</sup> Thus, the bishop from Mississippi argued that men could find success and exhibit their manliness through a steadfast character and devotion to a righteous cause.

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<sup>63</sup> Tigert, ed., *Discipline*, 7.

<sup>64</sup> Charles B. Galloway, "Inflexibility of Purpose," n.d., 1, Box 5, Charles B. Galloway Papers M14, J. B. Cain Archives of Mississippi Methodism, Millsaps-Wilson Library, Millsaps College, Jackson, Mississippi, (CBG).

<sup>65</sup> Charles B. Galloway, "The Mother of the Wesleys," n.d., 2-5, Box 5, CBG.

<sup>66</sup> Charles B. Galloway, "Stability of Character," n.d., Box 5, CBG.

Galloway made it clear that pure-hearted devotion to a cause could make an adult male a true man in his 1908 commencement speech, “Jefferson Davis: A Judicial Estimate,” delivered at the University of Mississippi.<sup>67</sup> Throughout this speech praising Jefferson Davis, Galloway took great pains to point out to the crowd gathered before him how his fellow Mississippian embodied the ideal Christian gentleman.<sup>68</sup> What was more remarkable, according to Galloway, was that Davis did this without ever allowing his step to have any “variableness or shadow of turning.”<sup>69</sup> The bishop praised Davis for his sense of chivalry and honor as well as his affectionate nature towards his family, while at the same time paying tribute to the man’s oratorical skills and statesmanship.<sup>70</sup>

Galloway then went even further in his praise of the former president of the Confederate States of America and extolled Davis as the “Greatest of Mississippians, the leader of our armies, the defender of our liberties, the expounder of our political creeds, the authoritative voice of our hopes and fears, the sufferer for our sins, if sins they were, and the willing martyr to our sacred cause.”<sup>71</sup> Clearly, Galloway was an admirer of Jefferson Davis; but he was more than that as well. Galloway was one of the most well known members of the clergy who helped develop and propagate the ideas of the Lost Cause throughout the South at the beginning of the twentieth

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<sup>67</sup> Charles B. Galloway, “Jefferson Davis: A Judicial Estimate,” given 3 June 1908, in *Bulletin of the University of Mississippi* VI (August 1908): 1-48.

<sup>68</sup> For more on how the idea of a Christian gentleman became an archetype in the post-war South, see Friend, “Southern Manhood to Southern Masculinities,” in *Southern Masculinity*, x-xii.

<sup>69</sup> Galloway, “Jefferson Davis,” 46.

<sup>70</sup> Galloway, “Jefferson Davis,” 36-41.

<sup>71</sup> Galloway, “Jefferson Davis,” 47.

century.<sup>72</sup> His spirited defense of Jefferson Davis was thus not merely an appraisal of someone that Galloway thought that young men should emulate. Rather, Galloway wanted to believe in a version of history in which Southern men would not lose their masculinity because of defeat on the battlefield, but where “true” manhood could find honor in fighting for a doomed cause. Galloway was not the only one attempting to reinterpret the events of the American Civil War during this time period. He may have been one of the most well known proponents of the Lost Cause, but this defense of Southern masculinity was very popular during the turn-of-the-century in the South.<sup>73</sup>

Nonetheless, Galloway’s interpretation of Jefferson Davis enabled the bishop to portray the former president of the Confederacy as having perfect manhood that fit into a Christological model. Certainly, the Methodist bishop from Mississippi was not the only religious leader to portray Davis as a Christ figure. In fact, historian Charles Reagan Wilson documents that from 1890-1920, Davis rivaled Robert E. Lee as the most revered “Southern Saint” in the pantheon of Lost Cause iconography.<sup>74</sup> Bishop Galloway’s portrayal of Davis was thus not unusual during the period, but it did offer a window into the vision of southern white Christian manliness that the Methodist leader tried to imprint upon his audience.

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<sup>72</sup> Historian Charles Reagan Wilson notes that Bishop Galloway was “perhaps the best-known Lost-Cause paternalist in the post-1900 period.” For more, see Wilson, *Baptized in Blood*, 109.

<sup>73</sup> For more on the development of the Lost Cause and its popularity, see David W. Blight, *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in American Memory*, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2001); Edward J. Blum, *Reforging the White Republic: Race, Religion, and American Nationalism, 1865-1898*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2005); Katherine Du Pre Lumpkin, *The Making of a Southerner* with a Foreword by Darlene Clark Hine, (Athens, Georgia: Brown Thrasher Books, University of Georgia Press, 1991), 111-147; Wilson, *Baptized in Blood*; and W. Scott Poole, *Never Surrender: Confederate Memory and Conservatism in the South Carolina Upcountry*, (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2004).

<sup>74</sup> Wilson, *Baptized in Blood*, 50-51.

While Galloway argued that Jefferson Davis had the martial spirit, it was equally clear that bishop thought Davis did not allow warlike emotions to rule his actions. Galloway told his listeners that even in moments of great emotion, Davis was self-controlled and honorable.<sup>75</sup> However, it was by equating Jefferson Davis with Christ that Galloway made clear some of the characteristics he believed made an ideal man. Galloway's model of ideal masculinity was clearly Jesus – his theology and conception of gender merged entirely on this point – and he posited that Jefferson Davis had virtually attained the goal of perfect manhood. Indeed, Galloway's Christological model of manhood seemed to be the paragon of honor, the epitome of selfless love for others, and a great leader in times of need. Thus, Jefferson Davis appeared as a Christ figure who gave his people a system of belief, led them to battle (remember Galloway's insistence that the "martial spirit [was] the air of Methodism"), was wounded for their transgressions, and ultimately gave his life on their behalf. This imputation of Christ's character onto Davis allowed Galloway to tell his listeners about the perfect model of manhood that combined Methodist theology with Southern cultural ideals.

Though Galloway spent a great amount of time talking about the manly ideals of others, he also talked about his own masculinity. In one speech defending the Bible's place in American society, the bishop argued against the idea that only those who produced something physical were worthy models of manhood. He told the crowd before him, "I am a non-producer but I believe that when I open the Holy Bible to the people I am doing more for them than any bank president or merchant prince can do."<sup>76</sup> When he talked about being a non-producer, Galloway tapped into the notion that manhood meant economic independence, and a complete lack of

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<sup>75</sup> Galloway, "Jefferson Davis," 30-31.

<sup>76</sup> Charles B. Galloway, "Bishop Galloway's Work," *Southern Methodist Recorder*, 2 March 1899, 4.

reliance on others to supply one's needs. Across the South at the beginning of the twentieth century, politicians like Ben Tillman of North Carolina were trying to appeal to voters by castigating those who were "non-producers," saying that they preyed on those who actually worked the land. This type of language was meant to enhance the manliness of those who worked their own fields at the expense of those who worked for wages or merely provided goods.<sup>77</sup> Though Tillman lived in North Carolina, by the time that Galloway defended his claim to a non-producing manliness in 1899, "Pitchfork Ben" was in the U.S. Senate and his speeches and political philosophy easily could have made their way into the Mississippian bishop's hands. Galloway acknowledged that the producer was one type of manliness, but asserted that there was a separate manhood, one that was greater, that helped others in their spiritual needs.

In another article from 1907, Galloway talked about his first trip to Cuba and his voyage from Key West to Havana. According to him, there were clear differences in the cultures of the two countries as travelers went "from Protestant progress to Roman effeteness." Thus, Galloway not only talked about his own masculinity, he asserted that Protestantism, in and of itself, created a more manly culture than Roman Catholicism.<sup>78</sup> The Southern bishop was not the only person to argue against Roman Catholics during this time. One of the more well-known diatribes was Josiah Strong's *Our Country: Its Possible Future and Its Present Crisis*, which listed "Romanism" as one of the eight major perils facing the United States. Strong believed this because of the idea that Roman Catholics within the United States owed their ultimate allegiance to the Roman pontiff rather than the country in which they lived.<sup>79</sup> Additionally, during the

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<sup>77</sup> Kantrowitz, *Ben Tillman*, 5, 110-111.

<sup>78</sup> Charles B. Galloway, "My First Visit to Cuba," *Christian Advocate*, 15 March 1907, 10.

<sup>79</sup> Josiah Strong, *Our Country: Its Possible Future and Its Present Crisis*, with Introduction by Austin Phelps, (New York: The American Home Missionary Society, 1885), 46-58.

1890s a number of anti-Catholic secret societies emerged in the United States. Though these groups did not have much of an influence across Mississippi, Alabama, and Georgia, the rhetoric that Roman Catholics were “disloyal adherents of a foreign potentate” still clearly had resonance in the mind of the MECS’ Bishop Charles Galloway.<sup>80</sup> Thus, Galloway was not alone in believing that while Protestantism promoted progress in the United States, the Catholic Church created a culture of crinolined creoles in Cuba. These ideas of Catholic effeminacy relied on the notion that men were the only independent entities, and according to some Protestant notions of Roman Catholic belief, Catholics depended upon the pope. This dependency thus reduced Catholic manhood in the minds of some American Protestants. Since many ideas of masculinity at the time were predicated on the ideas of independence and absolute authority over one’s own household, the relative freedom of theological expression within the MECS led Galloway to believe that he was more manly than the Roman Catholics he would meet on Cuba.

While Galloway clearly thought that his manhood superseded that of all the Roman Catholics on Cuba because of their religion, he would have also thought that his racial identity gave him a higher type of manhood than was possible for Cuban creoles.<sup>81</sup> Not only was Galloway’s own manhood thus superior to any Cuban that he would encounter on the island, but

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<sup>80</sup> For more on the anti-Catholic secret societies and rhetoric in the United States during this time, see John Higham’s *Strangers in the Land: Patterns of American Nativism, 1860-1925*, Second Edition, (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1992), 77-87.

<sup>81</sup> The ideas linking race with masculinity have been explored by historian Gail Bederman and numerous other scholars who have shown the multitudinous ways that white males linked their racial and gender identities. For examples see Gail Bederman, *Manliness and Civilization*, 77-120, 170-216; Kristin L. Hoganson, *Fighting for American Manhood: How Gender Politics Provoked the Spanish-American and Philippine-American Wars*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), 24-30; Matthew Frye Jacobson, *Barbarian Virtues: The United States Encounters Foreign Peoples at Home and Abroad, 1876-1917*, (New York: Hill and Wang, 2000), 3-4, 222-223; and Colin B. Chapell, “The Third Strand: Race, Gender, and Self-Government in the Mind of Lyman Abbott” in *Fides et Historia* 42 (Fall 2010): 27-54.

the bishop asserted that his own masculinity even superseded that of veteran sailors as the tumble of the sea failed to diminish his own steady gait. He remarked that the actual sea trip was often so rough that it “humiliates the sea legs of veteran sailors, but it did not affect the steadiness of my step.”<sup>82</sup>

Bishop Galloway was not the only MECS official who felt the need to assert his own manhood at the end of the nineteenth century. In 1883, the president of Emory College, Atticus Haygood, spoke before a crowd in Chautauqua, New York about the relationship between the North and the South after the American Civil War. Haygood talked about his current love for the Union, but also how at one time he would have died for the Confederacy. He then remarked about his pride in having done his duty and having sung the battle songs of the Confederacy almost twenty years earlier. “Nobody who has the heart of a man in him,” Haygood asserted, “will ask me to-day to be ashamed that I did sing them once.” Here, the Southern bishop proposed that though his former cause had lost the war, it did not diminish the manhood of those who were conquered. Indeed, he told his audience that it was a badge of honor that he had believed strongly enough in a cause to be willing to lay down his life for it.<sup>83</sup> Thus, Haygood thought the success of the cause did not determine the measure of the man; rather, it was the ardor of that belief that demonstrated masculinity as well as the attempt to fulfill one’s duty for that cause.

The next year, Haygood affirmed the idea that a true man would do his duty no matter how large or small. In 1884, Haygood addressed the students at Emory College in Atlanta,

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<sup>82</sup> Galloway, “My First Visit to Cuba,” 10.

<sup>83</sup> Atticus G. Haygood, “Address by Rev. Dr. Haygood,” given 24 August 1883 in Bound Volume 9, 15, Atticus G. Haygood family papers, Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library, Emory University, Atlanta, Georgia, (AGH).

Georgia (at the time it was still a men's institution and had not yet become a university) on the opening Sunday of the fall term. Haygood told the young men that they would receive training at Emory that would serve them for the rest of their lives. What he emphasized most, however, was that in order to achieve the proper character and earn a good reputation, they must see to their duty. He reminded them that duty was not merely something that would come to life in the extraordinary events; rather, it was best demonstrated in the making the "regular and honest work" life's daily tasks.<sup>84</sup> Here, though there was not a war in which the young men at Emory could prove their mettle, as their fathers and grandfathers had done in the Civil War, Haygood presented another way of showing masculinity – through "honest work."

Though Haygood believed that work could be the avenue where males showed their masculinity, he did not believe that manliness could simply appear; rather, the boys who came to Emory needed the proper training in order to reach the fullest heights of manhood. In another address to his students from 1883, Haygood spoke about the importance of preparation as he talked about "David and His Sling."<sup>85</sup> The college president told the young men gathered before him that the training that David had received watching over his sheep and defending them against predators with his sling had given him the preparation to do the work of the Lord in defeating Goliath.<sup>86</sup> Haygood connected this with the students' lives by arguing that the daily tasks of manhood were what prepared one for the trials of life. The college president then went even further, and argued that while many men found themselves in positions where they could do great good as they reached middle age, not many actually achieved their goals because they had

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<sup>84</sup> Atticus G. Haygood, "Work out your own salvation," 5 October 1884, 7, Box 2, AGH.

<sup>85</sup> Atticus G. Haygood, "David and His Sling," 6 January 1883, Box 2, AGH.

<sup>86</sup> Haygood, "David," 2, AGH.

not received the training that prepared them to do such things.<sup>87</sup> Haygood told his audience that it was the solemn duty of the students and faculty of Emory to develop characters and minds in order to accomplish all God had planned for them, and thus achieve true manliness.<sup>88</sup> Again, through the language of character that he used, and the fact that Haygood was speaking at Emory College, a private religious institutions, both demonstrated the classed nature of this particular definition of manliness at the end of the nineteenth century.

In Alabama, another college president, John Massey of the Alabama Conference Female College in Tuskegee (later Huntington College of Montgomery, Alabama), spoke to the Alabama Education Association in 1895 and argued that the “chief aim in every system of education should be to develop its pupils into the noblest manhood.”<sup>89</sup> Massey tried to spread his vision that the way to bring pupils to their noblest manhood was to develop character in them, and thus combined the ideas of a community that needed to refine manhood with the idea of an individual who needed to work at fulfilling its “noblest” ideals. In a separate commencement speech, Massey encouraged the soon-to-be graduates continually to ask not what they would *do* once they finished their educational pursuits, but “What will you be?”<sup>90</sup> With this question in mind, he encouraged them that the “formation of right character” was the greatest thing that they could hope to achieve, and to seek after it as it not only enabled success in this life, but also would

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<sup>87</sup> Haygood, “David,” 3, AGH.

<sup>88</sup> Haygood, “David,” 4, AGH.

<sup>89</sup> John Massey, “The Vital Point in Education” given 20 July 1895, 2, Dr. John Massey Personal Papers H71, The Methodist Archives Center, Huntington College Library, Huntington College, Montgomery, Alabama, (JMPP).

<sup>90</sup> John Massey, “Character,” n.d., 4, emphasis in original, Tuskegee Female College and Alabama Conference Female College H1, The Methodist Archives Center, Huntington College Library, Huntington College, Montgomery, Alabama, (ACFC).

determine their fate after death.<sup>91</sup> These questions were, and are, rather common sentiments for commencement addresses. However, in the turn of the century in Alabama, they still demonstrated that MECS leaders had a defined vision of manliness that they attempted to instill in their audiences – a vision that connected religious values with gender and class ideals.

Massey’s vision of character was not simply an issue of “noblest manhood,” it intimately intertwined with his ideas of the sacred. This can be seen clearly in his published memoirs. Massey gave his readers examples of men whom he most admired on the board of trustees when he first became president who were “true men, men who can be trusted with sacred things.”<sup>92</sup> Obviously, these were men whom Massey respected and may have wanted to emulate. He based his high regard for their character upon their ability to handle the things that Massey considered holy. This respect for men who honored the sacred was not restricted just to the board of Massey’s college. Massey also praised a man he had known in childhood whose religiosity was “no wet-weather spring,” but who showed his love for God through both the good times and the bad.<sup>93</sup> Massey maintained that through the continual demonstration of the man’s religious fervor, he won the respect of the neighborhood boys, and had a positive influence upon their lives.

The influence of such people was so powerful in his life that Massey commented that growing up he used to be deathly afraid of anything risky or dangerous. Yet, through the godly example set before him by his elders, he learned to rely on God, who allowed him to “stand in

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<sup>91</sup> Massey, “Character,” 5, ACFC.

<sup>92</sup> John Massey, *Reminiscences: Giving Sketches of Some of Scenes Through Which the Author Has Passed and Pen Portraits of People Who Have Modified His Life*, (Nashville: Publishing House of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, 1916), 277.

<sup>93</sup> Massey, *Reminiscences*, 39.

the places I have been called to fill without compromising my manhood.”<sup>94</sup> Once again, then, an MECS leader pointed to the ways in which a community of godly individuals helped to refine his own, individual manliness. Massey then defined “manhood” through courage and commitment to duty, while at the same time acknowledging a reliance upon the work of God, whom he believed sustained his manhood and gave him character. In fact, for Massey, character, that determiner of manliness, was directly related to one’s spiritual condition. Massey linked the tenor of a person’s spiritual life to the way in which he related to the world and showed his true character, and so warned young men that if they were not careful in pursuing their vocation, they could be sucked into the trap of covetousness and avarice.<sup>95</sup>

### **Methodist Ideas of Love Divine**

While Massey warned young men not to pursue money at the expense of their souls, and thus become lured into avarice, he was equally concerned about people who pursued beauty at all costs and fell into vanity.<sup>96</sup> The college president even pointed to the ancient Greeks as an example of a people who pursued beauty without a higher purpose. In doing so, Massey thought that the typical Greek man “unseated his virtue and [sapped] the foundation of his character.”<sup>97</sup> Simply issuing blanket warnings against the pursuit of beauty did not fit with Massey’s personality, however, and in 1882, he gave a commencement address that sought to explore the

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<sup>94</sup> Massey, *Reminiscences*, 318.

<sup>95</sup> Massey, “Character,” 8-13, ACFC.

<sup>96</sup> Massey, “Character,” 13-14, ACFC.

<sup>97</sup> Massey, “Character,” 16, ACFC.

“ultimate ground of beauty.”<sup>98</sup> In the speech, he proposed to his audience that everything beautiful on earth pointed towards an ideal beauty, which found its ultimate source in the “King of Beauty himself.”<sup>99</sup> It was interesting that in this speech Massey, unlike Bishop Galloway, reveled in the beauty that he found in Jesus Christ. Rather than extolling his listeners to conquer the world for Christ, he exhorted them to see “the beauty of holiness,” and the “loveliness of moral action.”<sup>100</sup> More dramatic, however, was the change in the description of Christ Himself. Rather than being the victor in the battle, Massey described Jesus as the “King of Beauty,” and the college president pled with his audience to “look habitually and reverently upon the face of the All-Beautiful.”<sup>101</sup>

Such an image of Jesus led to a very different construction of manhood. Massey certainly would have been aware of the martial understandings of Jesus that were prevalent at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century, but deliberately chose to present a different interpretation of the divine to his audience in Alabama in 1882. This presentation did not focus on a militant Jesus scourging the temple grounds of money-changers, or his victory over sin and death, but on his compassionate side; the side that welcomed children to be blessed and wept at the death of a friend.<sup>102</sup>

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<sup>98</sup> John Massey, “Beauty,” 2, 1882 Commencement at Alabama Conference Female College, ACFC, (emphasis in original).

<sup>99</sup> Massey, “Beauty,” 8, 11, ACFC.

<sup>100</sup> Massey, “Beauty,” 11, ACFC.

<sup>101</sup> Massey, “Beauty,” 8, 17, ACFC.

<sup>102</sup> For examples of these things, see Mark 11:12-19; Luke 24; Mark 10:13-16; John 11:32-36, Holy Bible.

Alabamian Massey was not the only one to focus on a compassionate Jesus as a picture of true manhood in the turn of the century Deep South. One pastor from Georgia, James Osgood Andrew Clark, in a sermon about waiting on the Lord, described Jesus as a “tender and gentle shepherd” who lovingly watched over His flock and cared for their needs.<sup>103</sup> Similarly, James Crews, a Methodist preacher from Alabama, once described in loving terms the divine mercy of a gentle and affectionate Jesus who gently guided His wayward sheep back into the fold.<sup>104</sup> Rather than a warrior-God leading a “flying column” as Galloway envisioned, Crews’ model presented a warm, personal God concerned about the individual welfare of his beloved children.

Following the model of Jesus who was gentle and loving and had set his affections on them, various MECS officials argued for a type of manliness in which fathers and husbands felt free to express their own love for their families. This presentation of domestic affection constituted a valid expression of manhood for these members of the clergy. In fact, many MECS officials were affectionate family men who conveyed their love for their wives and children repeatedly in letters and notes. In 1875, James Madison Crews sent his sweetheart a letter in which he talked freely about his love for her.<sup>105</sup> In the letter, Crews proposed, “a man trembles before the woman he loves and finds not enough nerve to tell her what is in his heart.”<sup>106</sup> Clearly, Crews believed that it was entirely appropriate for a man to “tremble” and was not overly concerned that he would endanger his manliness. Indeed, if this nervousness showed

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<sup>103</sup> Clark, “They that wait,” 5-6, JOAC.

<sup>104</sup> James Madison Crews, Untitled Sermon on Hebrews 4:16, n.d., n.p., Box 56, JMC.

<sup>105</sup> James Madison Crews, “An Autobiography,” 1885, 10, Box 56, JMC.

<sup>106</sup> James Madison Crews to Ora Elizabeth Askew (reproduced and typeset for JMC), “An Epistle of Love,” 1875, 1, JMC (emphasis in original).

anything, it demonstrated the power of the feelings that a man could feel for a woman and in that way demonstrate his masculinity even more.

The power of manly love was also demonstrated in a pastor's letter to the Georgia Methodist pastor John Davis Gray. In it, the unnamed pastor (who simply signed his letter "C.E.D.") talked about his newborn baby girl, and declared that though she was only a week old, "the little stranger already has a great hold on my affections."<sup>107</sup> In this epistle to a friend, C.E.D. made a statement about his manhood and fatherhood. Rather than being a picture of the solitary, stoic soldier on the field of battle, this pastor obviously loved his baby daughter and wanted his friend to know the power of his feelings for her. As a pastor himself, C.E.D. would have been entirely familiar with the story of Jesus welcoming the little children to be blessed, and would thus feel entirely comfortable relating his own manly feelings to those that he believed Jesus would have felt. This model of manhood was strikingly different than the formulation of militant masculinity that Bishop Galloway, and others, presented, though there is no record of these two types of manliness causing friction between friends or clergymen within the MECS.

Nonetheless, this did present a very different picture of manhood to Deep South congregations than they saw in the culture around them. There, manhood was often epitomized by competition, physicality, and occasional violence.<sup>108</sup> The Methodist leaders who tried to encourage their parishioners with visions of expressions of affection for family members were thus attempting to persuade their congregants to take on a very different understanding of southern white masculinity in the New South period.

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<sup>107</sup> C.E.D. to John Davis Gray, 17 March 1879, 1, Box 2, Burge Family Papers, 1832-1952, Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library, Emory University, Atlanta, Georgia, (BFP).

<sup>108</sup> Ownby, *Subduing Satan*, 21-102.

While MECS leaders often expressed affection in private epistles from one person to another, this was not always the case. One man who wanted multiple members of his family to know of his love for them was the Mississippian itinerant minister John G. Jones. In 1830, Jones began writing his autobiography “for the perusal of myself and family and relations in the future.”<sup>109</sup> Eventually spanning more than fifty-eight years in three volumes of 584 handwritten pages, this narrative of the life of an MECS itinerant minister described a man who cared deeply for his family, and particularly his wife. When beginning to describe the year of her death at the end of the nineteenth century (1883), Jones wrote that theirs was “more than an earthly love; it partook largely of sweet foretastes of the heavenly [sic] union and the communion of the spirits of the just made perfect.” Here, Jones evidenced a great love for his wife, one that he believed offered a glimpse of heaven. He further described their pleasant evenings together, when they would often talk by the fireside during the winter or on the front porch during the warmer months.<sup>110</sup> Clearly, they loved each other deeply, and as Jones wrote his autobiography, he wanted to convey that message to his children, grandchildren, and anyone else who might read his text. He certainly did not believe that these expressions of love, or even his expressions of profound grief and sorrow at his wife’s death, would jeopardize his manhood. Yet, he was careful to weep and mourn in “secret places” so as not to unduly upset his family who worried that he might do himself harm.<sup>111</sup> The desire not to let his family see his sorrow was an attempt by Jones to demonstrate that, though he was deeply moved by his wife’s death, he still retained his self-control and was able to master his emotions. The urge to retain mastery in the midst of

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<sup>109</sup> Jones, “Autobiography,” Vol. 1, 1830-1833, 1, JGJ.

<sup>110</sup> Jones, “Autobiography,” Vol. II, 163, JGJ.

<sup>111</sup> Jones, “Autobiography,” Vol. II, 173 and 175, JGJ.

great personal loss was one way in which many Southern men demonstrated their manhood. This mastery could be demonstrated in the ways that men dealt with the loss of property and financial stability as well as the loss of a spouse.<sup>112</sup>

Fellow Mississippian Isaac Borders was another MECS pastor who clearly loved his wife and longed for her to be at his side. During their correspondence while they were apart in 1912 and 1913, Borders started and ended each letter with an expression of love for his spouse.<sup>113</sup> Within the letters, though, the depth of his true feelings often emerged. In the first surviving epistle from their five-month geographic separation, the pastor cried, “I yearn so for the little woman” that he loved, and that his “heart hungers so for her.”<sup>114</sup> In another letter, Borders wrote that even though they would be apart from each other over Christmas, (she was stuck in California selling their house while he was already in Mississippi) “Our hearts can be together...and so we shall think of each other with unusual tenderness that day.”<sup>115</sup> When Borders finally learned that his family would be starting out on the cross-country move to Mississippi, he was obviously excited to see his wife and children again, and wrote them, remarking that as their arrival drew closer, he missed them more and was “very, very hungry for” his wife. More than that, though, he felt that any long delay in their arrival would be an “insupportable calamity” now that he had “opened up the flood gates of affectionate desire for [her] companionship.”<sup>116</sup> In this correspondence, Borders clearly tried to strike a delicate

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<sup>112</sup> James L. Roark, *Masters without Slaves: Southern Planters in the Civil War and Reconstruction*, (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1977), especially 68-108 and 156-209.

<sup>113</sup> For examples, see Isaac D. Borders papers, Box 1, “Letters to his wife” folder, IDB.

<sup>114</sup> Borders to “My Beloved,” 26 November 1912, 1, IDB.

<sup>115</sup> Borders to “My well beloved sweetheart-wife,” 15 December 1912, 3, IDB.

<sup>116</sup> Borders to “My Precious Wife,” 1 March 1913, 1, IDB.

balance – letting his wife know that he desired her, while attempting to stay within the boundaries of early twentieth century ideas of propriety. Even though these letters were intimate, and meant only to be viewed by husband and wife, Borders did not feel comfortable talking overtly about the sexual desire he felt for his spouse. Yet, the fact that he mentioned that he was “very, very hungry” for his wife and that her expected arrival had “opened up the flood gates of affectionate desire” were clear signs that he loved his wife and desired their physical relationship to commence after their long separation. Certainly, Borders was not worried that expressions of love and spousal desire imperiled his manhood; rather, his wish to be an affectionate husband and loving father was manifest in his letters.<sup>117</sup> These expressions may have even helped him to feel more masculine as he affirmed his own sense of sexuality, longing, and deep love for his spouse even in the midst of being geographically separated from his family.

Similarly, Georgian Asa Griggs Candler, a member of the Methodist laity, wanted his family to be confident of that fact that he loved them even when separated. Though he sometimes wrote stern letters to his family, particularly to his sons when they were attending Emory College and causing trouble, he took care to be sure that his children knew that he loved them. For example, in 1903, Candler wrote a letter to his son Howard remarking that there was “nothing that I am more thankful for than that I have two noble sons.” Candler then remarked that both his sons had wonderful common sense and were a credit to him, and that it would be impossible to “be too grateful to my Heavenly Father for them and what they are to me.”<sup>118</sup> Similarly, he wrote to his daughter, Lucy, telling her that “papa misses his jewel.”<sup>119</sup> Though

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<sup>117</sup> For more on his desire to be a good father, see letters dated 13 December 1912; 15 December 1912; and 25 December 1912, IDB.

<sup>118</sup> Asa Griggs Candler to Charles Howard Candler, 24 February 1903, Box 1, AGC.

<sup>119</sup> Asa Griggs Candler to Lucy Candler, 9 September 1899, 1, Box 18, AGC.

this was the same man who had his picture taken in a military uniform for a slide advertising his Sunday School talk, Asa Candler apparently did not think that a martial image was the only way of displaying his manhood. It was obvious that he thought that expressions of affection were entirely appropriate to his role as father and patriarch of his family.

As should be clear, these expressions of tender, loving care from Methodist officials were made in the private letters and notes that they send to family members. The major exceptions were James Madison Crews who talked about the tender mercies of God in a sermon, and John Massey who talked about looking habitually at the face of the “King of Beauty” in a commencement speech. This seemed to present a bifurcation in manhood for many MECS officials. They encouraged their parishioners to uphold a model of martial, aggressive masculinity tempered by Christian character; while at the same time, Methodist leaders envisioned that their congregants would be affectionate fathers and husbands in private. While this did present two different expressions of manliness separate by the public and private realms, this did not mean that one was secular and the other sacred; rather, these officials infused both of their conceptions of manliness with ideas of the sacred. The aggressive Christian soldier that Galloway encouraged was equally as religious as the love that Jones had for his wife and believed offered a glimpse of heaven. Every aspect of their lives was sacred. MECS leaders grounded both public and private expressions of masculinity on the example that they believed Jesus had set. Thus, whether they encouraged the members of their congregations to conquer hearts or woo to the tender shepherd depended on how they understood the example set by Jesus.

**CHAPTER FOUR:**  
**EVANGELIZING WOMEN IN THE MECS**

*The doctrine of regeneration is the most important in all the Scripture....  
Without it the Bible would be unintelligible.*

- James Madison Crews<sup>1</sup>  
(1885)

While different interpretations of Jesus' example provided many officials in the Methodist Episcopal Church, South (MECS) with two primary models of masculinity at the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth century, officials rarely used Biblical examples in similar ways to develop ideals of the family and femininity. Rather, as MECS leaders attempted to define family life and womanhood, they used more abstract theological ideas as they attempted to rearrange the ways in which congregants understood gender. More specifically, the idea of spiritual rebirth, or conversion (the giving of one's life to Jesus in the belief that His sacrifice was the only way for a sinful, broken person to approach a holy God), had a greater influence on the construction of how families should operate, as well as how femininity should be expressed, than other elements of Methodist theology. The importance of the conversion experience cannot be overlooked in MECS thought. In 1901, one bishop from the Mississippi Conference, Charles Galloway, claimed that the idea "Ye must be born again" should be defined as the pre-eminent doctrine of

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<sup>1</sup> James Madison Crews, "Regeneration," n.d. circa 1885, Box 56, Personal Papers of James Madison Crews MC87, The Methodist Archives Center, Huntington College Library, Huntington College, Montgomery, Alabama, (JMC).

the church.<sup>2</sup> Other pastors across Mississippi, Alabama, and Georgia frequently made reference to regeneration and the conversion experience in their sermons as well, and the necessity of conversion influenced the ways in which MECS officials conceptualized gender in a myriad of ways at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century.<sup>3</sup>

For church officials in the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, the theological idea of regeneration was not limited to a few people; rather, the call to be “born again” was extended to the entire world.<sup>4</sup> This meant that every person was a potential convert for Methodist preachers and pastors, many of whom counseled their congregants that the home was the first and primary mission field for parents. This view meant that many MECS officials thought women should receive liberal arts educations in order to deal with the very real complexities of the world, even though their “proper” place was in the home where they could tend to the spiritual needs of their

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<sup>2</sup> Charles B. Galloway, “Christian Experience: Its Supreme Value and Crowning Evidence,” *The Methodist Times*, 5 September 1901, 644.

<sup>3</sup> For examples of remarks on regeneration and the conversion experience, see James Osgood Andrew Clark, “They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength,” n.d., 11, Box 3, James Osgood Andrew Clark papers, Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library, Emory University, Atlanta, Georgia, (JOAC); and Isaac D. Borders, “Regeneration,” 1907, Isaac D. Borders M17, J. B. Cain Archives of Mississippi Methodism, Millsaps-Wilson Library, Millsaps College, Jackson, Mississippi, (IDB). For more on the importance of camp meetings, where the focus was on converting the lost, see John Griffing Jones, “A Brief Autobiography of J.G. Jones and J.A. Jones written for their children,” Vol. II 1833-1887, 161-162, and Vol. III 1888, 5, John G. Jones papers MS10, J. B. Cain Archives of Mississippi Methodism, Millsaps-Wilson Library, Millsaps College, Jackson, Mississippi, (JGJ).

<sup>4</sup> James Hamilton Baxter, “The Atonement: Its Extent,” 4 November 1880, Box 1, James Hamilton Baxter Papers, Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library, Emory University, Atlanta, Georgia, (JHB); and Barney Washington Lewis, “The Plan of Salvation,” 2, 17 September 1902, Folder 2, Barney Washington Lewis Papers M58, J. B. Cain Archives of Mississippi Methodism, Millsaps-Wilson Library, Millsaps College, Jackson, Mississippi, (BWL); and H. Walter Featherstun, *What We Protest Against: Epworth League Institute Booklet No. 5*, (Nashville: Publishing House of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, n.d. circa 1910), 3-6.

children.<sup>5</sup> Conversion and regeneration provided structures within which MECS leaders could begin to construct and interpret different aspects of family life and femininity before passing these ideas on to their parishioners through speeches, sermons, and written works.

For many MECS officials in the New South era, the home represented the primary mission field for families, and parents should tend to the souls of their children. The *Pocket Visiting Book* that pastor James Osgood Andrew Clark used as he visited families in their homes throughout south-central Georgia made it clear the parents' role in their child's spiritual life in the section on infant baptism. This section not only supported the doctrine of infant baptism, it also directed pastors how to perform the rite. According to the *Visiting Book*, the pastor was to exhort the parents, reminding them that it was their duty to see that their child would "read the Holy Scriptures, and learn the Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments, the Apostle's Creed, the Catechism" and any other things that would be beneficial to a growing Christian's spiritual health.<sup>6</sup> Clark took this to heart, and in one sermon told his parishioners that they should practice their beliefs in such a way as to show their children that parents "practice abroad what [was] taught them in the family."<sup>7</sup> Indeed, so important was this, Clark told his congregants, that it was a divine command to teach the words of God to children.<sup>8</sup> Because of this, the spiritual role of the father was very important. Historian Sean Scott's study of religion in the north during

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<sup>5</sup> For some of the tensions inherent in this view, see Amy Thompson McCandless, *The Past in the Present: Women's Higher Education in the Twentieth Century South*, (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1999).

<sup>6</sup> *Clergyman's Pocket Diary and Visiting Book*, arranged by James Porter, (New York: Nelson & Philips, 1876), 14-15.

<sup>7</sup> James Osgood Andrew Clark, "Therefore, you shall lay up my words," n.d., 23, Box 4, JOAC.

