

## Historical Roots



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We begin this lesson on the history of the charismatic movements by focusing upon the historical roots of the movement. In the last lecture, we talked about the ideological roots of the charismatic movements, emphasizing the influences of John Wesley and Charles Grandison Finney.

What I'd like to do in this lecture is to look more at the historical roots in the context of America and in the nineteenth century, so what I would like to emphasize or reflect upon is the origin of the movement as it is expressed in two movements in nineteenth-century America. One is Methodism, the rise of American Methodism, and its history in the nineteenth century, for I think all would agree that the charismatic movements are a child of Methodism, and our simple argument has gone something like this: Out of Anglicanism came John Wesley and English Methodism. Out of English Methodism came American Methodism. Within American Methodism came the Holiness Movement and later what we would call the National Holiness Movement. And in the fragmentation of the National Holiness Movement, at the end of the nineteenth, beginning of the twentieth century, is born classical Pentecostalism. So today the emphasis is upon American Methodism as a root of the charismatic movements and American revivalism as a second root of the charismatic movements.

So let me begin by emphasizing a few things about American Methodism. American Methodism obviously is that movement that is part of the eighteenth-century revivalism that sprang across England through the preaching of John Wesley and hosts of others within that great movement. The influence of Wesley upon the British American colonies in the late eighteenth century came twofold. It came first through lay preachers, laymen, in Methodism like Strawbridge and Webb and Emory, who found that in their ministries, though part-time, they had a very large audience. John Wesley, then seizing that insight, sent over to America a group of seasoned circuit riders—Boardman, Filmore,

Thomas Rankin, Francis Asbury—professional, seasoned circuit riders who had labored on the various circuits of England, and out of their ministry was born in 1784 at the so-called Christmas Conference in Baltimore, Maryland, American Methodism.

Now, American Methodism, though perhaps coming at an ill-advised time humanly speaking, became a huge movement quite rapidly in American history. However, when you pass into the nineteenth century, that Methodist movement that began so quickly and spread so prolifically began inextricably and inexplicably to decline. And many within Methodism began to argue, Why are we facing decline?

Rose, in his book called *Called to Holiness*, says, “There came a decline in the spiritual fervor and holiness emphasis of the Methodist Church. Our bishops warned of the dangerous trends of our people in 1840, but seemingly little was done to change that trend. Methodism as a whole continued to fall away.” What I’m trying to argue for you is this, to understand the rise of the charismatic movement in America is really to understand, in part, the birth of American Methodism and the history of Methodism, for the charismatic movements in large part are born out of that tradition.

Methodism became a huge movement in American history, became the largest denomination by 1845, but for some reason it began to decline. There was a lack of emphasis on holiness. There were various crises in the church, like the crisis over form of rulership, some preferring less autocratic rule or rule by bishops, for a more of a republican or democratic rule. Then the church would be beset by the issues of slavery. Sociologists look at these factors as influential. If you read the Methodists themselves, they often talk about the damaging influence of affluence and popularity that came upon the church. One of the great circuit riders, Jesse Peak, says that he described the church in his day as a mass of backsliders that filled the church.

So on the one hand, I’m saying that Methodism grew very rapidly in America, but in the 1830s, early 1840s, it began to decline. Concerned by this decline, many began to say, “What’s wrong with our church?” Some reasoned this way, that they had neglected or departed from Wesley’s teaching by not emphasizing a facet of what Wesley emphasized. He emphasized two works of grace to save: one to save you and a second work to bring you to the state of perfect love or sanctification.

Many reason that the Methodist circuit riders and preachers had done a fine job in preaching salvation by grace, but they had not emphasized sanctification as a work after salvation.

Some, like Timothy Merritt in 1825, published a treatise entitled *Christian Perfections* with directions for obtaining that state. Adam Clark produced a commentary in which he advocated this second state of perfect love. Richard Watson wrote his theological institutes. And what's common about Merritt's writing and Clark's writing and Watson's writing is the assumption that there is a blessing, a second blessing, a baptism, an unction, a filling that follows salvation chronologically, and by not emphasizing that second work of grace, Methodism has suffered serious decline and backsliding.

