

ALBERT BENJAMIN SIMPSON:  
AN INTEGRATED SPIRITUALITY WITH CHRIST AS THE CENTRE

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## **INTRODUCTION**

### **1. SPIRITUALITY AS THE CENTRE**

Spirituality reflects the very essence of a person's life in God. The heart "is the core of our being whereby the presence of God touches us."<sup>(1)</sup> What are the individual's nonnegotiable core values in relationship with God? What are their inner motivations that stir them to do ministry? What life beliefs are they willing to die for? What or whom is their centre?

Christian spirituality is anchored upon the Uncreated Creator, the Trinitarian God of both Old and New Testaments of the Bible, as revealed in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and evidenced through the Holy Spirit. How Christians process their relationship with God, with others and the world and participate in active service is influenced by these core values, inner motivations and life beliefs, and most particularly, that which is at their centre, inflaming the passions of their heart, and thus reflecting their spirituality.

### **2. IMPORTANCE OF EXPERIENCE**

An often underestimated facet particularly in Protestant spirituality is the degree to which a person's central values, motivations, beliefs and passions have been shaped by experience. Personal experience is often a point of departure, or point of entry, depending on which vantage point is taken.<sup>(2)</sup> Most Protestants would like to believe that they follow a hermeneutic that moves from historic Scripture and into personal experience. They believe that experience must be based on the foundation of the Word of God. This is a simplistic view for, in reality, Scripture and experience are highly interrelated. "Theology can judge experience; experience can stretch theology; a given theology can make certain experiences possible."<sup>(3)</sup> Dramatic, authentic experiences with God can often lead one to reread the Bible and view

everything else in a new light.<sup>(4)</sup>

Is it a four-legged stool of Scripture, tradition, reason, and experience upon which we stand to discover truth and encounter reality? Citing Friedrich von Huelgel, Michael Downey suggests that our religious quest for the sacred has three dimensions held in tension: (1) Institutional: tradition, texts, persons, patterns of community and authority; (2) Intellectual/Theoretical: cogent systems of thought, critical reflection; and (3) Mystical: subjective experience.<sup>(5)</sup> Downey further develops the term experience.

*Human experience is the very "stuff" of spirituality...* In contemporary spirituality "experience" is a term used to speak of all that enters our lives: events, stories, relationships, commitments, sufferings, hopes, tragedies, and so on. Our lives are shaped by our response to and engagement with all of these factors as we encounter them.<sup>(6)</sup>

Experience is a source of meaning and the stuff of spirituality.<sup>(7)</sup>

### 3. RESPECT FOR HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Moreover, authentic encounters with God grow out of an immediate historic context which further results in influencing and shaping a person's experience and thus their spirituality. Rather than reading into history what is already held to be true, it is important to "attempt to take history seriously, seeking to understand persons, movements, writings in their own context."<sup>(8)</sup> People lived in situations, cultures and periods of time different than our own which called forth expressions of the Christian life appropriate to different ways of perceiving and being in the world. In order to interpret properly the spirituality of a person or movement, the historical context must be respected.<sup>(9)</sup> Evelyn Underhill recognized the influence of environment and early development in shaping Christian mystics:

Every mystic is profoundly influenced by his environment, and cannot be understood in isolation from it. He is rooted in the religious past of his race, its religious present surrounds and penetrates him whether he will or no, and through this present and this past some, indeed much, of his knowledge of God must come. However independent, however "direct" the revelation he has received, careful investigation shows how much, as a matter of fact, he owes to his spiritual ancestry, his reading, the influences that have shaped his early life.<sup>(10)</sup>

## THESIS

The first official biographer of Albert Benjamin Simpson (1843-1919), founder of the *Christian and Missionary Alliance*, affirmed the impact of his personal spiritual experiences:

The secret of his creative life was related to the spiritual crises into which he came. Aware of the fact that while he preached and taught the deeper things of the Word of God, his own heart had not experienced them until the day he took from the shelf and read from an old musty volume on the subject of the fuller Christian life. It was not a conclusion at which he arrived, but a revelation of his consciousness. His theology then became a fire in his heart.<sup>(11)</sup>

Moreover, Albert Simpson's formative spiritual experiences emerged in a particular historical, cultural

context within North American Protestantism in the latter half of the nineteenth century. This dynamic period of history in the United States, Great Britain and Europe saw the birth of modern technology and its accompanying social changes. Revival activities were bringing spiritual vitality into the churches as thousands professed faith in Christ. Five transdenominational movements emerged: the promotion of mass evangelism, the establishment of the holiness movement, the rekindling of interest in physical healing, the advocacy of the premillennial coming of Christ, and the expansion of world evangelization and missions. These movements converged in Simpson and the synthesis of his own personal experiences in this context resulted in a unique contribution of pastoral theology.

This paper is a constructive analysis examining the impact of primary spiritual experiences in Rev. Albert Benjamin Simpson within his own historic context and his resulting unique contributions in formulating an integrated spirituality. This paper proposes an original synthesis, which for Alliance people, revolves around a familiar theme of the Fourfold Gospel. Three primary life-shaping experiences of salvation, sanctification and healing marked the great epochs of his life, formed the heart of his personal spirituality, and became the framework for his practical theology. Simpson's Fourfold Gospel slogan epitomizes these three and adds a fourth as a future experience -- Jesus Christ as Saviour, Sanctifier, Healer and Coming King.<sup>(12)</sup>

Simpson captured the heart of conservative Protestant movements contemporary in his day, consolidated them in his own experience, articulated them in a cohesive manner, integrated these within broader streams of spirituality, and expressed them in effective ministry. His centre was Jesus Christ. The spirituality of A. B. Simpson could be interpreted historically and recontextualized today as an integrated spirituality with Christ as the centre.

## **A. SIMPSON'S EXPERIENCE, CONTEXT AND CONTRIBUTION**

Simpson's formative spiritual experiences, the historical context from which these experiences with God emerged, and the resulting unique contribution he gave to spirituality provide the basis for analysis.