<sup>8</sup> Clark, "Therefore," 11, JOAC.

the American Civil War supports this idea, and demonstrates that the fathers of soldiers took great pains to impart spiritual lessons to their sons.<sup>9</sup> In similar fashion, Clark believed that the father was not merely to be a moral role model, but was instrumental in the spiritual health of all those in the home. In order to do this, he suggested to his congregants that the “father and priest of the family” should gather his family around him each night and give them an appropriate lesson from the Bible.<sup>10</sup>

While there was nothing particularly novel about the fact that Clark encouraged his parishioners to have the father gather the members of the household at night and lead in family devotions, the fact that Clark called him the “priest of the family” had significant theological implications. Throughout the Bible, the priests of Israel were the figures appointed by God to intercede on behalf of others, and it was the priests who offered the sacrifices that atoned for the sins of the people of Israel.<sup>11</sup> The office of a priest was an extremely important role in the Bible; one that the Methodists (and all Evangelicals) believed Jesus fulfilled when He offered the perfect sacrifice of His own body as the atonement for the sins of all who put their trust in Him.<sup>12</sup> To elevate the role of the father and husband to the priest of the family was a significant theological statement that required the family to go through the father in order to interact with God.<sup>13</sup> The father was then much more than a simple teacher; he was the most important

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<sup>9</sup> Sean Scott, *A Visitation of God: Northern Civilians Interpret the Civil War*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 140.

<sup>10</sup> Clark, “Therefore,” 23, JOAC.

<sup>11</sup> For examples, see Leviticus chapters 8-9, 16, 21-22, Holy Bible.

<sup>12</sup> Tigert, *Discipline*, 1-2, 4-5, 10-11.

<sup>13</sup> For a different view, one that emphasized the priesthood of all believers, see Walter B. Shurden, *Not an Easy Journey: Some Transitions in Baptist Life*, (Macon, Georgia: Mercer University Press, 2005), 80-87.

spiritual figure in his family as he was the intermediary between his family and God. This was a position with eternal responsibilities in Methodist eyes as each member of the family was a potential convert to Christianity.

This exalted position of the father-priest did not appear in many other MECS officials' writings in the turn of the century Deep South, but it was clear that they felt that the spiritual formation that took place at home was vitally important in the spiritual health and vitality of the next generation. Indeed, the Methodist emphasis on conversion meant that the home was training ground where children would learn to lean on God and trust in Jesus.<sup>14</sup> This was especially important as the MECS believed that it was possible to lose one's salvation.<sup>15</sup> With that possibility in mind, Methodist parents were strongly encouraged to "train up a child in the way he should go."<sup>16</sup> Bishop Galloway, in his early-twentieth century sermon "Inflexibility of Purpose," tried to encourage the parents in his audience by giving them the example of Daniel, whom he believed was a "son of a pious home" and went on to stand firm in his faith for his entire life, despite the persecution and trouble he faced because of his faith.<sup>17</sup>

Although James Osgood Andrew Clark felt that the father should be the priest of the family, other MECS officials felt that home evangelism was the place of the mother and wife. For example, John Jones of Mississippi described how his wife began to lead family prayers soon after receiving entire sanctification.<sup>18</sup> She was often in charge of the family devotions, and

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<sup>14</sup> Bishop Galloway claimed that the idea "'Ye must be born again' should ever be the ringing message of the Church of God." (Galloway, "Christian Experience," 644.)

<sup>15</sup> Featherstun, *What We Protest Against*, 17-19.

<sup>16</sup> Proverbs 22:6, Holy Bible.

<sup>17</sup> Galloway, "Inflexibility of Purpose," 1, Box 5, CBG.

<sup>18</sup> Jones, "Autobiography," Vol. II, 185, JGJ.

was always careful to start before the children were “overcome with sleep” so as to be the most effective for their souls.<sup>19</sup> Mrs. Jones’ role as a spiritual mother to her own children, as well as a number of adopted ones, was an example that college president John Massey of Alabama would have approved. In his speech, “The Education of our Girls,” Massey lauded the efforts of Frances Willard, Clara Barton, and others who had made strides in showing women’s equality. With that said, however, the President of the Alabama Conference Female College argued that, “it remains true that the home idea remains the central idea of this earth.”<sup>20</sup> Because of this, he believed that, as a mother and a wife, a “woman is the most potent factor in the development of the [human] race.”<sup>21</sup>

Massey told his audiences that the home was the place where a “woman’s touch” would influence her children to “lift [their] faith up to God.”<sup>22</sup> So important was this role of moral authority in Massey’s view, that the woman who neglected to develop her “moral powers” was considered “a blot on creation.”<sup>23</sup> At the end of the nineteenth century, for the officials who believed that the home was a place where children might be converted to a saving faith, the mother’s role in the home was something sacred. Massey believed, and attempted to persuade others, that the role of the wife and mother in the home was a place of honor, filled with equal or

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<sup>19</sup> Jones, “Autobiography,” Vol. II, 186-187, JGJ.

<sup>20</sup> John Massey, “The Education of Our Girls,” n.d. probably around 1895, 5, Box H71, JMPP. A similar sentiment is also found in Massey’s article, “Woman’s Highest Sphere of Influence,” *The* (Alabama Conference Female College) *Sagastean* III (March 1903), 12-14.

<sup>21</sup> Massey, “Education of Our Girls,” 12, JMPP.

<sup>22</sup> Massey, “Education of Our Girls,” 14, JMPP.

<sup>23</sup> John Massey, “The Higher Education of Man,” 1878, n.p., Box 1, ACFC.

greater importance to anything that men working outside the home could accomplish.<sup>24</sup> Yet, he was also insistent that those women who did not do all that they could to take care of their homes were aberrations. Indeed, Massey thought that these women had so distorted their vocations that he called them a “blot on creation.” The college president thus clearly believed that the proper place of women was in the home, nurturing the souls of children and converting them to a saving faith in Jesus.

Massey would have had trouble, then, in acknowledging many African-American women as fulfilling their role as true women in the turn of the century Deep South. His view that the home was the “central idea of this earth” was hard for those who had to work outside of their personal domestic worlds in order provide for their families. While his ideas of femininity then clearly had implications related to socio-economic class, they were also fraught with racial meaning. Many African-American women across the South did not have the luxury of staying home during the day, and so would not have fit into Massey’s sharply circumscribed view of proper southern ladies. This did not mean that these women objected to the idea that the home was a world women were in charge of, however. Many Southern black women fully accepted, and even encouraged the idea that they were in charge of home life.<sup>25</sup> However, many white Methodist leaders such as John Massey could not fully accept the idea that African-American women fit into the model of femininity that they espoused that highlighted home life.

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<sup>24</sup> John Massey, “Home,” 1879, n.p., Box 1, ACFC.

<sup>25</sup> John M. Giggle, *After Redemption: Jim Crow and the Transformation of African American Religion in the Delta, 1875-1915*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 139, 148-152.

## Methodist Women

Because of the importance of the home, a number of MECS officials, including John Massey of Alabama, worked to reform and expand women's educational opportunities so that they might better be able to meet the spiritual needs of their future families. (It was assumed that young women would only stay in education as long as they were single. There was virtually no reference point for married women going back to school once they had gotten married and started a family.<sup>26</sup>) One pamphlet, written around 1910 by John Milford Williams of Galloway Women's College in Arkansas, argued that the world had entered a new age, which would regard women as the equal of men.<sup>27</sup> Williams urged that the "Methodist Episcopal Church, South, shall make it known that now and henceforth women shall stand equal with men in privileges, gifts, and opportunities; [and that] their education shall be given just consideration by our Church and such ideals and standards shall be set for them as are worthy the equal partners of our lives."<sup>28</sup> The equality that Williams pressed for was to be shown most clearly in the education of women – an education that he believed must be serious, challenging, and enriching to women's lives and intellects.<sup>29</sup> It was extremely unlikely that Williams' remark about equal opportunities would have meant equal roles in institutional church leadership. Nothing in the rest of his pamphlet suggested this, and it was probable that he was referring strictly to educational and financial opportunities. Such an interpretation made sense as Williams

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<sup>26</sup> McCandless, *Past in the Present*, 32-34.

<sup>27</sup> John Milford Williams, *The Education of Women for the New Age: A Plea for Greater Liberality for Women's Colleges*, (Nashville: Board of Education [of the] Methodist Episcopal Church, South, n.d. circa 1910), 3.

<sup>28</sup> Williams, *Education of Women*, 8.

<sup>29</sup> Williams, *Education of Women*, 6-8.

reminded his readers that, though he wanted to make it possible for women to be economically independent, he still wanted them to remain at home.<sup>30</sup>

Many southern Progressives agreed with the tension at work in Williams' statement. The idea that women needed to learn "suitable" trades and be prepared in order to become economically independent while still learning to carry oneself as a "lady" was an important point in many industrial and normal schools that aimed at working-class and lower-middle-class constituencies at the end of the nineteenth century.<sup>31</sup> For those in middle- and upper-class homes, however, "college was a place to shelter young women...not a place to encourage intellectual development. Most students did not stay at college long enough to earn a degree."<sup>32</sup> Instead, music, art, deportment, and expression served as major elements of the curriculum for many young women who went to school in order to make their homes more aesthetically pleasing. Many MECS schools for women across Mississippi, Alabama, and Georgia also offered courses on religion and ethics so that women the young women attending would better be able to attend to the spiritual needs of their families.<sup>33</sup>

Clearly, the idea of the home as a sacred place that would be instrumental in developing the spiritual lives of children was a major part of young women's education. Williams believed that this meant "women must continue to make and keep the home, and the home must be made

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<sup>30</sup> Williams, *Education of Women*, 7.

<sup>31</sup> McCandless, *The Past in the Present*, 12.

<sup>32</sup> McCandless, *The Past in the Present*, 34.

<sup>33</sup> McCandless, *The Past in the Present*, 56-57. For examples of these types of educational offerings, see Fifty-Third Annual Catalogue and Announcement of Grenada College and Conservatory of Music, Art, and Elocution. 1904-1905, (Grenada, Mississippi: Sentinel Book and Job Print., 1904); Annual Catalogue: Alabama Conference Female College, Tuskegee, Alabama, 1899, (Cincinnati: Elm Street Printing Works, 1899).

and kept with far greater sacredness than we generally find to-day.”<sup>34</sup> Williams intertwined his hope of helping women become economically independent with the idea of the home as a sacred place for the nurturing of children’s spiritual needs.<sup>35</sup>

The idea of the home as a place for nurturing young souls can also be seen in Bishop Galloway’s speech on Suzanna Wesley, the mother of Methodist founders John and Charles Wesley. In it, Galloway extolled the motherly virtues of Suzanna Wesley’s “patient, prudent, prayerful” parenting.<sup>36</sup> The bishop also praised her for praying both with and for each of her nineteen children, for routinely asking them about their own private relationships with God, for teaching them about the doctrines of the Christian faith, and for demonstrating what an experiential faith looked like through her own life.<sup>37</sup> Because of Suzanna’s faithful witness, Galloway told his listeners, “All the Wesley children became faithful Christians and every one died in the Lord.”<sup>38</sup> For many MECS officials, the story of a faithful mother rearing her children in the fear of the Lord was something that they wished to have repeated many times over. That was how they connected a theology focused on evangelism with the hope of a sacred home.

Even as many MECS officials at the turn of the century attempted to connect a theology focused on conversion to a view of the home as a sacred place for raising children, there was also an idea that, by its very nature, Christianity was a force that increased the status of women in

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<sup>34</sup> Williams, *Education of Women*, 4.

<sup>35</sup> The idea of the home as a sacred place can be seen in Ted Ownby, *Subduing Satan: Religion, Recreation, and Manhood in the Rural South, 1865-1920*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1990), 103-121.

<sup>36</sup> Galloway, “Mother of the Wesleys,” 18, Box 5, CBG, emphasis in original.

<sup>37</sup> Galloway, “Mother of the Wesleys,” 20-21, Box 5, CBG.

<sup>38</sup> Galloway, “Mother of the Wesleys,” 21, Box 5, CBG.

cultures. Mississippian pastor Barney Lewis certainly felt this way. In a 1902 sermon describing the plan of salvation and its universal application, Lewis argued that women were discriminated against and treated as inferior beings in every culture “but where the gospel prevails.” In the areas where Christianity had taken hold, Lewis believed that the good news of salvation through Jesus Christ, without regard to age, gender, or station in life, had elevated “the weaker sex and [made] her equal in all its advantages and blessings.”<sup>39</sup> While Lewis proclaimed the equality of men and women, the language he used gave a different picture. Though his theology taught that all must admit their own helplessness and depend solely on the saving grace of Jesus, and furthermore, that there was no distinction between persons, Lewis still used the term “weaker sex” when referring to women.<sup>40</sup> This contraction in Lewis’ thought was likely due to a lingering thought in American theology at the beginning of the twentieth century that though all persons were counted equal before God, there were temporal differences and stations in life, and so while still on earth, everyone must keep his or her “place.”<sup>41</sup> It also clearly demonstrated that though Methodist leaders’ theology deeply influenced ideas of gender, it did not create new categories – it altered them.

College president John Massey of Alabama was also concerned about the place of women in society, but he declared in an 1886 graduation speech at the Alabama Conference

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<sup>39</sup> Barney Washington Lewis, “The Plan of Salvation,” 21 September 1902, 3, BWL.

<sup>40</sup> For more on Lewis’ rejection of distinctions and the belief that all are equally helpless before a holy God, see Lewis, “Plan of Salvation,” 2-5, BWL.

<sup>41</sup> Edward J. Blum, *Reforging the White Republic: Race, Religion, and American Nationalism, 1865-1898*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2005), 38-39, 47-48, 92-104, 108; Curtis J. Evans, *The Burden of Black Religion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008). See also Katherine Du Pre Lumpkin, *The Making of a Southerner* with a Foreword by Darlene Clark Hine, (Athens, Georgia: Brown Thrasher Books, University of Georgia Press, 1991), 136-137.

Female College that the women of ancient Rome should serve as a warning to the world. He believed that these women had valued their “rights above their womanly qualities,” and warned that the “result of this emancipation from the laws of God and nature” was the degradation and eventual fall of the empire itself.<sup>42</sup> Even as Massey was careful to point out that the young ladies graduating from the Alabama Conference Female College at the end of the nineteenth century needed to be sure to care for their “womanly qualities,” he was equally convinced that Christianity had done more to elevate women than anything else. He talked about the role of women in different civilizations before concluding that the Christian spirit “elevated woman from her minimal place in heathenism to the righthand [sic] of honor and love.”<sup>43</sup> Massey firmly believed that women should have an elevated place in society – one surrounded by honor and love. Nonetheless, his comments about Roman women demonstrated that Massey’s conception of women was bounded by the idea that they needed to retain a specific type of femininity: one concerned more with “womanly qualities” such as moral authority, beauty, and purity rather than with specific political or social rights. Historian Nancy Cott records that this was an idea prevalent since the early part of the nineteenth century.<sup>44</sup> At that time, the notion that women should serve as a purifying influence on their husbands and sons, but not get directly involved in political life was a vibrant part of American culture.<sup>45</sup> Even during the Civil War, wives and

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<sup>42</sup> John Massey, “Woman’s Place in Civilization,” 1886, n.p., Box 1, ACFC, (emphasis in original).

<sup>43</sup> Massey, “Woman’s Place in Civilization,” ACFC.

<sup>44</sup> Cott, *Bonds of Womanhood*, 8.

<sup>45</sup> Some of these ideas took their cues from the notion of Republican Motherhood. For more on that concept, see Linda K. Kerber, *Women of the Republic: Intellect & Ideology in Revolutionary America*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1980), 265-288; and Rosemarie Zagari, *Revolutionary Backlash: Women and Politics in the Early American Republic*, (Philadelphia: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2007), 5, 19.

mothers from the north attempted to carefully inculcate morality into their loved ones as they were fighting on the battlefield.<sup>46</sup> Massey certainly would have agreed with this idea as he wanted the young women graduating in 1886 to concentrate on their “womanly qualities” rather than their political rights. The college president would not have encouraged his female students to join any type of suffrage movement at the end of the nineteenth century. Massey’s speech came thirty-four years before the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment, although there were southern suffragists working towards woman suffrage by that point in time.<sup>47</sup> Yet, in this midst of his opposition to the women’s political movements, the college president clearly wanted his graduating students to agree with him that Christianity had elevated the status of women more than any other belief system.

The twin strands of this braided message – that Christianity elevated women and that women needed to concern themselves less with their rights than with a focus on their moral and spiritual improvement so that they could help convert others – worked their way into other speeches of Massey’s at the turn of the century as he talked about the importance of a Christian woman’s education. In one message before the South Alabama Educational Association, Massey argued that men needed to be trained for science and development in business.<sup>48</sup> Women, he told his audience, should be taught to “deal with the spiritual counterparts of these useful enterprises.” This included training to cultivate moral authority, inspire truth and beauty,

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<sup>46</sup> Scott, *A Visitation of God*, 72, 95.

<sup>47</sup> See Elna C. Green, *Southern Strategies: Southern Women and the Woman Suffrage Question*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997); Evelyn A. Kirkley, “‘This Work is God’s Cause:’ Religion in the Southern Woman Suffrage Movement, 1880-1920,” *Church History* 59 (December 1990): 507-522; Anne Firor Scott, *The Southern Lady: From Pedestal to Politics, 1830-1930*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970) for more on the Southern Suffrage movement.

<sup>48</sup> Massey, “Education of Our Girls,” 16-17, JMPP.

encourage moral action, remove friction in society, and “attune the chords of domestic life and make them resound with charming melody.”<sup>49</sup> More importantly, though, Massey believed that properly educated women could “free the souls of men” by encouraging faith in God.<sup>50</sup>

For such things to happen, though, Massey wanted a reformation in the curriculum taught to women. He did not think that a focus on the hard sciences was necessary for young women at the end of the nineteenth century, and instead wanted a curriculum that focused on fine arts, literature, and language.<sup>51</sup> He believed that this would enrich women’s lives, making them vital members of society. Indeed, Massey told his listeners that the best schools for women worked to educate women “on a more generous scale than in any of the older civilizations;” however, he also warned that women’s education should focus on the “sphere in which she will fulfill her highest mission,” which was nurturing the souls of her children.<sup>52</sup> Many educators in the early part of the twentieth century would have agreed with the Alabaman college president. They placed a high emphasis on the aesthetic elements of the curriculum for women, and parents often did not wish their daughters to receive a “mannish” education.<sup>53</sup> Once again, within Massey’s thought there was the seeming contradiction between educating women so that they might take a greater place in society than at any time previously, and the idea that these same women should stay in their “proper sphere.” This braided message makes sense when one considers the importance of evangelism in Massey’s thought.

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<sup>49</sup> Massey, “Education of Our Girls,” 17, JMPP.

<sup>50</sup> Massey, “Education of Our Girls,” 18, JMPP.

<sup>51</sup> Massey, “Education of Our Girls,” 18-19, JMPP.

<sup>52</sup> Massey, “Education of Our Girls,” 19, JMPP.

<sup>53</sup> McCandless, *The Past in the Present*, 18, 20, 26, 34.

The theological necessity of conversion allowed Massey to hold together the message that women should receive a high quality education with the idea that they needed to remain at home after they had acquired this education since they were “uniquely suited” to nurturing young souls and winning them for Christ. The conversion of all people to Christianity was the highest goal in Massey’s mind, and the easiest time to begin to develop a person’s love for Jesus was when that individual was young. This meant that women, whom Massey believed were in their proper place at home, had a unique responsibility to begin inculcating children with affection for the divine. To do this better, Massey, and many other educators at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century, thought that women should go to college and receive educations that focused on subjects of beauty and language. This type of curriculum would then better enable women to point their children to Jesus.

Alabama Conference Female College president John Massey was not the only Methodist collegiate official to believe that women should be educated so that they might return to their homes as faithful Christian women. In the 1904-1905 Catalogue of Grenada College (which eventually became part of Millsaps College in Jackson, Mississippi), the author proudly declared that from that place had “gone forth numbers of cultivated Christian women to bless the homes, adorn society and further the educational interests of our land.”<sup>54</sup> Even though this catalogue tried to attract interest in the college, it used only passive verbs that hinted at the proper place for women in the larger culture. Women were to “adorn” society, not change or take active roles in anything at the beginning of the twentieth century. If the hints about women’s passive roles were not clear enough in the belief that the proper place for women in the Deep South was in the

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<sup>54</sup> *Fifty-Third Annual Catalogue and Announcement of Grenada College and Conservatory of Music, Art, and Elocution*. 1904-1905, (Grenada, Mississippi: Sentinel Book and Job Print., 1904), 6.

home, the catalogue made it explicit only a few pages later when comparing Grenada College to its brother institution, Millsaps (at that time a men's institution). The catalogue read, "What Millsaps is doing to build up an effective citizenship, Grenada College is doing to make strong, refined and cultured homes."<sup>55</sup> Grenada College, a Methodist school dedicated to the education of women, clearly believed that their proper place was in the home, and much of MECS theology supported this idea by emphasizing women's role in nurturing the souls of children. The catalogue's assertion that Millsaps built up citizenry was a nod to the idea that only men were supposed to participate in politics. Yet, not all college women would have agreed with the idea that women were supposed to remain in the home and out of political life.

In the 1914 issue of the Woman's College of Alabama yearbook, *Belles and Pomegranates*, one of the clubs listed with the highest number of members was

the Equal Suffrage Club (**Figure 5**).<sup>56</sup> The club listed fifty-eight members, and the picture that ran alongside the club listing suggested its seriousness. The nature of the club as a real expression of student opinion, rather than the many satirical groups listed by many student annuals, may have been enhanced by the fact that this was a women's college and not a co-educational institution.

**Figure 5**



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<sup>55</sup> *Catalogue and Announcement of Grenada College*, 53.

<sup>56</sup> *Belles and Pomegranates*, (Montgomery, Alabama: The Students of the Woman's College of Alabama, 1914), n.p.

In contrast to the seeming respect given to the Equal Suffrage Club at the Women's College of Alabama, another Alabama school, Southern University, took a different approach in their student yearbook, *The Southron*. In 1914, they also ran a picture of a Suffragette Club. They ran this picture immediately above a picture of the Antisuffragette League.<sup>57</sup> When looking closely at the pictures from *The Southron*, it was clear that some of the women in both pictures were the same, though they dressed dramatically differently for each shot (**Figure 6**). In



the depiction of the Suffragette Club, the women have put on plain clothes, picked up frying pans and rolling pins, and appear to move menacingly towards the camera. However, in the picture of the Antisuffragette League, the young women have dressed in their finest clothing and stand serenely gazing peacefully forward. The denunciation of women's suffrage as a group of angry, forceful, bad-tempered women was clear – as was the message that women should stay out of politics. In similar fashion,

**Figure 6**

<sup>57</sup> *The Southron*, (Greensboro, Alabama: The Student Body of Southern University, 1914), n.p. Southern University eventually moved to Birmingham and merged with Birmingham College to become what is now known as Birmingham-Southern College.

the student editors for the 1913 *Bobashela* (the Millsaps College annual), listed the motto for the “‘Votes for Women’ Club” as “Wanted, a medical preparation for growing a mustache.”<sup>58</sup> While there were no insulting pictures, most likely simply because Millsaps was, at that time, an all-male institution, it was clear that the editors for the yearbook believed that voting was a male activity, and those women who wished to vote were just as absurd as a woman who wanted to grow a mustache.

Another image of crossing gender lines was shown in the 1911 *LeFost* yearbook from

Brookhaven,

Mississippi’s

Whitworth

Female College

(**Figure 7**). That

year, the women

of the college

held a wedding



**Figure 7**

ceremony commemorated in the yearbook.<sup>59</sup> What made this marriage unique; however, was the fact that there were no men involved. While some historians have examined the cultural phenomenon of the “Womanless Wedding” in the South, here was “Matrimony without Men” at Whitworth Female College.<sup>60</sup> Yet, the young women who made up the wedding party were not

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<sup>58</sup> “Votes For Women” Club, (Millsaps College) *Bobashela IX*, (Columbus, Ohio: The Champlin Press, 1913), 120.

<sup>59</sup> From Whitworth Female College’s *LeFost I*, (1911), n.p.

<sup>60</sup> For more on the Womanless Wedding, see Craig Thompson Friend, “The Womanless Wedding: Masculinity, Cross-Dressing, and Gender Inversions in the Modern South,” in Craig

all dressed as women. Many of young women crossed gender lines and dressed in tuxedos, waistcoats, and bowties – not just acting as men, but dressing as them as well. On the same page that the picture of the “Matrimony without Men” appeared, the *LeFost* featured a portrait of a young woman fashionably dressed with multiple strings of pearls and captioned “Portia,” while another picture listed the “Faculty Burlesque.” These other images supplied the only context for the wedding image and suggested that it was part of a series of tongue-in-cheek theatre performances. Nonetheless, this performance would have reinforced the appropriate roles of women and models of femininity in 1911 as it made light of the inversion of gender roles.<sup>61</sup> Thus, at this women’s college in Mississippi, the faculty felt that having a “Matrimony without Men” was a safe way of reinforcing the proper roles that the young women under their care would take later in life.

Clearly, different colleges had varying ideas of the appropriate roles that women might take. However, all of them believed that the education of women should be a high priority for Southern Methodists as an education would help women nurture the souls of the other people in the home. Exactly what this education should look like was a contentious issue, however. In his *Reminiscences*, John Massey also talked about how his ideas of his work as a college president at a women’s school had changed over the years. As he began his work at the Alabama Conference Female College, Massey was told, among other things, that though it took a man to manage a boy’s college, anybody could manage girls.<sup>62</sup> Another friend told Massey that he must go carefully when trying to arrange the women’s curriculum, because if he required as much from

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Thompson Friend, ed., *Southern Masculinity: Perspectives on Manhood in the South Since Reconstruction*, (Athens, Georgia: University of Georgia Press, 2009), 219-245.

<sup>61</sup> Friend, “Womanless Wedding,” 222-224, 226-227.

<sup>62</sup> Massey, *Reminiscences*, 287.

women as men, he would only discourage the young ladies under his care.<sup>63</sup> However, as Massey began to get to know his students and encourage their academic work in Alabama in the last decade of the nineteenth century, he found that there was virtually no difference in ability between his former (male) students and his current (female) ones. For Massey, this meant that “the difference in the ability of the sexes is more a difference in taste than in natural talent. Neither is superior nor inferior. They are different. They are counterparts of each other.”<sup>64</sup> Thus, though the college president firmly believed that each sex had their proper place in life and society and should hold complimentary roles, he was sure that they had equal intelligence capabilities – whether or not they should use them in public.

Even more than mere equality, though, Massey was fond of pointing out the Biblical reference that daughters were to be the “polished cornerstones” on which the foundations of society rested.<sup>65</sup> His clear commitment to the ideas of a feminine domestic sphere combined with the notion that the home was the foundation of society. This idea was a popular one during the nineteenth century, as demonstrated by historian Laura Edwards.<sup>66</sup> In Massey’s mind, this gave women an important role in his view of the world. It was their responsibility to create, and care for, the foundation of civilization. The idea that women were to be the foundation of culture and society clearly influenced Massey, and gave him the impetus to create an educational

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<sup>63</sup> Massey, *Reminiscences*, 289-290.

<sup>64</sup> Massey, *Reminiscences*, 290.

<sup>65</sup> See Massey, “Education of Our Girls,” 24-25, JMPP; Massey, “Higher Education of Man,” 3, ACFC. The Biblical reference comes from Psalm 144: 12.

<sup>66</sup> Laura Edwards, *Gendered Strife and Confusion: The Political Culture of Reconstruction*, (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1997), 18.

experience that would give his students the tools to carry out what he believed was their God-given mission.

As important as women's education was to Massey, he was certainly not the only MECS official to talk about it. In 1889, Atticus Haygood accepted a position in Sheffield, Alabama, as the head of a proposed school for women. (This school never opened, and Haygood eventually pulled out when it became clear that the financial backing would not materialize.) Haygood believed that the Deep South needed a better school for women, and though he acknowledged that it could not be created in one day, or even in a single year, he hoped to "do something worthy [of] the white girls of the South." In doing so, Haygood believed that the enterprise would become one of his "chief joys." Even while Haygood acknowledged the need for a better women's college, though, he talked about his desire that it should retain a focus on "all womanly industries as truly as all womanly culture."<sup>67</sup> Once again, the braided message of a full, but uniquely feminine education was proposed.

In one sermon Haygood that preached in Atlanta in 1889, he proposed to his listeners that those who taught women best did so in a unique way that incorporated the core of womanhood into the "very warp and woof" of his or her teaching.<sup>68</sup> Nonetheless, Haygood was also careful to articulate that he did not think this meant discussions needed to be any less intellectual when women were engaged. He even warned his audience, "some fools treat women as if they were too silly for rational intercourse."<sup>69</sup> Thus, while Haygood envisioned that there were unique ways of teaching, which especially appealed to women, he did not think this meant a pandering

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<sup>67</sup> Atticus G. Haygood to W. L. Chambers, 12 June 1889, reprinted in *Southern Christian Advocate*, 26 June 1889, in Bound Volume 10, 25, AGH.

<sup>68</sup> Atticus G. Haygood, "Jesus and the Woman of Samaria," 3 March 1889, 2, Box 2, AGH

<sup>69</sup> Haygood, "Woman of Samaria," 3, Box 2, AGH.

treatment of the curriculum. Haygood also thought those who dismissed women as irrational did so to their own detriment. He believed women were fully capable of discussing the pressing topics of the day, and should not be treated as mere objects to be seen and not heard.

Asa Candler, a high-profile member of the Methodist laity, went even further in his support of appropriate levels of teaching and education for women. In 1902, Candler worried that his daughter, Lucy, was leaving school too early because of a boy, and complained to his son, “She is now fixing to get married. Then she will have tied herself down to burdens for which I fear she is poorly equipped.”<sup>70</sup> Clearly, Candler felt that his daughter needed to receive more education before she entered married life. Though he did not elaborate exactly what the burdens were that he was worried would tie his daughter down, Candler made it clear that there were certain expectations about the role his daughter would soon take. This idea of a specific role for Christian women was not unusual, and many MECS officials talked about exactly how women’s roles should be carried out at the turn of the century – providing valuable insight into their conceptions of femininity.

In 1904, the Wesley Memorial Church in Atlanta celebrated the one-year anniversary of their Sunday School program by publishing a short history called “The First Mile Post.”<sup>71</sup> The officers of the Sunday School were all men, with the exception of two unmarried assistant secretaries. Interestingly, these two female assistants were not listed with the other assistant secretary, a man, but instead were listed below both the librarian and the treasurer (both were men). In contrast to the officers, all of the teachers listed were women, with the exceptions of

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<sup>70</sup> Asa Griggs Candler to “My Dear Son,” 24 April 1902, 1, Box 1, AGC (emphasis in original).

<sup>71</sup> “The First Mile Post: Being a History of the Sunday School of Wesley Memorial Church, Corner Ivy and Auburn Streets, Atlanta, Georgia,” (Atlanta: Wesley Memorial Church, 1904), Box 3, AGC.

the pastor of the church and one other man, S.C. Aiken.<sup>72</sup> When time came to present a picture of the Sunday School teachers, Mr. Aiken's picture ended up being surrounded



**Figure 8**

by all the women, seeming to give stability as the faces of the female teachers orbited the man (**Figure 8**). Taken together, these things suggested that Methodist leaders expected women to remain in the background working in supportive rather than executive roles at the start of the twentieth century. Indeed, the only woman in an executive role was Mrs. Roger Williams, the Superintendent of the Primary Department of the Sunday School. Once again, this hinted at the idea that women should work with children and nurture their souls rather than be in a position of authority over men. Indeed, this role as the head of the Primary Department could be seen as a motherly role, and thus remained within the home ideal as Mrs. Williams nurtured the young children in her classes.

This reading of Sunday School teachers as an extension of women's nurturing domestic role is a different reading than is presented in Elizabeth Hayes Turner's study of women in

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<sup>72</sup> "The First Mile Post," 5, Box 3, AGC.

Galveston, Texas. In her work, Turner demonstrates that the role of the Sunday School teacher was an empowering one for women. The Sunday School teachers in Galveston were sometimes called upon to create new classes in outlying areas, and eventually these classes would become independent congregations. By her reading, then, these women were essentially acting as church planters.<sup>73</sup> I do not dispute her claims about the women in the churches in Galveston, only point out that this was not the case for the Wesley Memorial Church in Atlanta – there, it was expected that women would fulfill their roles in nurturing, domestic ways. The difference highlights the ways in which the cultures tied to specific towns and places could alter gender construction.

While the Wesley Memorial Church's Sunday School demonstrated one way in which women's work outside the home could still be viewed as a nurturing role, other people began to think of ways that women's roles might be expanded. Mississippi pastor Isaac Borders definitely believed that his wife should have an expanded role in his life and ministry. In one letter to his wife written in 1912, Borders mentioned the tremendous mortgage that the church in Aberdeen, Mississippi had and what a problem it would be to ministry there. However, Borders noted that he was confident that by "working together in mutual love and trust," he and his wife would be able to make a wonderful life and ministry there.<sup>74</sup> Throughout his letters to his wife in the second decade of the twentieth century, it was clear that Borders viewed her as an equal, and as his partner in ministry.<sup>75</sup> Even in the Borders family, though, it was clear that Mrs. Borders would have a spiritual role, as they would be building a ministry. Yet, this was still a larger role than many MECS leaders wanted women to have. This was clear when Borders became

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<sup>73</sup> Elizabeth Hayes Turner, *Women, Culture, and Community: Religion and Reform in Galveston, 1880-1920*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 66-71.

<sup>74</sup> Isaac D. Borders to "My Precious Sweetheart Wife," 18 December 1912, 2, Box 1, IDB.

<sup>75</sup> Borders, 18 December 1912, 4, Box 1, IDB.

involved in a controversy with the editor of the *New Orleans Christian Advocate*, R.A. Meek. Meek and Borders differed on many issues, but particularly on the “woman question” and on whether or not theatre could be used as a tool of the gospel.<sup>76</sup> Throughout 1913, Borders wrote repeatedly to Meek in hopes of his views being published in the *Advocate*. In response to one article received, Meek stated that he would very much like to publish what he had received, but that he felt it would be better if Sister Borders’ remarks be excluded.<sup>77</sup> The very fact that Borders would include a written portion of his wife’s remarks demonstrated the value that he placed upon their partnership.

Another man who greatly valued his wife’s ministerial help was John Jones. The itinerant minister from Mississippi would often attend camp meetings with his wife. There, the two would work hard to try to convert others to Christianity. Jones recorded in his autobiography that his wife was “gifted in song and extemporaneous prayer, and for an old lady had a large share of endurance.” In fact, so great was her energy that she often stayed up much later than her husband with those who were near conversion. Her ministry with the penitents at these camp meetings was so successful throughout the mid- and late-nineteenth century that eventually her husband asked what she talked to them about. She replied simply that the Lord directed the appropriate portions of Scripture, songs, or life-stories to her mind as she talked to each individual person.<sup>78</sup> Jones’ obvious admiration for his wife and her skill at leading others to Christ demonstrated his conviction that a Christian woman’s role was to evangelize just as much as it was any Christian man’s task. Jones not only valued his wife’s help in ministry, but

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<sup>76</sup> See folder marked “Borders-Lipscomb Controversy” in Box 1, IDB.

<sup>77</sup> R.A. Meek to Isaac D. Borders, 12 March 1913, Box 1, IDB.

<sup>78</sup> Jones, “Autobiography,” Vol. II, 162, JGJ.

acknowledged that she did evangelistic work on her own even after he had to leave the extended meeting and go to bed.

In her role offering spiritual succor to the penitent, Mrs. Jones could well have fit into the role of a church mother. Religious historian Althea Butler documents the ways in which African-American women, particularly those in the Church of God in Christ, used their roles as a church mothers as a vehicle “to remake their religious and social worlds within a framework of piety, devotion, and civic life” in the beginning of the twentieth century.<sup>79</sup> Through their religious work, the women that Butler investigates were able to use the ideal of motherhood in order to create new spaces to take active roles in the world around them.<sup>80</sup> Though Mrs. Jones was neither African-American nor a part of the Church of God in Christ, the ways in which her husband described her work – leading their family devotions, caring for orphan children they adopted, and ministering to the spiritual needs of the penitent at camp meetings – were all ways in which she took on the role of a spiritual mother. In fact, it was her great success at camp meetings that caused her own husband to marvel at her spirituality and physical stamina.