With that as a backdrop, that concern with the decline of the church, scholars aware of that, in fact in the general conference of 1832, much discussion was held on the necessity of a holiness revival of perfect love in the church. With that as a background, the decline of Methodism, the assumption that they had done a fine job in preaching grace but not a good job in emphasizing sanctification as a work after grace, you have a gathering in New York City called the Tuesday Meetings for the Promotion of Holiness. It began in 1831 by a lady whose name is Sarah Lankford, and she was concerned with the spiritual decline of the Methodist Church. Her sister-in-law, Phoebe Palmer, in 1835 also came into the meetings, and, in fact, when Sarah Lankford left the city, Phoebe Palmer took over the Tuesday Meetings for the Promotion of Holiness. In these living room meetings, sort of a type of the holiness meetings or the Holy Club from Wesley's experience, she began to influentially proliferate the doctrine of second blessing.

Let me say a word about Phoebe Palmer briefly, because we'll bring her up again in our study. Phoebe was a lay lady, married to Walter Palmer, a well-to-do New York physician. After being moved at a local revival at the Allen Street Church in New York City in 1832, she was baptized or sanctified on the 26th of July, 1837, and she found this second work of grace, this unction of the Spirit, to lift her to a plane of spirituality and vitality that she was sure would be a key to the vitality of the church that she loved. Mrs. Palmer, with her husband, became vastly used and widely traveled advocates of the second work of grace. She wrote many, many books such as *The Way of Holiness* in 1850 and *Pioneer Experiences* in 1865.

In brief, what Mrs. Palmer taught as the key to the revivification of a declining Methodism was a second blessing doctrine.

While the Holiness Movement always regarded John Wesley as its great authority, the movement owes its distinctive ideas and practices to Phoebe Palmer, who developed what is often called altar phraseology, born out of Romans 12:1–2, which seem to be a key, central passage in a second work of grace doctrine. Whereas Wesley saw sanctification as an enduring process, Palmer emphasized a sudden crisis accompanied by emotional exuberance. Whereas Wesley saw a process after perfection, she saw an instantaneous reality that did not admit further progress.

Jones, in his book called *Perfectionistic Persuasion*, says,

In the cleansing wave, she likened entire sanctification to baptism, an inward cleansing followed by a circumspect life. Reliving the experience, she exclaimed, “O now I see the crimson wave, the fountain deep and wide,” then plunging in claimed purity. Although Wesley was certainly as puritanical as Mrs. Palmer, he anticipated pure behavioral changes than she as a result of perfect love. Wesley’s refining fire implied purgation of internal impurities; Phoebe Palmer’s baptism, external evidence of the internal work. The polluted nature died and was replaced by a new one divinely created, and the perfected Christian, ecstatic with joy, exulted. I rise to walk in heaven’s own light, above the world of sin; With heart made pure and garments white, and Christ enthroned within.

The importance of looking at Phoebe is this: that while Dr. Wesley saw sanctification as a gradual attainment, Phoebe saw it as an immediate availability, and she connected it with Romans 12:1–2, with the Methodists’ mourners’ bench, and altar terminology.

What I’m saying is simple. To understand the charismatic movements is to understand Wesleyanism or John Wesley and American Methodism. American Methodism came into our country and was a fantastic movement; it grew rapidly, but in the 1830s it began to decline. When it did, many became earnestly concerned and saw the solution to the dilemma in what they thought was a neglected teaching that Mr. Wesley had passed, and that neglected teaching was an emphasis on sanctification or perfect love or second blessing.

Beginning in the Tuesday meetings in New York City with Sarah Lankford and more importantly with Phoebe Palmer, you have the emergence of a teaching in the church that argued for a second work of grace that lifted you above sin. While that teaching differed to some degree from John Wesley's, it was nevertheless a profoundly Methodist-oriented teaching of Romans 12:1–2, laying your all upon the altar, once for all obtaining a state of perfection, and seeing through the Methodists' mourners' bench.

Through the Palmers and many others, Methodist holiness theology experienced a massive resurgence in the church. Many very prominent Methodists, men and women, bishops and teachers, received a second blessing of baptism through the experiences and ministries of the Palmers: William Taylor, Thomas Morris, Elijah Heading, Edmund James, Leonidas Hamline, Nathaniel Bangs, and the list can go on and on and on.

Eventually within Methodism an organization was born, a caucus, an emphasis group within Methodism that became known in 1867, the year of its birth, as the National Holiness Movement. Maybe the way to have access to the National Holiness Movement is to comment or to quote Klaude Kendrick's note in his book *The Promise Fulfilled*. He says,

The Holiness Movement made two contributions that prepared fertile ground from which modern Pentecostalism could ultimately spring. First, it introduced to American religion a new interest in spiritual experiences, subsequent to the crisis experience of salvation, and second, it produced another wave of phenomena which includes tongues. Out of Methodism came the rise of the Holiness Movement. That movement became a recognized entity within Methodism in 1867 and it was then called The National Holiness Movement. This takes the teachings of Phoebe Palmer and others and makes it a national agency.