### **1. JESUS CHRIST AS SAVIOUR**

**a. Simpson's Formative Spiritual Experience.** Born in 1843 and growing up in a strict Scottish Covenanter Presbyterian home, Albert Simpson learned self-discipline, respect for others, and a reverence for God. Religious knowledge was crammed into his head, but it remained as a skeleton frame without life or breath. At age fourteen he had a definite spiritual awakening and conversion experience. Through a conviction of duty, he felt obligated to pursue Christian ministry. But he also had an irresistible urge to have a gun to shoot and hunt. He reasoned that a minister could not indulge in such pastimes. Able to purchase secretly, use and hide a shot gun, he was unable to eventually keep his preoccupation hidden from his parents. His mother discovered it, and since she had lost a brother to an accidental discharge of a gun, a day of parental judgment came. This crushing experience settled the question for young Albert. He would have to be a minister.

This sense of duty was further conflicted by the commitment of his parents to pay for their oldest son's ministry training. Albert pleaded for and received their approval and blessing for him to follow a similar path, if he paid for his educational pursuits himself.

Under the stress of early preparation for pastoral ministry, he eventually experienced a collapse of his health further accentuated by three compounding events. He took a break from studying one day, went

swimming with others, and nearly drowned. Soon after, he heard a traveling evangelist, Rev. H. Grattan Guinness from London, and became deeply convicted. On his way home, he became disoriented and lost his way, stumbled upon some desecrated First Nations' graves, which left him deeply distraught. "The near-drowning, exhausting studies, plundered graves, being lost in the woods -- all crowded in upon him and his health collapsed under the strain."<sup>(13)</sup>

Under nervous and physical exhaustion, Simpson became convinced that he was to die at a certain day and hour and was overwhelmed with despair and the inability to find God and receive eternal life. When that moment passed, he rallied some, but he felt as if his life was hanging upon a thread. At length one day in 1858, he stumbled upon Walter Marshall's *Gospel Mystery of Sanctification* in his pastor's study, and his eyes fell upon a paragraph that he took as a message from God:

The first good work you will ever perform is to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. Until you do this, all your works, prayers, tears, and good resolutions are vain. To believe on the Lord Jesus Christ is just to believe that He saves you according to His Word, that He receives and saves you here and now, for He has said -- "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." The moment you do this, you will pass into eternal life, you will be justified from all your sins, and receive a new heart and all the gracious operations of the Holy Spirit.<sup>(14)</sup>

This was like a shaft of light from heaven. He fell upon his knees, looked up to the Lord Jesus, and prayed believing that God received, saved and forgave him. An inward assurance and spiritual blessing followed. The Word of God became as divine revelations to him personally. Three years later, as he contemplated college and the ministry, Simpson would write out a lengthy, solemn covenant, dedicating himself formally to God. In this detailed transaction, he dedicated himself entirely to God to use his life for God's service and glory. Jesus became his Saviour.<sup>(15)</sup>

**b. Historical Context: Revivalism, Mass Evangelism and Missions Movements.** Simpson's personal experience and ministry emphasis on Christ as Saviour grew out of the teachings heralded in the revivalism, gospel evangelism and missions movements. At the beginning of the eighteenth century, religious influence had declined in North America. Local revivals in the early 1700s merged and spread until they became known as "The Great Awakening" which was followed one hundred years later by a "Second Great Awakening." Prayer movements emerged bringing personal revival and church renewal. The revived church grew, spread westward, and fostered missions.

Simpson was also impacted by huge campaigns of gospel evangelism, influenced by people such as Major Daniel W. Whittle (1840-1901) and Dwight L. Moody (1837-1899) who preached a message that the love of God expressed for all humanity is in Jesus Christ. Gospel evangelists emphasized that sinful people could receive eternal life by believing that Jesus Christ died to take the punishment for their sins. Preaching that people were ruined by sin, that Christ provided redemption, and that believing people could be regenerated by the Holy Spirit, their evangelistic goal was to bring people to repent of their sins and receive Christ as their Lord and Saviour.

Simpson viewed evangelism as one of the primary purposes of the church: "to bring those who were without Jesus Christ into a personal relationship with him."<sup>(16)</sup> His passion for "evangelizing the lost" also fueled his missionary passion to convert the unevangelized in foreign countries.<sup>(17)</sup>

Dwight Moody also characterized the late nineteenth century foreign missions movement in North American Protestantism. He held a series of successful revivals in 1886 on American college and university campuses, such as Princeton, Harvard, and Yale. Those interested in missionary activity were

then invited that summer to his Massachusetts convention where one hundred students would pledge their commitment to become foreign missionaries. One year later that number rose to twenty-one hundred students. Missions had entered a new era of awareness, emphasis and response. During this era, interdenominational missions organizations were formed and began to prosper.

In the wake of this expanding missionary movement, Simpson started his own Evangelical Missionary Alliance in 1887 with the purpose of encouraging new missionary efforts to reach unoccupied fields and send the full gospel of Christ to the neglected millions of heathen lands.<sup>(18)</sup> His passion for global evangelization, to win for Christ as many as possible as quickly as possible, was further fostered by the conviction that Christ's return was imminent.

**c. Unique Contribution.** While Simpson echoed mainstream, evangelical, nineteenth century Protestantism, the unique contribution of Simpson was to view salvation as a spiritual union of the believer with Christ. The initial encounter with the Risen and Living Lord Jesus Christ was considered a salvation experience of conversion. Simpson articulated this emphasis:

The personality of Christ is intimately connected with our salvation. We are not saved by embracing a creed or believing a doctrine, but by accepting a Person.<sup>(19)</sup>

[Salvation is] not receiving a sacrament, a creed, a system of theology, a set of moral precepts, but a living, personal Saviour.<sup>(20)</sup>

Simpson believed that humanity's eternal destiny is settled by their relationship to the Lord Jesus himself. Jesus Christ is himself the Gift of God the Father to sinful humanity. The Gift is not an object but a Person. The acceptance of that Gift brings people into fellowship with God and recipients of all the benefits of redemption. Simpson said, "Just as Adam was the living personal head of our fallen race, so Christ is the Living Head of the redeemed race," and we are all made alive in Christ.<sup>(21)</sup>