Interestingly both Jones and Borders, who so valued the work of their wives in their pastoral ministries, had personal theologies that did not align with some of the mainline MECS’ theology. Jones’ theology of entire sanctification as a second blessing, while not unheard of within the MECS, was still outside the official denominational statements by the end of the nineteenth century. Jones even noted in his autobiography that when he heard Bishop William W. Duncan talk about the idea of perfect love as a life-long pursuit how it did not match with his

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<sup>79</sup> Althea D. Butler, *Women in the Church of God in Christ: Making a Sanctified World*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 12.

<sup>80</sup> Butler, *Women in the Church of God in Christ*, 15, 31.

own ideas or experiences.<sup>81</sup> While Jones' ideas were slightly out-of-step with the prevailing notions of sanctification, it was Borders who was truly heterodox. His personal statement of faith, called "Credo," though containing elements of orthodoxy, nonetheless questioned important elements of Christian faith. At one point, Borders declared, "I make my own capacity for heaven; no imputation of another's righteousness can make it for me."<sup>82</sup> This essentially nullified the influence of orthodox Protestantism in Borders' words, and meant a vastly reduced role of Jesus in his view of salvation. At the same time, though, this statement was a manifesto of Borders' independence. He essentially proclaimed that he was able to achieve heaven on his own, without divine help. For an MECS pastor in Mississippi at the early part of the twentieth century, this was dramatically heterodox.

While both Jones and Borders held views that were at some variance with their larger denomination, these two men also had some of the most expansive views of a Christian woman's role in ministry. Heterodoxy (which, to be clear, was very slight in Jones' case) and an expanded view of a Christian woman's role cannot be made to connect neatly, however. John Massey, the college president, gave no hint of disagreeing with stated MECS doctrine or polity in his voluminous writings; yet, he made his admiration for and reliance on his wife, Elnora Frances Massey, clear throughout his written *Reminiscences*.<sup>83</sup> In fact, the last chapter of his memoir was

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<sup>81</sup> Jones, "Autobiography," 217, JGJ. Even though Jones used the same terms and had much of the same theology as those in the Holiness movement, he never identified himself as anything but a Southern Methodist. It is for this reason that this author has kept him in the ranks of the MECS, though more will be said about him in the opening chapter of Section III, which examines the Holiness movement.

<sup>82</sup> Isaac D. Borders, "Credo," n.d., 2, Box 1, IDB. Traditional understandings of Trinitarian theology, soteriology, and other basic elements of the Christian faith were all attacked in this document.

<sup>83</sup> For example, see Massey, *Reminiscences*, 319.

a direct copy of the program from her memorial service. The tributes contained there made it clear that the ministry of her husband as a college president, was supported, encouraged, and partnered in by Mrs. Massey – in other words, she acted as the helpmeet. Even in this example, however, Mrs. Massey frequently acted as the substitute mother for the young women at the college, and so continued to work within the ideal of the home to tend to the spiritual needs of those in her house.<sup>84</sup> This fit well with Massey’s speeches on the ways in which women should seek to model their faith, and live as Christian women and “polished cornerstones” in the world, providing a sure foundation for civilization.<sup>85</sup> This ideal fit in well with many contemporary notions of appropriate roles for women in reform work.<sup>86</sup>

One woman who exemplified the ideal of a Christian woman in James Osgood Andrew Clark’s mind was the First Lady, Lucy Webb Hayes. In 1878, the Georgia pastor went to visit Washington D.C. and was received by the first lady. Clark wrote back to his wife in glowing terms about Mrs. Hayes, remarking not only that she was charming, but also that she was a “true and perfect Christian woman.” In her, the pastor from Georgia felt that visitors met a woman “in whom there is no guile, and in whom the gentlest and noblest Christian graces are happily blended in associated beauty.” Thus, guests felt that they were with “a true wife and mother, as well as with a lady of exalted rank and dignity.”<sup>87</sup> Clark felt that her mere presence and purity of heart was enough to keep her husband on the straight and narrow as he remarked, “Her influence and example alone must keep Mr. Hayes from doing many naughty things, even if he were so

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<sup>84</sup> Massey, *Reminiscences*, 324-330.

<sup>85</sup> Massey, “Higher Education of Man,” 3, ACFC.

<sup>86</sup> Ginzburg, *Women and the Work of Benevolence*, 1, 190, 212.

<sup>87</sup> James Osgood Andrew Clark to “My Precious Wife,” 25 June 1878, reprinted in the *Baltimore Episcopal Methodist* and found in the Clark Scrapbook, n.p., Box 7, JOAC.

disposed.” Thus, through her influence on the President, Mrs. Hayes fulfilled the ideal of those who saw Christian women as the polished cornerstones of society, and through her wifely influence on the President of the United States, set a civil tone in Washington politics.

The emphasis on Mrs. Hayes’ purifying influence on her husband and her care for her family (as Clark called her “a true wife and mother”) seemed to blend the qualities that Clark believed women should exhibit, and retained them in their appropriate place in society.

According to Clark’s letter, Mrs. Hayes was not involved in affairs outside the home nor did she directly mention her views on particular political matters to her husband. Rather, it was her “influence and example *alone* [emphasis added]” that kept the President acting in an appropriate manner.<sup>88</sup> The argument that Clark made about a woman’s influence on politics was very similar to contemporary arguments about women’s place in the world. These ideas taught that the appropriate role of women in politics was to be a purifying influence, but not to get directly involved.<sup>89</sup> Such arguments were current during the end of the Victorian period, and it was clear that Clark fully imbibed these notions while at the same time blending them with his ideas of the sacred.<sup>90</sup> In other words, the proper place for women was in the home where their moral

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<sup>88</sup> Clark to “My Precious Wife,” n.p., JOAC.

<sup>89</sup> For examples, see Cott, *Bonds of Womanhood*, 199-200; Ginzburg, *Women and the Work of Benevolence*, 1; Edwards, *Gendered Strife and Confusion*, 6-7, 20; and Wheeler, *New Women of the New South*, 17-20. For older representations of this through the idea of Republican Motherhood, see Kerber, *Women of the Republic*, 265-288; Zagarri, *Revolutionary Backlash*, 5, 19.

<sup>90</sup> For more, see Mary G. Dietz and James Farr, “‘Politics would undoubtedly unwoman her’: Gender, Suffrage, and American Political Science,” in *Gender and American Social Science: The Formative Years*, Helene Silverberg, ed. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1998): 61-85; and Lyman Abbott, *America in the Making*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1911), 155-157.

authority and example might influence their husbands and children, thus gently purifying their hearts and leading them to Christ through their example of Christian femininity.

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Throughout the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, MECS theology had a focus on conversion. This meant that Methodist officials conceived of gender, in particular femininity and family life, through a lens focused on evangelism. The ideas of womanhood of many Methodist leaders were rooted in the notion that women were to be the foundation for a Christian home that would nurture the young, impressionable souls of children and lead them to Jesus. In order for this to happen, many Methodist leaders argued that women needed to receive an education, even if such an education was not equal to that which men received. Women's education tended to focus on literary achievements and ideas of beauty and stayed away from the hard sciences or business degrees.<sup>91</sup> Methodist leaders believed that a literary education would prepare women for the many trials and travails that they would encounter. Furthermore, it would train them in the necessary Christian virtues so that they might better influence their families and encourage godly behavior in their homes. And for many Methodist officials, those homes were sacred spaces – they were places where they might find respite from the world, but more importantly, where future generations might learn the truths of the Christian religion. Thus, in a denomination so heavily focused on evangelism and missions work, the home was the first field where they might bring others to Christ.

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<sup>91</sup> Women's colleges frequently provided curriculums based on literary and fine arts achievements rather than the science- or business-based curriculums found at men's schools. For a comparison of men's and women's education, see the *1905 Annual Catalogue of the Alabama Conference Female College*, in The Methodist Archives Center, Huntington College Library, Huntington College, Montgomery, Alabama; and compare with the *Millsaps College Register, 1906-1907*, in J. B. Cain Archives of Mississippi Methodism, Millsaps-Wilson Library, Millsaps College, Jackson, Mississippi.

In fact, every idea that MECS officials had about gender, about what it meant to be a man, about how femininity was to be thought of and displayed, and the nature of family life was tempered by their understandings of theology. Of course, this makes one wonder if radical theology could have the power to dramatically reinterpret Southern notions of gender. In order to answer this question, the next section of three chapters explore the ways in which the Holiness movement in the American South constructed gendered ideals.<sup>92</sup>

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<sup>92</sup> This section is deliberately broad in its exploration of Holiness theology. It does not discuss the many schisms that appeared in the movement, nor does it examine the split between Holiness and Pentecostal groups, though it is worth noting that all of the people under study stayed with the Holiness movement and did not join the Pentecostals. For those who want a more in-depth study of both the theology of the Holiness and Pentecostal movements and their splits and schisms, Randall J. Stephens' work, *The Fire Spreads: Holiness and Pentecostalism in the American South*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2008) is recommended.

**SECTION III:**  
**THE SOUTHERN HOLINESS MOVEMENT**

While both Southern Baptists and Methodists emphasized an individual's need to believe in Jesus, the advancement of the kingdom of God was not the only thing Christians in Mississippi, Alabama, and Georgia were concerned with between 1877 and 1915. Many devoted themselves to living lives that they believed would please God and honor their savior, and so sought to live free from sin. The desire to imitate God's holiness was an idea especially prevalent among those who prescribed to the idea of living sinless lives here on earth. Many of these people at the turn of the century were members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and had read John Wesley's treatise, *A Plain Account of Christian Perfection*.<sup>1</sup> (Wesley was the founder of Methodism and so his teachings held particular importance for Methodists.) The doctrinal turn towards living holy lives here on earth picked up momentum in the South after the Civil War during the late-1870s when many members of evangelical groups began to be fascinated with the idea of entire sanctification, also known as Christian perfection. Those who were enamored with Christian perfection began to seek after it, taking their theology from Wesley as well as later

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<sup>1</sup> I do not refer to the Holiness movement as a separate denomination because during much of the period under study, many people who self-identified with Holiness theology still belonged to other denominations. Eventually, most proponents of entire sanctification came out of these churches to start their own organizations, but for clarity's sake, I simply refer to Holiness as a movement or separate theological fold.

writers such as Phoebe Palmer.<sup>2</sup> Thus, the Holiness theology that developed in the Deep South, but particularly in Georgia in the last decades of the nineteenth century, was a blend of ideas that had long been in Southern Methodism with new notions of instantaneous sanctification developed and propagated by Palmer and other proponents of what became known as the second blessing.<sup>3</sup>

In order to understand what those in the Holiness movement believed about entire sanctification (also known as perfect love, heart purity, Christian perfection, or the victorious life), it is important to understand what most other Evangelicals in the Deep South believed about sanctification. Evangelicals across the region believed that part of what sanctification meant was that the believer would be more and more conformed to will of God. In other words, a believer would order his or her life more around the standards set by the Bible rather than those set by secular society, and thus the devil's temptations would have less and less power to cause that person to sin. Most southern Protestants believed that this was a gradual process occurring over the lifetime of a believer and would never be entirely complete until that person was in heaven.<sup>4</sup> They often juxtaposed the ways in which conversion was an instant process with the gradual work of sanctification. Baptist theologian E.C. Dargan's *Doctrines of Our Faith* stated

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<sup>2</sup> Randall J. Stephens, *The Fire Spreads: Holiness and Pentecostalism in the American South*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2008), 31-34.

<sup>3</sup> For examples of Southerners who claimed to have received entire sanctification roughly fifty years before the start of the Holiness movement, see John Griffing Jones, "Autobiography," Vol. I, 213-214, 98-100, and Vol. II, 217-218, (JGJ); and "State of Religion on the Mississippi District. Extract of a letter from the Rev. William Winans, Presiding Elder of the Mississippi District," *The Methodist Magazine* 7 (1 April 1824), 156. For an example of the influence of Phoebe Palmer to the Southern Holiness movement, see A.J. Jarrell, *The Key to the Storehouse; OR, Faith in God the Secret of All Triumph*, (New York: Palmer and Hughes, n.d. 188?), 29-31.

<sup>4</sup> As a note of just how prevalent this view of sanctification was, see the arguments against it in Beverly Carradine, *The Sanctified Life*, (Cincinnati: M.W. Knapp, 1897), 12-15. Carradine noted, "Many thousands hold to this in all the different churches" (12).

well what many Southerners believed was meant by sanctification. He said, “Justification and adoption are actions which God completes at the times they are taken, but *sanctification is not only a result, but also a process*.... It is an unfolding – a growth.”<sup>5</sup>

By contrast, adherents of the late nine nineteenth century southern Holiness movement believed that sanctification was an instantaneous work in which the Holy Spirit purified the believer’s heart.<sup>6</sup> Thus, Dargan’s further comments were aimed at the Holiness movement as he stated, “Some serious mistakes are made by neglecting this truth [of the gradual growth of sanctification]. Some people have been led to think that sanctification is like the other actions, completed in an instant.”<sup>7</sup> Indeed, the Holiness movement acquired its name through the belief that people could be entirely sanctified in a single instant through the work of the Holy Spirit.<sup>8</sup> This meant that adherents of the Holiness movement believed that Christians could live free from all willful sin in this life. This did not mean that those in the Holiness movement thought that they never again made any mistakes. Holiness author and evangelist W.B. Godbey wrote against this idea, saying, “Christian perfection prepares us to live in this world in perfect harmony with the Divine law, though encumbered with multitudinous infirmities which expose us to mistakes and blunders.”<sup>9</sup> Thus, though critics would accuse members of the Holiness movement of saying that they lived entirely perfect lives, that was not actually what those who claimed to have

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<sup>5</sup> Dargan, *Doctrines of Our Faith*, 159 emphasis in original.

<sup>6</sup> Beverly Carradine, *Sanctification* with Introduction by L.L. Pickett, (Nashville: Publishing House of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, 1891), 71-77.

<sup>7</sup> Dargan, *Doctrines of Our Faith*, 159.

<sup>8</sup> W.B. Godbey, *Work of the Holy Spirit* with Introduction by L.L. Pickett, (Louisville: Pickett Publishing Co., 1902), 31-33.

<sup>9</sup> W.B. Godbey, *Divine Healing*, (Greensboro, NC: Apostolic Messenger Office, 1909), 7.

received entire sanctification believed.<sup>10</sup> Rather, adherents of the Holiness movement claimed that their conscious wills had been purified through the work of the Holy Ghost and they could now live in perfect harmony with the moral law of God, even though they might still make mistakes.

What adherents of the Holiness movement did believe, however, was that the experience of entire sanctification separated them from other believers. They felt that receiving the second blessing was what enabled them to do Christian ministry and was just as important as any seminary degree or other qualification.<sup>11</sup> In fact, for most leaders of the Holiness movement at the turn of the century, the experience of Christian perfection was the most important marker of personal identity. The following chapters demonstrate how radical theology opened new ways of understanding gender, and how leaders tried to spread these understandings to Holiness adherents through sermons, periodicals, and published works.

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<sup>10</sup> For two examples of critics of the Holiness movement, see Bishop A.G. Haygood, “Disputing about Holiness” in Bound Volume 8, (AGH); and J.E. Edwards, “The Holiness ‘Craze’,” *The Christian Index*, 8 October 1885, 5.

<sup>11</sup> See W.B. Godbey, *Church – Bride – Kingdom*, (Cincinnati: God’s Revivalist Office, 1905), 75-76.

**CHAPTER FIVE:**  
**A PECULIAR PEOPLE**

*I discovered, in a way, which I am at a loss fully to express, that the object God had in view when he gave his Son to die for us, and the object Christ had in view when he became a voluntary sacrifice for us, and in sending his Spirit unto us; was to “redeem us from all iniquity, and to purify us unto himself a peculiar people zealous of good works.”*

- John Griffing Jones  
Unpublished Autobiography, Volume I  
(1830)

In 1822, a young Mississippian by the name of John Griffing Jones converted to Christianity. More specifically, he was one of the many Southerners who found solace for their souls in the doctrines of Methodism in the early decades of the nineteenth century. Southerners from all walks of life found spiritual comfort in the teachings of the Methodist and Baptist preachers who moved throughout the countryside preaching about the redeeming love of Jesus. As Jones quickly learned, though, part of what it meant to be a Methodist was to seek after something variously called full salvation, entire sanctification, Christian perfection, or perfect love. Whatever the name, the meaning was the same – the idea that the Holy Spirit would enable the believer to say no to all ungodliness and moral corruption; in other words, to all willful sin. During the early part of the nineteenth century, the doctrine of Christian perfection was a significant part of Methodist theology in the South, but particularly in Mississippi. However, a

little over fifty years later, Jones and many others would come to find that the Methodist Episcopal Church, South (MECS) no longer held to the doctrine of entire sanctification.

The move away from the doctrines of perfect love was one that de-emphasized a unique part of Methodist practice and polity. This move away from doctrinal uniqueness created instead a general Evangelical theological hegemony throughout the South as Baptists and Methodists composed the largest denominations in the region.<sup>1</sup> In fact, numerous scholars have written about how Methodists and Baptists were the two largest Protestant denominations in the United States.<sup>2</sup> Even more impressive, though, Methodism itself was “the most pervasive form of Christianity in the United States” in the decades surrounding the Civil War, with almost a million people (or roughly one of every eight persons in the United States) attending a Methodist camp meeting each year.<sup>3</sup> While the Southern Convention had more members throughout Mississippi, Alabama, and Georgia by the close of the nineteenth century, Methodism still represented a full third of all churchgoers in these Deep South states.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> It is recognized that the formation of both the Wesleyan Methodist Church in 1843 and the Free Methodist Church in 1860 are two counter examples of the move away from the doctrines of Christian perfection in Methodism during this time period. However, neither of these two denominations had a significant influence in the American South as they both opposed slavery. For more on this, see Mark Noll, *America's God: From Jonathan Edwards to Abraham Lincoln*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 169.

<sup>2</sup> For example, see Jon Butler, Grant Wacker, and Randall Balmer, *Religion in American Life: A Short History*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 239; see also the tables in Noll, *America's God*, 166, which list Baptists and Methodists as the largest two religious denominations of any type from 1790 to 1860.

<sup>3</sup> Noll, *America's God*, 168-169.

<sup>4</sup> For specific numbers of parishioners from each denomination, see Department of Commerce and Labor, Bureau of the Census, E. Dana Durand, Director, *Bulletin 103 (Second Edition, Revised and Enlarged): Religious Bodies: 1906*, (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1910), 42-47, 103-104.

After the American Civil War, this Methodist/Baptist theological dominance continued throughout the Deep South and created a broad-based Evangelical culture that heavily influenced ideas of gender identity. This dominance was so pervasive that between eighty and ninety percent of all churchgoers in the South, and roughly one-third of the total population, could be lumped into these two theological traditions.<sup>5</sup> While there were many points of agreement between Evangelicals and the Holiness movement, the idea that the baptism of the Holy Spirit was the mark of mature believers and qualifying sign for Christian service led the leaders of the Holiness movement to understandings of gender that did not fit into the larger evangelical scheme. Rather, part of the Holiness movement's explosive growth was because of the implications of its theology and the ways in which leaders developed and spread new understandings of gender.

Before delving into an exploration of the Holiness movement's understanding of manhood, womanhood, and family life, however, it is important to get a sense of the antebellum history of southern Holiness as well as a few of the more important points of Holiness theology that its leaders believed had an influence on personal identity. Only in this way will one begin to understand the depth of meaning that Holiness leaders found in their new identities and tried to pass on to the laity. The Holiness movement was not an aberration in Southern religious culture that arose suddenly in the decades after Reconstruction. Instead, Holiness theology had been a

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<sup>5</sup> Paul Harvey's article on the evangelical campaign for respectable culture at the turn of the century estimates a high level of Methodist and Baptist attendees. See Paul Harvey, "These Untutored Masses: The Campaign for Respectability among White and Black Evangelicals in the American South, 1870-1930," in Walter H. Conser, Jr., and Rodger M. Payne, eds., *Southern Crossroads: Perspectives on Religion and Culture*, (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 2008), 249-252. For more on the sacred evangelical culture so pervasive in the South, see Ted Ownby, *Subduing Satan: Religion, Recreation, and Manhood in the Rural South, 1865-1920*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1990), 122-143 and 194-212. See also *Religious Bodies: 1906*, 38-42.

part of Methodism since the antebellum decades, but began to separate after Reconstruction as Holiness adherents began to self-identify themselves, not as Methodists, but the sanctified.<sup>6</sup> The process of claiming such a controversial identity was not easy. Those who self-identified with the Holiness movement often faced harsh criticism, derision, and opposition from family and friends. Yet those who claimed to have experienced entire sanctification, or the second blessing, were confident of their experience and often stood up for their beliefs.

By claiming insider status in a group with radical theology, the sanctified leaders of the Holiness movement claimed for themselves a new southern history; one rooted not in slavery and defeat in the American Civil War, but in the blessings of God upon a peculiar people. Additionally, they claimed an identity rooted in a distinct process of sanctification that separated them from, and elevated them above, everyone else. What separated adherents, the leadership claimed, were not the common markers of the day such as socio-economic class, racial identity, or biological sex, but spiritual identity. Thus, the Holiness leaders explained, those who were sanctified found in their new identities freedom from the restrictions of their culture, and, in effect, an opportunity to recast the image of God.

### **Holiness Theology**

The leaders and evangelists of the white Holiness movement in the American South resembled their Evangelical cousins in many ways.<sup>7</sup> The Holiness movement affirmed the traditional

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<sup>6</sup> Throughout this work, the author will follow the lead of the Holiness movement and use the terms “holiness,” “entire sanctification,” “Christian perfection,” “second blessing,” and “perfect love” interchangeably. For an acknowledgement of how these terms relate, see W.B. Godbey, *Divine Healing*, (Greensboro, NC: Apostolic Messenger Office, 1909), 7.

<sup>7</sup> For an excellent study of Holiness in the African-American churches during the time, see John M. Giggie, *After Redemption: Jim Crow and the Transformation of African American*

Protestant doctrines that man was a sinful, broken creature whose only hope of being reconciled to a just and holy God was through faith in the redeeming work of Jesus of Nazareth; who, being fully God and fully man, was the only one who could fulfill the law of God and make restitution for the sins of humanity. Furthermore, they believed that the Protestant version of the Bible was the inspired, inerrant, infallible, and authoritative Word of God. Thus, the movement's leaders could affirm many of the doctrines that their friends, neighbors, and family members throughout the South believed. However, there was a significant difference – the leaders of the Holiness movement believed that sanctification was “the central idea of Christianity, the crowning doctrine of revelation, the moving force of the church, the qualification for service, and fitness for heaven.”<sup>8</sup> This change in theology made a significant difference in the ways that the leadership of the Holiness movement connected theology and gender as they expressed it to their congregants.

While other Evangelicals in the Deep South between 1877 and 1915 believed in the idea of sanctification, they neither elevated the doctrine to such a position nor defined it the same way as Holiness adherents did. The leaders of the Holiness movement argued not only that sanctification was the central idea of Christianity, but also that it was a distinct work of the Holy Spirit to remove the “inherited sinful nature” of humanity.<sup>9</sup> Moreover, this was not a gradual growth in grace, as other evangelicals believed, but was an instantaneous blessing that cleansed

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*Religion in the Delta, 1875-1915*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008). For ease of reading, the racial marker “white” has been dropped through the rest of the text.

<sup>8</sup> Beverly Carradine, *The Sanctified Life*, (Cincinnati: M.W. Knapp, 1897), 114.

<sup>9</sup> Beverly Carradine, *Sanctification* with Introduction by L.L. Pickett, (Nashville: Publishing House of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, 1891), 30.

the believer's heart of the proneness to sin.<sup>10</sup> This meant that the sanctified could live pure lives on earth and be free from willful sin.

The focus on the experience of entire sanctification was the primary theological focus for the Holiness movement, and they used the phrases “second blessing,” “perfect love,” and “Christian perfection” interchangeably to denote the instantaneous work of the Holy Spirit. These second blessing doctrines and ideas were not a uniquely southern phenomenon. Indeed, many religious historians and persons in the movement itself noted how many of the doctrines were latent within Methodist theology from its arrival in the Americas at the beginning of the eighteenth century. Yet most of these scholars argued that it had little impact in the South until after Reconstruction.<sup>11</sup> Even one of the most prominent Holiness evangelists, W.B. Godbey, placed the transition of the movement south over the Ohio River to 1883.<sup>12</sup>

However, there is evidence that there were Southern Methodists who held the ideas of entire sanctification before the Holiness movement of the late nineteenth century, and thus gave Holiness adherents a separate history. One itinerant Southern Methodist minister and eventually the historian of the Mississippi Conference of the MECS, John G. Jones, believed that sanctification was an instantaneous work of the Holy Spirit, though he never self-identified with

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<sup>10</sup> Carradine, *Sanctification*, 20; W.B. Godbey, *Spiritual Gifts and Graces*, (Cincinnati: God's Revivalist Office, 1895), 11.

<sup>11</sup> See Randall J. Stephens, *The Fire Spreads: Holiness and Pentecostalism in the American South*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2008); as well as J. Lawrence Brasher, *The Sanctified South: John Lakin Brasher and the Holiness Movement*, (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1994); and Briane K. Turley, *Wheel within a Wheel: Southern Methodism and the Georgia Holiness Association*, (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1999). See also Allan Coppedge, “Entire Sanctification in Early Methodism: 1812-1835,” *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 13 (Spring 1978): 34-50, for how the doctrines of entire sanctification were retained throughout the early part of the nineteenth century in American Methodism.

<sup>12</sup> Godbey, *Autobiography*, 118.

the Holiness movement.<sup>13</sup> Both he and his wife, claimed to have experienced the second blessing, and in his handwritten autobiography, he recounted his wife's moment of sanctification just six weeks after they were married in 1828, nearly fifty years before the doctrines of perfect love coalesced into a larger movement.<sup>14</sup> Jones dated his own experience with sanctification even earlier. He began to seek after perfect love shortly after his conversion in February of 1822.<sup>15</sup> Jones eventually received the second blessing that same August, though he felt that he lost it less than a year later.<sup>16</sup>

While Jones recorded that he once again experienced entire sanctification and lived with the blessing throughout the rest of his life, he meticulously recounted that he knew numerous others who believed that Christian perfection was an instantaneous work of the Holy Spirit.<sup>17</sup> When Jones began to inquire after entire sanctification, Rev. Daniel De Vinne preached one of the sermons that proved most helpful to him at a camp meeting in Redlick settlement, Jefferson County, Mississippi. This sermon showed Jones that it was his "privilege to be cleansed from all sin now" rather than having to wait for a gradual work in grace.<sup>18</sup> De Vinne did not provide the only help that Jones received as he sought sanctification, though. A relative gave Jones the *Life of Hester Ann Rogers*, which taught the doctrine of instant holiness, and was an encouragement

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<sup>13</sup> John Griffing Jones, "A Brief Autobiography of J.G. Jones and J.A. Jones written for their children," Vol. II, 217-218, John G. Jones papers MS10, J. B. Cain Archives of Mississippi Methodism, Millsaps-Wilson Library, Millsaps College, Jackson, Mississippi, (JGJ).

<sup>14</sup> Jones, "Autobiography," Vol. I, 213-214; also recounted at the time of her death in Vol. II 1833-1887, 184-185, JGJ.

<sup>15</sup> Jones, "Autobiography," Vol. I, 27.

<sup>16</sup> Jones, "Autobiography," Vol. I, 52-53, 58.

<sup>17</sup> Jones recounts receiving the second blessing again "Autobiography," Vol. I, 98-100.

<sup>18</sup> Jones, "Autobiography," Vol. I, 47.

to him.<sup>19</sup> Those who helped Jones pursue entire sanctification demonstrated that there was a community of like-minded individuals prior to the Civil War who sought after perfect love and wished to be identified by the Holy Spirit's work in their lives.

This community was recognizable enough that even after Jones felt he lost the blessing of entire sanctification, he was able to identify the many people around him who still claimed the blessing. At one camp meeting in 1824, Jones recorded that one woman received the blessing of sanctification while a young man named Basset was "struck down under the influence of sanctifying grace."<sup>20</sup> Later that year, Brother Basset became one of Jones' traveling companions and a prayer partner.<sup>21</sup> During these travels, the two attended the District Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, where Rev. Thomas Clinton issued an altar call for all "felt an earnest desire to be 'cleansed from all sin' and to be made 'perfect in love.'"<sup>22</sup>

Clearly, holiness and entire sanctification was a concept that many preachers and evangelists in the Mississippi District of the Methodist Church understood and sought after during the mid-1820s. In 1824, the *Methodist Magazine*, published in New York, printed an extract of a letter from the presiding elder of the Mississippi District, William Winans. Winans was encouraged by the progress that the church was making in gathering sinners, converting them, and preaching the doctrine of personal holiness. He even asserted that the emphasis on

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<sup>19</sup> Jones, "Autobiography," Vol. I, 50.

<sup>20</sup> Jones, "Autobiography," Vol. I, 93.

<sup>21</sup> Jones, "Autobiography," Vol. I, 96.

<sup>22</sup> Jones, "Autobiography," Vol. I, 97.

this doctrine was helping to “revive the work of God.”<sup>23</sup> The first issue of the *Methodist Magazine* for 1825 contained another extract of Winans’ letter, which noted that preachers within the Mississippi District, were “becoming more earnest in urging their hearers to ‘go on to perfection.’” (John Jones may well have been one of the preachers that Winans was thinking of as Jones noted in his autobiography that many of his own sermons and talks from that point forward revolved around the idea of entire sanctification.<sup>24</sup>) Rev. Winans’ letter continued and noted that he was very happy that five people at one camp meeting that year “professed to experience it [entire sanctification], and others seem to be pressing on toward that ‘mark of the prize.’”<sup>25</sup>

While there were examples of others in the Mississippi District who sought and received entire sanctification, it was unclear just how long this emphasis lasted, as there was evidence that the doctrines of entire sanctification also caused controversy in the antebellum South. Jones later recounted that he preached several sermons on the second blessing at district conferences. At the 1855 District Conference in Jackson, Louisiana, Jones wanted to preach on the topic and as he did, he felt that the Holy Ghost gave him “liberty and Spiritual power.” Jones then gave an altar call and many of the preachers in attendance met to pray “that all who felt the need of it might enter into the rest of perfect love.” This did not go unnoticed, however, and shortly after leaving

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<sup>23</sup> “State of Religion on the Mississippi District. Extract of a letter from the Rev. William Winans, Presiding Elder of the Mississippi District,” *The Methodist Magazine* 7 (1 April 1824), 156.

<sup>24</sup> Jones, “Autobiography,” Vol. I, 116-117, 131, and 166.

<sup>25</sup> “State of Religion in the Mississippi District. Extract of a letter from the Rev. William Winans.” Dated October 20, 1824, *The Methodist Magazine* 8 (1 January 1825), 39. For more examples of the doctrines of holiness in American Methodism during the early part of the nineteenth century, see Coppedge, “Entire Sanctification in Early Methodism.” While Coppedge does argue that these doctrines remained in American Methodism, very few of his examples come from the South.

the church, a younger pastor who did not feel that sanctification was an instant process, but rather a “gradual growth through all life” confronted Jones on the issue of full salvation.<sup>26</sup> This encounter led to sermons being preached by both the second blessing and the gradual sanctification sides of the Methodist conference. According to Jones’ account, numerous “leading ministers arose in quick succession and asserted not only their unqualified belief in the doctrine of Christian perfection..., but testified to their personal experience of a clean heart.”<sup>27</sup> That so many ministers rose to the defense of instantaneous perfect love, and chose to identify themselves by it, was an encouragement to Jones. He then recorded that many who believed in the doctrine boldly proclaimed their belief in it after that meeting.<sup>28</sup> Similarly, in 1859, at the Conference in Woodville, Mississippi, Jones again preached on the doctrine of entire sanctification; and though this did not cause the same level of controversy as it did in 1855, Jones was gratified that Bishop Paine, the presiding bishop that year, expressed approval of his message.<sup>29</sup> This antebellum history was one that later adherents could refer to in order to re-imagine their own identities and histories.

John Jones clearly expressed his beliefs about the instantaneous work of the Holy Spirit in a believer’s life for the thirty years leading up to the American Civil War, and suggested that his own experience of it had been a defining point in his life. Yet, there was little to suggest that he experienced the disapproval of the Methodist bishops and leaders because of his identification with the doctrines of Christian perfection. In fact, Jones was assigned to write the history of the

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<sup>26</sup> Jones, “Autobiography,” Vol. II, 106.

<sup>27</sup> Jones, “Autobiography,” Vol. II, 106-107.

<sup>28</sup> Jones, “Autobiography,” Vol. II, 107.

<sup>29</sup> Jones, “Autobiography,” Vol. II, 114-155.

Mississippi Methodists in 1872.<sup>30</sup> Later, in 1886, Jones did take issue with the fact that Bishop William W. Duncan told an entering class of Methodist ministers that sanctification was to be a “gradual, life-long development” rather than an instant work of the spirit.<sup>31</sup> Yet, the next year, Jones had the opportunity to preach before the district conference in Brookhaven, and used the chance to preach on the doctrine of instantaneous Christian perfection.<sup>32</sup>

Thus, there were significant currents of Holiness theology among the Methodist leaders of the Mississippi Conference before the American Civil War.<sup>33</sup> However, there was no evidence to show that Holiness adherents identified themselves any differently than their Methodist brethren in the antebellum period. Indeed, though Jones lived well into the 1880s, a time when Holiness adherents began to self-identify and talk about starting separate denominations, Jones retained his Methodist identity and never gave any indication that he even considered identifying himself with the Holiness movement.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> John Griffing Jones, *A Complete History of Methodism As Connected with the Mississippi Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South* Vol. I, (Nashville: Publishing House of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, 1908), 5.

<sup>31</sup> Jones, “Autobiography,” Vol. II, 217-218.

<sup>32</sup> Jones, “Autobiography,” Vol. II, 221-222.

<sup>33</sup> Historians who examine the Holiness movement in the South have typically overlooked this fact. One of the most recent works on the Holiness and Pentecostal movements in the South, *The Fire Spreads*, briefly glanced over those who held to Holiness beliefs in the region prior to the Civil War; but concluded that they were in the minority within the Methodist fold and actually had their roots outside of the American South. See Stephens, *The Fire Spreads*, particularly Chapter 2, “Angels from the North,” 15-55. As noted in footnote 19, Coppedge argues a very different case in his article in the *Wesleyan Theological Journal*. However, Coppedge’s evidence in the South is far from conclusive.

<sup>34</sup> For more on self-identification, see Carl J. Couch, “Self-Identification and Alienation,” *The Sociological Quarterly* 7 (Summer 1966): 255-264; and Norman A. Chance, “Acculturation, Self-Identification, and Personality Adjustment,” *American Anthropologist* New Series 67 (April 1965): 372-393. Respectful of Jones’ identification with the MECS rather than the Holiness

As suggested above, while there were those who believed in Christian perfection in the South before the Civil War, it was in the late 1870s and early 1880s that the doctrine gained momentum throughout the region, and a movement of those who identified themselves primarily by their adherence to the doctrines of entire sanctification truly began. By 1883, church leaders who adhered to the doctrines of Christian perfectionism within the MECS in Georgia had formed enough of a support system that they founded the Georgia Holiness Association.<sup>35</sup> The roll for 1883 listed one hundred and forty individuals, all of whom consciously identified with entire sanctification and approved the first resolution to spread the doctrines of “Scriptural Holiness” throughout Georgia.<sup>36</sup>

While the Methodist Episcopal Church, South (MECS) did not endorse the doctrines of the second blessing as an instantaneous work of the Holy Spirit after the 1870s, the idea of perfect love was an important part of Methodist theology, and so on this point, the two groups could frequently converse, even though they often meant very different things by it.<sup>37</sup> For example, in 1893, the (New Orleans) *Southwestern Christian Advocate*, for many years the

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movement, I have continued to include him primarily in the Methodist chapters rather than the Holiness ones.

<sup>35</sup> For the complete roster for 1883 and 1884, see *Rev. W.A. Dodge as We Knew Him with Sketches of His Life, Diary, Consecration and Sermons*, Compiled by Mrs. J. Wm. Garbutt, (Atlanta: The Franklin Printing and Publishing Company, 1906), 126-131 in *William Asbury Dodge: Southern Holiness Pioneer*, Compiled by Kenneth O. Brown, (Hazleton, PA: Holiness Archives, 2001). For more on the history of the Georgia Holiness Association, see Briane K. Turley, *Wheel within a Wheel: Southern Methodism and the Georgia Holiness Association*, (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1999).