The founders of the National Holiness Movement were three important people. John A. Wood conceived the idea of taking the Tuesday meeting Bible studies of the Palmers and using the same idea in larger meetings, particularly out of doors in camp meetings. He was concerned that the distinctive doctrine of entire sanctification was not being actively taught in the churches.

In April 1867, he came into contact with William B. Osborn, a Methodist elder, and interested him in this idea of an outdoor,

summer Bible conference-like meeting that would be annual in nature, much like the other Bible conferences that were sweeping the country.

The other key figure, meaning John A. Wood, William B. Osborn, was John S. Inskip. John Inskip had come to entire perfection, a second work of grace on the 28th of August of 1864, and then had become closely associated with the Palmers, who held meetings in his churches.

It's the influence of John Wood, William Osborn, and John S. Inskip that brought about the first major organization called the National Holiness Movement. The first encampment was in Vineland, New Jersey, in 1867; the following year in Manheim, Pennsylvania; and in 1869 in Round Lake, New York. The importance of the National Holiness Movement cannot be overemphasized. It spread a holiness doctrine of two works of grace across the country. It was meant to revive the teachings of a healthy church, and from it there are several fruits that I think are important for us to grasp.

One by-product of the National Holiness Movement as it ever expands within Methodism—and within Methodism it's greeted with various degrees of acceptance—but at any rate, one by-product of the National Holiness Movement was the increasing polarization and popularization of the phrase “baptism of the Holy Spirit” as a synonym for the experience of entire sanctification or second blessing. In other words, language is being developed in the nineteenth century, and in Lankford's Bible studies, in Palmer's Bible studies, and in the meetings in the churches, and now in this summer conference ministry called the National Holiness Movement; the key is said to be a second work of grace—one to save and one to sanctify—but certain vocabulary is being developed to technicalize this second work of grace, and it's called the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

Second, another important feature of the National Holiness Movement is that slowly but surely tongues, glossolalia, or motoric speech, and sometimes it's defined as a known language or a heavenly language, but what is meant is Acts 2 or Corinthians 14, but at any rate, in the National Holiness Movement, tongues became an added new phenomenon in the 1870s. Kendrick, for instance, in his book on the history of the Assemblies of God, says, “In addition to these multiple experiences which laid a foundation for the later Pentecostal experience, the Holiness Movement stimulated in its worship unusual motor phenomena

that apparently contributed to a new interest in tongues.” R. B Swam reported tongues in his services in Providence, Rhode Island, at the end of the last century, as well as did others. And my point is that as far as I can tell in the nineteenth century, it’s only at the end of it that baptism of the Holy Spirit, second blessing, or entire sanctification is being identified with a miraculous gift. In this case, it’s tongues.

The fact of the emergence of motoric utterance or tongues should not entirely surprise us, for Asa Mahan of Oberlin College, a colleague of Charles Finney, recognized that possibility. In fact, Mahan had written well before, “Where the Holy Ghost is received such a change is wrought in the subject that he himself will become distinctly conscious of the change, a change observable also to others around as the Spirit gives utterance.” So what I’m trying to do is trace for you various linkages that will coalesce into the first expression of the charismatic movement, and that is the great classical Pentecostal movement.

Within the National Holiness Movement that’s born in 1867 and has annual meetings thereafter, several important things begin to happen, but there are bits and pieces of tapestry that we have seen in the past. For instance, this second work of grace so needed for power in one’s life is now officially designated as the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Second, tongues are beginning to be seen as the sign of that baptism. So those are two mighty influences of the National Holiness Movement. A third influence that’s important for us to grasp is that the National Holiness Movement claims as its offspring the great Keswick Conventions that began in the 1870s in England under Canon Hartford-Battersby, the vicar of Kewstic, England.

What I’m saying is that the Palmers, the Boardmans, the Mahans and Finneys, among others, influenced England, and out of that influence, second work of grace doctrine, came the Keswick Movement. Now to be fair, there are important differences at times between some Keswick teaching and the National Holiness Movement, and that has to do with the issue of baptism by the Spirit at the point of sanctification. Some view it as an endowment of power, which would be more Keswick; others as cleansing from sin, which would be more perfectionistic.