Furthermore, this union was a double union of the believer being in Christ and Christ being in the believer.<sup>(22)</sup> Being "in Christ" meant for Simpson that the believer had secured his or her standing and justification before God.<sup>(23)</sup> Simpson stated:

Jesus is the revelation of God to the world and to the believer, and only as we receive Him can we know God and enter into union with Him through Jesus Christ. When we receive His Son, we at once pass into direct and personal acquaintance with the Father.<sup>(24)</sup>

On the other hand, "Christ in the believer" secured the believer's spiritual quickening and deeper life.<sup>(25)</sup> Simpson often reiterated this theme:

The secret of all this is expressed in the ... sublime prayer, "I in them." This is the mystery hid from ages, and at last made known to the saints, "Christ in you the hope of glory," "I in them."<sup>(26)</sup>

Glass summarizes: "This second dimension of union with Christ was the presence of the Spirit of Christ indwelling the new believer."<sup>(27)</sup>

The person and work of Jesus was the focal point of the theme Christ as Saviour. For Simpson, union with Christ was the entry point into the Christian life. Christ not only died within history to give his life

to save people, but he gives his risen life in the present as the source of salvation and life itself.<sup>(28)</sup>

## 2. JESUS CHRIST AS SANCTIFIER

**a. Simpson's Formative Spiritual Experience.** Simpson experienced a second spiritual life crisis in 1874 after serving in pastoral ministry for ten years. He had already been successful in realizing significant church growth in Hamilton, Ontario, and Louisville, Kentucky. Yet when he read William E. Boardman's *The Higher Christian Life* (1858) and also came in contact with two Spirit-filled evangelists (Major D. W. Whittle and Philip P. Bliss), he concluded that his own spiritual life was lacking and he longed for more of God. What looked like fruitful ministry before, now appeared to him as barren and withered. He was awakened to his lack of spiritual power for life and service, and was led to seek the infilling of the Holy Spirit. First, he went to his Bible to become convinced that this was indeed part of the gospel of Christ. Then, as the later biographer, Aiden W. Tozer (1897-1963), would interpret Simpson's experience:

He now had a conviction, he had discovered a doctrine, but he must have spiritual confirmation or he could not go on. Reason was not enough. He must meet God and *experience* the power of the doctrine. The Spirit must furnish evidence that he understood the Scripture aright, that he was not mistaken in his position.<sup>(29)</sup>

Finally, throwing himself at the feet of Jesus, Simpson described his own deep encounter with the felt presence of Jesus:

I look back with unutterable gratitude to the lonely and sorrowful night when, mistaken in many things, and imperfect in all, not knowing but that it would be death in the most literal sense before the morning light, my heart's full consecration was made. At that time there crossed over the threshold of my being One who was as real to me as He who appeared to John on the isle of Patmos. With unreserved surrender I first could say,

Jesus, I my cross have taken,  
All to leave and follow Thee;  
Destitute, despised, forsaken,  
Thou from hence my All shall be.

Never, perhaps, has my heart known quite such a thrill of joy as when the following Sabbath morning I gave out those lines and sang them with all my heart. And if God has been pleased to make my life in any measure a little temple for His indwelling and for His glory, and if He ever shall be pleased to use me in any fuller measure, it has been because of that hour, and it will be still in the measure in which that hour is made the keynote of a consecrated, crucified, and Christ-devoted life.<sup>(30)</sup>

Simpson was previously afraid to seek sanctification, because he believed it meant that it was the last step before entering heaven. Now he concluded that there was a clear difference between salvation and sanctification among Christian believers based on his own experience.

I dare not say that every Christian has this Holy Ghost personally welcomed and dominant in his heart. I dare not say that I was not a Christian many years before I knew this, and that I [did not] preach the Gospel for at least ten years before I knew what it was to have a personal Divine Presence living and manifesting His reality in my brain, my affections, my will, my body, my thought, my work -- the indwelling Holy Spirit.

And I am sure He never came to me in that way, as the occupant of my house, until I gave Him the house and became no longer the owner of the house, but a lodger in it, and He the proprietor taking care of me and using me.<sup>(31)</sup>

Following this experience of the indwelling Christ and baptism of the Holy Spirit, Simpson was inflamed with a passion for city-wide evangelistic efforts where he pastored in Louisville, Kentucky. Simpson's deeper experience with God had awakened in his heart an intense, nondenominational concern to reach the unchurched masses of every social condition -- rich and poor, black and white, educated and uneducated -- with the gospel of Christ. His own passion for evangelism also intensified toward the entire world. Jesus became his Sanctifier.<sup>(32)</sup>

**b. Historical Context: Holiness, Deeper Life and Pentecostal Movements.** Simpson's personal experience and ministry emphasis on Christ as Sanctifier grew out of the holiness and deeper life movements and was later clarified in the emerging Pentecostal movement. In the eighteenth century, pietism had its influence on the North American church as Christians reacted to formalism and intellectualism and stressed Bible study and a personal experience of Christ. The Moravians fostered simple Bible study, witnessing and missionary zeal. John Wesley (1703-1791) received assurance of salvation and later launched the Methodism movement, preaching Christian perfection as a model for sanctification. These movements continued to influence the first half of the nineteenth century through such people as Charles Finney (1792-1875).

During the latter half of the nineteenth century, materialism and secularism crept into the church through the influence of modernism and liberalism. Enamored by evolution, science and ethics, liberals attacked much of the Bible as untrue. While denying many historic doctrines, promoting theological criticism, and focusing more on social and political issues, a new stirring for spiritual reality emerged. After the Civil War in the United States (1865), a series of Methodist revivals took place, preaching a return to holiness and emphasizing sanctification.