<sup>36</sup> *W.A. Dodge*, 123-124.

<sup>37</sup> The writings of John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, lend themselves to different interpretations as to what he thought Christian perfection meant. For more, see John Wesley, “A Plain Account of Christian Perfection,” in *The Works of Rev. John Wesley in Ten Volumes*, Vol. VIII, First American Edition, (New York: J. &J. Harper, 1827), 5-67.

landmark periodical for much of the MECS, reprinted Charles Wesley's hymn "Canaan of Perfect Love" on its front page. At this point, the editors of the *Advocate* had not yet taken a strong stance on the idea of Christian perfection; and it tried to please both sides by allowing a multitude of views to appear in its pages. An example of the way the paper tried to please both sides was the hymn's last two stanzas, which read:

Give me a new, a perfect heart,  
From doubt, and fear, and sorrow free,  
The mind which was in Christ impart  
And let my spirit cleave to thee.

Oh, that I now, from sin released,  
Thy word may to the utmost prove,  
Enter into the promised rest,  
The Canaan of thy perfect love.<sup>38</sup>

Holiness leaders would have understood this as clearly talking about the idea of entire sanctification and the instant the Holy Spirit purified a believer's heart. Those who disagreed with the movement would read these two stanzas as talking about two different experiences. The former stanza would be read as an affirmation of God purifying the believer's heart at the moment of regeneration, while the final stanza would be understood as talking about death and entering into heaven. These interpretations demonstrated the importance of the idea of perfect love, and the two readings of this hymn exemplified the ways that Methodists and those in the Holiness movement were two peoples separated by a common theological language.

Christian perfection and perfect love were such important ideas that many within the MECS began to fight over what exactly the terms meant: one side arguing that it meant entire sanctification on earth while the other insisted that perfect love could only be found in heaven. In fact, both Methodists and Baptists fiercely opposed the doctrines of the Holiness movement

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<sup>38</sup> Charles Wesley, "Canaan of Perfect Love," (New Orleans) *Southwestern Christian Advocate*, 11 May 1893, 1.

and often derided the latter group's activities and theology. In a rare attempt by MECS leaders to be conciliatory toward those in the Holiness movement, W. S. Harrison, a correspondent to the New Orleans *Christian Advocate*, attempted to placate readers by arguing that the "apparent differences of opinion on the subject have originated, we think, from the effort to shape all men's attainments in grace by some men's experience." The writer continued and tried to argue against the idea that entire sanctification must be an instantaneous, memorable experience. Harrison noted that he knew many people who had undoubtedly received "the fullness of grace, but not according to that formula [of the second blessing]," and noted that continual growth was the pattern of the normal Christian life.<sup>39</sup> While Harrison clearly was trying to keep the peace, the idea of growth in sanctification was one of the things that many in the Holiness movement fought hard against as they defined their new spiritual identities. Indeed, they thought that the instantaneous experience of perfect love was so wondrous, so life-changing, that it would be impossible to mistake.

The leaders of the southern Holiness movement believed that not only was perfect love important, it was the central doctrine for the life of a Christian. In 1907, the leader of the Indian Springs Camp Meeting, G.W. Mathews, explained to the readers of *The Atlanta Constitution* that "at conversion, one sought pardon from sin, whereas at sanctification, one was seeking for the infilling of the Holy Spirit, and empowerment for service in religious work."<sup>40</sup> Here, Mathews set a clear difference between the two experiences. Though not all Holiness preachers defined it in the same ways, they all agreed it was a separate experience from conversion. In fact, Mathews noted that sanctification was an experience that moved the believer onto a higher plane in his

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<sup>39</sup> W. S. Harrison, "Christian Perfection – What It Is," (New Orleans) *Christian Advocate*, 5 November 1896, 1.

<sup>40</sup> "Camp Meeting is at an End," *The Atlanta Constitution*, 20 August 1907, 7.

faith, as it empowered Christians for service. Entire sanctification was also a blessing that brought the believer into a perfect communion with God, according to those in the movement. This meant that the sanctified lived entirely in accordance with the law of God. Those who did not believe in entire sanctification could not understand how adherents of this theology believed that they could keep the mandates of a morally perfect God. Thus the many critics of the movement charged that adherents either were deluding themselves or were actually insane as they could not understand how adherents thought they could live without sin or mistakes.<sup>41</sup>

The leaders of the movement did not actually advocate the idea that they could live entirely without sin or mistakes, however. Instead, they carefully articulated the fact that they still had limitations. Indeed, the noted Holiness evangelist and preacher W.B. Godbey freely admitted that sanctification did not remove “the liability of mistakes, because the mind is not made perfect until this moral puts on immortality. Therefore, intellect, memory, and judgment will make mistakes. This perfection is simply that of the heart.”<sup>42</sup> Though Godbey worried about his loss of memory as he aged, he felt he did not have to worry about hubris in his memoirs, as he proclaimed, “I am dead to egotism and everything else but God and His precious truth.”<sup>43</sup> The leaders of the movement itself argued that sanctification gave the believer a new identity, and was as much about living in rhythm with the will of God as it was about self-control.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> “Holiness,” *Christian Index* 64, (12 August 1886): 31.

<sup>42</sup> W.B. Godbey, *Autobiography of Rev. W.B. Godbey, A.M.*, (Cincinnati: God’s Revivalist Office, 1909), 102.

<sup>43</sup> Godbey, *Autobiography*, 53.

<sup>44</sup> W.B. Godbey, *Work of the Holy Spirit*, (Louisville, KY: Pickett Publishing Co., 1902), 52. There are scholars who interpret the Holiness movement as primarily a way of demonstrating self-mastery and discipline. Such an interpretation can be found in Benton Johnson, “Do

The preachers and evangelists of the southern Holiness movement spread the doctrines of entire sanctification throughout the Deep South. Yet, in contrast to their Evangelical cousins in the Southern Baptist Convention and the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, many of the people regarded as leaders of the Holiness movement spent most of their time traveling from place to place spreading the good news of Christian perfection. They did not feel that their ministry was circumscribed by geographic location.<sup>45</sup> Instead, Holiness officials deliberately built a culture spanning state and even regional boundaries. W.B. Godbey, one of the most well-known Holiness evangelists, traveled throughout the region, and cared little about the actual geographic locale as long as he was able to preach on Christian perfection.<sup>46</sup> This disregard for regional identity brought opposition from officials of other denominations who worried that the movement was simply another form of northern invasion. Religious scholar Briane Turley records some of this opposition, stating, “Warren Candler among others explicitly argued that the northern church was using the Holiness movement as a major weapon in its arsenal against the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.”<sup>47</sup> While members of the Holiness movement were not a part of an envisioned plot to destroy southern denominational life, they did build a culture that spanned the nation.

A major part of the Holiness movement’s multi-regional culture that worried white southerners like MECS bishop Warren Candler were the religious periodicals that helped to

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Holiness Sects Socialize in Dominant Values?,” *Social Forces* 39 (May 1961): 309-316, especially 313-316.

<sup>45</sup> For an example of the wide-ranging work of these traveling evangelists of Holiness, see Stephens, *Fire Spreads*, 47-52, 75, 99.

<sup>46</sup> For a few examples, see Godbey, *Autobiography*, 12, 104, 299, 369, 469, 478.

<sup>47</sup> Turley, *Wheel Within a Wheel*, 15.

spread the doctrines of perfect love throughout the Deep South.<sup>48</sup> These newspapers, tracts, and pamphlets came from across the South and beyond. Historian Randall Stephens notes that these publications came from places as varied as Virginia, South Carolina, Georgia, Ohio, and even parts of New England.<sup>49</sup> The print culture of the Holiness movement was a major way in which these leaders disseminated the doctrines of entire sanctification to adherents throughout Mississippi, Alabama, and Georgia, but it also meant that the movement was one that deliberately looked beyond regional boundaries as preachers and evangelists sought to instill an identity based more upon religious experience than geographic place. The leaders who appear in this study focused on three Deep South states do not necessarily all come from Mississippi, Alabama, and Georgia. Some of the preachers and evangelists quoted were based in these states, while many others conducted revival services throughout the region, or had tracts, pamphlets, and other publications spread across the area by sanctified revivalists. The leadership of the Holiness movement tried to develop a subculture that deliberately eschewed southern identity in favor of a sense of self founded in entire sanctification.

Grounding identity in a specific theological meant that experiencing personal holiness was the driving force for, the prime occupation of, and virtually the sole focus of the Southern Holiness movement at the turn of the century. Leaders believed that it completely reworked the personal identities adherents of the movement, and continually hoped to demonstrate how Holiness theology rearranged ideas of gender. Though they often experienced ridicule, slander, and sometimes even became social pariahs, the leaders of the southern Holiness movement went forward believing that they were doing God's work. They felt assured that preaching the second

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<sup>48</sup> Stephens, *Fire Spreads*, 101, 135.

<sup>49</sup> Stephens, *Fire Spreads*, 99-135.

blessing was the will of God, and that they were following in the footsteps of generations of saints and martyrs before them. Everywhere they went, Holiness preachers and evangelists told their audiences that each individual needed not only to come to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ; but also that the true, mature believer needed to experience the instantaneous sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit in order to have a new identity.

### **The Pattern of Holiness**

The experience of Christian perfection was, for many eventual leaders of the Holiness movement, almost a second conversion experience. It was a moment when the leader claimed that his or her life and identity changed forever – indeed, each one believed that it had eternal significance. Each person’s experience of holiness had a slightly different version; however, taken together experiences of sanctification followed a five-step pattern: inward examination and questioning; the consecration of self and symbolically leaving all on the altar; a sense of an intimate connection with God or baptism of purifying fire; and a need to proclaim the experience of the second blessing.

As the many stories of the moment of sanctification told by leaders of the movement attested, a person’s new identity, which began with becoming filled with the Spirit and empowered for service, did not come easily. The first step that Holiness evangelists talked about in this process of sanctification usually began with the believer seeking either holiness itself, or coming to the realization that there was something missing in his or her Christian walk. One of the founders of the annual Indian Springs Camp Meeting, W.A. Dodge, had sought the experience of holiness before he asked members of his congregation (he was already an MECS pastor) to pray with him for Christian perfection. Even after his parishioners left his office,

however, Dodge stayed late into the night praying for the baptism of the Holy Spirit.<sup>50</sup> Similarly, John Lakin Brasher, one of Alabama's most well known holiness evangelists, spent several days attending the meetings of the Salvation Army and discussing the doctrines of sanctification with them.<sup>51</sup> He was not entirely sure what he was seeking, only that his Christian life lacked something. Similarly, even though Brasher's wife, Minnie, received entire sanctification before he did, she had not been seeking holiness, she was asking for the ability to die gracefully, as she believed she was on her deathbed.<sup>52</sup> Even the preeminent evangelist of Holiness in the South, W.B. Godbey, recalled that he could remember when he was not yet sanctified, and remembered the feeling that there was something missing from his Christian walk.<sup>53</sup>

While the initial step in receiving Holiness required seeking after it, for many, the second stage in gaining a new sense of self was a time of personal examination that they believed was led by the Holy Spirit. Author and evangelist Beverly Carradine recalled a series of almost audible questions that led him towards sanctification.<sup>54</sup> Minnie Brasher, on the other hand, saw questions written on the wall in front of her.<sup>55</sup> This process of self-examination was sometimes recounted as simply inward questioning, or could be replaced by the individual repeating to him

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<sup>50</sup> Kenneth O. Brown, "William Asbury Dodge," in *William Asbury Dodge: Southern Holiness Pioneer*, Compiled by Kenneth O. Brown, (Hazleton, PA: Holiness Archives, 2001), xi-xii.

<sup>51</sup> J. Lawrence Brasher, *The Sanctified South: John Lakin Brasher and the Holiness Movement*, (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1994), 178-180. The Salvation Army also believed in entire sanctification.

<sup>52</sup> Brasher, *Sanctified South*, 176-177.

<sup>53</sup> Godbey, *Autobiography*, 94-95.

<sup>54</sup> Brasher, *Sanctified South*, 177.

<sup>55</sup> Brasher, *Sanctified South*, 176.

or herself Scriptures affirming the belief that sanctification was real; and that the person was on the path towards it.

After self-examination was the third stage, in which leaders described how the penitent symbolically “put all on the altar.” In other words, the seeker deliberately sought out his or her greatest fears or most treasured object, whether it be a physical thing, a relationship, or even personal reputation, and then offered that thing to God. If it were a fear, the person would then offer to face it; if a valued object, the seeker would promise to give it up if necessary.<sup>56</sup> This was, perhaps, the most important stage in acquiring a new identity, as each individual had to wrestle with his or her deepest fears and personal insecurities in order to gain a new sense of self. Holiness proponents told their listeners that they needed to put aside their old identity and all that went with it. It was only after this point that a new, sanctified identity could emerge. W.A. Dodge even wrote out his “Consecration,” wherein he offered to God’s use “Myself, my body, eyes, tongue, hands, feet, mind and heart. My wife...; my boy..., and my little daughter..., my books, clothes, money, all I now have. Yes, all my means are, and shall be, Thine. My time, and if there is anything else that appertains to me, that I have not mentioned, I lay it on the altar to stay there forever.”<sup>57</sup> Clearly, the idea of putting all “on the altar” was a significant step. Holiness evangelists believed that it meant the seeker wanted to rearrange all of priorities, all loves, and put God before everything else. The language of the altar was a reference to the Old Testament where the Israelites placed their offerings on an altar in the temple in order to sacrifice them to God. Thus, when a person who sought holiness placed items “on the altar,” it meant that

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<sup>56</sup> See Cagle, *Life and Work*, 21; and Brasher, *Sanctified South*, 176-177.

<sup>57</sup> Brown, *William Asbury Dodge*, xii.

that individual was symbolically sacrificing that item to God, and killing the desire and love of it in deference to a desire to please God and receive the blessing of the divine.

In almost every recounting of the experience of the second blessing, once a person placed her all “on the altar,” she soon went into the fourth step, which was a sense of abiding peace and deep communion with God that confirmed the adherent’s new identity. Such was the case with one of the South’s premier female evangelists, Mary Lee Cagle, and it was only this sense of an intimate relationship with God that kept her going despite her family’s early, and fierce, opposition to her preaching.<sup>58</sup> Similarly, both Minnie and John Lakin Brasher felt a sense of light and peace at the time they identified as their sanctification.<sup>59</sup>

A sense of intimate union with the Holy Ghost was not the only way that leaders told their hearers to identify their sanctification, though. Sometimes they might describe the same experience as a baptism of fire. W.A. Dodge recalled that the day after he penned his consecration, he “felt that God sent His fire and consumed the offering.”<sup>60</sup> Holiness leaders marked this sense of intimacy or baptism of fire as an indication of a higher, greater Christian experience that marked a spiritual maturity in their lives. When Beverly Carradine noted the difference between regeneration and sanctification, he told his readers that regeneration was being born into the family of God, but that sanctification was a baptism by fire. He then reasoned, “*A baptism of fire would hardly be the proper swaddling-clothes for a newborn*

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<sup>58</sup> Cagle, *Life and Work*, 21.

<sup>59</sup> Brasher, *Sanctified South*, 177, 180.

<sup>60</sup> Brown, *William Asbury Dodge*, xii.

*babe.*<sup>61</sup> Clearly, Carradine thought that this experience was not merely one that marked a transition in the adherent's life; it also noted the believer's maturity in faith.

After the experience of sanctification, whether the believer felt a sense of intimate communion or a baptism of purifying fire, the fifth and final step in the pattern was that the newly-sanctified believer must testify to his or her new identity.<sup>62</sup> This important step helped the individual to understand her experience, as well as encouraging that person to identify publically with the larger Holiness movement. Indeed, those who were part of the Holiness movement self-identified, and so this final step was a necessary part of entering into the larger community. This testimony of Christian perfection and self-identification with the Holiness movement was a significant change from the previous ways in which Methodists had taught the doctrine of entire sanctification. Throughout the early part of the nineteenth century, though there was clear evidence that the doctrines of Christian perfectionism were part of orthodox Methodist teachings, adherents did not use these doctrines to define their Christian or denominational identity. Instead, they were Methodists – and a belief in personal holiness was simply a part of that. However, in the 1870s and 1880s, belief in the doctrine of the second blessing became the primary religious identification for many leaders of the Holiness movement across the Deep South.

Because personal holiness was the primary identification for preachers and evangelists in the Holiness movement, they were not simply content to continue with their lives as they had before they were sanctified, and often drew harsh criticism as they tried to live out their new

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<sup>61</sup> Beverly Carradine, *Sanctification* with Introduction by L.L. Pickett, (Nashville: Publishing House of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, 1891), 49 emphasis in original.

<sup>62</sup> Cagle, *Life and Work*, 21; Godbey, *Autobiography*, 94-97, 101-102; and Brasher, *Sanctified South*, 177, 180.

identities. The new understandings of theology altered the ways in which leaders viewed and talked about gender identity as the sanctified attempted to live out a life of perfect love. Yet, to some outsiders it appeared as though those in the Holiness movement were completely out of control and definitely not abiding by their own ideas of perfect love. Members of other theological groups often hated and derided Holiness people. Even secular newspapers articles portrayed the attendees at Holiness revival services as delusional, uneducated, and poor. These were fairly common stereotypes of the Holiness movement in the South. However, it is now clear the Holiness movement attracted adherents from every social group and background.<sup>63</sup> Religious scholar Briane Turley notes that those in the Holiness movement “were not the disinherited, nor were all of them rural.”<sup>64</sup> The most recent study of the history of southern Holiness and Pentecostals, Randall Stephens’ *The Fire Spreads*, also documents that though people within the southern Holiness movement “came from a variety of social and economic backgrounds, they were united in their identification with the poor.”<sup>65</sup> The identification with the poor came because the spokespeople for Holiness believed that entire sanctification was the most important mark of identity, and truly attempted to live out this transformational idea throughout the daily activities of their lives.

However, while Holiness leaders deliberately attempted to undermine class impediments, the doctrines of the movement did find particular resonance in the lives of those from the upcountry of the American South. Historian Randall Stephens records that Holiness leaders found the strongest support “in north Georgia, northwest South Carolina, the western half of

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<sup>63</sup> Briane K. Turley, *A Wheel Within a Wheel: Southern Methodism and the Georgia Holiness Association*, (Macon: Mercer University Press, 1999), 91.

<sup>64</sup> Turley, *Wheel Within a Wheel*, 207.

<sup>65</sup> Stephens, *The Fire Spreads*, 62.

Kentucky, Tennessee, and northeast Texas. Typically – with the exception of Mississippi, which became a center for black holiness – the movement took hold in areas that had not contained a large slave population.”<sup>66</sup> In the areas where the movement took hold, however, it did so with startling success.

Historians have continued to debate why the movement took hold and exploded with such force at the end of the nineteenth century. Briane Turley posits that Holiness became a way of experiencing a renewal of spiritual hope after the losses experienced during the American Civil War. He writes that although many Holiness adherents had experienced conversion before the war, “they could not erase from their consciousness the realization that the blessing of their first religious encounter had not saved them from great material and emotional loss. The Georgia Holiness Association’s message of a “second blessing” experience was welcomed by thousands of Christians in the New South who identified their first blessing with a tragic era.”<sup>67</sup> While that is a possibility, this ignores the issue of whether or not adherents actually were persuaded by the religious teachings of Holiness; instead, it uses those doctrines as a veneer to cover social anxiety. It is the argument of this work that the radical doctrines of the Holiness movement were adopted by adherents because of the transformative religious implications of those teachings. They truly believed what they said they did. While there may have been those who subconsciously dealt with the losses of the Civil War by turning to Holiness, it would have been a strange choice because of the social ostracism experienced by many who identified themselves with the movement.

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<sup>66</sup> Stephens, *The Fire Spreads*, 65.

<sup>67</sup> Turley, *Wheel Within A Wheel*, 91, see also 204 for this argument.

In fact, by 1885, those who testified that the Holy Ghost had baptized them had made such a name for themselves that the *St. Louis Globe-Democrat* had a special correspondent's report on the "Holiness People in Georgia." The article mocked those who believed they were sanctified and portrayed a man named Rev. Miller Willis as an offensive rube who accosted strangers in the street with messages of hell-fire and brimstone.<sup>68</sup> This was a common way that outside groups (both religious as well as secular opponents) attempted to define the Holiness movement. They often portrayed members of the movement as ignorant, offensive, and uncultured.<sup>69</sup>

The preachers and evangelists of the Holiness movement were very aware of their reputations as members of the lower class. Yet many Holiness writers seemed to revel in their identities as part of the lower class, and railed against those with wealth and power in society. W.B. Godbey, one of the movement's most prominent writers and evangelists, warned against those who were able to give their children large inheritances. Godbey cautioned that those who gave their children large amounts of money were likely to "pay their way to Hell!"<sup>70</sup> Beverly Carradine, a leading proponent of Holiness throughout the South at the turn of the century, also worried about the dangers of high society. He told his readers not to get involved with the "stirring, fussy, unspiritual Ladies' Aid Society" which he believed held itself aloof from "the class meeting room where testimonies ring clear, tears drip, and shouts abound."<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>68</sup> "The Holiness People in Georgia," *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*, 16 April 1885.

<sup>69</sup> For, perhaps, the defining popular portrayal of revival and Holiness religion in the early twentieth century, see Sinclair Lewis' novel, *Elmer Gantry*, (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1927).

<sup>70</sup> Godbey, *Autobiography*, 73.

<sup>71</sup> Carradine, *Sanctified Life*, 211.

Carradine's advice demonstrated the type of worship that he thought was most appropriate to those who had been baptized by the Holy Spirit. His was not a structured, staid worship untouched by the power of the Holy Ghost; instead, he wanted there to be emotional displays of the love of God among his people. Carradine obviously thought that those who formed the Ladies' Aid Society would not greet this type of worship warmly. Other pastors and evangelists within the Holiness movement also welcomed expressive worship. Evangelist Mary Lee Cagle felt that the first time she fully expressed her emotions while preaching was the true beginning of her ministry and was thankful that she never felt the need to restrain them again.<sup>72</sup>

Defending the tears and cries of evangelists like Cagle were Holiness authors and publishers like M.W. Knapp, who denounced those who thought they were above emotional worship. Knapp was one of the radicals of the Holiness movement at the beginning of the twentieth century because of his association with the Metropolitan Church Association (MCA), which was known throughout the United States and even in the United Kingdom for its physical manifestations of the Holy Spirit's work such as jumping, crying, and shouting.<sup>73</sup> At one service, a man leapt onto the stage with Knapp, picked him up, and rushed back and forth, all the while shouting, jumping, and proclaiming the glory of his new identity in the Holy Spirit.<sup>74</sup> Knapp felt that both physical and emotional displays were the best way of showing the divine empowerment, and renewed understanding of self that the Holy Spirit brought believers through the second blessing. Thus, many of the leaders of the Holiness movement were suspicious of

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<sup>72</sup> Mary Lee Cagle, *Life and Work of Mary Lee Cagle: An Autobiography*, (Kansas City, MO: Nazarene Publishing House, 1928), 29-31.

<sup>73</sup> William Kostlevy, *Holy Jumpers: Evangelicals and Radicals in Progressive Era America*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 9.

<sup>74</sup> Kostlevy, *Holy Jumpers*, 32-33.

those who eschewed emotion in worship. The level of emotional worship within the Holiness movement was a continuation of the highly demonstrative, often very emotional worship of the Methodist tradition prior to the American Civil War.<sup>75</sup> In fact, leaders of the Holiness movement mixed this emotive style of worship with the theology of perfect love to envision a construction of sanctified manhood that allowed male adherents to demonstrate emotive displays of platonic affection between men at a time when most formulations of Southern masculinity made it difficult to display emotion in public.

Yet, in Knapp's mind, the real danger was not from groups such as the Ladies' Aid Society that derided emotionalism within the Holiness movement, it was from the professional preachers who had become enervated through excessive schooling, and formulated their identities around educational attainment rather than in religious experience. Knapp told his readers that an "alarming symptom of apostasy in the churches is...the requirement of a college diploma instead of a Pentecostal experience as a condition of ministerial acceptability."<sup>76</sup> Here was a mighty charge. He thought that that many churches had it backwards, and told his readers, "Many an uncouth, unschooled preacher to-day is winning more souls to God and holiness than a whole city full of learned scholastics."<sup>77</sup> According to Knapp, then, such educated but unsanctified and irreligious preachers were ineffective and only those who had received the second blessing were making an eternal difference. Interestingly, Knapp appropriated the idea that those in the Holiness movement were uneducated. Rather than trying to shy from the label, he turned it on its head and made it a badge of honor. He worried about the damage the upper-

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<sup>75</sup> For one example of emotion in traditional Methodist worship services and camp meetings, see Jones, "Autobiography," Vol. I, 93.

<sup>76</sup> M.W. Knapp, *Pentecostal Preachers*, in *The Full Salvation Quarterly* III (July 1897): 10.

<sup>77</sup> Knapp, *Pentecostal Preachers*, 23.

class, highly educated pastors were doing, and preferred the teachings of those who secured their sense of self in the doctrines of entire sanctification supposedly without the benefit of education.<sup>78</sup>

Similarly, W.B. Godbey loved to talk about the work that sanctified, illiterate ministers were doing as compared to those who had spent years at seminaries.<sup>79</sup> He even talked about the ways in which education had “paralyzed their nerves by long years of assiduous study” and had “worn out their voices.”<sup>80</sup> Interestingly, though, Godbey himself was a highly educated man. He spent six years in college, three in classes and three working to pay his way, and was very proud of his education, particularly his ability to read and write the Biblical languages.<sup>81</sup> Godbey even told his readers, “You need a classical education to qualify you to successfully study the blessed Bible.”<sup>82</sup> Clearly, Godbey was no backwoods rube and he expected his hearers and readers to work in order to better their own education. Yet, he wanted his congregants to find their identities in the working of the Holy Spirit rather than in the number of initials after their names. Thus, though many evangelists in the Holiness movement, including Godbey, claimed that their experience of holiness made them more highly qualified for Christian ministry than those who simply received a college or seminary education, many of them had college degrees and strongly encouraged others to receive as much education as they could.<sup>83</sup> Holiness

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<sup>78</sup> See also Knapp, *Pentecostal Preachers*, 7, 9, and 21.

<sup>79</sup> For examples, see Godbey, *Spiritual Gifts and Graces*, 6, 7, and 19-20

<sup>80</sup> Godbey, *Spiritual Gifts and Graces*, 7.

<sup>81</sup> Godbey, *Autobiography*, 72-73 and 75.

<sup>82</sup> Godbey, *Autobiography*, 75.

<sup>83</sup> See Stephens' *The Fire Spreads*, 62-66 for more on the ways in which the Holiness movement was made up of all classes and types of people throughout the South.

theology did not discourage education per se – it discouraged the rooting of personal identity in anything other than the experience of Christian perfection.

The idea that education was not as important as the blessing of the Holy Spirit in preparing someone for ministry was just one measure of how Holiness preachers talked about the transformative power of the second blessing in their lives. Such power frequently led those in the Holiness movement to envision gender in different ways than many other people throughout the South, and the following chapters explore a few of these dimensions. Chapter Six focuses on the ways in which the leaders of the southern Holiness movement used the theology of entire sanctification to argue for rearranging some of the ideas of manhood and masculinity current in the Deep South between 1877 and 1915. While the Holiness movement used their own categories for what would define “true manhood,” they retained elements of masculinity popular in the broader culture of the time. Some of the ways in which this occurred was by continuing to use martial and hyper-masculine imagery to talk about the church (specifically those in the Holiness movement). At the same time, however, leaders focused on a believer’s perfect love of God to envision a distinct type of manliness where men talked freely about their love and affection for one another. This stood in stark contrast to the contemporary ideas of masculinity that eschewed emotive displays of affection between men in public. Chapter Seven investigates the ways in which Holiness leaders subtly tried to reorient the ideals of both femininity and family life around the experience and responsibilities of the second blessing. This meant that sanctified women encouraged to take positions of leadership and authority in the church, while still expected to maintain “traditional” roles within the home and in a marriage. Leaders also argued that for families, the centrality of the second blessing and the building of a sanctified community of believers should encourage parents to see their faith as a communal identity to be

passed down through the generations as they reared children in the doctrines of Holiness.

Together, these chapters demonstrate the unique ways that leaders of the southern Holiness movement tried to connect their beliefs about the sacred with personal and familial identity, and how they tried to pass these views on to their congregants in the turn of the century Deep South.

**CHAPTER SIX:**  
**PURE AND MANLY LOVE**

*Greater still than a preacher, greater than a warrior for the faith, it is to be a  
“brother” – one yoked in love to every other minister and witness of full  
salvation...*

- Joseph H. Smith<sup>1</sup>

The leaders of the Holiness movement in the American South believed that their theology produced a distinct identity for those who claimed to have received the second blessing. They argued that this identity extended into the ways in which adherents should perceive and express gender. Their theology, which emphasized the power of the Holy Spirit in cleansing a believer from all willful sin, altered the ways preachers and evangelists envisioned the construction of gender, and offered a contrast to the manly ideals of the MECS and SBC. This did not mean that self-identified leaders of the Holiness movement completely dispensed with the prevailing ideas of manhood and masculinity in the South centered on an honor-based society that encouraged self-assertiveness, aggression, and competitiveness.<sup>2</sup> Instead, they took such ideas and modified

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<sup>1</sup> Joseph H. Smith, “A Brother Beloved” in *Rev. W.A. Dodge as We Knew Him with Sketches of His Life, Diary, Consecration and Sermons*, Mrs. J. Wm. Garbutt, compiler, (Atlanta: The Franklin Printing and Publishing Company, 1906,) 13 in *William Asbury Dodge: Southern Holiness Pioneer*, Kenneth O. Brown, compiler, (Hazleton, PA: Holiness Archives, 2001).

<sup>2</sup> See Bertram Wyatt-Brown, *Southern Honor: Ethics and Behavior in the Old South*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982) for more on the notions of honor in the South. See also

them to better fit into a theology that emphasized ideas of entire sanctification and perfect love. This meant that though Holiness leaders did express militant faith, other types of masculinity were also viewed as manly – some of which undercut traditional Southern ideals.

The preachers and evangelists of the Holiness movement, emphasized the Holy Spirit's power, the second blessing of sanctification, emotive worship services, and the ways in which an individual could live free from all willful sin. By doing so, these leaders promoted an alternate form of masculinity throughout the Deep South. Holiness manhood uniquely blended expressions of publically affectionate manliness with the traditional southern ideas of aggressive masculinity. Historian Ted Ownby notes the many ways in which this aggressive nature could be displayed, but it was often through competition on farms and plantations.<sup>3</sup> Similarly, scholar Elliot Gorn's work has demonstrated the violent competition and fights that were important parts of social life in the Old South.<sup>4</sup> Thus, sanctified manhood, leaders argued, could be seen in the truly unique ways men freely expressed their homosocial love for each other in terms that were markedly absent from other denominations or the public. Among Baptist officials, the only expressions of manly affection were ones that were voiced in private letters. Methodist pastors,

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Ted Ownby, *Subduing Satan: Religion, Recreation, and Manhood in the Rural South, 1865-1920*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1990), 12-13; and Craig Thompson Friend, "From Southern Manhood to Southern Masculinities: An Introduction," Craig Thompson Friend, ed., *Southern Masculinity: Perspectives on Manhood in the South Since Reconstruction*, (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2009), xi-xii. Similar ideas of manhood and masculinity permeated other parts of the country as well as Victorian notions of manly self-control and restraint were challenged by notions of "barbarian virtues" and "the strenuous life." For more on these issues, see Gail Bederman, *Manliness & Civilization: A Cultural History of Gender and Race in the United States, 1880-1917*, with forward by Catherine R. Stimpson, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1996), 78-80, 100-101, 184-196.

<sup>3</sup> Ownby, *Subduing Satan*, 93.

<sup>4</sup> Elliot J. Gorn, "Gouge and Bite, Pull Hair and Scratch: The Social Significance of Fighting in the Southern Backcountry," *American Historical Review* 90 (February 1985): 18-43.

on the other hand, were a little more forthcoming with expressions of affection, but officials directed such gestures almost exclusively towards family members, not other men. The open expressions of intense affection and love among the male preachers and evangelists in the Holiness movement, as well as the highly emotional worship services and camp meetings, marked a stark contrast from the dominant Evangelical culture in the South, and provided one reason why other denominations hated Holiness theology so much – it undercut ideas of Southern manhood.

At the same time that leaders of Holiness used such expressions of affection and love when talking about other men, they did retain some elements of manhood and masculinity from the wider culture. What they kept from the larger culture was the hyper-masculine, militant language that encouraged the idea that Holiness adherents were engaged in a spiritual battle. Preachers and evangelists consistently used martial imagery to portray sanctified manhood standing against the powers of Satan, the world, and Christian apostates. Even in this, though, Holiness proponents carefully expressed a sense of shared community in their spiritual warfare. Community itself was an important concept, and one that was held together by the shared sense of identity given through Holiness theology.

This new identity centered around the ideas of entire sanctification, and could be shown by specific signs of Christian perfection. Such marks of having received the second blessing could be as varied as demonstrable heart purity, spiritual maturity, supporting female preachers and evangelists, and dressing in inconspicuous and modest fashion. Held above all other signs, though, was the mark of perfect love. Holiness author and evangelist Beverly Carradine, when talking about how a person's life changed after experiencing sanctification, noted that life after sanctification could not simply return to the status quo. Instead, for the sanctified, daily life

became “an experience of perfect love.”<sup>5</sup> This was not merely a quiet love that was obvious only to the sanctified individual, though. Carradine believed that the love he talked about should be clearly recognized by the passerby, and he continued saying, “The sanctified life should be recognized by being a quieter, gentler, and more loving life; by a holy zeal and activity in the service of God, and by a spirit of rejoicing, prayerfulness, and perfect fearlessness of man.”<sup>6</sup> The terms that he used helped to redefine a picture of holy Christian manhood. Though Carradine did not say that he was specifically talking about men rather than women, throughout the rest of his books, he used the universal male and frequently talked about the sanctified believer using masculine pronouns. Additionally, because he was a man and writing from his own experience, it was fully appropriate to extrapolate Carradine’s words about “perfect love” as applying to men. Yet, Carradine’s picture of manliness went against the dominant notions of aggressive, violent confrontations to restore personal honor, and recreational activities that encouraged competition and danger. Rather than being a rash, aggressive masculinity, Carradine talked about the sanctified as having a quieter, gentler life.<sup>7</sup> This did not mean that he completely disavowed traditional Southern notions of masculinity, though, for he talked about the believer’s new zeal for activity and fearlessness. Thus, Carradine held onto specific ideals of southern

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<sup>5</sup> Beverly Carradine, *Sanctification* with Introduction by L.L. Pickett, (Nashville: Publishing House of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, 1891), 62.

<sup>6</sup> Carradine, *Sanctification*, 67.

<sup>7</sup> The Victorian ideas of true manhood being expressed through restraint and self-control were still running throughout much of the United States. However, in the South, these ideas were overshadowed by more aggressive notions of manliness. For more, see Bederman, *Manliness & Civilization*, 77-120; and Ownby, *Subduing Satan*, 38-55, 89-99.

manhood, like fearlessness in the face of conflict, while tempering them with aspects of perfect love.<sup>8</sup>

In the passage above, though Carradine advocated a life tempered by perfect love, he did not specify whom that love should be directed toward. Some Holiness writers were careful to say that perfect love was between God and sanctified believers. Others, though, talked more about the platonic love between two people as the ultimate example of perfect love. This love between two men could be a valid expression of this spiritually perfect love, and opened up avenues of emotive, manly affection that were at odds with most other ideals of manhood during the period. Nonetheless, those in the Holiness movement would never have understood the love between two men in the terms of homosexuality or homoerotic tension. This lack of tension would have flowed from the fact that at the end of the nineteenth century in the South, there was not gay-straight-bi division.<sup>9</sup> Rather, love was given to both men and women, with the love towards women the only one with specific erotic overtones. Thus, those in the Holiness movement would have viewed the platonic homosocial love between two members of the same biological sex as a natural outpouring of the perfect love in their hearts.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> For more on traditional notions of southern masculinity that included fearless confrontation, see Ownby, *Subduing Satan*, 136; see also W.J. Cash, *The Mind of the South, The Mind of the South with a New Introduction by Bertram Wyatt-Brown*, (New York: Vintage Books, 1991), 50-51, 73-74, 122.