The point I’m trying to make, though, is this: that whether it is Keswick theology or National Holiness theology, whether its William Boardman or Hannah Whitall Smith or Phoebe Palmer,

these people are teaching the necessity of two works of grace—one to save and one to sanctify. Sanctification is being separated from justification into two separate works. Keswick will be brought back to America through the influence of Moody's Northfield Conferences, and from there it will become a feature of America evangelicalism, though it will not attach itself to motoric speech. Another influence of the National Holiness Movement is upon William Booth and the birth of the Salvation Army in England. Booth spoke of baptism and Christian perfectionism, which penetrated America in the 1880s.

What I have said thus far is this: the ideological roots of the charismatic movements in America are in John Wesley and Dr. Finney. The historical roots of the charismatic movements are found in two nineteenth-century movements. One is Methodism, and as Methodism declined, people asked why, it's a great church, as, of course, it is, and they reasoned that they had not emphasized Wesley's teaching of a second blessing doctrine, what we would later call a baptism of the Holy Spirit, so the National Holiness Movement was a purifying movement within the Methodist Church that later coalesces into a huge national movement called the National Holiness Movement that seeks to emphasize a second work of grace with a hope of revitalizing the church.

For our study, that National Holiness Movement made three major contributions to the fabric of what becomes the background of the charismatic movements. One is almost technicalizing the word *baptism* as a work after salvation. Second, the beginning to identify a miraculous gift as a sign that accompanies this baptism. Third, the birth of Keswick, the great Keswick Movement, and there are many similarities between Keswick emphases and Holiness emphases, which is why there are many similarities between non-charismatic and charismatic evangelicalism's emphasis on the doctrine of sanctification. And fourth is what is called the Salvation Army, which, like the Holiness Movement, like Keswick, sees a second work of grace as a baptism and so on.

There is one other historical movement to touch upon before we go on to the basic story itself, and that is nineteenth-century American evangelicalism as it relates to the birth of American revivalism.

In other words, to understand the charismatic movements in America particularly is to understand Methodism, the Holiness Movement, the National Holiness Movement, and second, it's to

understand American revivalism.

In the early nineteenth century, there were three major eras of religious awakenings, we would say. The Second Great Awakening, which began about 1787 to about 1805; the Finney era, which usually dates from the 1820s to the 1840s; and the Layman's Prayer Revival of 1858. Now, before we describe each of these, what is important to grasp is this: the nineteenth century witnesses a decline of Calvinism. The Calvinistical emphases upon waiting for the Lord to come in mercy if He pleases, the arbitrariness of God gave way to much more democratic emphases that are characterized by two things. One, more of a stress on individualism, the person, and second, more of a stress on an emotional emphasis of faith. Both of these come out of the Awakening era—individualism and emotion as a sign of God's blessing.

Maybe a quote from Brunner in his book *The Holy Spirit* would be perhaps helpful. He says this: "While theologically Methodism has exerted the major influence on the Pentecostal movement, methodologically revivalism, particularly American revivalism, has been the post formative influence." So there is my outline. First American Methodism and now American revivalism.

The American predecessor and contemporary of Methodism, the Great Awakening, and its unique child, frontier revivalism, radically transformed America's understanding, appropriation, and application of the Christian faith. Revivalism's particular contribution to American religion and hence to Pentecostalism, again a distinctly American product, was the individualizing and emotionalizing of the Christian faith. Those are the two key words. Emphasis upon the individual and an emphasis upon not so much the rational, the intellectual, or the factual, but the emotional and the affected side of man. Alterations which some have argued became increasingly necessary in an acceleratingly depersonalized civilization. Here's this great thought: Pentecostalism is revivalism gone indoors, meaning in the place of a monarchical, sovereign, sometimes perceived to be unmovable God, the emphasis in revivalism is upon individual faith and individual emotional response of faith.

I go on with Brunner's quote, "In Pentecostalism, revivalism has moved from its tense and rented halls into organized Christendom and myriads of local churches. Inheriting Wesley's experiential theology" (and I would add Finney) "and revivalism's experiential

methodology” (now those are the two key words), “Wesley’s theology modified in American Methodism and Holiness teaching and revivalism’s experiential methodology, Pentecostalism went out into an experience-hungry world and found a response.”