These holiness interests began to emphasize entire sanctification and Spirit baptism through a complete surrender to Christ. The quest for a revived church took many forms. The interdenominational *Keswick Higher Life Movement* promoted practical holiness, stressing the Spirit-filled life through the victorious Christ who by the vicarious atonement defeated sin and self in the life of the believer. The *National Holiness Association* emphasized a second blessing of entire sanctification resulting in perfectionism.<sup>(33)</sup>

**c. Unique Contribution.** Sanctification was to Simpson not a psychological experience nor an emotional state, but a genuine encounter and ongoing, growing relationship with the risen and living person of Christ. Simpson came to believe that there was in every Christian life the necessity of a definite and distinct spiritual crisis beyond salvation of being baptized in the Holy Spirit and united with the Lord Jesus Christ. Following the holiness movements, he made a distinction between justification and sanctification, viewing them as separate acts of faith. Faithful, seeking believers would be led by the Holy Spirit into such a crisis and into the fullness of God. Following the inflow of the Holy Spirit, the Lord Jesus would begin to live his life of purity and power through them even as he lived on earth. Sanctification was considered a second work of grace, received by faith, and resulted in the mystical union of the Christian with the indwelling Spirit of Christ.

Simpson filtered the diverse, contemporary sanctification movements through his own experience and his understanding of the Bible by focusing not upon sin but upon Christ. For Simpson, sanctification came simply through union with Christ.

So also our deeper life is through union with the personal Christ.... Holiness is not personal character slowly attained, but union with the Lord Jesus, so perfect and intimate that He Himself has described it under the figure of the vine and the branches.... We have not to climb by slow and painful ascent the heights of holiness, but to receive the Holy One Himself to dwell within us and lift us up to all the heights of grace and glory which He Himself has attained... Our part is not to struggle after ethical culture, but to receive Him, abide in Him, and have Him transfer to us day by day and step by step His own excellence, His own qualities, His own graces, "grace for grace."<sup>(34)</sup>

Simpson's view of sanctification thus moved away from the sin-centered focus of the Wesleyan view of eradication and the Calvinist view of suppression.<sup>(35)</sup> His spirituality revolved around a Christ-centered axis. In addressing those doctrinally divided on sanctification, he recalled his own message:

The writer was once called to address a meeting of consecrated Christians, one-half of whom held to the doctrine of eradication, and the other half to the doctrine of suppression. Instead of opposing or approving of either, he asked his audience to rise above both of them to a new and higher plane, even the Christ life, and seek such a union with God Himself.<sup>(36)</sup>

He focused upon the Sanctifier instead of the gift of sanctification in which the believer enters into a deepening and intimate union with Christ which viewpoint he believed would bring greater glory to God.

Simpson emphasized a crisis, surrender or dedication distinct from conversion, which reflected neither the Wesleyan perfectionism model of entire sanctification, nor the Calvinistic holiness model of progressive sanctification, but majored upon Christ himself and Christ in the believer. Believing that the Holy Spirit is the divine agent in the experience of sanctification, Simpson stated, "Therefore the baptism of the Holy Spirit is simultaneous with our union with the Lord Jesus."<sup>(37)</sup>

This second, distinct blessing as a further development of conversion, second conversion or second union, is not earned by self-effort or self-imposed through asceticism, penance or suffering.<sup>(38)</sup> Rather, sanctification is given as a gift of grace by God through separation from all sin and selfishness, dedication of all to God, and receiving by faith the infilling of the Holy Spirit.<sup>(39)</sup>

It is that experience by which we become united to Christ in so divine and personal a sense that we become partakers of His nature, and the very person of Christ, through the Holy Ghost, comes to dwell in our hearts, and by His indwelling becomes to us the substance and support of our spiritual life.<sup>(40)</sup>

This crisis is followed by a progressive work of sanctification in constant dependence on the sufficiency of God. Spirit-baptism is the doorway into ongoing and deepening union with God as the believer is filled continually with the Holy Spirit. Simpson did not preach perfection but a perfect Christ abiding and living his life through the sanctified believer. The believer is in process -- complete but not completed, whole but not perfected. Spiritual growth is to continue and deepen.

The believer is thus changed continually to become like Christ in life and ministry as he or she continues to reckon themselves dead to sin and in spiritual union with Christ, to surrender or yield themselves to God completely, and abide moment by moment in dependence upon Christ through obedience and fellowship. Through these disciplines of reckoning, surrendering and abiding, believers grow in their knowledge and experience of union with Christ and in personal holiness as the Spirit of Christ lives in and through them.<sup>(41)</sup> Thus, foundational to sanctification in Simpson's view is the teaching that believers can enter into intimate union with Jesus Christ, and thus the Christian life is simply the

indwelling Christ living through them.<sup>(42)</sup>

In the early twentieth century, when Pentecostalism emerged emphasizing another blessing in sanctification -- speaking in tongues as the evidence of being filled with the Holy Spirit -- Simpson predictably reemphasized a balance and an ultimate focus on Jesus Christ. He did not emphasize spiritual gifts above the Giver, nor elevate gifts above ministry. He endeavored to urge "people to keep the Person of Christ in full focus in every consideration of the gifts of the Spirit."<sup>(43)</sup> While others in his movement spoke in tongues, Simpson did not. He "concluded that the gift of tongues was one manifestation of the Holy Spirit's infilling, but neither necessary nor the sole evidence of such an experience."<sup>(44)</sup> The key evidence of sanctification was viewed as power for holy living and effective service. Simpson recognized fully all the gifts of the Spirit including various kinds of tongues "as belonging to the Church in every age" and stated that "many of our most wise and honored workers both in the homeland and in the mission field have had this experience."<sup>(45)</sup> Furthermore, he counseled:

We give and claim charity and liberty, that those who have not this experience shall recognize in the Lord those who have it and use it to edification. And that those who have it, shall equally recognize those who have not this special form of divine anointing, but have the Holy Ghost in such other gifts as He is pleased to bestow upon one and another "severally as He will."<sup>(46)</sup>

Simpson fully recognized and welcomed all spiritual gifts in Alliance churches provided they were exercised with humility, a sense of order and propriety, and a demonstrable regard for corporate edification. Spiritual experiences may be realized and manifestations may take place, but they were not the focus in sanctification for Simpson. He felt that focusing on manifestations instead of devotion to God could reduce evangelistic and missionary zeal. His focus was, rather, on being united with the indwelling Christ and receiving power to do God's global work.