<sup>9</sup> Jonathan Ned Katz's work is very helpful in describing the lack of the gay-straight-bi division during the nineteenth century. See Jonathan Ned Katz, *Love Stories: Sex Between Men Before Homosexuality*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001); as well as Jonathan Ned Katz, *The Invention of Heterosexuality with a New Preface*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007). See also Martin Bauml Duberman's helpful (though dated) review essay, "Reclaiming the Gay Past" in *Reviews in American History* 16 (December 1988): 515-525.

<sup>10</sup> For an example, see Mary Lee Cagle, *Life and Work of Mary Lee Cagle: An Autobiography*, (Kansas City, MO: Nazarene Publishing House, 1928), 25. For more on homosociality, see Jean Lipman-Blumen, "Toward a Homosocial Theory of Sex Roles: An Explanation of the Sex Segregation of Social Institutions," *Signs* 1 (Spring 1976): 15-31; and

These expressions of love did not always come when a person was alive, however. After his death, numerous people wanted their friends and fellow believers to know the powerful love that W.A. Dodge, one of the founders of the annual Indian Springs Camp Meeting, had for people, and particularly men in the Holiness movement. Particularly of note was Georgian pastor Joseph H. Smith's remembrance of Dodge. Smith said of Dodge, "Christ's perfect love in him made him a real lover of men."<sup>11</sup> Though it was clear that these comments came after Dodge's death, and so were part of his eulogy, it was equally clear that Smith wanted readers to be aware of Dodge's great love for those around him. Moreover, the terms that Smith used, "lover of men," and "perfect love," were meant to designate the ways in which Dodge cared deeply for those around him, and particularly for the men within the Holiness movement. These terms did not highlight Dodge's aggressive masculinity, his steely nature, or even his physical presence. Instead, Smith chose to focus on Dodge's tender, loving care for those around him.

The shift toward tender, loving dimensions of manhood that Holiness leaders envisioned presented a stark contrast to the traditional secular notions of masculinity or ideas among Baptists and Methodists, and was a move to try to incorporate the idea of perfect love into holy manhood. This love could even be demonstrated by the friendship and platonic love between two men. Mary Lee Cagle, one of the South's premier female evangelists, talked about her first husband's male love. Cagle said that when her first husband was on his deathbed, he had a visit

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Sharon R. Bird, "Welcome to the Men's Club: Homosociality and the Maintenance of Hegemonic Masculinity," *Gender and Society* 10 (April 1996): 120-132. Lipman-Bluman defines homosocial engagement as the "seeking, enjoyment, and/or preference for the company of the same sex" (16). As one example of the lack of gay culture in the Deep South at the turn of the century, see Benjamin E. Wise, "The Cosmopolitanism of William Alexander Percy," in Craig Thompson Friend, ed., *Southern Masculinity: Perspectives on Manhood in the South Since Reconstruction*, (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2009), 129-149.

<sup>11</sup> Smith, "A Brother Beloved," 13.

from “Brother Mitchum, a dear good man, as tender-hearted as a woman, [who] came in (His and Brother Harris’ [Cagle’s first husband] was something like the love David and Jonathan had for each other).”<sup>12</sup> This sentence from Cagle’s pen was quite a statement about Brother Mitchum. First, she noted that he was “as tender-hearted as a woman.” This statement was not a slight on Mitchum’s manhood. Instead, it was a nod to Mitchum’s care for, and love of, Cagle’s first husband. Cagle continued on that theme, and talked about the love that Mitchum and Harris had for each other using one of the most well known stories of male love in the Christian Scriptures. In the Bible, the story of David and Jonathan was a story of platonic male love so strong that Jonathan, the son of the Israelite King Saul, protected his friend David against the paranoid machinations of his own father, the king.<sup>13</sup>

Referencing this story for the love of Mitchum and Harris was signal about the power of homosocial love between men in the Holiness movement. Holiness leaders argued that because of the ways their radical theology could connect to gender, two men could have powerful love for each other, love seen by all those around them, without endangering their manhood or masculinity. Indeed, Cagle talked about the power of these two men’s love for each other in reverential terms. In her eyes, this love was something powerful that flowed out of their experiences of sanctification. Because both men had experienced perfect love, they could gladly give expression their mutual affection in such a way so that even their wives could recognize the deep love the men shared. Perfect love acted as a marker for those who experienced sanctification and proved, leaders believed, that they had achieved Christian perfection and received a new sense of identity. This mark was one that altered Holiness perceptions of

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<sup>12</sup> Cagle, *Life and Work*, 25.

<sup>13</sup> I Samuel 20, Holy Bible

appropriate gender behavior, especially in regards to the love between men. Once the Holy Ghost baptized them, men were free to express their homosocial love in intimate terms. Men in other religious traditions generally shied away from such emotive language, as their theology did not emphasize perfect love, nor was their denominational culture built around highly emotional worship that highlighted experiential religiosity.

While some preachers and evangelists talked about their love for other sanctified believers, others concentrated on the ways in which perfect love had changed the relationship between God and humanity. This was particularly the case within the tract, pamphlet, and newspaper culture of the Holiness movement. Historian Randall Stephens documents that religious literature was particularly important to the southern Holiness movement. It helped not only to spread the doctrines of the second blessing, but also to reinforce a distinct identity among subscribers, readers, and authors of these periodicals.<sup>14</sup> Holiness pastor and author Rev. B.S. Taylor was one of the Holiness authors who talked about this love in his tract, “The Gibeonites.” The tract was entitled “Gibeonites” after the nation in the Bible that willingly surrendered to the Israelites and became their slaves. In Taylor’s explanation of the text, the Gibeonites represented the infirmities of mind and body that did not constitute sin yet could become hindrances to holiness if not properly addressed or even repressed.<sup>15</sup> In the pamphlet, he mentioned the ways in which the Holy Ghost whispered tenderly to the hearts of believers.<sup>16</sup> Taylor’s language was that of a lover talking about the voice of a beloved. Not only did the Holy Ghost use tender

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<sup>14</sup> Stephens, *Fire Spreads*, 99-135; and Stephens, “There is Magic in Print,” in *Southern Crossroads*, 194-230.

<sup>15</sup> B.S. Taylor, “The Gibeonites: A Scriptural Allegory” in *The Full Salvation Quarterly* II (October 1896): 28. For the Biblical text, see Joshua 9-10, Holy Bible.

<sup>16</sup> Taylor, “The Gibeonites,” 34-35.

tones, but also spoke in “a quiet, tender, loving voice.”<sup>17</sup> The way in which Taylor framed his image of the Holy Spirit clearly echoed the ways in which lovers spoke, and he referenced the idea that Holy Ghost would woo believers’ hearts away from the devil.<sup>18</sup> Here, Taylor gloried in the idea that God was his beloved and that he gave his heart fully to God. MECS and SBC officials almost never used this type of language; yet, Taylor loved talking about the God of love who courted the hearts of his people.

For Holiness author W. McDonald, loving God with one’s entire heart was not just a mark of conversion to Christianity; it was the mark of Christian perfection. In 1877, he wrote that the best test of Holiness was whether a believer’s heart “is emptied of sin, and filled with love, and nothing else; if he loves ‘God with all his heart, might, mind and strength,’ he has ‘perfected holiness in the fear of the Lord’.”<sup>19</sup> McDonald made it clear he believed that those men who claimed the experience of sanctification needed to describe the perfect love that they now experienced. This proclamation of someone’s experience helped to confirm the new identity that the believer claimed, as well as cement the sense of self for all those who heard it. In essence, this process reinforced the beliefs and identity of the entire group. These testimonies were not dry accounts; instead, they were often emotional accounts of God’s faithfulness and the Holy Spirit’s blessing.

Because of these leaders ideas of God’s faithfulness to a select group of people, there were plenty of men, like A.J. Jarrell one of the founders of the Georgia Holiness Association,

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<sup>17</sup> Taylor, “Gibeonites,” 40.

<sup>18</sup> Taylor, “Gibeonites,” 34-35.

<sup>19</sup> W. McDonald, *Scriptural Views of Holiness*, (Philadelphia: National Publishing Association for the Promotion of Holiness, 1877), 11. Though the book was published in Philadelphia, it was advertized in Georgia Holiness publications and referenced by southern Holiness leaders.

who relished the idea that their hearts belonged fully to God. Jarrell's tract from the end of the nineteenth century, "Christian Perfection," addressed those who were not sympathetic to the cause of entire sanctification; yet, he proudly talked about those who "love God with all our hearts" and had love unmixed with other motives.<sup>20</sup> He noted that his love was one that was all consuming and unadulterated. This love was something that he cherished and wanted others to know that he had. Indeed, Jarrell took pride in the strength of his love for God. It was a manly emotion because of its power and intensity of feeling, and because of the fact that love could be masculine within the Holiness movement.

Perfect love, though, was not the only marker of the second blessing. Nor was it the only way in which Holiness theology changed how leaders talked about gender and its appropriate expression. Another important inward sign that a believer had experienced Christian perfection was his or her purity. Purity was a term that many preachers and evangelists in the Holiness movement used to denote the state of one's heart before God. They did not use the term interchangeably with holiness or entire sanctification, though. Instead, purity came to represent a separate trait among the sanctified. Whereas perfect love represented a relationship between two people or between a person and God, purity did not rely on a relationship with someone else for its definition, an individual could display signs of purity. Purity meant not only was the person without willful sin, as holiness suggested, but also the pure person desired to do the will of God. Purity was not simply about the person; it also suggested that the Holy Spirit had cleansed the most intimate parts of a person's heart. This meant that leaders envisioned that an individual's

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<sup>20</sup> A.J. Jarrell, *Christian Perfection: An Address*, (La Grange, Georgia: A.J. Jarrell, n.d. 188?), 13.

life and actions changed as that person pursued the practices that would demonstrate his or her new identity.<sup>21</sup>

Many evangelists viewed purity as a necessary sign of the second blessing in a believer's life and confirmation of their new identity. Beverly Carradine, who pastored churches in Mississippi and New Orleans at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century, wrote that there were people inside the Holiness movement that conflated purity and maturity, and noted, "the blessing we are contending for is not maturity but purity."<sup>22</sup> Here, Carradine explained that there was a difference between spiritual maturity and heart purity, even for those within the Holiness movement, and urged people to seek after purity first. In a similar fashion, W. McDonald proclaimed that an error that often kept people from seeking the second blessing was because they confused purity and maturity. He felt that Scripture kept the idea of maturity separate from purity, and told his readers, "Seek a clean heart first, and look for maturity in the order of the Divine appointment."<sup>23</sup> While there were disagreements within the Holiness movement about the relationship between purity and maturity, McDonald was careful to tell his readers, both men and women, to continue seeking after purity. Similarly, in an address on Christian perfection published in the last decades of the nineteenth century, A.J. Jarrell told his readers to seek after purity in their own hearts first before seeking after spiritual maturity.<sup>24</sup> This may have come as a surprise to many of his readers who would have equated spiritual maturity

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<sup>21</sup> For more on the practices of sanctification, see Anthea D. Butler's article, "Observing the Lives of the Saints: Sanctification as Practice in the Church of God in Christ" in *Practicing Protestants: Histories of Christian Life in America, 1630-1965*, Laurie F. Maffly-Kipp, Leigh E. Schmidt, and Mark Valeri, eds., (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006), 158-176.

<sup>22</sup> Beverly Carradine, *The Sanctified Life*, (Cincinnati: M.W. Knapp, 1897), 13.

<sup>23</sup> McDonald, *Scriptural Views*, 12-13.

<sup>24</sup> A.J. Jarrell, "Christian Perfection," 11-13.

with holy manhood, or thought of purity as a feminine characteristic or one focused primarily on sexuality.

The idea that men should seek purity would have come as a surprise for those new to Holiness theology, as purity was frequently considered a feminine character trait at the end of the nineteenth century. In contrast to those evangelists and authors in the Holiness movement who used purity to refer to both women and men, pastors from other denominations routinely talked about purity as part of godly womanhood. For example, in 1893, one Baptist pastor from Mississippi talked about young maidens whose “thoughts [were] as pure as the milk.”<sup>25</sup> Similarly, Baptist preacher Landrum Pinson Leavell, in a commencement address to Hillman College in 1905, exhorted the young women there to follow the examples of Christian women who had served God wholeheartedly. Leavell then gave examples of such women and consistently highlighted their purity.<sup>26</sup> Another Baptist minister who believed that purity was a feminine trait was William Holtzclaw, who, in 1909, even emphasized an idea that a woman’s purity could be undone by marriage to an unfaithful man.<sup>27</sup> Such an idea highlighted that those outside the Holiness movement viewed the concept of purity as a distinctly feminine, and sexual, trait.

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<sup>25</sup> For examples of officials from other denominations using purity as a solely feminine trait, see John L. Johnson, “Emotionalism in Religion” *Proceedings of the Eleventh Baptist Congress, Held in Augusta, Ga., December 1893*, (New York: Baptist Congress Publishing Co., 1894), 20, Baptist Congress Proceedings Collection, AR. 40, Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives, Nashville, Tennessee, (BCPC).

<sup>26</sup> Landrum Pinson Leavell, Untitled Hillman College Commencement Address, 1905, 10, Box 1, Landrum Pinson Leavell Collection, AR. 795-180, Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives, Nashville, Tennessee, (LPL), 7-9.

<sup>27</sup> William J. Holtzclaw, *Women of To-day* with an Introduction by J.A. Leavitt, (Louisville, KY: Baptist Book Concern, Publishers, 1909), 32, 64-66, 115.

Similarly, Holiness author and publisher M.W. Knapp from Cincinnati noted the importance of purity as a trait of all of those who had experienced the second blessing in his 1897 work, *Pentecostal Preachers*. Though Knapp was from Cincinnati, he frequently worked with southern Holiness evangelists during the turn of the century, including W.B. Godbey. In return, Godbey encouraged his southern audiences to read periodicals published by Knapp's company, God's Revivalist Office. In *Pentecostal Preachers*, Knapp noted the many characteristics of fire-baptized, entirely sanctified preachers and evangelists. He noted that true Pentecostal preachers were gentle, plain, humble, and devoted as well as being powerful and convicting.<sup>28</sup> Importantly, though, they were also pure preachers. Knapp went so far as to say, "purity is a mark which all His true ministers bear."<sup>29</sup> Purity, in his mind, was something that happened once the baptism of fire came upon a person, and so to have impurities remaining in their life would be just cause to question that person's claims to a new identity founded upon holiness and entire sanctification. Moreover, Knapp argued that purity was such an important trait that the lack of it was a mark that a God was not with that particular preacher. Thus, purity was not only an important mark of sanctification for Holiness leaders, it was also a requirement for those who would minister and help other people receive the second blessing.

Purity was a very important aspect of holiness; however, it was not the only one. Many ministers disagreed with Carradine and McDonald, and felt that the second blessing gave the true believer not only a pure heart, but also it moved them into spiritual maturity. W.B. Godbey was one of the Holiness evangelists who felt this way. In his autobiography, he proposed that the second blessing gave believers a new identity by moving them from spiritual infancy into

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<sup>28</sup> M.W. Knapp, *Pentecostal Preachers*, in *The Full Salvation Quarterly*, III (July 1897): 13, 16, 20-22.

<sup>29</sup> Knapp, *Pentecostal Preachers*, 55.

“adulthood.”<sup>30</sup> Elsewhere, Godbey warned his readers that unsanctified believers were in “spiritual minority, they are not saved from the frivolities, trivialities, hilarities, novelties, curiosities, buncombe, glitter, glare, display, and phantasmagoria incident and attractive to childhood and youth.”<sup>31</sup> Godbey believed that not only were sanctified Christians more mature than those who had not achieved Christian perfection, but also that those who had not experienced perfect love were a threat to the health of the church. Those who were yet unsanctified were like children and easily distracted.

Godbey was not alone in believing that the second blessing gave maturity, other Holiness writers across Mississippi, Alabama, and Georgia espoused this idea. Such was the view of Samuel A. Cowan, a contributor to the (New Orleans) *Southwestern Christian Advocate*. In 1899, his article, “Holiness or Entire Sanctification,” appeared in the newspaper. Cowan urged his readers to seek holiness since he believed that the “great trouble with the church of to-day is that there are too many who are satisfied to remain in the initial stage of the Christian life, who fail to reach out the hand of faith for a deeper and more blessed experience of grace – entire sanctification.”<sup>32</sup> Cowan clearly felt that those who experienced entire sanctification were more mature, and that the experience of sanctification itself was what had brought them further along in their faith and helped them grow in spirituality.

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<sup>30</sup> Godbey, *Autobiography of Rev. W.B. Godbey, A.M.*, (Cincinnati: God’s Revivalist Office, 1909), 416.

<sup>31</sup> Godbey, *Church – Bride – Kingdom*, (Cincinnati: God’s Revivalist Office, 1905), 104-105.

<sup>32</sup> Samuel A. Cowan, “Holiness or Entire Sanctification,” (New Orleans) *Southwestern Christian Advocate*, 16 February 1899, 2.

Godbey also wrote that those who were unsanctified had stunted growth, and were abnormal in their spiritual development.<sup>33</sup> This meant that men who were not sanctified were not fully developed in their spiritual manhood, and so lacked an element of true masculinity given only to those experienced the second blessing. Furthermore, the idea that entire sanctification was the normal track for spiritual development let Godbey talk as though spiritual maturity mirrored physical maturity. He wrote that getting the second blessing was an important step in a believer's life and led that person from "the feeble faith of spiritual infancy to the stalwart, triumphant and perfect trust of manhood."<sup>34</sup> In other words, experiencing perfect love was a rite of passage for believers, and those who did not receive the second blessing had their manhood stuck in arrested development. Godbey even wrote about the many pastors in the MECS (his home denomination) who had not been baptized by the Holy Ghost and told his readers that those pastors were "spiritual dwarfs, having never progressed out of babyhood."<sup>35</sup>

Godbey's conflation of holiness with spiritual maturity and manhood was a charged statement. In stating that only those men who experienced the second blessing had reached their spiritual manhood, he emasculated all those who opposed the movement and asserted that they were not true men. Not only were they not true men, Godbey remarked that they were "pygmies."<sup>36</sup> This would have added insult to injury as the idea of white adult men turning into spiritual pygmies had both gendered and racial implications. Godbey effectively called into question the supposed racial superiority of those who had not been sanctified as he challenged

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<sup>33</sup> Godbey, *Church – Bride – Kingdom*, 88.

<sup>34</sup> Godbey, *Church – Bride – Kingdom*, 93.

<sup>35</sup> Godbey, *Church – Bride – Kingdom*, 89.

<sup>36</sup> Godbey, *Church – Bride – Kingdom*, 89.

their manhood. For Southern men whose sense of identity relied heavily on their claims to racial supremacy, physical power, and mastery over their everyday lives, being called pygmies was an extreme insult. It was a remark that called into question their racial identity as well as their stature as mature men.<sup>37</sup> At a time when there was extreme racial violence throughout the South, such a remark about the racial identity of those who not part of the Holiness movement would be enough reason for many people to oppose it.

Yet, in a similar statement, John Lakin Brasher, one of the major figures of the Holiness movement in Alabama in the early decades of the twentieth century, fondly remembered his forebears, and the impression that they made upon his young mind. Brasher's biographer recalled that the preacher longed for the "Days when men were men and not Pygmies. Also days when men had convictions."<sup>38</sup> Here, Brasher vividly noted that the days of his youth in the Holiness movement had men who, he believed, were manlier than many were in his elder years. His use of the term "Pygmies" was certainly a reference to the physical stature of those who he saw around him; however, by insulting the racial and gendered identity of pastors who were currently in the ministry, he gave a backhanded-compliment to the pastors he was around as a young child. It also suggested that they had commanding physiques. Brasher related their masculinity not only to a man's physical frame, but also to that man's spirituality. He stated that the men of his youth were manlier, as they were willing to stand up for their principles and

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<sup>37</sup> For more on how white masculinity relied on ideas of race, power, and mastery, see Joe Creech, "The Price of Eternal Honor: Independent White Christian Manhood in the Late Nineteenth-Century South," in Friend, ed., *Southern Masculinity*, 28; and Kris DuRocher, "Violent Masculinity: Learning Ritual and Performance in Southern Lynchings," in *Southern Masculinity*, 46-82.

<sup>38</sup> John Lakin Brasher, *A Simple Statement*, 11, quoted in J. Lawrence Brasher, *The Sanctified South: John Lakin Brasher and the Holiness Movement*, (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1994), 75.

beliefs as opposed to those he saw in his old age who he thought shrank from their ideals at the first sign of conflict.

### **Sanctified Soldiers in Holiness Thought**

The idea of men shrinking from conflict was abhorrent to many in the South during the New South era, including those in the Holiness movement. Numerous historians of the South have shown that southern men viewed the ability to hold their own in a disagreement as a major part of what it meant to truly be a man.<sup>39</sup> In fact, many men across Mississippi, Alabama, and Georgia frequently talked about the ways in which conflict enhanced manhood. Similar to many other religious groups, the Holiness movement frequently used martial language that allowed adherents to view themselves with a warrior image as they talked about the ways in which adherents battled sin, Satan, and the world. By doing so, religious groups offered the male adherents who had not fought in the American Civil War an “opportunity to participate in their own holy crusade.”<sup>40</sup> The use of such hyper-masculine language may have also provided a counterweight to the many critics from other denominations who charged that overbearing women ran the movement. Holiness groups in the north, like the Salvation Army, also used this type of martial language at the beginning of the twentieth century, and historian Diane Winston notes that this was particularly important for men in a movement that offered women expanded

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<sup>39</sup> For examples of this in the Old South see Wyatt-Brown, *Southern Honor*; and Gorn, “Gouge and Bite.” For a study of how this continued beyond the Civil War and Reconstruction, see Edward L. Ayers, *Vengeance and Justice: Crime and Punishment in the 19<sup>th</sup>-Century American South*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984).

<sup>40</sup> Diane Winston, *Red-Hot and Righteous: The Urban Religion of the Salvation Army*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999), 82-83.

roles and authority.<sup>41</sup> However, Holiness groups, both north and south, were not the only religious traditions who used martial language. Indeed, as demonstrated earlier, leaders of the Southern Baptist Convention and the mainline Methodist Episcopal Church, South routinely used militant imagery in their sermons and speeches to link their understandings of masculinity and theology at the turn of the century. Baptists often talked about Christians as individual warriors while Methodists gave assent to the idea that the mission of the Church was to conquer the world for Christ, and both groups talked about the necessity of battling sin and the devil.<sup>42</sup>

Martial imagery was used not only to denote battling Satan and the forces of evil that the Holiness movement saw at work in the world; evangelists and pastors also used the language of war when referring to clashes with other theological groups – sometimes even within their own parent denominations which disapproved of the theology of entire sanctification. Some evangelists even used the language of battle to address the process through which they received the blessing of perfect love. Beverly Carradine demonstrated the use of martial language while waiting for sanctification when he proclaimed, “After the battle of consecration came the battle of faith. Both precede the perfect victory of sanctification.”<sup>43</sup> Here, Carradine asserted that in order to receive Christian perfection, parishioners were to yield the totality of their lives to God (consecration), and then believe (or have faith) that in doing so, the Holy Spirit would give them

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<sup>41</sup> Winston, *Red-Hot and Righteous*, 83.

<sup>42</sup> For examples, see Charles B. Galloway, “Progress of the Twentieth Century Fund,” *Christian Advocate*, 6 April 1899, 9; James Madison Crews, “Dancing,” n.p., August 1884, in Sermon Book, Box 56, James Madison Crews MC87, The Methodist Archives Center, Huntington College Library, Huntington College, Montgomery, Alabama; and J.B. Gambrell, “Call to Universal Conquest of the World,” Folder 36, Box 1, Southern Baptist Convention Sermon Collection, AR. 638, Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives, Nashville, Tennessee.

<sup>43</sup> Carradine, *Sanctification*, 19.

a new identity through the second blessing. Carradine noted that neither step was easy and both were battles they needed to fight. Yet, he assured his readers there was a victory awaiting them after these fights.

Such language about internal battles was not overly common among the Holiness movement, however. More often, Holiness preachers warned about fighting the battles with denominations who did not believe in sanctification as an instantaneous work of the Holy Ghost. Such language denoted the level of conflict between Holiness groups and the opposing denominations who hated them. Carradine recognized this heightened state of conflict and said in 1897, “The internal war is over. The battle is now on the outside.”<sup>44</sup> Thus, Holiness writers even intimated that those who openly opposed the second blessing were enemies amidst a spiritual war.

In one 1897 edition of the *Full Salvation Quarterly*, M.W. Knapp warned his readers across the Deep South that they would face opposition from all quarters. This was not an empty warning; religious scholar Briane Turley’s work *Wheel Within a Wheel* documents some of the opposition that the Holiness leaders in Georgia faced from the MECS. Though Holiness evangelists were greeted warmly in denomination during the late 1880s, by the mid-1890s, the proponents of Holiness doctrines were demoted, moved to undesirable districts, and even received assignments out of state. Holiness leaders then urged their congregants, and audiences at camp meetings, to regard these indignities merely as the corrupt world’s response to the hard message of truth.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> Beverly Carradine, *The Sanctified Life*, (Cincinnati: M.W. Knapp, 1897), 64.

<sup>45</sup> Turley, *Wheel Within a Wheel*, 15, 203-105.

Knapp's response to persecution was typical of many Holiness leaders. He told his readers that true preachers, baptized by the Holy Spirit, were loyal to the cause despite opposition. In fact, "though bullets whiz and demons hiss, and dead churchmen scorn, with faces firm as flint, they [the preachers who had received entire sanctification] press forward in the name and strength of God, ready to do or die."<sup>46</sup> Knapp expected opposition to greet those who claimed to have received the second blessing at the end of the nineteenth century. The author also made it clear there would be at least three types of opposition that they would face. First, they would face the bullets of the world. In other words, those who were not Christians would attempt to destroy the faithful. Second, the sanctified would come across supernatural, even demonic, opposition as they sought to live out their faith. Finally, those preachers who talked about their new identities and experiences of Christian perfection would encounter the rebuke and scorn of those inside the church who sought to undermine them. Knapp even questioned whether such churchmen were part of the Kingdom of God as he pronounced them "dead." Thus, it was clear to the reader that he or she would face peril, even from other denominations. However, Knapp made it equally clear that the true preacher who had achieved full salvation would "press forward" despite the opposition to further the Kingdom of God and the teaching of Christian perfection.

Not all holiness leaders were quite as vociferous in their fights with other church leaders. Many people in the Holiness movement did their utmost to remain in their home denominations and for many that meant the Methodist Episcopal Church, South (MECS), where the writings of John Wesley, one of the founders of Methodism who lived from 1703 to 1791, taught that

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<sup>46</sup> Knapp, *Pentecostal Preachers*, 47.

Christians might have their hearts cleansed of all indwelling sin.<sup>47</sup> Even so, many officials in the MECS argued that Christian perfection did not come through an instantaneous second blessing of the Holy Ghost and bitterly opposed holiness teachings. The MECS was certainly not the only denomination that denounced the doctrines of Holiness, Baptists, Presbyterians, and others also roundly condemned Holiness theology. This mounting opposition in the last decades of the nineteenth century encouraged some Holiness people to come out of the southern Methodist church during the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century. Those who left of their own accord were dubbed “come-outers” while those who pushed Holiness adherents out of other denominations were called “put-outers.” Both roundly condemned the other and blamed the mounting tensions over Holiness teachings on each other. Some of the Holiness leaders who left the MECS included evangelist and preacher Mary Lee Cagle and her late husband, Rev. R.L. Harris. In 1894, they removed themselves from the MECS, something that Cagle recalled was an emotional decision, and they moved to help start a new denomination that would eventually be part of the Church of the Nazarene.<sup>48</sup>

Not all holiness ministers wanted to leave the Methodist church, and W.B. Godbey stayed despite the opposition he faced throughout the turn of the century. Godbey warned those who opposed him, though, that they were in a precarious position. In his memoirs, published in 1909, Godbey mentioned cases of Methodist pastors who opposed the message of entire sanctification and a few weeks or months later ended up dying.<sup>49</sup> Though Godbey obviously felt that those

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<sup>47</sup> For the Wesleyan teachings on entire sanctification, see John Wesley, “A Plain Account of Christian Perfection,” in *The Works of Rev. John Wesley in Ten Volumes*, Vol. VIII, First American Edition, (New York: J. &J. Harper, 1827), 5-67.

<sup>48</sup> Cagle, *Life and Work*, 22-23.

<sup>49</sup> Godbey, *Autobiography*, 349-351.

who opposed holiness within Methodism were wrong and risking their lives, he saved most of his invective for those who followed the teachings of Alexander Campbell. This group, known by its detractors as “Campbellites,” started the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), and was a powerful religious group in antebellum Kentucky when Godbey was growing up. Throughout his autobiography, Godbey talked about his fights and debates with this group, describing them in martial terms and even comparing one debate as though he were engaged in the Trojan War.<sup>50</sup> Indeed, though Godbey did not feel that debates helped the people of God, he learned never to shrink from a religious debate, fearing there was “no alternative but cowardly retreat.”<sup>51</sup>

Though Godbey, and other holiness preachers, were not shy about using martial language to talk about their debates and fights with other theological groups, they were also careful to mention that their true fight was with Satan and the forces of evil. Godbey’s memoirs recorded his thoughts that “While we follow the blood-stained banner, we fight under the flag which means no compromise with sin or error... In this exterminating war with sin and Satan we have no fight with churches... We love all of the churches with a perfect love, which prepares us for martyrdom.”<sup>52</sup> While this passage seemed to contradict Godbey’s thoughts on fighting with other theological groups, it suggested the importance of the Holiness movement’s emphasis on supernatural warfare. Godbey explained what he meant by the banner flying before the Holiness army saying, “We fight under three flags, all simultaneously floating in the air – the blood-red flag means full redemption, and always under the blood; the snow-white flag proclaims the experience of entire sanctification under the blood, while the raven-black flag means death on

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<sup>50</sup> Godbey, *Autobiography*, 185.

<sup>51</sup> Godbey, *Autobiography*, 108-109.

<sup>52</sup> Godbey, *Autobiography*, 175.

the battle-field and no compromise with sin and Satan” Thus, the bloodstained banner was a reference to the belief that Jesus’ blood would wash away the sins of all those who trusted in him while the white symbolized the sanctified believer’s new identity. Both flags, as well as the promise not to compromise with sin, served as rallying points for believers in the Holiness movement. Much as a flag at the front line of an armed conflict served as a rallying point for troops, these banners helped to focus the efforts of those who saw them going before them.<sup>53</sup> According to Godbey, this focus was absolutely necessary as he told his readers that they were engaged in a war of extermination with Satan, and warned, “We need a thousand glittering swords constantly unsheathed to fortify our holiness people.”<sup>54</sup>

Using the language of battle enabled holiness evangelists, like Godbey, to cast themselves in the warrior image. Publisher and author Martin Knapp was proud that not only were those in the Holiness movement warriors, they were also the officers of God’s army. He proclaimed, “Satan hates fire-baptized preachers as no other persons. They are the officers of the army that is conquering him and wresting [the] earth from his traitorous grasp.”<sup>55</sup> Here, Knapp made it clear that he viewed his readers as part of an army that was winning the war with the enemy. They were part of the conquering army. The mission would not be easy, however, and he warned that his readers would need a “heaven-forged armory.”<sup>56</sup> Godbey agreed with this idea, telling his readers that the Holiness movement would need “sixty-four pounders to smash up the devil’s citadel.” Godbey was confident, however, that the Holy Spirit would supply “the

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<sup>53</sup> W.B. Godbey, *Spiritual Gifts and Graces*, (Cincinnati: God’s Revivalist Office, 1895), 46.

<sup>54</sup> Godbey, *Autobiography*, 191.

<sup>55</sup> Knapp, *Pentecostal Preachers*, 41.

<sup>56</sup> Knapp, *Pentecostal Preachers*, 7.

cannon and the powder, the ball, shot and shell.”<sup>57</sup> Indeed, in Godbey’s mind, the Holy Spirit was the “Omnipotent Armor-bearer” and quartermaster who gave His people all that they needed to fight evil.<sup>58</sup>

Godbey consistently told his readers that he believed he had a changed identity and he lived out the ideals of the Christian soldier. Godbey wrote that God had given him the ability to preach, and told his readers, “God gave me a regular gattling [sic] gun, loaded to the muzzle with red-hot shot and shell.”<sup>59</sup> Clearly believing that this fight was deadly serious, Godbey talked (metaphorically) about using some of the most advanced weaponry of the day for promoting the Holiness cause throughout the Deep South. Such artillery was not unleashed on Satan alone, though. Godbey and other Holiness evangelists were more than willing to unleash their spiritual arsenal on non-believers in order to convert them. In one account of a revival at the end of the nineteenth century, Godbey talked about how a friend turned a “fresh volley of red-hot Bible shot” on a self-professed “infidel.”<sup>60</sup> Clearly, Godbey and his contemporaries believed that they were in a pitched battle with the forces of evil for the souls of men and women throughout the world and thought that the most powerful weapon they had at their disposal was Scripture.

It was also apparent that Holiness evangelists tried to use this martial imagery to describe to their audiences that sanctified men unique position as spiritual warriors. Many of the men and women who were involved in the Holiness movement had some personal connection to the American Civil War through uncles, fathers, and occasionally even older brothers, though not

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<sup>57</sup> Godbey, *Work of the Holy Spirit*, (Louisville: Pickett Publishing Co., 1902), 74.

<sup>58</sup> Godbey, *Autobiography*, 480.

<sup>59</sup> Godbey, *Autobiography*, 287-288.

<sup>60</sup> Godbey, *Autobiography*, 276.

many of the Holiness authors and evangelists fought on the front lines. Using the language of battle allowed male Holiness members to appropriate the mantle of a warrior that many of their fathers and brothers had acquired by bearing arms in the Civil War.

However, the warrior image was primarily a masculine typology, and few women in the Holiness movement used it to talk about their preaching. In marked contrast to the image of the holy warrior wielding a Gatling gun full of “red-hot Bible shot,” Alabama-raised evangelist Mary Lee Cagle told readers that she used another method of evangelism through the early years of the twentieth century throughout the Deep South. Writing in third person, Cagle explained in her autobiography, “One characteristic of her preaching was her tears, and God has used them from one coast to the other to break hardened hearts.”<sup>61</sup> This statement reflected both the shared purpose and vastly different methods that preachers used as they attempted to convert others to Christianity. Godbey wanted his readers to think of him as a crusading warrior and used militant, hyper-masculine language to show that he wanted to win the battle for the souls of his audience. His writings were full of battle imagery and weaponized spirituality. Yet, even among the radical theological climate of the Southern Holiness movement, such language was not used for women preachers. Instead, female evangelists and preachers, like Cagle, maintained a more feminine image in their use of language. Women preachers did not destroy the barricades that Satan had erected in the hearts of non-believers; instead, they worked to soften and then woo their listeners’ hearts.

Despite the differences between male and female evangelists’ imagery, men in the Holiness movement used martial language frequently. Yet, even in this, the ways that male Holiness leaders used martial imagery stood in contrast to how Methodists and Baptists talked

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<sup>61</sup> Cagle, *Life and Work*, 30. Throughout her autobiography, Cagle referred to herself in the third person.

about spiritual warfare. Rather than statements about how all Christians needed to join the fray, the leaders of the Holiness movement emphasized how the entire sanctification was the only way that Christians would be ready to do battle. A.J. Jarrell, called “the St. John of the Georgia Conference...the apostle of love,” warned the readers of his tract *Faint-Heartedness* that a reluctance to join the battle, indeed faint-heartedness itself, was “too contagious to be allowed in the armies of God.”<sup>62</sup> Not only did Jarrell’s word validate the idea of the Christian soldier, but also by presenting this idea, he implied that he was ready to join the battle at any time since he had been sanctified. Godbey would have agreed whole-heartedly with Jarrell’s idea that the fainthearted were not to be counted among the sanctified, and told his readers that it was safer to turn and face Satan’s charge head-on than to retreat from the battle.<sup>63</sup> For those parishioners who contended that they no longer had to fight Satan, Godbey rebuked them saying, “If Satan doesn’t fight you it is simply because you don’t fight him.”<sup>64</sup> Godbey presented this charge to his readers and told them they should expect to have problems. If they were not having problems, then Godbey warned that they should examine their lives to make sure they were fighting the devil rather than colluding with him. Thus, Godbey linked the attacks of evil upon the sanctified as a mark of their identity.