Now let me take our few moments to emphasize the important changes here. You will not understand the birth of the American phenomena of the charismatic movements without understanding Wesley, Finney, the National Holiness Movement, and American revivalism.

As I said, there were three great revival eras—the Second Great Awakening, the Finney era, and the Layman’s Prayer Revival. The Second Great Awakening began about 1787 to 1805, witnessed the end of a worldview by blending it with another. Calvinism and Arminianism were revivals, but Calvinism as a system, a worldview, faded from the scene in the midst of the Second Great Awakening; meaning, the democratic themes of Individualism and freedom and choice, which are part of the new American nation, took precedence over the more Calvinistical monarchical themes. In New England, it degenerated into New Divinitism. In the South and the West it was swallowed up in the awakenings that identified as bountiful fruits of the Holy Spirit. Religion came to be identified with external evidences, and Calvinism did not fit in the new American nation.

The Second Awakening was a massive, wonderful movement of the Spirit of God, and in that preaching, preaching was carried to the individual who was commanded to make an immediate choice and come to God. A Calvinist of the previous century could not say that. He would say, “Maybe God will have mercy on you,” and would not promise that He would. The preaching of the early nineteenth century was a vastly different kind. Salvation was immediate. It was determined by your choice. The emphasis is upon the individual, and the fruit of that mercy of God became a joy and peace and those types of characteristics.

Then you come to the Finney era, and we’ve talked about Finney before. Perhaps one quote would say that great era with Dr. Finney as we’ve discussed him. Smith in his book on the holiness of revival says,

The revivals of the Jacksonian era produced Charles G. Finney, a perfectionist quite as radical as any that John Wesley’s followers ever taught. Since the Oberlin doctrine

did not look back to an eighteenth-century prophet, but rather grew out of the religious climate of the age, its history serves well to introduce the current, which swept across American Protestantism between 1835 and the end of the Civil War.

Finney's influence on the American scene can hardly be overemphasized. Damboriena in his book, *Tongues as a Fire*, says, and I think this is really quite accurate, "In Finney were combined both the theology, essentially Methodism, and methodology, essentially revivalism, which were later to find a permanent home in the movement called Pentecostal."

The last of the Great Awakening movements of the nineteenth century for our study is what's called the Layman's Prayer Revival. The Layman's Prayer Revival was in many ways a profound moving of prayer that was characterized by an interdenominational spirit. In reality, a new eclectic evangelicalism was born as commonality was stressed and distinctives hushed. Smith again wrote, "Theologically, the new evangelical synthesis required frank abandonment of old Calvinism." And again he says, "An important byproduct of revivalism's triumph over Calvinism was that American theology stood increasingly upon the practical, empirical foundation of American experience."

So what these three great revivals did was shift an emphasis away from Calvinistical determinism, as some say, to a Methodist democratic view of Christianity by emphasizing the individual, individual choice, and by prioritizing experience, or as Smith said, "Evangelicalism spawned Arminianism and Arminianism, both the Wesleyan and Oberlin varieties, bore perfectionism." And obviously our study is arguing that it's out of perfectionism, a second work of grace, that this great movement called the charismatic movements will be spawned in the beginning of the twentieth century.

In addition to its fertile root in Methodism and its fertile roots in nineteenth-century revivalism, there emerged at the midpoint of the century several major writings called holiness writings. Or in other words, in addition to the rise of holiness teaching, particularly through the Palmers, and the abandonment of Calvinism through the rise of revivalism, major book-length explanations of second blessing theology appeared and became huge bestsellers, and as we conclude our lecture, I want to mention briefly two of these. Neither of these two people are technically Pentecostal, but they

do teach a second work of grace and became extremely popular.

One is the Presbyterian, William Boardman, who published a book entitled *The Higher Christian Life*. In that book he separates two kinds of Christians—those who live a substandard life and those who live on a higher plane. The higher plane life is obtained by a second work of grace called full salvation through full surrender. He sees salvation in two parts, received by two distinct acts of faith. This becomes important to both the evangelicalism and the charismatic movements. The other important source is Hannah Smith's very famous book, a lady of Quaker persuasion, entitled *The Christians Secret of a Happy Life*. It's a two work of grace theory again.

Let me summarize what we've said today, and that is this: to understand the charismatic movements is to understand two nineteenth-century movements—Methodism in which is born the National Holiness Movement, and nineteenth-century revivalism with its emphasis on individualism and the priority of experience.