Thus, Albert Simpson's view of sanctification was neither sin-centered nor spiritual gift-centered, neither holiness-centered nor power-centered, but fully Christ-centered. "For Simpson, this intimate union of the believer with Christ was the deepest truth of all Christian experience, and provided the heart of his spirituality."<sup>(47)</sup> For him, as with the apostle Paul, "Christ is all, and is in all" (Colossians 3:11).

### 3. JESUS CHRIST AS HEALER

**a. Simpson's Formative Spiritual Experience.** Healing was the third great crisis which Simpson experienced that shaped his life and ministry. He was dramatically healed physically in 1881. As stated earlier, he had a nervous breakdown at age fourteen while preparing for college which took him near death. Later, in his first pastorate at twenty-one, he broke down with heart trouble and worked for years with constant remedies and hundreds of times felt as if he would fall in the middle of a service. He had two other collapses of long duration that threatened his life. Then while serving as a pastor in New York City, a prominent doctor told him that he would succumb to his illness in a few months. But while recuperating at a camp meeting, he heard people testify of healing. They had been healed by simply trusting Christ, even as they had for their salvation. Simpson went to his Bible, found the answers he was searching for, and became convinced that healing was part of the good news of Christ. He went out into the silent pine woods and there made a threefold covenant with God and appropriated healing:

1. As I shall meet Thee in that day, I solemnly accept this truth as part of Thy Word and of the Gospel of Christ, and, God helping me, I shall never question it until I meet Thee there.
2. As I shall meet Thee in that day, I take the Lord Jesus as my physical life, for all the needs of my body until all my lifework is done; and, God helping me, I shall never doubt that He does become

my life and strength from this moment and will keep me under all circumstances until all His will for me is perfectly fulfilled.

3. As I shall meet Thee in that day, I solemnly promise *to use* this blessing for the glory of God and the good of others, and to so speak of it or minister in connection with it in any way in which God may call me or others may need me in the future.<sup>(48)</sup>

Immediately, he felt every fiber of his soul tingling with a sense of God's presence, but he did not know if his body felt any better or not. Yet after several tests of faith, his strength was definitely and physically renewed, and he enjoyed phenomenal health until he was seventy-five.

In today's medical terminology, Simpson had been a weak and frail man with a chronic heart disorder. Yet he had learned to trust Christ as the healer of his physical body. This singular crisis experience was followed by other occasions in which he trusted Christ to heal him. He believed that divine healing and health were available to all believers who would reach out and take it, hold it, and persevere in it. He felt that Christians could live in continuous connection with the risen and living Jesus for their physical needs. Jesus became his Healer.<sup>(49)</sup>

**b. Historical Context: Divine Healing Movement.** Simpson's personal experience and ministry emphasis on Christ as Healer grew out of the rekindling of the divine healing movement in the nineteenth century which taught that direct intervention of God could restore health and wholeness to the physically sick. "Dorothea Trudel and Otto Stockmayer in Switzerland, Johann Blumhardt in Germany, William Boardman in England, and Dr. Charles Cullis and Carrie F. Judd-Montgomery (1859-1946) in the United States" were among those who taught the doctrine of divine healing.<sup>(50)</sup> The Boston Baptist minister, Adoniram J. Gordon (1836-1895), and Andrew Murray (1828-1917) from Africa were contemporaries of Simpson who also believed and practiced divine healing. Homes for healing were opened and prayer for the sick was offered, for God had extended grace to heal.

The divine healing movement was a natural theological outgrowth of the sanctification holiness movements which emphasized "the doctrine of Christian perfection or the baptism of the Holy Spirit as purification from sin, the endowment with power, and the living of a consecrated life of holiness."<sup>(51)</sup> Once theology had affirmed that the supernatural power of the Holy Spirit displayed in the New Testament Acts of the Apostles was available to all believers in the present, it was a logical conclusion to approve accompanying supernatural signs and gifts of the Spirit. Moreover, another basic presupposition of the faith healing movement was to relate all sickness as indirectly caused or ultimately connected to sin or Satan. Thus, if the Pentecostal power of Acts was available to the sanctified believer by faith, then he or she not only had power over sin and Satan but had power over sickness too. A practical, theological connection was made between Christian perfectionism and divine healing. Christ's atonement was viewed as not only providing justification from sin, but also purifying human nature from sin. In a sanctification experience, sickness could also be eliminated.<sup>(52)</sup>

**c. Unique Contribution.** Simpson's unique contribution to divine healing was to view healing not as a commodity to be appropriated, a ritual to be performed, or an "it" to be taken, but as an encounter with a person, the risen and living Lord Jesus Christ. Belief in physical, mental and emotional healing was "not the whole gospel, nor perhaps the chief part of it, but it is a part."<sup>(53)</sup> He stated unequivocally, "The resurrection body of our glorious Lord is the source of physical energy for all His trusting people ... as we abide in Him and draw from Him His sustaining strength."<sup>(54)</sup> Simpson viewed healing and health as extensions of sanctification, in mystical union with the living Christ in his resurrection life made available through his atonement on the cross which destroyed the root of sickness.