Beverly Carradine also warned his readers about the dangers of Satan’s attacks and in one account at the end of the nineteenth century told of a male friend whom Satan had attacked with

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<sup>62</sup> J.T. Morris, “Remarks by Rev. J.T. Morris at Service Held in Memory of Rev. A.J. Jarrell,” 30 August 1896, Box 6, Charles Crawford Jerrell, MSS 428, Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library, Emory University, Atlanta, Georgia, (CCJ); A.J. Jarrell, *Faint-Heartedness*, (New York: Palmer and Hughes, n.d., 1880s), 8.

<sup>63</sup> W.B. Godbey and Seth C. Rees, *The Return of Jesus*, (Cincinnati: God’s Revivalist Office, 1898), 33.

<sup>64</sup> Godbey, *Spiritual Gifts and Graces*, 41.

doubts shortly after receiving perfect love. The friend quickly responded by turning to the Holy Ghost and was relieved. To present a contrast, Carradine next talked about a “lady friend” who had a much harder time fighting off the attacks of Satan.<sup>65</sup> Though meant as a lesson to turn quickly to God rather than try to face the devil alone, Carradine’s story also affirmed the idea that the true warriors were the more masculine ones – or, indeed, the male ones.

### **Holy Manhood**

While it was clear that for many the idea of the sanctified warrior was a supremely masculine image, holiness writers, preachers, and evangelists also talked specifically about manliness itself. In their writings on the subject, two themes emerged. The first was that true men were strong and physically commanding. The second theme was that only true men had been made holy through Christian perfection. These themes of physical manliness and holy manhood each connected in holiness theology with the idea that the sanctified believer gained a new identity through the second blessing.

As noted previously, those in the Holiness movement throughout Mississippi, Alabama, and Georgia believed that they were in a life and death struggle with the forces of evil at the turn of the century. Therefore, the fact that many of these leaders viewed the ideal man as an excellent physical specimen was not only an example of God’s blessing upon that person, but also of his readiness to fight the good fight. Pastor and author Beverly Carradine connected these two ideas in his *Sanctified Life* as he wrote that a sanctified man was “as conscious of spiritual power as he is of physical strength.”<sup>66</sup> The author made it clear that a sanctified man

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<sup>65</sup> Carradine, *Sanctified Life*, 68-69.

<sup>66</sup> Carradine, *Sanctified Life*, 51.

was clearly aware of both his spirituality and physicality, and as a man with perfect love would have tremendous spiritual power (according to Carradine), it only stood to reason that that man should have physical prowess as well.

Since physicality was an important part of manliness for many evangelists in the Holiness movement, some preachers felt compelled to defend their own manhood by talking about their physical exploits. They may have felt compelled to defend their manhood against those outside the movement who charged that it subverted gender identities.<sup>67</sup> In his autobiography, W.B. Godbey repeatedly talked about his excellent health, work ethic, and the number of physical contests he won as a youth. When talking about growing up in a small town, Godbey recalled, “I was always pronounced the fleetest runner in the entire community, and the most adroit wrestler. Such became my notoriety that they were constantly after me to wrestle.”<sup>68</sup> The evangelist was clearly very proud of his accomplishments as a youth, and wanted his readers to know about his reputation as a runner and wrestler.

Godbey may also have been trying to prove his own masculinity to himself. Elsewhere in his memoirs, he recorded, “I was but a little lad, as my growth was so slow;” thus, giving some insight as to why it was so important to him that people recognized that having a small physical stature did not mean that a man was necessarily any less masculine. Even so, there were other times in his life when Godbey’s manhood was questioned. When recounting his life immediately before he experienced the second blessing, Godbey recalled that a woman called him a “little fop.”<sup>69</sup> The experience caused Godbey to question his calling as a preacher and was

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<sup>67</sup> See Stephens, *Fire Spreads*, 49.

<sup>68</sup> Godbey, *Autobiography*, 25.

<sup>69</sup> Godbey, *Autobiography*, 93.

enough of an insult to his manhood that he remembered it years later. Godbey was clear; however, this occurred *before* his experience of Christian perfection.

The insult spurred him on to try to realize what he was missing, and when he received Christian perfection, he believed that it completed his manhood. It was only after this point that he started to view the physical as serving the spiritual; but it was the combination of the two – tremendous physical ability and potent spiritual power – that typified Godbey’s manhood in his own mind. He recalled that it was in 1883, that “I was in the vigor of my manhood and early in my sanctified experience, exceedingly athletic and demonstrative.”<sup>70</sup> Clearly, Godbey believed that his athleticism and hardy constitution served his preaching endeavors and thought the combination constituted his manhood.

Not all men had the opportunity to write about their own physical accomplishments. Mary Lee Cagle talked glowingly about her second husband’s, Rev. H.C. Cagle, physicality. She recorded that her husband was “strong in body, congenial in spirit, and had a fine case of religion, which was a great asset to her work. She had worked so hard and had borne so much responsibility that she was rapidly going down physically. His broad shoulders and willing heart to help carry the load, were indeed a blessing.”<sup>71</sup> Here, Cagle made it clear to her readers that her husband was physically a strong man, while not neglecting the fact that he was very religious as well. Moreover, she indicated that she could not handle her responsibilities on her own, that she needed help. Here was a hint that Cagle thought that women’s physicality was not equal to the ideal man’s.<sup>72</sup> Instead, her husband’s “broad shoulders” rescued her from the crushing

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<sup>70</sup> Godbey, *Autobiography*, 271.

<sup>71</sup> Cagle, *Life and Work*, 85.

<sup>72</sup> Cagle eventually states this very thought in her sermon on “Women’s Right to Preach.” *Life and Work*, 160-162.

weight of her responsibilities. Indeed, it was not even physical tasks that she needed help with, but that her spiritual tasks were too taxing for her feminine constitution and her health was declining. Thus, not only was H.C. Cagle's physical strength a reassurance, but his strength restored his wife's and rescued her from physical decline.

The story of a strong man rescuing a woman from distress was not unusual in the Holiness movement or in the culture at large; in fact, it was one of the few areas where the leaders of Holiness maintained the gendered norms of the culture in which they lived. Another example of this trope was in the memorial booklet put together shortly after W.A. Dodge's death in 1904. In it, numerous pastors, friends, and family members recounted stories and memories of the holiness pastor. In one, a pastor from Georgia recalled Dodge's early life and told readers that when Dodge's father died, the young boy had to work on the farm, which helped him to develop from "a lubberly boy into a man of large physical stature." Though Dodge was still young, his mother had to "lean on him as her prop and stay" since her husband died.<sup>73</sup> Here, Dodge's physicality was highlighted as it was the transformation from a flabby youngster into a strong worker that marked Dodge's initiation to manhood. Additionally, the author, Thomas Seals, who another pastor from the North Georgia Conference of the MECS, was careful to note that Dodge's mother relied heavily on him; thus, again marking his manliness as a woman was looking to him for help and support during her time of need.

The connections between the male body, identity, and power or authority were part of an influential discourse of race and gender current at the beginning of the twentieth century. Historian Gail Bederman traces many of these connections in her work *Manliness & Civilization*. In it, she demonstrates just a few of the ways that bodily strength stood for male authority and

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<sup>73</sup> Thomas Seals, "The Early Life of Rev. W.A. Dodge" in *Rev. W.A. Dodge*, 18-19 .

manliness.<sup>74</sup> In similar fashion, John Kasson's work demonstrates how the idea male body changed over time and that the physical prowess, strength, and sheer size came to embody the perfect male in the early part of the twentieth century.<sup>75</sup> While Bederman and Kasson's work primarily investigates northern examples of manliness and masculinity, Ted Ownby's investigation into southern manhood also demonstrated that competition, skill, and physical prowess were important aspects of becoming a man in the South between 1877 and 1915.<sup>76</sup>

Though physical attributes were one prominent way that preachers and evangelists in the southern Holiness movement marked the ideal manhood at the end of the nineteenth century, it was not the only way. In fact, for many leaders of the movement who had obtained entire sanctification, there was a distinct division between worldly masculinity (or even that of other denominations) and holy manliness. Holiness proponents did not view intensely emotional religiosity as a mark of the effete; instead, they believed, and tried to persuade their audiences, that intense feelings and displays of piety enhanced an adherent's manhood.

The Rev. W.A. Dodge provided one example of this idea of holy manhood. In one vignette about Dodge, Georgia pastor and Holiness leader E.M. Bounds wrote that Dodge was a man of prayer, and that his entire life was lived in a state of constant communion with God. Mornings, particularly, Bounds believed, were a special time of prayer for Dodge. In view of Dodge's example, Bounds editorialized that "It would scarcely be decent, surely not manly, not

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<sup>74</sup> *Manliness & Civilization: A Cultural History of Gender and Race in the United States, 1880-1917*, with forward by Catherine R. Stimpson, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1996), 1-45.

<sup>75</sup> John F. Kasson, *Houdini, Tarzan, and the Perfect Man: The White Male Body and The Challenge of Modernity in America*, (New York: Hill and Wang, 2001), 3-19 and 21-75.

<sup>76</sup> Ted Ownby, *Subduing Satan*, 70-75 for more on just one example of skill demonstrations at plantation tournaments.

to be at prayer before going out of the sleeping chamber.”<sup>77</sup> Bounds clearly believed that prayer was an important part of masculine life. By saying that it would be unmanly to leave the bedroom in the morning before praying, Bounds reinforced the idea that a having a strong relationship with God was what defined true manhood. Far from the idea that religion was best left to old men or women, Bounds’ remark used religious expression as a defining feature of manliness. This was not just a religiosity expressed in the revival tent either; the demonstration of manhood that Bounds talked about was a daily exercise performed before any of the other tasks of the day. Only a few pages later, Bounds reiterated this message for his readers, telling them, “The prayerful man is ever talking with God, breathing out his soul after God, and ever communing with God.”<sup>78</sup> Here, Bounds reinforced the idea that it was through the constant expression of religion that a man might best show his character. Prayer here was not a sign of weakness or desperation; rather, it was a manly action that should be engaged in constantly. Similarly, sharing one’s inmost thoughts, emotions, and feelings was not viewed with disgust or considered a feminine activity, but instead was part of the prayerful man’s daily experience with God.

The daily experience of God was an important part of the new identity of holy manhood according to many of the preachers and evangelists within the movement who had experienced Christian perfection. For some, the second blessing itself was what defined holy manhood. In *Church – Bride – Kingdom*, W.B. Godbey talked about the ways in which obtaining entire sanctification moved the believer into spiritual maturity. He wrote that when the adherent experienced it, he passed “triumphantly from the feeble faith of spiritual infancy to the stalwart,

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<sup>77</sup> E.M. Bounds, “A Man of Prayer” in *Rev. W.A. Dodge*, 23.

<sup>78</sup> Bounds, “Man of Prayer” in *Rev. W.A. Dodge*, 25.

triumphant and perfect trust of manhood.”<sup>79</sup> Godbey made it clear that he believed that receiving perfect love was what moved a person into spiritual maturity and perfected manliness. Godbey intimately connected his theology to what he believed about manhood, and so thought that it was impossible to reach the pinnacle of manliness without receiving the second blessing.

In contrast to the manliness of those that had the second blessing, Godbey mentioned in his autobiography being in the company of those men whose “silly, foolish jesting, mingled with ribaldry, obscenity and profanity grieved [his] soul” to the point where he felt compelled to run from their company.<sup>80</sup> Clearly, Godbey did not want to be around these people, and felt that it was best for him to flee from their presence. However, as already stated, Godbey certainly viewed himself as a healthy specimen of masculinity and so his flight represented (at least in his mind) a flight from sin and a deliberate move away from immaturity rather than the flight of a coward from a fight.

Rev. B.S. Taylor, in his work “The Gibeonites,” noted the ways in which sanctification changed the action and character of men. He wrote that though there were appropriate things to be angry about, men frequently indulged their sinful natures by using “harsh and cruel words and acts.” Once a man was sanctified, Taylor believed he would still get angry, but would express the anger in a “kind, tearful, and tender way” and that the “Lord will sanctify your temper, and keep it sweet.” As he wrote these things, Taylor anticipated that some readers would object to his statements, saying that such a response would leave the man with a decidedly effeminate

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<sup>79</sup> Godbey, *Church – Bride – Kingdom*, 93.

<sup>80</sup> Godbey, *Autobiography*, 62.

identity, thus Taylor was careful to note, “God does not make you a putty man because you are cleansed.”<sup>81</sup>

Taylor was very concerned that his readers realized that there was a difference between sanctified and unsanctified manhood. For him, this difference expressed itself not by making men “putty men” and thus emasculating them; rather, through tempering anger and making it constructive rather than destructive. The point was that even though these men were angry, their experience of sanctification had so changed them that they were concerned about the welfare of those who had wronged them. This sanctified manhood was not one bent upon revenge, but on the restoration and reconciliation of relationships and provided a determined counterpoint to the traditional model of honor-driven, violent manhood in the American South that was still current in the early part of the twentieth century.<sup>82</sup> Nonetheless, Taylor envisioned that sanctified males at the pinnacle of manliness were not going to be walked over either. They were not “putty men” who would bend at the first sign of opposition. Instead, he argued that they would retain their steely reserve and even their anger, but would temper it in love rather than in self-serving wrath.

A.J. Jarrell’s *Faint-Heartedness*, written and published by the Georgia Holiness Association president in the last decades of the nineteenth century, also highlighted the ways in which the doctrine of entire sanctification had on manly character and identity. In this tract, Jarrell told his readers that he believed a man’s character made the all-important difference in

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<sup>81</sup> Taylor, “Gibeonites,” 51-53.

<sup>82</sup> For examples of historians and others who have taken note of the violent nature of southern masculinity, see Cash, *The Mind of the South*; Bryant Simon, *Fabric of Defeat: The Politics of South Carolina Millhands, 1910-1948*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998); Ben Kantrowitz, *Ben Tillman and the Reconstruction of White Supremacy*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000); and Bertram Wyatt-Brown, *Southern Honor: Ethics and Behavior in the Old South*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982).

life; yet, there were those who were so faint-hearted that they were cowards and traitors to the cause of God.<sup>83</sup> Jarrell then proclaimed that he knew but one cure for faint-heartedness, and that was the experience of entire sanctification. It was only through this experience, he argued, that men could reclaim their position in the battles against sin and the devil.<sup>84</sup> Jarrell united his ideas of theology and manliness in these statements, claiming that it was only through perfect love that men could cast off their fears and become brave Christian soldiers. Thus, Christian perfection did not merely enhance manliness, it was what brought males into their manhood. Without it, Jarrell told his readers, a man could not reach his full potential.

When men did experience full salvation and reach their fullest potential, though, courage was just one of the traits that Beverly Carradine of Mississippi talked about as an element of holy manhood. In 1891's *Sanctification*, Carradine wrote that his readers would find that once they had been sanctified, they would become like the apostles on the biblical Day of Pentecost and "courage, fearlessness, devotion, love, compassion, and holiness [would] now [be] the marked features of their lives."<sup>85</sup> Carradine proposed that it was the infilling of the Holy Spirit which gave the disciples of Jesus these traits, and promised his readers that the Holy Spirit could do the same for them. Thus, the traits that he mentioned became parts of a vision of holy manhood. Carradine argued for a unique vision of manliness characterized by the intimate intertwining of robust masculinity and religious experience. Though some historians have argued that the aggressive, rough-and-tumble masculine culture in the post-bellum Deep South was opposed to quiet, self-controlled ideals of Evangelical culture, Holiness leaders did not see this division in

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<sup>83</sup> Jarrell, *Faint-Heartedness*, 6-8.

<sup>84</sup> Jarrell, *Faint-Heartedness*, 15-16.

<sup>85</sup> Carradine, *Sanctification*, 121.

the same way. Instead the enthusiastic evangelists of the Holiness movement fused the two models of southern manhood. By linking devotion, holiness, and compassion with courage and fearlessness, and Holiness writers and preachers created a unique masculinity focused on religious experience, while at the same time still appropriating ideas of southern masculinity as they argued for a refashioning of religious manliness.<sup>86</sup>

For the preachers and evangelists of the Holiness movement in the American South, masculinity had three primary expressions. First, in contrast to Baptist and Methodist understandings of manhood, Holiness leaders urged adherents to express their manliness through the emotive expression of perfect love – even platonic love to other men. Second, Holiness preachers thought that their own manhood showed itself through physicality. Whether successful in boyhood sports, being strong enough that others could lean on them or simply having a commanding physical presence, physical power was a significant marker of manhood for the sanctified. It showed not only God’s blessing, but also a readiness to fight against sin, the world, and the devil. The third expression of manhood that these leaders envisioned at the turn of the century came through highlighting the differences in worldly masculinity and holy manliness in the Deep South. The writers, preachers, and evangelists of the southern Holiness movement believed that entire sanctification was an experience that transformed manhood, and it was only through this experience that men could reach the fullest heights of manliness. Without it, manhood was a mere shadow of what it might become.

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<sup>86</sup> The most articulate demonstration of the argument for a divide between the ideas of secular masculine culture and quiet, self-controlled evangelical life is found in Ted Ownby’s *Subduing Satan*.

For the Holiness movement's leaders, the second blessing provided not only a new source of identity, but also a lens that filtered popular ideas of manhood and masculinity. Some expressions of manhood, like the use of martial language and warrior imagery, went through virtually unchanged. However, these officials also used the same lens to alter radically other ways that they believed men might envision their gender identity. Entire sanctification allowed men to express deep affection for one another in ways that would have been highly suspect in other communities. The experience of sanctification itself also gave Holiness men an additional mark of maturity and manhood – one could not be a true man without the second blessing. These expressions of manliness, as well as the others discussed in the chapter, show how evangelists and other Holiness leaders used theology to refine and alter concepts of manhood and masculinity. Such alterations were not merely confined to men, though. The next chapter delves into the ways in which Holiness leaders argued that theology changed ideas about femininity and family life.

## CHAPTER SEVEN:

### HOLY FEMININITY AND INTIMACY WITH THE DIVINE

*God is not looking for a man or woman to do His work, but He is looking for someone wholly consecrated to Him, and when He finds someone like that, He will use him or her, regardless of sex.*

- Mary Lee Cagle,  
“A Woman’s Right to Preach”  
(1928)

The above quote from Holiness preacher and evangelist Mary Lee Cagle demonstrated one of the ways in which leaders of the Holiness movement reconstructed gender roles within the institutional authority of the church. Members of the Holiness movement’s loosely affiliated leadership were not as concerned about having separate gender roles in the church as Methodists and Baptists because of the Holiness belief that the second blessing of entire sanctification was the most important mark of identity for an individual. For Cagle, and most other preachers and evangelists within the movement, biological sex was not a valid marker for differentiating roles within the church. (Though there were some Holiness leaders that were ambivalent about women becoming preachers, this was the minority position.) What was important to her was an individual’s consecrated heart, which gave both men *and* women equal right to preach.<sup>1</sup> To Cagle, proper theology and religious experience mattered much more than biological differences.

Cagle did not ignore all gender differences, though. Only a little after mentioning that sex was irrelevant compared to a sanctified heart in the service of God, she asked her audience

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<sup>1</sup> Mary Lee Cagle, “Woman’s Right to Preach” in *Life and Work of Mary Lee Cagle: An Autobiography*, (Kansas City, MO: Nazarene Publishing House, 1928), 169.

why God had given “women such a talent to talk, if not to be used for Him?”<sup>2</sup> Earlier in her sermon, Cagle even told her listeners that she was willing to admit that men excelled women “physically and mentally,” and may even be better at “sermonizing and preaching” though no man could love better than a woman.<sup>3</sup> Cagle’s ideas of gender equality within the church clearly did not extend to all areas of her life in the early part of the twentieth century. She did not simply blur gender distinctions or believe that entire sanctification somehow made believers asexual beings; rather, Cagle used the idea of entire sanctification to minimize the culture’s restrictions on the roles that women could fill in the church. Cagle’s life mirrored her belief that sanctification was more important than her biological sex. Almost immediately after she received the second blessing in the final years of the nineteenth century, Cagle felt a call to become a pastor, though she was fully aware of the opposition that she would face due to her gender from those outside the Holiness movement; even members of her own family were opposed to her desire to preach.<sup>4</sup> Nonetheless, she followed what she believed to be God’s call on her life and preached the doctrines of Christian perfection throughout the South despite the difficulties she faced.<sup>5</sup>

Cagle’s idea that men and women could hold equal position of authority in the church was a radical revision of women’s roles for Protestant groups across Mississippi, Alabama, and Georgia; yet, she blended her views on women’s ability to take institutional authority in the church with the retention of popular ideas of the differences between men and women. This was

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<sup>2</sup> Cagle, “Woman’s Right” in *Life and Work*, 171.

<sup>3</sup> Cagle, “Woman’s Right” in *Life and Work*, 167.

<sup>4</sup> Cagle, *Life and Work*, 21.

<sup>5</sup> Cagle, *Life and Work*, 34-39.

one example of the ways that Holiness leaders used the radical theology of entire sanctification to argue for altered perceptions of gender and identity that contrasted sharply with the views of other denominations. Preachers and evangelists in the movement often combined secular ideas about gender with conceptions of manliness and femininity heavily influenced by the radical theology of the second blessing. This led to unique ideas of gender that emphasized the influence of the Holy Spirit in a believer's life and in the life of the Holiness community. Their ideas of the sacred, so heavily dependent on the theology of the second blessing, led leaders to try to persuade adherents that they were part of a community that had a unique relationship with God.<sup>6</sup> Even though Holiness officials did not significantly challenge many other ideas of gender in Southern culture regarding femininity and the family, they forcefully advocated new roles for women within the church.

The reinterpretation of gender norms in the Holiness movement was evident in the ways that many of leaders of Holiness associations and denominations expressed their ideas of femininity, marriage, and family life using the theology of entire sanctification. This chapter demonstrates how Holiness preachers, writers, and evangelists recast ideas of femininity using Holiness theology. Prominent Holiness leaders envisioned that their ideas of the sacred led to ideas of femininity that encouraged women to take positions of authority within the church while at the same time, many of these same people warned sanctified women about distinctly feminine sins. Holiness theology proponents also pointed to marriage as a model of the relationship between God and the sanctified believer, allowing both men and women within the movement to consider themselves the bride of Christ. Finally, the focus of the chapter moves to family life,

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<sup>6</sup> For similar findings within an African-American Holiness denomination, see Anthea D. Butler, *Women in the Church of God in Christ: Making a Sanctified World*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007).

where Holiness officials often told adherents that their faith in entire sanctification was a communal one that could, and should, be passed down through the generations. Throughout the chapter, however, it is clear that holiness theology served as the primary marker of personal identification for leaders in the movement. Taken as a whole, the chapter demonstrates that Holiness leaders believed that their radical theology had a dramatic effect on identity formation.

Holiness understandings of gender, though heavily influenced by a theology of entire sanctification, did not break entirely away from traditional constructions of gender. Theology altered ideas of gender and opened new avenues of expression, but it did not create them *ex nihilo*. This meant that though there were dramatic differences in the way that sanctified leaders viewed gender, they were heavily influenced by the culture in which they grew up and continued to live that still considered women, particularly white women, to be fragile figures who should remain in the private, or domestic, world.<sup>7</sup>

For women in the movement, this meant that though many people encouraged them to testify to their experience of sanctification and become preachers, they did occasionally face opposition from within the movement. Opposition to female preachers and evangelists sometimes came from their own families. Alabama Holiness preacher John Lakin Brasher told a story of one woman who felt the call to become a preacher. The woman was the wife of a Confederate veteran, and though she struggled for more than a month against the call, she finally gave in and told her husband that she was leaving him and going to serve the Lord. The veteran thought that she had gone insane and physically restrained her. She quickly gave in to her husband's restraint and decided that God had been testing her to see whether she was willing to

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<sup>7</sup> For more on this, see Amy Thompson McCandless, *The Past in the Present: Women's Higher Education in the Twentieth Century South*, (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1999), 6, 12, 18, 34.

give up all that she held dear and consecrate her heart fully to God.<sup>8</sup> Brasher quickly moved on to talk about how the woman had become, after she yielded to her husband, “the best of wives and mothers,” subtly implying that female preachers were often neither good mothers nor wives. Brasher recounted the story as a testimony to how God called people to be willing to sacrifice their most important relationships in order to receive entire sanctification, but it also served as an example of the occasional opposition to women serving as preachers and evangelists that came from within the Holiness movement. Even though Brasher recounted that the husband was sanctified, when his wife announced her intention to become an evangelist, he thought that she had gone insane. The fact that Brasher himself told the story approvingly hinted at his own ambivalent ideas of the role of women in the church. Nowhere in his story did Brasher talk about the woman’s right to preach or her authority to do so.<sup>9</sup> Brasher’s ambivalent view of women preachers, though, did not reflect the majority of those in the Holiness movement.

The popular Holiness author and publisher, M.W. Knapp, voiced a more popular opinion in 1897 in his a tract entitled *Pentecostal Preachers*. Knapp used Holiness theology to argue to his readers that the most important marker of personal identity was whether someone had experienced Christian perfection, and he assumed that sanctified women had every right to become preachers and evangelists.<sup>10</sup> Though he made it clear that he believed that women could be church leaders, he wanted to show why he thought so. Thus, one of the points in his tract was entitled “*Women may be Pentecostal preachers.*” In this section, Knapp used Scripture and

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<sup>8</sup> J. Lawrence Brasher, *The Sanctified South: John Lakin Brasher and the Holiness Movement*, (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1994), 140-141.

<sup>9</sup> Brasher, *Sanctified South*, 141.

<sup>10</sup> M.W. Knapp, *Pentecostal Preachers* in *The Full Salvation Quarterly* III (July 1897): 1-77, (Cincinnati, Ohio: Revivalist Office, 1897), 21.

experience in order to declare that the sanctified woman who began to preach had a divine call and “by her gifts and graces and fruitage...is recognized among the most effective of Pentecostal preachers.”<sup>11</sup> Far from Brasher’s recounted ambivalence towards women in the ministry, Knapp thought that women made no small contribution to the southern Holiness movement at the turn of the century. By grounding his thoughts about women in the ministry in Scripture, Knapp showed how important his theology was to his views of gender; and his theology led him to believe women had important leadership roles in the Holiness movement.

Another Holiness leader who felt that women should have leadership roles in the church was the evangelist W.B. Godbey. Godbey loved to talk about the issue of women holding positions of authority as preachers and evangelists. In the tract, *Work of the Holy Spirit*, Godbey declared that the doctrine of women’s ministry was one of the “grand truths” that the Holiness movement was to preach to the “ends of the earth.”<sup>12</sup> For Godbey, the idea that women should be preachers and evangelists was not merely a side issue, but was one of the central ideas of the movement. He believed that the work and power of the Holy Ghost was so overwhelming and all encompassing that those who received it would gain a new identity more powerful than their gender and automatically testify about their experience of sanctification. In fact, in *Shall the Women Preach?* Godbey declared, “When we are born of the Spirit into the Kingdom of God, sexual distinction goes into eternal eclipse, forever perpetuated by sanctification and glorification... This enfranchisement of the sisterhood is the crowning glory of the present age.”<sup>13</sup> There is little to suggest that W.B. Godbey either supported or criticized the woman

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<sup>11</sup> Knapp, *Pentecostal Preachers*, 42, emphasis in original.

<sup>12</sup> W.B. Godbey, *Work of the Holy Spirit*, (Louisville, KY: Pickett Publishing Co., 1902), 55.

<sup>13</sup> William Baxter Godbey, *Shall the Women Preach?*, (Louisville, KY: Pentecostal Publishing Co., 1891; reprinted by Holiness Data Ministry, Digital Edition, 1999), 7.

suffrage movement in the Deep South at the turn of the century.<sup>14</sup> He rarely spoke about political issues and this phrase most likely was a call for women to take their religious rather than political rights. Similar to Cagle, though, Godbey was unconcerned as to whether an individual was male or female as long as they had received entire sanctification, and clearly felt that the empowerment of women in the ministry was one of the most important points of the Holiness movement. Indeed, he told his readers that it was the “crowning glory” of what Holiness offered to the world.

Godbey tried to bolster his theological arguments by using historical examples to support the idea of women evangelists. Throughout his sermons, speeches, and writings, Godbey told his audiences about different female preachers in history spreading the word of God. According to his reading of the Bible, the first female evangelist was Mary Magdalene, and he felt that women often had the greatest effect on the hearts of hardened sinners.<sup>15</sup> Godbey also established a history of women preachers and evangelists throughout the history of the early church.<sup>16</sup> Godbey frequently praised the women of the Salvation Army (who also believed in entire sanctification) for their efforts preaching to the urban poor, and compared them positively with the “many collegiate graduates” who had not yet reached Christian perfection.<sup>17</sup> The comparison was not merely between the illiterate and the college graduates, though. Godbey envisioned that

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<sup>14</sup> For more on the southern women suffrage movement, see Marjorie Spruill Wheeler, *New Women of the New South: The Leaders of the Woman Suffrage Movement in the Southern States*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993); Evelyn A. Kirkley, ““This Work Is God's Cause": Religion in the Southern Woman Suffrage Movement, 1880-1920,” *Church History* 59 (December 1990): 507-522; and Elna C. Green, *Southern Strategies: Southern Women and the Woman Suffrage Question*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997).

<sup>15</sup> W.B. Godbey, *Spiritual Gifts and Graces*, (Cincinnati: God's Revivalist Office, 1895), 7.

<sup>16</sup> Godbey, *Shall the Women Preach?*, 4-5.

<sup>17</sup> Godbey, *Spiritual Gifts and Graces*, 19.

the power of God, as evidenced through entire sanctification, could take hold of the lowest in society, give them a new identity, and prepare them for a ministry far more effective than those whom the world trusted. In other words, he deliberately meant to turn the paradigms of class and gender power upside down, and demonstrate to his readers how vitally important the baptism of the Holy Ghost was.

While Godbey used Holiness theology deliberately to throw off the restrictions of popular ideas about class and gender, he was not as radical in his ideas regarding entire sanctification and race. Like many others in the white Holiness movement in the South, Godbey rarely made explicit statements about race. One of the few times when Godbey mentioned African Americans in his writings, he praised the way he thought emotional worship reflected the power of the Holy Ghost.<sup>18</sup> An emotive worship style was one of the hallmarks of the Holiness movement; yet, was also one of the reasons that Southern Baptists and other groups excoriated the Holiness movement. SBC officials, with their emphasis on masculine self-control viewed these emotional, often frenetic worship services and camp-meetings as decidedly unmanly affairs. However, more than that, some SBC officials related the emotionalism of the white adherents of Holiness to African-American emotions.<sup>19</sup> In other words, some critics of the Holiness movement believed that the boisterous worship degraded the racial identity of those who attended and participated. Not only did outsiders deride Holiness revival meetings for their “African” qualities, these meetings could also be bi-racial. While this did not always happen, the

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<sup>18</sup> W.B. Godbey, *Autobiography of Rev. W.B. Godbey, A.M.* (Cincinnati: God’s Revivalist Office, 1909), 186.

<sup>19</sup> For examples, see “Letter from Natchez, Miss.,” *Baptist and Reflector* (Nashville), 25 June 1896, 4; J.W. Rush, “Fair Play,” *Alabama Christian Advocate*, 17 January 1895, 1; J.W. Rush, “Shut Out,” *Alabama Christian Advocate*, 11 July 1895, 1. See also Randall J. Stephens, *The Fire Spreads: Holiness and Pentecostalism in the American South*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2008), 82-93.

Holiness movement was one of the few groups in the South at the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth century that had the theological paradigm to look past racial identities.<sup>20</sup> This is not to say that many white southern Holiness leaders actually encouraged interracialism or that whites and blacks forged “color-blind” relationships through Holiness theology. Rather, that leaders used the same paradigm of radical theology to encourage congregants to accept each other in the pew. However, there were separate Holiness movements among white and black parishioners and eventually separate denominations grew out of these groups.<sup>21</sup>

There was communication between both white and black Holiness groups, though, and leaders of the white movement freely borrowed examples from the African-American coreligionists. Godbey demonstrated this tendency by using examples of sanctified African-American women in his writings. In *The Return of Jesus*, he mentioned coming across “an old negress [sic] at the washtub who did not know her letters who would shout as she did her humble duties, and did not know she had sanctification, i.e., did not know what to call the blessing.”<sup>22</sup> Similar examples of illiterate black women also appeared in Godbey’s writings when he wanted to contrast the education given at seminaries with the qualifications for preaching and evangelism given by the Holy Ghost. While he explicitly used these examples to subvert the gender and class norms of society, he rarely condemned, or even made any specific mention of

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<sup>20</sup> For more on interracial camp meetings and revivals, see Stephens, *The Fire Spreads*, 82-92.

<sup>21</sup> For more on the African-American Holiness movement, see John M. Giggie, *After Redemption: Jim Crow and the Transformation of African American Religion in the Delta, 1875-1915*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008); and Althea D. Butler, *Women in the Church of God in Christ: Making a Sanctified World*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1007).

<sup>22</sup> W.B. Godbey and Seth C. Rees, *The Return of Jesus*, (Cincinnati: God’s Revivalist Office, 1898), 14.

the racism within Southern Holiness. Indeed, while he praised Amanda Smith (an African-American Holiness preacher) as “one of the most efficient preachers of the world” who had “preached to myriads in America, Europe, Asia, and Africa,” the point of his example was not to show how African Americans could take leadership roles in white Holiness church, but to show how the Holy Ghost could use those considered lowest in society.<sup>23</sup> Even though Godbey infrequently mentioned race, the few examples that he did give were more than many others in the white Holiness movement. This is not to say that other white Holiness evangelists neglected African Americans. For example, Mrs. S. S. Garbutt, at the encouragement of W.A. Dodge, led at least one meeting for black Holiness adherents in Lovett, Georgia, in the final years of the nineteenth century. Altogether though, while the leaders of the Holiness movement envisioned that the doctrine of entire sanctification would eventually move many to reorient their ideas of gender completely, these same leaders rarely had a similar message about effect of theology on issues of race during this period.<sup>24</sup> Holiness doctrines gave leaders the religious paradigm to begin looking past racial differences. However, the culture of violent racism so prevalent across Mississippi, Alabama, and Georgia was so deeply entrenched that most leaders could not imagine the same transformation, nor speak out with the same conviction, as they did in regards to new visions of gender.

Historian Randall Stephens has a different interpretation of the Holiness movement’s response to Southern racism. In his book recounting the history of the Holiness movement in the South, Stephens maintained that Holiness theology led adherents to confront many aspects of

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<sup>23</sup> Godbey, *Spiritual Gifts and Graces*, 20.

<sup>24</sup> Mrs. J. Wm. Garbutt, Compiler. *Rev. W.A. Dodge as We Knew Him with Sketches of His Life, Diary, Consecration and Sermons*, (Atlanta: The Franklin Printing and Publishing Company, 1906), 111, in Kenneth O. Brown, Compiler, *William Asbury Dodge: Southern Holiness Pioneer*, (Hazleton, PA: Holiness Archives, 2001).

racial prejudice.<sup>25</sup> However, while there were isolated incidents when the sanctified reached beyond the limits of contemporary racism, these were few and far between. Holiness theology did encourage many people to look beyond the color of skin, which was a dramatic step in the New South. Additionally, members of the Holiness movement's leadership did not attempt to reconcile sectional differences in the United States at the expense of people of color like many other religious groups did.<sup>26</sup> However, adherents found it much easier to look for signs of sanctification across gender boundaries than racial ones particularly during the nadir of Southern race relations.