Flowing out of an intimate relationship with Jesus Christ, the believer could seek healing. Couched in that relationship of love with God, the believer could encounter Jesus Christ in their physical crisis, and the divine-human relationship would continue whatever the outcome. Travis summarizes Simpson's Trinitarian position on healing:

Divine healing is the supernatural divine power of God infused into human bodies, renewing their strength and replacing the weakness of suffering human frames by the life and power of God.... Divine healing comes through the life of the resurrected Christ, who bodily rose from the dead.... Divine healing is the healing that comes via the work of the Holy Spirit. Jesus healed by the Holy Spirit while on earth, and He is still the same today.<sup>(55)</sup>

The infusion of divine life with the seeker could bring supernatural, if not miraculous, healing. God could supernaturally impart resurrection life to stimulate, quicken and revive the natural, physical forces that are infirm, exhausted and weak. Simpson was "persuaded that [Christ's] body, which is perfectly human and real, can somehow share its vital elements with our organic life, and quicken us from His Living Heart and indwelling Spirit."<sup>(56)</sup>

Ultimately, divine healing was viewed by Simpson not as the mere restoration of ordinary, physical health, nor the harmony of balancing all aspects of body, mind and spirit, nor the proper alignment of the natural powers of the body to heal itself, though these were not entirely avoided nor denied.<sup>(57)</sup> Divine healing was understood as the impartation of the strength and life of Christ through the Holy Spirit. God could certainly use medical means, alternative healing methods, or psychotherapy as part of the healing process. But divine healing for Simpson meant that the sick person was intrinsically brought into union with the body of the Risen Christ and received an impartation of his resurrection life.<sup>(58)</sup> The sufferer could affirm with Paul, spiritually as well as physically, "I no longer live, but Christ lives in me" (Galatians 2:20). Physical healing thus would become a foretaste of the future resurrection of the body. Authentic faith available to every believer elicited an encounter with the Risen Christ in healing. "As with his teaching on salvation and sanctification, then, Simpson's teaching on healing was anchored in Christ's union with the believer."<sup>(59)</sup>

#### 4. JESUS CHRIST AS COMING KING

**a. Simpson's Formative Spiritual Experiences.** Based on Simpson's passion for North American evangelism and global missions, he developed a ministry philosophy of "bringing back the King." Unlike the first three aspects of his Fourfold Gospel which grew directly out of his integration of contemporary church history, reflection on God's Word, and personal formative experience with Jesus, this "fold" anticipated an experience with Jesus yet to come. As a synthesizer, this fourth aspect rounded out his fourfold message of Jesus Christ as Saviour, Sanctifier, Healer and Coming King. This anticipated future experience of the second coming of Christ impacted his present Christian activity and mission.

Nevertheless, even this aspect of his pastoral theology was impacted uniquely by personal spiritual experience. Baptized as an infant by John Geddie (1815-1872), one of Canada's first foreign missionaries, Albert was dedicated, according to his mother's desire, to the ministry or to missionary service.<sup>(60)</sup> Some of the first pastoral ministry gifts evident in Albert Simpson were the gifts of preacher and evangelist, and his churches often grew significantly through conversion growth. He always had a heart for foreign missions and missionary activity and organized mission's emphases within his churches. Then in 1876 Simpson had a remarkable dream which further fueled his passion for evangelism and enlarged a global missionary spirit within him. Tozer recognized how important

experience was to Simpson in this context.

It was the way of this God-possessed dreamer. His call must come direct from the Throne. Logic would not do. Reasons were not enough. There must be a spiritual experience concerning the matter or there would be no response.<sup>(61)</sup>

In a sermon preached in August 1894, Simpson told how this dream came to him:

Never shall I forget how, eighteen years ago, I was awakened one night from sleep, trembling with a strange and solemn sense of God's overshadowing power, and on my soul was burning the remembrance of a strange dream through which I had that moment come. It seemed to me that I was sitting in a vast auditorium, and millions of people were there sitting around me. All the Christians in the world seemed to be there, and on the platform was a great multitude of faces and forms. They seemed to be mostly Chinese. They were not speaking, but in mute anguish were wringing their hands, and their faces wore an expression that I can never forget. I had not been thinking or speaking of the Chinese or the heathen world, but as I awoke with that vision on my mind, I did tremble with the Holy Spirit, and I threw myself on my knees, and every fibre of my being answered, "Yes, Lord, I will go."<sup>(62)</sup>

At first he interpreted this dream as a personal call to serve God as a missionary in China. His wife disagreed. Efforts he made to pursue this personal vision never came to fruition. Gradually, he came to realize that God intended him, as he said, "to labor for the world and the perishing heathen just the same as if I were permitted to go among them."<sup>(63)</sup> That he did. He created a first-rate missionary journal and started the first continuing missionary training Bible college in North America in South Nyack, New York.<sup>(64)</sup> He initiated deeper life and missions conferences where he recruited volunteers to go abroad as missionaries as well as solicited vast sums of sacrificial giving and impassioned intercessory prayer to support these missionary ventures. He carved out a cooperative, interdenominational fellowship which became eventually the *Christian and Missionary Alliance* as a nonsectarian denomination which continues to promote evangelism in North America and serve today in part as a sending and supporting foreign missions organization.

A product of his generation, he was also influenced by larger theological movements in eschatology and went through a paradigm shift during the mid-1870s by becoming convinced of premillennialism, the view that Christ will come before a thousand-year reign. He believed that "the Holy Spirit had given him 'light' to see the truth of premillennialism and set aside his previous teaching."<sup>(65)</sup> Prior to this Simpson had taught that the second coming of Christ had to do with the spiritual presence of Christ's coming to the believer upon death. Combining his missionary dream and eschatological paradigm shift, Simpson's simple passion inflamed to preach the gospel to the ends of the earth and thus hasten the second coming of Christ. Jesus would be his Coming King.<sup>(66)</sup>

**b. Historical Context: Missions Movement.** Simpson's personal experience and ministry emphasis grew out of the missions movement. The modern missions movement began in 1792 with William Carey as a missionary to India. Denominational efforts and later interdenominational, independent, faith movements were united in the nineteenth century as evangelical believers began to unite around a common vision and purpose for foreign missions.