Though few leaders in the movement talked about how the second blessing might undo the South's racial mores at the end of the nineteenth century, most were consistent in the idea that the doctrine of entire sanctification was vitally important to the roles women could take in church leadership. Godbey realized, though, that not all felt as strongly as he did about the roles that sanctified women could assume. In his autobiography, Godbey recounted how, in the middle decades of the 1800s, his mother had taken all of her sons on her knee once they reached the age of three and told each of them how she had given them to God to become preachers. He maintained that had his mother lived a generation later, she also would have taken each of his sisters aside to talk about how they too might become ministers.<sup>27</sup> He was fully convinced that the power of God was enough to change the hearts and minds of all those who sought after

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<sup>25</sup> Stephens, *The Fire Spreads*, 82-92.

<sup>26</sup> Charles Reagan Wilson, *Baptized in Blood: The Religion of the Lost Cause, 1865-1920*, (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1980); Edward J. Blum, *Reforging the White Republic: Race, Religion, and American Nationalism, 1865-1898*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2005); and David W. Blight, *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in American Memory*, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2001),

<sup>27</sup> Godbey, *Autobiography*, 14 and 26.

holiness and would persuade them that any individual, whether male or female, who had experienced entire sanctification was fully qualified to preach the gospel and fight the forces of evil.<sup>28</sup>

Even many of the male leaders of the Holiness movement who did not specifically talk about women preachers gave their tacit approval to them. One such example within the Holiness movement was A.J. Jarrell, the leader of the influential Georgia Holiness Association. Jarrell demonstrated this tendency to simply assume women's role as preachers as he repeatedly quoted from the work of Phoebe Palmer in his tracts.<sup>29</sup> Phoebe Palmer was the preeminent example of a female leader for the Holiness movement. Palmer had lived in New York and taught a particular version of holiness that eventually helped to define the movement after the American Civil War. While there is evidence to suggest that the theology of entire sanctification was present in antebellum Southern Methodist circles in the post-war South, many people pointed to her writings in their sermons and tracts. Palmer emphasized the instantaneous moment of sanctification, the idea of an individual placing their "all on the altar," and popularized the idea that women as well as men should seek a place in religious service.<sup>30</sup> Palmer's contribution to the Southern Holiness movement was tangible, and the idea that women should have an authoritative role was one of the central symbols of the second blessing in the South. Even those leaders who did not directly refer to female evangelists may have supported them. The culture of the Holiness movement certainly supported this interpretation. Moreover, religious scholar

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<sup>28</sup> Godbey, *Work of the Holy Spirit*, 68; and Godbey, *Church – Bride – Kingdom*, 76 both talk about the "grand army of preachers, male and female" that was being raised in the Holiness movement in order to fight the devil.

<sup>29</sup> See A.J. Jarrell, *The Key to the Storehouse; OR, Faith in God the Secret of All Triumph*, (New York: Palmer and Hughes, n.d. 188?), 29-31.

<sup>30</sup> See Stephens, *The Fire Spreads*, 31-34.

Grant Wacker argues that, among the related Pentecostal movement of the early twentieth century, the imperative for women to testify to their religious experience was so clear and self-evident that few leaders actually felt the need to argue for it.<sup>31</sup>

While the support of women preachers was a sign to those outside the movement that Holiness leadership believed their theology altered an individual's identity, one visible demonstration of a sanctified identity to others within the movement was a preference for plain clothing. Mississippi Holiness preacher and author Beverly Carradine thought that the change in the clothes of those who had Christian perfection was so important that in 1897 he wrote, "To obtain the blessing of sanctification is to regulate at once the dress."<sup>32</sup> Carradine was careful not to state exactly how the sanctified should dress, but he warned his readers across the Deep South to be neither a "fashionable scare-crow for the devil" nor "a fanatical scare-crow for God." Instead, he urged individuals to be careful not to adorn themselves with worldly goods or let their clothes become a hindrance in their attempts to serve God.<sup>33</sup> The prohibition on fancy dress would have also helped to cement group identity and forge ties across class lines as leaders attempted to make clear that the only identifying mark that truly mattered was that of entire sanctification.

Though many preachers and evangelists in the Holiness movement exhibited a level of gender equality in the roles they believed that women might take in church, many retained the idea that sins could be gender specific. For example, the love of fashion was one area that many writers believed affected women more than it did men. In fact, the idea that an inordinate desire

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<sup>31</sup> Grant Wacker, *Heaven Below: Early Pentecostals and American Culture*, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2001), 162-165.

<sup>32</sup> Beverly Carradine, *The Sanctified Life*, (Cincinnati: M.W. Knapp, 1897), 159.

<sup>33</sup> Carradine, *Sanctified Life*, 164.

for expensive attire or fashionable clothing was a distinctly feminine problem was a popular thought dating back at least to the founding of the English colonies in America.<sup>34</sup> Religious scholar Pamela E. Klassen explains that for many women in the nineteenth century, “clothing was a self-consciously defining and communicative feature for a woman in public.”<sup>35</sup> Many Holiness leaders tried to persuade sanctified women to realize that their garments conveyed meaning and should express their experiential piety through their attire. This often meant that women wore relatively plain clothing in order to demonstrate a woman’s inner purity, quiet spirit, sanctified heart, and, perhaps more subconsciously, group identity. There are surviving pictures of women at Holiness camp meetings who wore plain white dresses. It is highly likely that the women in these pictures used their white clothing to signify the purity of their hearts, or their desire for entire sanctification (**Figure 9, next page, shows one from 1905**).<sup>36</sup>

Additionally, such garments served as a visible witness to a woman’s self-identification with the Holiness movement. An entire group of women clothed in white provided a sense of solidarity and group identity to adherents and curious bystanders alike. Through relatively plain white dresses, leaders argued that these women hoped to convey ideas of both the holiness of the group and the personal sanctification experienced by its individual members. An additional aspect of plain, white clothing, perhaps not fully grasped by the leaders or adherents themselves, was the

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<sup>34</sup> See Leigh Eric Schmidt, “‘A Church-Going People Are a Dress-Loving People’: Clothes, Communication, and Religious Culture in Early America,” *Church History* 58 (March 1989): 36-51. African American women not only had to deal with what was perceived to be a gendered problem, but also had to contend with the ways in which fashion and dress was described in racialized terms. For more on this, see Pamela E. Klassen, “The Robes of Womanhood: Dress and Authenticity among African American Methodist Women in the Nineteenth Century,” *Religion and American Culture: A Journal of Interpretation* 14 (Winter 2004): 39-82.

<sup>35</sup> Klassen, “Robes of Womanhood,” 39.

<sup>36</sup> White Cross Camp Meeting, Blount County, Alabama, 1905. Taken from Brasher, *Sanctified South*, 105.

fact that this would minimize class differences among the sanctified. As leaders of the Holiness movement tried to encourage one another, and their audiences, to view the second blessing as the most important marker of personal identity, an important part of encouraging group cohesion would be to minimize the inter-group differences. This would be particularly important if individuals were wearing jewelry or clothing that identified them as members of a higher-class status.

One woman who clearly wanted to convey piety through her dress, and wanted others in the Holiness movement to do the same, was Rev. Mary Lee

**Figure 9**



Cagle. Cagle viewed the issues of fashion and appropriate dress as a women's problem. In her memoirs, she recounted that early in her ministry, very few sanctified preachers in the Deep South talked about "how women should adorn themselves, and so very often holiness professors were wearing gold, feathers, and flowers, and worldly dress in general."<sup>37</sup> Eventually, Cagle felt that she needed to preach on the issue of proper dress, and did so with dramatic results. She recalled that as she finished her sermon on appropriate dress, the front of the church filled with

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<sup>37</sup> Cagle, *Life and Work*, 32.

the penitent who wanted to rid themselves of their worldly adornments. Cagle showed how she thought that this was distinctly a woman's problem as she talked about the women who cast off gold rings, class pins, and other articles of jewelry in an attempt to demonstrate their holiness. Once these women rid themselves of "worldly goods," which would have also been markers of class rather than spiritual identity, Cagle noted how quickly they demonstrated entire sanctification: one was a schoolteacher who later married a minister and became the "mother of four boys," one was preaching Christian perfection, and others were preparing to become evangelists.<sup>38</sup> In her memory of this event, Cagle built on a tradition of testimonies both in the Holiness movement and in other faith communities, that expensive clothing or worldly dress could hinder spiritual growth.<sup>39</sup>

Cagle's memory of the event showed the ways in which she blended progressive and traditional views of gender and class with her theological identity. She clearly believed that appropriate clothing was a primarily an issue for women to deal with, and even recalled how her own dress changed as she sought sanctification. Powdering her face, curling her hair, and even wearing any but the "plainest dress she could find" represented a distracted and divided heart to Cagle. Her desire for holiness and wanting to "get right with God" meant that she needed to lose all such distractions of fashion and outward appearance.<sup>40</sup> Such ideas about plain dress would have also been instrumental in trying to keep class distinctions out of the Holiness movement. By doing their best to keep dress relatively plain, Cagle and other church leaders tried to keep the

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<sup>38</sup> Cagle, *Life and Work*, 32-33.

<sup>39</sup> For more on these narratives, see Schmidt, "Church-Going People," 49.

<sup>40</sup> Cagle, *Life and Work*, 20.

focus on spiritual identity and status rather than on the differences in wealth among their congregants.<sup>41</sup>

Yet even as Cagle made it a point to emphasize the value of plain dress, her ideas about gender were nuanced. While she imbibed the traditional idea that fashion was a hindrance to women's spirituality, she also espoused the thought that women might become preachers and evangelists. Cagle's theology had a dynamic influence on her ideas of gender, and she attempted to follow her understanding of the sacred in every area her life, and encouraged her listeners and those who read her book to do the same. Sometimes this meant repeating traditional ideas of spiritual stumbling blocks that were uniquely feminine, while at the same time affirming unconventional roles for those who had removed those blocks and were running in the light of entire sanctification. Cagle offered a wonderful example of the way in which Holiness leaders used theology to envision that adherents would reconfigure their own gender identity. Church leaders did not simply create their own ideas of gender, instead, they rearranged ideas of what men and women should be while opening up new avenues of gender expression. Sometimes, as with Cagle, this led to conflicting ideas of what constituted appropriate expressions of femininity. She believed that women should be taking more authority in the church, which was a radical notion for the time; but retained the traditional idea that women must be especially careful of the sins of vanity, a thought that had been in the church since time immemorial.

Despite such conflicting ideas, Cagle was not the only Holiness leader who warned women in the Deep South about the dangerous messages they sent through their choice of

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<sup>41</sup> For more on how spiritual identity was demonstrated through discipline practices such as modest dress, see Anthea D. Butler's article, "Observing the Lives of the Saints: Sanctification as Practice in the Church of God in Christ" in *Practicing Protestants: Histories of Christian Life in America, 1630-1965*, Laurie F. Maffly-Kipp, Leigh E. Schmidt, and Mark Valeri, eds., (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006), 158-176.

clothing. Author B.S. Taylor warned his turn-of-the-century readers, “love of display of dress is a snare to women.”<sup>42</sup> If that were not enough, Taylor claimed, “fallen women begin their downward career by selling virtue for fashionable display.”<sup>43</sup> Here, Taylor intimately linked sexuality and the love of fashion. He made it clear that a love of fashion was not only inappropriate to those who had received Christian perfection, but it was wrong for anyone who called herself a sanctified Christian. By claiming that love of fashion was a uniquely feminine struggle that began the path to prostitution, Taylor opened the idea that any woman could be a prostitute-in-the-making. Any man who felt that fashion was beginning to ensnare his wife, daughter, or sister was then responsible to save not only her soul, but her virtue and purity as well. The connection that Taylor made between clothing and deviant female sexuality was impossible to miss. There was no rebuke to men about their lustful advances towards women, or a check on their expressions of sexuality.<sup>44</sup> Instead, clothing and appropriate dress were almost entirely an issue for women according to Taylor, because it was about attracting and being attractive to men. This issue thus had dramatic importance for their spiritual and sexual lives. These two ideas made it clear that the link between women’s sexual purity and her heart purity, an idea prevalent across Mississippi, Alabama, and Georgia at the time, was also a gender norm retained by writers and evangelists in the Holiness movement.

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<sup>42</sup> B.S. Taylor, “The Gibeonites: A Scriptural Allegory” in *The Full Salvation Quarterly* II (October 1896): 81, (Cincinnati, Ohio: Revivalist Office, 1896).

<sup>43</sup> Taylor, “Gibeonites,” 82.

<sup>44</sup> Taylor did mention that he thought there was a “clearly defined line between the dress of a real Christian gentleman or lady, and the worldly fashion, the carnal display, the affection and sham of ‘society.’” (“Gibeonites,” 81). However, this remark was mild compared to the rebuke that women received for their dress.

Throughout the writings of the Holiness movement's leaders, the moment when a believer experienced entire sanctification, or perfect love, was an important point in that believer's life. This was when officials told adherents their identities were changed, and their love, their desires, and their very heart would be cleansed of all of its darkness. This meant that the desires of the sanctified were now purified and they lived in accord with the will of God. Thus, far from being an obscure spiritual reference, purity was an important trait for preachers and evangelists in the Holiness movement. It was a mark of a person's individual spiritual condition; it did not rely on their relationships with other people in the same ways that the idea of perfect love did. Nonetheless, in the larger culture of the Deep South, purity had a very intimate component that carried distinctly sexual overtones – particularly for women. These sexual overtones could make preaching to revival services uncomfortable for sanctified women who had their purity questioned.<sup>45</sup>

In her memoirs, published early in the twentieth century, Mary Lee Cagle talked about how hard it was for women in the Holiness movement to have their names, reputations, and purity impugned simply because they were preachers or evangelists.<sup>46</sup> Yet, historian Randall Stephens records that it was not unusual for communities to malign the names of visiting female evangelists; one town going so far as to spread rumors that an evangelist had murdered her husband and abandoned her children.<sup>47</sup> Being a public woman, even one who preached about Christianity rather than walked the streets, challenged ideas of white southern womanhood that

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<sup>45</sup> For examples of how this worked in other religious traditions, see Beryl Satter, *Each Mind a Kingdom: American Women, Sexual Purity, and the New Thought Movement, 1875-1920*, (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1999), 22-26, 30-32.

<sup>46</sup> Cagle, *Life and Work*, 22.

<sup>47</sup> See Stephens, *The Fire Spreads*, 96-97.

elevated the importance of the domestic world for women.<sup>48</sup> Hence, the suggestion from Cagle that female evangelists' reputations were dragged through the mud was an acknowledgement that the sexual purity of women preachers was often called into question.<sup>49</sup>

### **Pure and Holy Marriage**

For those in the Holiness movement, however, the actions of one spouse, even a radical female preacher, did not necessarily impugn the other, and many of the writers within the movement used the analogy of marriage to talk about their union with God through Christian perfection. Using marriage as a model provided the Holiness movement's leaders with an analogue that expressed the intimacy that they felt with God because of their sanctification. This contrasted sharply with ideas from both the Southern Baptist Convention and the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. Between 1877 and 1915, these two denominations were the largest religious bodies in the Deep South, and particularly in Mississippi, Alabama, and Georgia.<sup>50</sup> Neither of these denominations talked about marriage providing an example of the intimacy available in a believer's relationship with God. The interest in spiritual intimacy was an emphasis exclusive to the leaders of the Holiness movement. However, matrimony was not merely seen as an analogue. Marriage, according to many Holiness writers and evangelists, was also the place

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<sup>48</sup> See Nancy F. Cott, *The Bonds of Womanhood: "Woman's Sphere" in New England, 1780-1835*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977), 8, 64, 199-200; Jane Censer, *The Reconstruction of White Southern Womanhood, 1865-1895*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2003), 51, 90, 276-277.

<sup>49</sup> During the time, a pure woman frequently meant a chaste woman, and there were even those from other denominations who suggested that a woman might lose her purity through the actions of a sexually unfaithful husband. See William J. Holtzclaw, *Women of To-day* with an Introduction by J.A. Leavitt, (Louisville, KY: Baptist Book Concern, Publishers, 1909), 64-66.

<sup>50</sup> *Religious Bodies*, 42, 62-63.

where a sanctified couple could live each for the other while providing mutual support and encouragement for service and ministry. Mary Lee Cagle used this model of marriage. When talking about her marriages (the first ended in her husband's death from tuberculosis), Cagle emphasized the Christian ministry that she and her husbands were able to accomplish.<sup>51</sup> It was clearly of utmost importance to her that she had a sanctified husband and that they could work in full-time Christian ministry together.

While some Holiness evangelists, like the Cagles, clearly worked together as a couple in full-time Christian ministries, not all Holiness preachers had spouses that worked with them. For example, there was no evidence that W.A. Dodge's wife was involved in full-time ministry with him. However, it was clear that they provided each other with support and encouragement. One of Dodge's memorialists, Clement C. Cary, a pastor in the North Georgia Conference of the MECS and a fellow member of the Georgia Holiness Association with Dodge, recorded that Dodge and his wife shared the joys, sorrows, and toils of life together.<sup>52</sup> Cary also talked about the ways in which Dodge cared for his wife after she became an invalid.<sup>53</sup> Altogether, Cary gave the reader a picture of a man who deeply cared for his wife. The relationship did not rely merely upon the times of good health and financial stability, but rather was able to weather the times of sickness, pain, and affliction. Cary envisioned that the Dodge's marriage was a relationship that each partner could depend upon the other, and knew that there was security in their intimacy.

In his autobiography, W.B. Godbey also praised the institution of marriage by telling his readers that matrimony was "the only institution which survived the fall and came down to

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<sup>51</sup> Cagle, *Life and Work*, 22-23 and 85-88.

<sup>52</sup> Cary, "Conference Memoir" in *Rev. W.A. Dodge*, 86.

<sup>53</sup> Cary, "Conference Memoir," 86-87.

brighten this dark, fallen world with a perpetual souvenir of the lost Paradise.”<sup>54</sup> Godbey made it clear that he believed marriage was a relationship set up specifically by God. Moreover, it was one of the things that remained from before Paradise was lost. In this way, Godbey proclaimed that marriage was a perfect relationship. The institution itself was something holy, albeit his theology said that the two individuals within the relationship were both broken people, marred by sin.

Godbey demonstrated just how wonderful he thought marriage was when he told readers, “It has always seemed to me that God, in His mercy, ransacked creation when He selected a helpmeet for unworthy me.”<sup>55</sup> Godbey then continued and talked about how they had endured the long conflict of life by supporting each other.<sup>56</sup> Interestingly, Godbey seemed to combine different ideas of marriage and gender roles in talking about his own spouse.<sup>57</sup> Clearly, Godbey loved his wife, and he talked about his unworthiness for her. While it is almost a cliché for many people simply to state their own unworthiness for their spouse as a nice way of giving a compliment to their loved one, this was a revealing statement for a man who had experienced entire sanctification, and occasionally had to defend himself from the charge of hubris in his writing.<sup>58</sup> Thus, an otherwise simple statement of a husband’s unworthiness of his wife became a very charged statement coming from the pen of W.B. Godbey; and carried interesting

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<sup>54</sup> Godbey, *Autobiography*, 426.

<sup>55</sup> Godbey, *Autobiography*, 88.

<sup>56</sup> Godbey, *Autobiography*, 89.

<sup>57</sup> For more on marriage in the American South, see Carol Bleser, ed., *In Joy and Sorrow: Women, Family, and Marriage in the Victorian South, 1830-1900* Introduction by C. Vann Woodward, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991).

<sup>58</sup> Godbey, *Autobiography*, 53.

connotations when mixed with the term “helpmeet.” The term “helpmeet” has meant many different things in Christian history. Some scholars have interpreted this term as a way of ensuring the subjection of women to male authority.<sup>59</sup> However, others have pointed out the term “helpmeet” was used only four times throughout the Bible, twice being applied to God’s role in relationship with the ancient nation of Israel.<sup>60</sup> The latter group of scholars argues that the term did not have connotations of unbalanced power relationships, but often served an empowering term. While both interpretations are intriguing, Godbey’s use of the term fell somewhere in between the two.<sup>61</sup> The Holiness evangelist was a strong proponent of women’s right to preach and equality before God; however, the culture of his day, which assumed men as the head of the household serving in patriarchal roles, greatly influenced him and he clearly held to the ideas that the domestic world was primarily a feminine sphere.<sup>62</sup> Thus, while Godbey connected Holiness theology to marriage and family life in order to envision and talk about

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<sup>59</sup> See Maureen Fitzgerald, “The Religious is Personal is Political: Foreword to the 1993 Edition of *The Woman’s Bible*,” in *The Woman’s Bible* by Elizabeth Cady Stanton with Foreword by Maureen Fitzgerald, (Ann Arbor, Michigan: Northeastern University Press, 1993), iii.

<sup>60</sup> For more on this interpretation, see Josh Remington, “Recovering a Creation Mythology: Reading Genesis in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century,” Unpublished Paper presented at the 2008 Urshan Graduate School of Theology Symposium, “Standing Together for Truth,” (7-9 November 2008): 6; and Robert Alter, *Genesis: Translation and Commentary*, (New York City: W.W. Norton & Company, 1996), 9.

<sup>61</sup> Kathleen M. Brown’s “Beyond the Great Debates: Gender and Race in Early America,” *Reviews in American History* 26 *The Challenge of American History* (March 1998): 96-123 looks at a few of the ways in which the ideal of the “helpmeet” has been debated and discussed by historians, though it does not deal specifically with the theological interpretations. A brief look at the different theological interpretations can be found in Judith S. Antonelli, *In the Image of God: A Feminist Commentary on the Torah*, (Northvale, New Jersey: Jason Aronson, 1995), 5-7.

<sup>62</sup> See Censer, *The Reconstruction of White Southern Womanhood*, 51, 90, 276-277.

spiritual equality between men and women in positions of authority within the church, he nonetheless retained relational and functional hierarchies within marriage and family life.

The retention of gendered hierarchies within marriage and family life, despite a theology of institutional and spiritual equality, did not mean that Godbey loved his wife any less or looked down on her. As has already been mentioned, Godbey, who fervently proclaimed his own experience of Christian perfection to all who would listen, talked about his own unworthiness of his wife. Indeed, Godbey loved his wife dearly and when he wrote his autobiography in 1909 was looking forward to their fiftieth wedding anniversary.<sup>63</sup> His ideas about power relationships in their marriage, then, were not a hindrance to what he perceived to be a close, companionate, loving, and affectionate relationship.

In fact, according to the preachers and evangelists in the Holiness movement, the same traits that created a close, affectionate marriage also defined their relationship with God, and so it was a natural extension of their theology that allowed the sanctified to talk about themselves as the true bride of Christ. This meant that both men and women willingly appropriated feminine traits as they affirmed the idea that they were married to Jesus. The idea that the sanctified were wedded to their savior meant a new understanding of their relationship with God. W.B. Godbey was one of the Holiness writers who talked the most about the sanctified believer's relationship to God in marital terms between 1877 and 1915. In the aptly named *Church – Bride – Kingdom*, Godbey urged his readers to put their all on the altar so that “the Holy Ghost may solemnize your matrimony and thus wed you eternally to the fairest among then thousand.”<sup>64</sup> Here, Godbey told believers that they were to marry Jesus himself. Though Godbey talked about Jesus as the

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<sup>63</sup> Godbey, *Autobiography*, 89.

<sup>64</sup> W.B. Godbey, *Church – Bride – Kingdom*, (Cincinnati: God's Revivalist Office, 1905), 111.

“fairest among ten thousand,” he clearly identified Jesus as the groom and all of his readers, both male and female, as the bride in this cosmic wedding. He made this clear when he told readers that the Holy Ghost would be sure to identify the sanctified as Jesus’ bride.<sup>65</sup> In *The Return of Jesus*, Godbey wrote that Jesus was like a young man who came in the middle of the night and stole away his betrothed so that they might elope. Godbey then penned his desirous response, “Oh, I want to be stolen. I am so anxious to be stolen.”<sup>66</sup>

Godbey clearly wanted to be with his beloved Jesus, and used the most intimate of relationships to declare his longing for a closer union with his savior. Godbey’s language also indicated a deep sense of belonging and kinship that offered a stark contrast to language of the Southern Baptist Convention. No longer would he have to go through life alone, or have to face spiritual battles by himself. Instead, he was united to God – united not simply through the ties of friendship, but through the bonds of marriage. Using the analogue of marriage also allowed Godbey to speak about the intimacy he felt with his savior. He appropriated the title of “the bride” and talked about how Jesus would take the initiative in the relationship. In fact, Godbey put himself in a passive position. Jesus would come and steal him away – Godbey was not going to run and meet Jesus, he was not going to do any of it on his own. This was in striking contrast to the ways in which Godbey described the rest of his life. Throughout his writings, Godbey let his readers know just how hard he worked for the cause of Christ around the turn of the century, and how actively he pursued holiness.<sup>67</sup> Thus, to describe his relationship with Jesus in passive

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<sup>65</sup> Godbey, *Church – Bride – Kingdom*, 103.

<sup>66</sup> Godbey and Rees, *The Return of Jesus*, 19.

<sup>67</sup> For examples, see Godbey, *Autobiography*, 103, 108-109.

terms was a mark of how fully he internalized the idea that he belonged to the “bridehood,” and the roles he thought married women should take in their relationships with their husbands.

While Godbey made the reader aware that though she could expect an intimate connection with God through sanctification, it also meant that she would have to give herself fully to God. Though this sounded similar to the idea that the penitent must put all on the altar in order to receive the second blessing of entire sanctification, given the context of the analogue of marriage, the idea that the sanctified believer must give herself fully to God also took on vaguely sexual overtones. It connected the relationship between the believer who experienced perfect love and God with the intimacy within a physical relationship between a husband and wife.

Godbey left little doubt of this interpretation of the intimacy between a sanctified believer and God when he wrote in 1895’s *Spiritual Gifts and Graces* that at the second coming of Jesus, the sanctified would “formally consummate the long-anticipated matrimonial alliance which was spiritually plighted at sanctification.”<sup>68</sup> While Godbey was not saying that believers would engage in some type of sexual relationship with the divine, he did suggest to his readers that the relationship between Jesus and the sanctified believers would be on the same level of intimacy as a bride and groom on their wedding night. Those in the Holiness movement would recognize that Godbey was talking metaphorically. However, they would also recognize that Godbey used his theology to envision that all those within the movement – both male and female alike – should take up the position of the bride. In this relationship, God, and more specifically Jesus, was the groom and everything moved at his initiative.<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>68</sup> W.B. Godbey, *Spiritual Gifts and Graces*, (Cincinnati: God’s Revivalist Office, 1895), 66.

<sup>69</sup> Godbey, *Autobiography*, 416; and Godbey, *Church – Bride – Kingdom*, 81.

When Godbey identified sanctified believers with the bride of Christ in his sermons and writings, he knowingly took on a feminine title to himself. This transgression of gendered norms was not entirely uncommon as the Bible alluded to the idea of the church of God the Bride of Christ.<sup>70</sup> However, few male writers outside of the Holiness movement so readily applied the title of the bride as easily to themselves as Godbey did.<sup>71</sup> His appropriation of this term was not merely superficial either. Instead, throughout his writings, it was clear that Jesus was the one taking the initiative, as Godbey thought was appropriate for husbands to do. Jesus was the one who rescued his people, Jesus was the one doing all the action – not those identified as the bride. This use of gendered language showed a great deal about Godbey’s ideas of the appropriate role of a bride and wife, even as he identified himself as part of the bride. Godbey connected his theology and gendered ideals in such a way that suggested that a wife should wait for her husband, let him lead, not question his authority or leadership, and look to him to meet all of her needs. Such ideas were similar to many regarding marriage and family life in the antebellum South. However, after the Civil War and Reconstruction, many white women took on responsibilities that were more public and had a greater voice in domestic affairs than they had before the war in many parts of the Deep South. Nonetheless, even at the beginning of the

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<sup>70</sup> See Ephesians 5: 22-23 and Revelation 21: 9-10, Holy Bible.

<sup>71</sup> For preachers and pastors from other traditions who did not use this language, see Fernando Coello McConnell, “The Doctrine of Missions,” 1902, 3, Folder 46, Box 1, Southern Baptist Convention Sermon Collection, AR. 638, Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives, Nashville, Tennessee, (SBC); William J. Holtzclaw, *Women of To-day* with an Introduction by J.A. Leavitt, (Louisville, KY: Baptist Book Concern, Publishers, 1909); and James Madison Crews, “Regeneration,” n.d. circa 1885, Box 56, Personal Papers of James Madison Crews MC87, The Methodist Archives Center, Huntington College Library, Huntington College, Montgomery, Alabama, (JMC).

twentieth century, white women across Mississippi, Alabama, and Georgia were supposed to let their husbands take the lead in relationships and responsibilities.<sup>72</sup>

In addition to taking on the various roles of the bride, Godbey's writings suggested that sanctified believers, collectively the bride of Christ, should make themselves ready for reception by her bridegroom, and could only truly do so by experiencing Christian perfection.<sup>73</sup> When the Christian church was thus sanctified and ready for the return of Jesus, Godbey promised his readers that Jesus would come and take his people to their eternal home.<sup>74</sup> For those in the Holiness movement, this was a wonderful hope. They believed that they had a savior who cared intimately for them and would rescue them from a broken, sinful world. Following Godbey's metaphor of the bride and groom, it was clear that he believed that husbands were to not only support and encourage their wives and take the initiative in the relationship, they were also supposed to rescue their wives. This would not necessarily mean removing them from life-threatening situations, but it did mean that husbands were to create a haven where their wives, and by extension their entire family, might find rest from the stings of the world. Indeed, the home itself was to be a sacred domain and a respite from secular society.<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> See Censer, *Reconstruction of White Southern Womanhood*, 6-9, 50-51, 90, 276-279; Rebecca Montgomery, "Lost Cause Mythology in New South Reform," 174-198, in *Negotiating Boundaries of Southern Womanhood: Dealing with the Powers That Be*, Janet L. Coryell, Thomas H. Appleton, Jr., Anastatia Sims, and Sandra Gioia Treadway, eds., (Columbia, Missouri: University of Missouri Press, 2000); Virginia Burr, "A Woman Made to Suffer and Be Strong: Ella Gertrude Clanton Thomas, 1834-1907," in Bleser, ed., *In Joy and Sorrow*, 215-232; Edwards, *Gendered Strife and Confusion*, 20; and Wheeler, *New Women of the New South*, 4-7, 17-20.

<sup>73</sup> Godbey and Rees, *The Return of Jesus*, 101.

<sup>74</sup> Godbey, *Church – Bride – Kingdom*, 132-133.

<sup>75</sup> For more on the idea of the sacred nature of the home, see Ted Ownby, *Subduing Satan: Religion, Recreation, and Manhood in the Rural South, 1865-1920*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1990), 4-5, 8-11, 104.

Beverly Carradine from Mississippi also talked about the respite that Holiness believers would find in Christ. According to him, this rest was something that the Holy Spirit gave at the moment of sanctification. Carradine told his readers in 1891 that in the moment when they received perfect love, Jesus would “establish the most tender and delightful and permanent relationship.” Moreover, he was “going to give himself to you in his fullness. Such a gift demands that your heart cry out with burning desires and quenchless longings.”<sup>76</sup> Carradine’s readers would not have missed the intimate language that the evangelist used to talk about their new relationship to Jesus. They would have recognized the language of marriage and have been able to identify Christ as the groom. According to Carradine, it was Jesus, as the groom, who was going to establish the relationship and give himself to his people, not the other way around. The readers would have been amazed at the ways in which Carradine talked of a transcendent God who created the universe establishing a tender relationship full of delights with humans. This relationship was so intimate that Carradine used the language of the wedding night to portray it – Jesus was going to “give himself...in his fullness” to those who achieved holiness. The language that Carradine used to demonstrate the appropriate response had sexual tension as well. The readers would not have read sexuality into Carradine’s words, but recognized that their pastor was attempting to show the intimacy and close communion with God that the second blessing enabled.

Even in these passages, Carradine made it clear that it was the groom’s responsibility to take the initiative and establish a relationship with his wife. The bride, portrayed here as the people of God, took a passive role in Carradine’s writings until the groom first moved towards her. Using this model, Carradine made it clear that married women were to respond to their

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<sup>76</sup> Beverly Carradine, *Sanctification* with Introduction by L.L. Pickett, (Nashville: Publishing House of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, 1891), 138.

husbands' overtures with grateful, loving, urgent responses full of longing and desire. What Carraine envisioned and described to his readers in terms of Jesus as the groom and the sanctified people of God suggested that both partners in a marriage had responsibilities in the marriage relationship. It was the husband's role to initiate the relationship and to pursue his wife; he was supposed to give himself fully to his wife, holding nothing back. However, once he did so, a wife should respond with love, care, and desire. Thus, such a marriage between two mature individuals was based on mutual care, respect, and love, while each protected the other.

Additionally, many turn-of-the-century Holiness writers repeated the idea that such a marriage demonstrated a healthy relationship between two mature adults. The analogue of marriage to God thus not only brought a new identity as the Bride of Christ and intimacy with Jesus, but also it brought about maturity. Even though there were those who argued that sanctification brought purity, not necessarily maturity, most evangelists used the idea of the second blessing to talk about the spiritual maturity of those who had received the baptism of the Holy Ghost versus those who had not and were still spiritual babes.<sup>77</sup> Beverly Carradine actually argued both ways on this point. His 1891 book, *Sanctification*, argued, "A baptism of fire would hardly be the proper swaddling-clothes for a newborn babe."<sup>78</sup> This suggested that holiness, while not necessarily bringing about maturity itself, could only happen to mature Christians who had moved out of spiritual infancy. However, a few years later, in *The Sanctified Life* (1897), Carradine amended his former stance saying, "The mistake that these brethren make is confounding purity and maturity. Maturity or mellowness or ripeness comes with the flight of

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<sup>77</sup> A.J. Jarrell was one of the writers who felt that the second blessing did not automatically entail spiritual maturity. See his tract, *Christian Perfection: An Address*, (La Grange, Georgia: A.J. Jarrell, n.d. 188?), 11-12.

<sup>78</sup> Carradine, *Sanctification*, 49, emphasis original.

time, both in nature and grace, but the blessing we are contending for is not maturity but purity.”<sup>79</sup> Whether his readers were surprised with this apparent switch in opinion or not, Carradine wanted to make clear that he no longer thought that only the spiritually mature received holiness. This opened the way for people to undergo both conversion to Christianity and receive the second blessing at the same revival – possibly even at the same service.

Those who did proclaim the second blessing brought maturity also had sanctified ideas about human sexuality. As was mentioned earlier, B.S. Taylor believed that the desire for fashionable clothing could cause trouble in female sexuality; however, this line of thought did not sum up the entirety of his ideas on sanctified sex. Taylor firmly believed that sex, as an expression of love, care, and mutual pleasure between married couples, was a wonderful gift of God to be enjoyed.<sup>80</sup> Taylor’s final section in “Gibeonites” talked about the differences between what he called Scriptural purity and “Christian” purity. Taylor castigated those who held that “Christian” purity meant that married couples should only have intercourse for the purpose of procreation. While there were pamphlets and marriage guides offering sexual advice to married couples at the turn of the century, they were often not as repressive as popular visions of Victorian culture pretend them to be. Nonetheless, numbers of them did suggest that husbands and wives abstain from sex for purposes other than procreation, often in order to “preserve” what was considered the husband’s finite amount of sexual energy.<sup>81</sup> Despite the advice of these

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<sup>79</sup> Carradine, *Sanctified Life*, 12-13.

<sup>80</sup> Taylor, “Gibeonites,” 84-86.

<sup>81</sup> Various pamphlets and marriage guides suggested that husbands and wives abstain from sex for purposes other than procreation. These were not as pervasive as popular visions of Victorian culture pretend them to be, though they were produced. For more on the topic, see John S. Haller and Robin M. Haller, *The Physician and Sexuality in Victorian America*, (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1977), 120-121; and Ronald G. Walters, ed., *Primers for*

manuals, Taylor counseled his readers to enjoy their spouse in order that to keep their sexual desire pure.<sup>82</sup> Taylor reminded his readers that they had been sanctified, and noted “Desire in a pure Christian is pure.”<sup>83</sup> The author used purity in both its spiritual and sexual sense here, and allowed his readers to align the two connotations of the word and apply each to men and women both.<sup>84</sup> It was clear that when talking about fashion and appropriate dress Taylor warned of the dangers of female sexuality; however, throughout the rest of his pamphlet, he celebrated sexual expression within marriage.