Simpson surveyed the considerable missions activity in progress on both sides of the Atlantic. Outstanding pioneers like David Livingstone, J. Hudson Taylor and Mary Slessor of Great Britain,

Adoniram Judson of the United States, Jonathan and Rosalind Goforth of Canada helped make the 1800s the "Great Century of Missions." John Geddie, the great pioneer missionary whom fellow Canadians ranked with Taylor and Judson, had personally influenced Simpson.<sup>(67)</sup>

Interest in end times prophecy also grew and premillennialism began to be held as a point of orthodoxy. Interdenominationalism and prophecy conferences in the latter half of the nineteenth century stirred a vision for missions. Many held that the Great Commission needed to be fulfilled before Christ would return.<sup>(68)</sup>

Premillennial eschatology was motivated by two apparently contradictory themes. Because of the belief that Christ's return was imminent, many were animated by a desire to evangelize as many people as possible as quickly as possible. In other words, the time for evangelistic effort was short, for Christ was coming soon. Adoniram J. Gordon (1836-1895) and Arthur T. Pierson (1837-1911) were among those who preached this message. A second theme grew out of dispensational eschatology developed by British Plymouth Brethren teacher John Nelson Darby (1800-1882). Because of the belief that once the gospel message was preached to all of the world and then the end would come, many believed they could help shorten the days before Christ's return. Thus the emphasis on the second coming of Christ had a strong missionary theme interwoven with it.<sup>(69)</sup>

**c. Unique Contribution.** True to his consistent, interrelated development of the Fourfold Gospel, Simpson uniquely emphasized the second "coming of the Lord ... not so much an event as a Person, an eternal and inseparable union with Christ."<sup>(70)</sup> A more recent study came to a similar conclusion:

Simpson's philosophy of missions majored on a Person rather than a creed. Advocating trinitarian views, Simpson nevertheless saw Jesus Christ, the redeemer, as constituting the center, source, motive, goal and dynamic for Christian living. Missions, then must focus upon Christ, the One who died to create the gospel to be proclaimed.<sup>(71)</sup>

Although he speculated in eschatological conjecture, believing that certain natural, political and ecclesiastical signs pointed to the soon return of Christ, he was convinced fundamentally that salvation, sanctification, healing and missions were connected closely to the imminent return of Christ. This was at the heart of his faith vision of the world. Salvation is ready to be revealed in the last time. Christ's coming provides urgency for sanctified, holy living and promoting missions. Healing is a foretaste of the resurrection of the body. The gospel has a future emphasis realized fully in Christ's second coming.<sup>(72)</sup> Simpson announced eagerly, "The glorious doctrine of His Second Coming would be nothing without the personal Christ Himself."<sup>(73)</sup> It is not reward or crown that inspired the supreme longing of his followers, "but it is the person of the Lord Jesus in that blessed place and time when at last it shall be true, "They shall see his face."<sup>(74)</sup>

Though a follower of premillennialism, he did not force his belief on others who joined his movement, nor did he fully embrace dispensationalism. Rather, from the historicist interpretation, he believed that the more the prophecies of Scripture were fulfilled, the fewer remained to be fulfilled before Christ returns and in fact was convinced that most of those signs were already past. Imminency did not mean that Christ could return at any moment as if to expect the instant return of the Lord. Rather, he believed in an imminent event that is impending and approaching rapidly. For Simpson, the imminency of Christ meant that "Christ will appear when the last sign has been fulfilled, and there is only one last sign to wait for."<sup>(75)</sup> He predicted the restoration of the Jews to Palestine as a national state which then left only one sign unfulfilled and the most important -- the missionary task. Based on Matthew 24:14, "And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the

end will come," Simpson emphasized that:

Once a testimony had been established in every tribe and nation, this last sign would be complete, and the church would then expect the Lord's return at any moment. To this end, he and the people who, with him, founded the missionary society, committed themselves to "bring back the King" by fulfilling the missionary mandate.<sup>(76)</sup>

The task of this mandate is to give everyone at least a chance to hear about Christ, thus making a differentiation between evangelization and conversion and connecting the church's obedience with Christ's appearing. Simpson's passion for global missions focused on preaching the full gospel of Christ to the unchurched masses, the neglected millions, the poor and mistreated, by living among them as one of the destitute of the world.

Homeland and foreign missions centered in a Christ-centered, fourfold message. Proclaiming salvation was missions' prime essential. Overseas missionaries needed to experience Christ as Sanctifier for power to present Christ convincingly, exemplarily, and lead others into maturity. Divine healing was part of the gospel also to be communicated. Premillennialism and dependence upon Christ's imminent return further fostered missionary endeavor.<sup>(77)</sup> Interwoven with mission activity was the ultimate hope of the physical and personal appearance of Christ. This eternal future was the culmination of perfect union with God. Glass summarizes Simpson's central belief in a unitive life with Christ:

In salvation, the believer was first brought into union with Christ, with sanctification the believer entered the "second union" with him; for physical healing, the believer's union with Christ provided access to Christ's healing life; and with Christ's return the believer would enter the final and perfect union with God. Each element of the four-fold gospel was an expression of the believer's intimate spiritual union with Christ, on earth or in heaven.<sup>(78)</sup>

## **B. BROADER CONTEXT WITHIN STREAMS OF SPIRITUALITY**

Albert Benjamin Simpson "was simultaneously a revivalist preacher, a Holiness prophet of the 'deeper' or 'higher Christian life,' a promoter of world missions, an eschatological speculator, and a theological synthesizer."<sup>(79)</sup> As a synthesizer he seemed to be able to draw from many broader streams of spirituality -- contemplative, holiness, charismatic, social justice and evangelical streams -- balancing them into an even flow as he intermingled the different rivulets together to form his integrated spirituality with Christ as the centre.

### **1. CONTEMPLATIVE STREAM**

An often overlooked aspect of Simpson's spirituality was his mystical and contemplative elements.<sup>(80)</sup> Recent scholarship by Clyde Glass, however, "shows that Simpson appropriated mystical and contemplative practices for his personal piety, and encouraged these practices in the lives of his people through his modeling, preaching and writing."<sup>(81)</sup> He was greatly influenced and shaped by an old mediaeval message found in *A Guide to True Peace or The Excellency of Inward and Spiritual Prayer* (1818) which was a compilation of Quietist writings by Madame Jeanne Guyon (1648-1717), Francois Fenelon (1651-1715) and Michael de Molinos (1640-1697) and edited by two Quakers, William Backhouse and James Janson.<sup>(82)</sup> This book became yet another turning point in Simpson's life and probably became the basis for his practice of *via negativa*, that is, "the image of passivity and receptivity

to God as the world was shut out and the intellect was stilled in apophatic prayer."<sup>(83)</sup>