Taylor was not the only one to celebrate sex within marriage. When Mississippi pastor Beverly Carradine talked about the second coming of Jesus, he told his readers that when Christ came, Jesus would “give himself to you in his fullness.”<sup>85</sup> Carradine’s language was decidedly sexual. Writers in the Holiness movement were not ascetics; they believed that sex, within the confines of marriage, was something wonderful. By using this type of language to talk about the intimacy of the relationship between Jesus and the sanctified, Carradine showed his approval of sexuality. This becomes even clearer when one finds that the appropriate response from the pious was for their hearts to “cry out with burning desires and quenchless longings.”<sup>86</sup>

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*Prudery: Sexual Advice to Victorian America* Updated Edition, (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000). See also Bederman, *Manliness & Civilization*, 101-104

<sup>82</sup> Taylor, “Gibeonites,” 84-86.

<sup>83</sup> Taylor, “Gibeonites,” 85.

<sup>84</sup> Taylor, “Gibeonites,” 85.

<sup>85</sup> Carradine, *Sanctification*, 138.

<sup>86</sup> Carradine, *Sanctification*, 138.

W.B. Godbey's views on sex and the sanctified were not as celebratory as Carradine and Taylor's. Godbey felt that marriage was "a most effective breakwater against sin."<sup>87</sup> A sacred relationship, then, could help to stem the tide of sin in an individual's life. While Godbey did not take the laudatory tone that some other writers did on the subject of sex, he certainly felt that physical intimacy within marriage was important. Indeed, for one who had renounced all willful sin, an outlet for physical desire was an important release.<sup>88</sup>

The way marriage provided a breakwater against sin was an important point for those who used the analogue of marriage and their sanctified relationship with God. In fact, those in the Holiness movement tried carefully to avoid sin at all costs so as not to lose the blessing of entire sanctification, and while southerners outside of the Holiness movement viewed marriage as a foundation for society at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century, but few other writers would have classified it as a "breakwater against sin."<sup>89</sup> This meant that a healthy physical relationship with one's spouse took on eternal significance. Not only was marital intercourse something that was enjoyable and to be celebrated, it provided a safeguard against the temptations of the devil. Those who had perfect love wanted to honor their savior in every aspect of their lives and in every secret part of their hearts. For them, nothing could be more intimate, more sacred than the physical relationship between a husband and wife, and so even the way couples made love became a way to honor God.

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<sup>87</sup> Godbey, *Autobiography*, 428.

<sup>88</sup> Godbey did not condone masturbation, and in his autobiography talked about how one of his early sins in life was "unhygienical treatment of my body." See Godbey, *Autobiography*, 13.

<sup>89</sup> For more on the household and marriage as the foundation of society, see Laura Edwards, *Gendered Strife and Confusion: : The Political Culture of Reconstruction*, (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1997), 6.

The way that sex itself became a way of honoring God, and served as a metaphor for the intimacy between the believer and her savior, made it clear that the preachers and evangelists in the Holiness movement took seriously the idea that sanctification provided incredible intimacy with the creator of the universe. They envisioned that the second blessing would not only redefine the adherent's relationship with God, it would reorient the ways in which the sanctified person conceived of his or her own identity. The theology of entire sanctification allowed Holiness leaders to imagine gender norms in ways that reinterpreted broader cultural norms. As demonstrated, the sanctified interpreted their ideas of both femininity and marriage through the ideas of Holiness theology.

### **Childhood and Family Life in Holiness Thought**

While many of the leaders in the Holiness movement thought of Christian perfection as an experience that could transform femininity, they did not neglect the implications they believed it had for their families and were careful to inculcate familial identities that highlighted the second blessing into their writings. Those in the Holiness movement frequently talked about the importance of rearing faithful children who would someday experience Christian perfection for themselves. In contrast to those within the SBC, Holiness preachers and evangelists believed that Christianity was a communal faith. They repeated the idea to their audiences that through families, future generations learned about the doctrines of the faith and the unique identity that they could acquire when they received entire sanctification. Officials who sought after, or who had received, the second blessing noted the importance of families in several different ways. They frequently wrote about the ways in which faith came through the generations and the

importance of rearing faithful children. In addition, preachers and evangelists talked about the importance of home life to the sanctified community and some of the dangers to it.

Mary Lee Cagle was very happy that her parents were so careful and loving during her childhood in Alabama, and recalled that her mother was a Christian and, even though her father was not a believer, “she was wholly protected from the vices...was never in a dance hall, and attended only one show.”<sup>90</sup> Similarly, W.B. Godbey recalled that “a preaching father, a sainted mother and a Christian home” reared him in such a way that he “wasted no time in the devil’s workshop.”<sup>91</sup> Both passages from influential figures in the Holiness movement showed concern about the ways in which parents passed faith down to their children. For Cagle and Godbey, one of the things that they were extremely thankful for was that their two respective families had sheltered them as children. Within the Holiness movement, there was no thought that young men should “sow their wild oats” before settling down to a life of faith. Holiness writers wanted their children to be faithful witnesses all their lives, not just once they reached adulthood.

Godbey was particularly concerned that parents were very careful about rearing their children properly at the turn of the century. He warned parents, even those whose children had already professed their faith in Christianity that they needed to guard their little ones carefully against temptation, as it was all too easy for children to backslide.<sup>92</sup> In fact, it was not only in the child’s best interest to guard their hearts, but also Godbey believed that it was the parents’ “imperative duty to do our utmost from beginning to build around our children the strongest wall we possibly can in order to fortify them against temptation.” Here, Godbey told his readers that

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<sup>90</sup> Cagle, *Life and Work*, 15-17.

<sup>91</sup> Godbey, *Autobiography*, 13.

<sup>92</sup> Godbey, *Autobiography*, 37.

parents were not simply encouraged to teach their children in the ways they should go, but it became their absolute duty to protect their children's hearts and faith. Godbey explained that this meant educating children in the doctrines of Christianity and perfect love from the time they were born.<sup>93</sup> For Godbey's mother, this meant that she took each one of her sons individually during the 1830s and 1840s and told them that she was consecrating them for the Lord's service and that they were to become preachers.<sup>94</sup> The evangelist believed that this was a huge influence upon his own ministry, and encouraged parents to consecrate their own children for the Lord's work. Godbey's mother would have fit well into the model shown by many Christian women from the north during the American Civil War. Historian Sean Scott demonstrates that many women of the period believed that it was their duty to encourage the religious affections of their sons, even as they were away at war.<sup>95</sup> Godbey clearly internalized this model and used it as his archetype of the way in which religious sentiment was passed through the generations.

Additionally, Godbey warned his audiences Christian parents not to give their children all types of worldly comforts and possessions. According to him, many of his schoolmates in college slipped into sin because of the money that their parents sent them. He was, in fact, happy that his parents were "too poor" to give him money for college and he advised other parents that it was a mistake for "Christian parents to pile up money for their children when they are so likely to use it to pay their way to Hell!"<sup>96</sup> Here, Godbey's understanding of class interacted with his ideas of the duties of Christian parents. As noted previously, those within the Holiness

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<sup>93</sup> Godbey, *Autobiography*, 43.

<sup>94</sup> Godbey, *Autobiography*, 25-26.

<sup>95</sup> Sean Scott, *A Visitation of God: Northern Civilians Interpret the Civil War*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 72, 95.

<sup>96</sup> Godbey, *Autobiography*, 73.

movement were very aware of their class status, particularly the fact that outsiders perceived them as lower class. While there were some who tried to shed this status, most embraced it, saying that their experience of entire sanctification gave them status in heaven that would far exceed that of their more worldly brethren in other denominations.<sup>97</sup> Godbey's advice that parents not pile up money and possessions for their children, then, was not only an exhortation to his readers, but a denunciation of those whose wealth was so great that their children would not have to work. He believed that not having to labor would let children lose the discipline that was required for work, and possibly even the discipline needed to experience the second blessing. Thus, those in the Holiness movement could turn their reputation as lower class on its head, and hold it as a badge of honor that would (hopefully) encourage the children of the sanctified to form their identities as members of a sanctified community.

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An identity within a sanctified community and the use of marriage as a model of God's relationship to the sanctified believer were just two ways in which white southern Holiness leaders envisioned that their theology altered constructions of gender across Mississippi, Alabama, and Georgia. They also used the ideas of entire sanctification to try to persuade their audiences to change the ways in which ideals of femininity was conceived. Without completely throwing out the larger culture's constructions of gender, the preachers and evangelists of the southern Holiness movement used radical theology to modify the ways they imagined proper womanhood, marriage, and family life – and encouraged their congregants to do the same.

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<sup>97</sup> For an example, see Godbey, *Spiritual Gifts and Graces*, 66-69.

For the sanctified writers and preachers of Holiness, their experience of the second blessing and their belief that the Holy Spirit had completely cleansed their hearts of all willful sin, was a life-changing event. That moment in their lives, and the theology that they were steeped in afterwards, led them to alter the conceptions of gender that they had grown up with. It meant that they took ideas of gender that were prevalent in Southern society at the time and either infused them with sacred meaning or arranged them differently. This meant that Holiness leaders encouraged women to testify publically about their experience of sanctification, and, if they felt called to do so, to preach with the full authority of church. At the same time, men retained a higher level of authority in the home. Holiness proponents also used theology to encourage believers, both male and female, to think of themselves as the true bride of Christ, thus portraying marriage as the best analogy of the intimate relationship between God and the sanctified believer. The movement's leadership also encouraged parents to think about Christianity as a communal faith that could be passed through the generations.

The laity of the Holiness movement could easily have heard sermons and speeches or read almost innumerable tracts, pamphlets, or periodicals from preachers and evangelists that repeated the belief that those who experienced the second blessing were a peculiar people, purified and set apart for God's special purposes. The proponents of Holiness hoped that their audiences would be persuaded by this theology and so reinterpret their perception of themselves and the world around them. Holiness authors and speakers believed that restrictions based on things other than the experience of sanctification were secondary. What mattered was whether or not a person had received perfect love. This view of the world, a binary division along spiritual lines, had dramatic implications for their ideas of personhood. Though they never truly dispensed with the conceptions of gender so prevalent in the culture around them, Holiness

leaders argued that the movement's theology created radically different ideas and expressions of personal identity. These ideas, repeated countless times across Mississippi, Alabama, and Georgia between 1877 and 1915, contrasted so sharply with those of the MECS and the SBC that Holiness leaders, as well as lay members, often faced sharp criticism and steep opposition. Yet, the example suggested by Holiness writers, preachers, and itinerant evangelists provide a dramatic demonstration of the ways in which ideas of the sacred shaped understandings of gender for members of the clergy in the American Deep South.

## CONCLUSION

*God made men for adventure, achievement, and challenge, and if they can't find those things in church, they're going to find them somewhere else. But if you allow your church to embark on a great adventure, the men will return.*

- David Murrow  
(2005)

Theology's influence upon gender formation and identity did not merely stop after the second decade of the twentieth century. One hundred years later, many of the same questions about what it meant to be a godly man or woman living in the United States remained. Throughout the decades at the end of the twentieth and beginning of the twenty-first centuries, Evangelical leaders published a number of books about what it meant to bear the image of God, and how that related to human gender. David Murrow, the author of the quote above, was not the only one worried about how to get men to attend church, or even the more fundamental question of what it meant to be a Christian man. *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood*, *The Life of a God-Made Man*, and *Gender and Grace* are only a few of the volumes that have touched on the subject published over the past two decades.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The quote from David Murrow comes from his book, *Why Men Hate Going to Church*, (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, Inc., 2005), 11. Other examples include John Piper and Wayne Gruden, eds., *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood: A Response to Evangelical Feminism*, (Wheaton, Illinois: Crossway Books, 1991); Dan Doriani, *The Life of a God-Made Man: Becoming a Man After God's Heart*, (Wheaton, Illinois: Crossway Books, 2001); and Mary Stewart Van Leeuwen, *Gender and Grace: Love, Work, & Parenting in a Changing World*, (Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 1990). See also Beth Impson, *Called to Womanhood: The Biblical View for Today's World*, (Wheaton, Illinois: Crossway Books, 2001); Rebecca Jones, *Does Christianity Squash Women?: A Christian Look at Womanhood*,

While the previous books have had limited impact in Evangelical circles, John Eldredge's 2001 volume, *Wild at Heart: Discovering the Secret of a Man's Soul*, sold more than a million copies within the first three years after it was published.<sup>2</sup> The book is so popular that it has gone into multiple editions, has workbook versions for group study, and the Eldredges (John and his wife Stasi) have organized ministry conferences designed around its central themes.<sup>3</sup> Nor have they neglected the thorny question of what Christian femininity looks like. The Eldredges have written similar works trying to describe what it means to be a Christian woman and mother.<sup>4</sup> While the Eldredges have certainly had more success in getting their message to a mass audience, all of the works mentioned emphasize that an understanding of the divine is vitally important to an understanding of gender.

What the Evangelical writers above would affirm, along with their forebears in the American Deep South, is that God created both men and women in the image of the divine. This meant that the task of discerning what true manhood and womanhood entailed was not merely an intellectual exercise; it was an important theological task. Church officials across Mississippi, Alabama, and Georgia between 1877 and 1915 were not only trying to figure out what it meant

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(Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2005); Brenda E. Brasher, *Godly Women: Fundamentalism & Female Power*, (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1998); Rebecca Merrill Groothuis, *The Feminist Bogeywoman: Questions and Answers about Evangelical Feminism*, (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Books, 1995).

<sup>2</sup> John Eldredge, *Wild at Heart: Discovering the Secret of a Man's Soul*, (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, Inc., 2001). See Rachel Donadio, "Faith-Based Publishing," *New York Times* (28 November 2004) for publishing numbers through 2004.

<sup>3</sup> For more on the Eldredges ministries, workbooks, and conferences, see [RansomedHeart.com](http://RansomedHeart.com), the website of John and Stasi Eldredge.

<sup>4</sup> See John and Stasi Eldredge, *Captivating: Unveiling the Mystery of a Woman's Soul*, (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, Inc., 2005); and Stasi Eldredge, *You Are Captivating: Celebrating a Mother's Heart*, (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, Inc., 2007).

to be a man or woman in the changing world of the New South; they were trying to construct ideas of manhood and womanhood that reflected who they thought God was and spread such insights to their congregants. Because they believed that both men and women were image bearers, their different theological understandings were not simply fashioning alternate ideas about human identity; they were recasting the image of God.

The leaders of the Southern Baptist Convention connected ideas of Christianity to the ideal of the individual, and this had consequences for the ways in which denominational officials formulated gender identity. The intertwining of individual theology with gender identity had very different outcomes for their understandings of masculinity and femininity, however. While preachers and pastors highlighted the ways in which Baptist men should act as masters over their individual lives, such expressions rarely appeared in connection with women. Rather, officials emphasized the importance of an idealized femininity, best expressed through essential traits meant to define all women. Moreover, while men could frequently act in ways that were best for their individual good, SBC leaders expected women to keep a higher standard and consistently sacrifice their individual goals and desires for the good of the children, families, and even use their moral authority to help purify society.

The tension between Christian manhood and womanhood also appeared in the sermons, speeches, and writings of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. Though Methodist leaders did not emphasize the importance of the individual to the same extent as the Southern Baptist Convention, the main theological thrust of the MECS was on the conversion of sinners to Christianity and highlighting of the person and work of Jesus. This emphasis influenced gender identity in numerous ways as well. Different interpretations of Jesus' character and work led to alternate understandings of what ideal masculinity should look like. A pastor might believe that

Jesus was a tender shepherd that pursued the hearts of his people while the conference bishop thought that Jesus was the divine warrior who conquered death and sin. These alternate interpretations dramatically changed the ways that MECS leaders conceptualized and imagined the construction of manhood. Alternately, the emphasis on conversion within Southern Methodism meant that many church officials strongly believed that women should receive a full, challenging, liberal arts education – but not for their own sake. Rather, the fathers of the church thought that Methodist women should acquire such education in order that they might better deal with the spiritual needs of their children. In other words, education would make women better at nurturing the impressionable souls of the young ones in their homes.

While the SBC and MECS leadership had distinct theologically-based visions of both manhood and womanhood, there were similarities in how they viewed gender. For most officials in both denominations, manhood was a deep concern, and it was important for them to connect their ideas of theology, in its varying forms, to their understandings of masculinity. Similarly, the vast majority of officials in these two denominations (which provided the largest two religious bodies in the South during the time), believed that women should remain at home, nurturing the souls of impressionable youths. Because of the overwhelming dominance of these two denominations in the Deep South, these constructions of gender became part of the larger culture's formulations of personal identity as well. Certainly, there were differences and tensions, but many white Southerners would have been comfortable with the gendered theology of both the SBC and MECS.

Not all Southern Christians came to such conclusions, however. At the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth century, there were Christians who thought that the Holy Ghost had given them unique power to live sinless lives on earth. This theology led some preachers and

evangelists to believe that the most important mark of personal identity was whether the Holy Ghost had blessed an individual with entire sanctification. For the purposes of church work, this new identity was more important to these than even biological sex, and these radical theological constructs had a powerful effect on the formulations of gender for the leaders of the southern Holiness movement. The resultant gendered ideals provided a stark contrast to both Baptist and Methodist ideals. There were many ways that the preachers and writers in the Holiness movement used radical theology to envision and rearrange personal and communal identities. Among the most visible signs of this revision of gendered ideals were: emotional worship services that provided new avenues for men to explore homosocial affection; camp meetings and revivals with opportunities for public testimonies for women and egalitarian clothing that provided visual markers to distinguish the sanctified from all others; and the multi-stage process of entire sanctification where the penitent had to put “all on the altar” before receiving the a new identity based solely on the experience of the second blessing. In other words, Holiness preachers and evangelists argued that for both men and women, the radical theology of the entire sanctification and perfect love should lead to altered understandings of what manliness and femininity entailed. Clearly, among the leadership of these faith traditions that stretched across Mississippi, Alabama, and Georgia, theology was a vitally important factor in the ways that they imagined gender between 1877 and 1915.

In the decades that followed the New South era, many Southern whites continued to use theology to help construct exclusively white gendered ideals, many of which had their roots in these turn-of-the-century constructs. The individualized ideals of masculinity prevalent in both the Southern Baptist ideas of mastery and the militarized public persona of Methodist masculinity were both concepts that whites used to deny African-Americans manliness. In

similar fashion, many constructions of womanhood denied African-American femininity. These ideas of femininity centered on the idea that only those women who stayed in their own home to nurture to the spiritual needs of their families were true ladies; a construct which denied true womanhood of the many African-American women working outside their homes in order to provide for their families. Both of these constructs were rooted, in part, on theological ideas propagated by Evangelical leaders. These leaders did not merely come up with new formulations of gender that excluded African Americans. Instead, what these church officials understood about the sacred heavily influenced their understandings of gender.

In fact, across the South, theology had a dynamic influence on the ways that church officials understood gender. Whether it was the combination of individualism and mastery; perfect love; or the tensions in the ideas of Jesus as a divine warrior and a tender shepherd, preachers and pastors across the Deep South altered their conceptions of manhood to match more closely what they believed about the sacred. Likewise, an idealized womanhood, the need for conversion, and empowering ideas of entire sanctification changed the ways in which denominational authorities perceived femininity. For church leaders who believed that humans were made *Imago Dei*, the fact that understandings of the divine had a profound influence on their personal identity was easily understood, accepted, and then disseminated in sermons, speeches, and published works. In fact, many denominational authorities in the Deep South thought that it was self-evident as to why their theology changed their understandings of themselves – they would have been confused if it did not. Their theology – Baptist, Methodist, or Holiness – provided new identities that superseded old understandings of gender. By examining a few of the ways in which preachers, pastors, and evangelists talked about the relationship between religion and identity in Mississippi, Alabama, and Georgia, this dissertation

demonstrated the profound ways in which church authorities envisioned that theology should reorder both their own lives and identities as well as those of their congregants.

## **APPENDIX:**

### **A BRIEF PRIMER ON EVANGELICAL THEOLOGY**

The idea of God has fascinated people across the world since time immemorial. Christians, including Protestant Evangelicals, approached the concept of the divine with reverence, awe, and the recognition that humans would never entirely comprehend the full nature of the mystery of God. That being said, this Appendix will explain some of the basic elements of Evangelical beliefs and provide a “theological scaffolding” for those who are not familiar with Christianity.

Protestantism began in the early Sixteenth Century when Martin Luther, and others, broke from the traditions and authority of the Roman Catholic Church in an attempt to reform what they saw as the distortion of the teachings of Scripture. Though there were differences among the early Protestant founders like Martin Luther, John Calvin, and Ulrich Zwingli, they were able to agree on a series of five statements that summed up their views. *Sola Scriptura*, *Sola Fide*, *Solus Christus*, *Sola Gratia*, and *Soli Deo Gloria* were the Latin phrases they used which captured these ideas. *Sola Scriptura* meant that the Protestants would use the Bible as the ultimate guide of faith and practice rather than looking to the traditions of the church or the statements of human authorities. *Sola Fide* encompassed the idea that humans were reconciled to God through faith alone. This faith would be placed in the work of Jesus of Nazareth, and thus the phrase *Solus Christus* marked that it was only his work that could reconcile sinful humans to a just and holy God. Because Protestants believed that it was only through the grace of God that a person might experience this redeeming work, not through any work that an

individual might do or penance she might participate in, they began to use the phrase *Sola Gratia*. Finally, the phrase *Soli Deo Gloria* was used as a recognition that God did all of the work of salvation, and so God alone should receive the glory.<sup>1</sup>

From the time that Luther broke with the Roman Catholic Church (1517) through the mid-nineteenth century (and today), Protestants constantly bickered with each other and formed new denominations. These denominations were bodies of like-minded believers who felt that they had a better understanding of Christian faith and practice than others did. As time went on, these denominations moved further away from each and developed different emphases in their theology. Though there were differences, some of these groups that held similar views on the major doctrines of Christianity who began calling themselves Evangelicals.<sup>2</sup>

Historian David Bebbington's work, *Evangelicals in Modern Britain*, outlined four characteristics of English Evangelicals that apply equally well to groups in the United States. The first of what he called "marks of Evangelical religion" was "*Conversionism*, [or] the belief that lives need to be changed." Indeed, all Evangelicals throughout the American South strongly asserted that individuals needed to turn from their past and accept the work of Jesus as their only hope for reconciliation with God. The idea of conversionism then flowed well into the mark of "*crucicentrism*," which Bebbington defined as a "stress on the sacrifice of Christ on the cross." Evangelicals believed that this was the only way that the Bible taught to receive eternal life. The fact that these Christians concerned themselves so highly with the teachings of the Bible was a

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<sup>1</sup> Stephen J. Nichols, *The Reformation: How a Monk and a Mallet Changed the World*, (Wheaton, Illinois: Crossway Books, A Division of Good News Publishers 2007), 18.

<sup>2</sup> The author recognizes that this label was not one that most Southerners between 1877 and 1915 would have used to identify themselves; however, it best represents the general outlines of the predominant theology under study in this dissertation. For more on the historical development of the label and idea of evangelicalism, see George M. Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture* New Edition, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 231-257.

third point, “*Biblicism*.” However, because of the exclusive nature of evangelical understandings of the sacred, Bebbington’s final mark was that of “*activism*,” defined as “the expression of the gospel in effort.”<sup>3</sup> In other words, Evangelicals actively proselytized, or evangelized (hence the name), in order to convert others to their beliefs, as they believed that was the best way to look after and love their fellow humans.<sup>4</sup>

Another point that many Evangelicals would have affirmed was the idea of the “Priesthood of all believers.” This essentially meant that each person was directly responsible to God and could approach the divine without the need for a human intermediary.<sup>5</sup> This was a point of divergence from both Orthodox and Roman Catholic theologies that encouraged believers to use saints and church officials as intercessors to God for individual believers.<sup>6</sup> This immediate access to God for all people is one of the highlights of Evangelical theology and one that became especially important for the Southern Baptist Convention with their emphasis on the individual believer.

While not all groups emphasized the priesthood of all believers, there were several points that all Evangelicals agreed upon. Among these points, two stand out. First, Evangelicals in the

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<sup>3</sup> These four marks of evangelicalism are found in David W. Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: A History from the 1730s to the 1980s*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 2-3.

<sup>44</sup> Bebbington, *Evangelicalism*, 10-12 talks more fully about the activism within evangelical culture. Full disclosure: I myself am an Evangelical Christian, though not a member of any of the traditions discussed in the dissertation.

<sup>5</sup> Walter B. Shurden, *Not an Easy Journey: Some Transitions in Baptist Life*, (Macon, Georgia: Mercer University Press, 2005), 80-87.

<sup>6</sup> For more on this idea in Orthodox theology, see Sergius Bulgakov, “The Virgin and the Saints in Orthodoxy,” in Daniel B. Clendenin, ed., *Eastern Orthodox Theology* Second Edition, (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Paternoster Press, A Division of Baker Book House, Co., 2003), 68-73.

South agreed upon the idea that God was a triune God. That is, within the single being, there were three persons – God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. The very name of the third person in the Godhead signified the second idea that Southern Protestants agreed upon – the fact that God was a holy God.

The idea that God was triune was a doctrine that has been held to by Christians of all stripes (Protestant, Roman Catholic, and Orthodox) since the first century.<sup>7</sup> This meant that they believed “There is but one living and true God.... And in unity of this Godhead, there are three persons of one substance, power, and eternity; the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.”<sup>8</sup> This relationship of three persons united in one was a central doctrine for Southern Evangelicals. Different groups may have emphasized the work of one member of the Godhead more than the other two; however, officials usually understood that the three were one.<sup>9</sup>

One of the most easily recognizable members of the Godhead was God the Father. One of the earliest expressions of Christian doctrine, the *Apostle’s Creed*, mentioned this member of the Trinity as the “Creator of heaven and earth.”<sup>10</sup> At the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, though, theologians often focused on God’s relationship with humanity and referred to

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<sup>7</sup> For examples of different creeds that affirm this doctrine, see the *Westminster Confession of Faith*, Chapter II; the *Apostle’s Creed*; the *Nicene Creed*, the *Athanasian Creed*; the *Baptist Confession of Faith of 1689*, Chapter II; and the *Lausanne Covenant*.

<sup>8</sup> Jno. J. Tigert, ed., *The Doctrines and Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South*, (Nashville, The Publishing House of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, 1902), 1.

<sup>9</sup> It is true that there were heterodox clergy who questioned the nature of the Trinity, though they were a distinct minority in evangelical denominations. For one example, see Isaac D. Borders, “Credo,” n.d., probably around 1913, 3, Isaac D. Borders M17, J. B. Cain Archives of Mississippi Methodism, Millsaps-Wilson Library, Millsaps College, Jackson, Mississippi, (IDB).

<sup>10</sup> *Apostle’s Creed*. Versions of the *Apostle’s Creed* were used in churches since the second century A.D. See O.G. Oliver, Jr., “Apostle’s Creed,” in *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, 87-88 for dates and early versions of this creed.

the Fatherhood of God when referencing this member of the Trinity. For example, the renowned Southern Methodist Atticus Haygood, before he became a bishop, talked about the universal brotherhood of all humanity, and claimed that it found its *raison d'être* in the divine fatherhood of God.<sup>11</sup> James Madison Crews, an Alabamian Methodist pastor, talked more personally of the fatherhood of God. In one sermon, Crews talked about the human propensity to do evil. He urged his congregation to seek God, that they “may not offend this gentle and loving Father by our wickedness.”<sup>12</sup> In Crews’ view, God the Father was a personal, loving God who took care of His children. Baptist theologian and seminary professor E.C. Dargan clarified that the Fatherhood of God to all humanity was a “vague conception,” but to believers, “it expresses the real relation of the converted soul to God.”<sup>13</sup>

In order to become a member of God’s family, though, Evangelicals believed that a person must trust in the work of God the Son – Jesus. The person and work of Jesus Christ was, and continues to be for many, the prime focus of Christianity. While the person of God the Father was relatively understandable, the humanity and deity of Jesus has been a frequently debated topic for centuries. While there have been many different interpretations of Jesus and his nature as a member of the Godhead, Southern Evangelicals affirmed the idea that Jesus of Nazareth was both fully God and fully human. The MECS’ *Discipline* declared that in Jesus “two whole and perfect natures, that is to say, Godhead and manhood, were joined together in

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<sup>11</sup> Atticus G. Haygood, “Untitled Sermon,” 19 August 1880, 9, Box 2, Atticus G. Haygood family papers, Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library, Emory University, Atlanta, Georgia, (AGH).

<sup>12</sup> James Madison Crews, Untitled Sermon on Hebrews 4:16, n.d., n.p., Box 56, Personal Papers of James Madison Crews MC87, The Methodist Archives Center, Huntington College Library, Huntington College, Montgomery, Alabama, (JMC).

<sup>13</sup> Dargan, *Doctrines of Our Faith*, 157.

one person...very God and very man.”<sup>14</sup> Holiness preacher and evangelist W.B. Godbey also assented to the divinity of Jesus in his book *Happy Nonagenarian*.<sup>15</sup> Southern Evangelicals believed that Jesus’ role as fully God and fully human was not the creator, but instead the redeemer of humanity. It was their understanding that only someone who was fully human was liable to pay for the sins of the world; yet, only one who was fully divine could live a perfect life and actually have the ability to fulfill the law of God.<sup>16</sup> Thus, affirming both Jesus’ deity and humanity was an important point in understanding his role as the one who could both redeem individuals from hell and reconcile them to God.<sup>17</sup>

Individuals needed to be rescued from hell because the idea that “all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God” was a concept with which Southern Evangelicals were intimately familiar and firmly believed.<sup>18</sup> In James Hamilton Baxter’s sermon, “Plan of Salvation,” the Methodist pastor noted not only that all individuals were guilty of committing sin, but also that sin had corrupted the “entire nature of man.”<sup>19</sup> E.C. Dargan also explained that the parents of the human race, Adam and Eve, passed a sinful, corrupted nature to all their progeny. Thus, all humans were born in a state of depravity and thus separated from God. (The separation was because they believed in the doctrines of God’s justice and holiness and the fact

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<sup>14</sup> Tigert, ed., *Discipline*, 1-2.

<sup>15</sup> W.B. Godbey, *Happy Nonagenarian*, (Zarephath, New Jersey: Pillar of Fire, 1919), 87.

<sup>16</sup> Christians generally consider the things that either go against the will of God or do not fully uphold the law of God as sins.

<sup>17</sup> For more on Jesus as redeemer, see Dargan, *Doctrines of Our Faith*, 134-139.

<sup>18</sup> Romans 3:23, Holy Bible, (King James Edition).

<sup>19</sup> James Hamilton Baxter, “Plan of Salvation,” 2, Folder 19, Box 1, James Hamilton Baxter Papers, Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library, Emory University, Atlanta, Georgia, (JHB).

that God does not suffer the presence of sin.<sup>20</sup>) Lansing Burrows, a Baptist minister, attested to the fact that sin, no matter how small or insignificant it might seem, was enough to incur the just punishment of God.<sup>21</sup> While Southern Evangelicals of all stripes could readily agree that humans were sinful creatures, justly deserving the wrath of a holy God, they also agreed that God had provided an escape from judgment through God the Son. Dargan claimed that this was “the central truth of Scripture, the distinctive feature of Christianity, the essence of a right Christian faith, that Jesus Christ is the Saviour [sic] of men from sin, and that thus removing the cause of separation between them he brings God and man together.”<sup>22</sup>

The idea of reconciliation with God through the work and sacrifice of Jesus was indeed the central idea of Southern evangelicalism, and many historians have noted that the emphasis that was placed on this idea. Some historians have even argued that the importance of conversionism overshadowed all other theological considerations.<sup>23</sup> While it was clear that conversion (also called regeneration, justification, or noted as the experience of being born again) was one of the most important elements of Protestant thought in the American South, various theological groups placed different amounts of emphasis upon this doctrine. Yet, they all believed that it was their duty to advance God’s kingdom through conversion.

Moreover, Evangelicals believed that they would not be alone in their attempts to advance the kingdom of God and convert others to Christianity. They thought that the third

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<sup>20</sup> Dargan, *Doctrines of Our Faith*, 94-96.

<sup>21</sup> Lansing Burrows, “The Sodomites: or, Sin in its Speedy Destruction,” 21, first preached in 1871, Lansing Burrows Papers, AR. 25, Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives, Nashville, Tennessee, (LBP).

<sup>22</sup> Dargan, *Doctrines of Our Faith*, 137.

<sup>23</sup> For one example, see John B. Boles, *The Great Revival: Beginnings of the Bible Belt*, (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 1996), 128-131.

person of the Godhead, the Holy Spirit, would act to guide, comfort, encourage, and even strengthen believers as they brought others to a saving knowledge of Jesus. Yet, exactly how the Holy Spirit (or Holy Ghost) might act in a Christian's life was often regarded as a mystery. Thus, while Evangelicals in the South understood and agreed on the roles of God the Father as creator and God the Son as redeemer, they were not always in agreement of the role of the Holy Ghost. For example, those in the Holiness movement had a much stronger view of the Holy Spirit's role in the life of the believer than did most officials in the SBC or the MECS. This did not mean that Baptists and Methodists ignored this member of the Trinity. Baptist theologian E.C. Dargan's work outlining the doctrines of the Southern Baptist Convention devoted an entire chapter to the Holy Spirit.<sup>24</sup> In it, Dargan emphasized four things that composed the work of the Holy Spirit. Dargan believed that the third member of the Trinity: 1) renewed individuals' souls in order that they might accept Jesus' work; 2) helped believers reject the temptation to sin;<sup>25</sup> 3) possessed God's truth; and 4) that the "Holy Spirit exerted that special influence upon the minds of the Scripture writers which enabled them unerringly to perceive and express the truth of God."<sup>26</sup>

Most Evangelicals in the South would have accepted the four points that Dargan outlined above. While many believers would have been generally happy with these points in any order, all Southern Evangelicals recognized the deity of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and assented to the idea that God was holy. The holiness of the Godhead meant more to believers than simple

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<sup>24</sup> Dargan, *Doctrines of Our Faith*, 75-81.

<sup>25</sup> The idea that Christians could begin to resist sin and temptation is a doctrine called sanctification, and will be explained in detail later in the text. The differences in the Holiness movement's ideas of sanctification was one reason why those in the movement talked much more about the Holy Spirit's role in their lives than did other evangelical groups.

<sup>26</sup> Dargan, *Doctrines of Our Faith*, 80-81.

perfection. In E.C. Dargan's work, he defined God's holiness as the divine's "*perfect moral purity*. He is perfectly good and always right.... To say that God is holy is to say that in him is no trace of any evil whatever."<sup>27</sup> In other words, Dargan felt that God was not only morally perfect, but that God was entirely righteous. The idea that God was holy and free from all taint of moral wrong, indeed, that God was the source of moral standards and perfection, was such an assumed part of evangelical worship in the South that many people did not even bother to define what they meant when they used the term. This was the case throughout the *Doctrines and Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South* (1892 Edition). In one of the prayers prescribed to use at burial services, the *Discipline* implored, "O Lord God most holy, O Lord most mighty, O holy and most merciful Saviour [sic], deliver us not into the bitter pains of eternal death."<sup>28</sup> Clearly, the characteristics named here meant to evoke different impressions of God; yet, they demonstrated the belief in a righteous God who would be entirely just to condemn those who did not live up to moral standards because of the divine's own holiness.

Evangelical Christianity, however, does not leave humanity in a place of condemnation, however. Rather, it provides a way in which people can be reconciled to a just and holy God. As mentioned earlier, Evangelicals believe that the historical Jesus of Nazareth lived a perfect life, and then, freely giving up his own rights as the incarnate God, took the punishment for the sins of the world upon himself. By taking the punishment for human sins upon himself, Jesus thus provided, to all who would trust in him, a way to be reconciled to God. Evangelicals thus look to the grace of God for their hope.

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<sup>27</sup> Dargan, *Doctrines of Our Faith*, 32-33.

<sup>28</sup> W.P. Harrison, ed., *Doctrines and Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South*, (Nashville: Publishing House of the M.E. Church, South, 1892), 291.

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