Simpson's first biographer described him as a "Pauline mystic" and a "man of prayer."<sup>(84)</sup> "If we are to know Dr. Simpson, we must reverently approach his prayer closet ... for every mystic has learned the simplicity and the continuity of prayer."<sup>(85)</sup> As a mystic, Thompson further wrote:

When we speak of A. B. Simpson as a Pauline mystic we mean that he followed Paul in his comprehension and declaration of the divine mysteries. With the history of Christian mysticism and its errors he was conversant, but he escaped the pitfalls in this path by overleaping them and going directly to Jesus and John and Paul for his teaching. And herein he was an evangelical mystic.<sup>(86)</sup>

Simpson's intuitive acquisition of knowledge was beyond mere rational understanding. He had experienced a "mystic union with Christ."<sup>(87)</sup> If the "essential meaning of mysticism is an experience of union with God," then Simpson qualified as a mystic but only in this limited Pauline or evangelical sense of gospel history or what has been otherwise described as a Christ-mysticism.<sup>(88)</sup> Simpson's mysticism of intimate, personal, conscious, direct union and communion with the God of the Bible led him to experience Christ first in salvation, and then second, in a deeper union with Christ through sanctification.

After his experience of the anointing of the Holy Spirit he was for the rest of his days an enraptured Christian. His enjoyment of the presence of the indwelling Christ almost literally transported him. His was a ravished heart which seemed to know no limit in its ardent devotion to the person of the Saviour. It was inevitable that a heart so ecstatic should sing, that the thoughts proceeding from a mind so enchanted should dance before the ark of God.<sup>(89)</sup>

Moreover, Simpson distanced himself from monastic isolationism and total passivity in contemplation. Personal guidance and direction from God received through listening prayer was to be balanced with and evaluated in the light of Scripture, and was to move an individual into active ministry. He was not initiated into some secret circle to keep his mouth shut as the Greek mystic, but as a "Christian mystic was given a glorious revelation of things which he was to declare."<sup>(90)</sup> Simpson's contemplative side led him directly into active service for God and fed him in his ministry to others. Thus, though he sat by and drank from a contemplative stream of spirituality, his infilling of the Holy Spirit and ongoing experience of the indwelling Spirit of Christ moved him to reach out to others locally and globally as contemplation in action.<sup>(91)</sup> Simpson combined Christian mysticism and biblical prayer which was interwoven with his evangelical activism:

Dr. Simpson had solved the secret of service when he learned the mystery of prayer. In prayer he received a vision of God's will. Through further prayer he ascertained God's plans for the carrying out of His will. Still praying, he was empowered to execute those plans. More prayer brought the supply of every need for the work. Continuing still in prayer, he was able to carry through what he had begun. Praying always, a spirit of praise and adoration welled up in his heart, and God received all the glory for everything that was accomplished.<sup>(92)</sup>

The centre for experiencing authentic contemplative aspects of the Christian life and leading him into evangelical activism was, for Simpson, the Christ of the Bible and Christ alone.

## 2. HOLINESS STREAM

Some consider that the religious quest of Simpson resulted in a spirituality of holiness. Certainly, "separation from the world, personal purification, and being filled with Christ ... form the inner essence of the holiness tradition."<sup>(93)</sup> Though having a strong view of holiness, Simpson found the Christ-life a higher and deeper life. He wrote:

Even the teachers of holiness are in danger of substituting it for Him, a clean heart for the divine nature. The mystery of godliness is Christ in you the hope of glory. The end of all experience is union with God.<sup>(94)</sup>

Likewise, the *Christian and Missionary Alliance* is often believed to have emerged out of a holiness tradition. Yet Simpson stated in an editorial:

[The Alliance] is not a holiness movement. Certainly we believe in true Scriptural holiness, and in teaching the necessity of separation from the world, and entire consecration to Christ. But there is something higher even than this, and something without which this will be a harsh, self-centered and unsuccessful attempt, or a cold disappointing theory.... [The Alliance] is a Christ Movement.<sup>(95)</sup>

So even while drinking deeply at yet another stream of spirituality, Simpson found his centre in Christ Jesus.

### 3. CHARISMATIC STREAM

The *Christian and Missionary Alliance* can be considered charismatic theologically, because it believes in the full ministry of the Holy Spirit and in the operation of all the gifts of the Holy Spirit as legitimate gifts from God to be exercised properly for the effective building up of the Body of Christ and for winning people to Christ. Signs and wonders of Bible times continue today according to Simpson:

We are in the age of miracles, the age of Christ, the age which lies between two Advents ... the age of Power, the age which, above all other ages of time, should be intensely alive.... Until he [Christ] comes again, the world will never cease to need the touch of His Power and Presence in the form of supernatural manifestations.<sup>(96)</sup>

Albert Simpson has been called both a forerunner and critic of Pentecostalism.<sup>(97)</sup> As a forerunner of Pentecostalism, he referred frequently to the "latter rain" of the Holy Spirit and the signs in Mark 16, eschewed cessationism, and believed in the practice of all the gifts of the Spirit.<sup>(98)</sup> He practiced prayer for physical healing through church elders and encouraged believers to seek after spiritual gifts with discernment. He was convinced biblically and experientially that tongues was a spiritual gift available in contemporary times, but not given to all believers.

Several themes surface as points of ideological continuity between Simpson and early Pentecostals... Simpson's view of church history, understanding of spiritual gifts, interpretation of the book of Acts and doctrine of the baptism of the Holy Spirit.<sup>(99)</sup>

As a critic of Pentecostalism, Simpson distanced himself from the Pentecostal movement, primarily because of its exclusivistic stance on the doctrine of tongues as the evidence of being filled with the Spirit and also because of biblical imbalance, extravagant excesses, and fanatical abuses.

In the context of the emerging Pentecostal movement in his generation, he sought the gift of tongues, but

did not receive it.<sup>(100)</sup> The spotlight for Simpson was on the Giver not the gift, to empower believers to live the Christian life supernaturally and to equip them for effective Christian service. Ministry focus is, thus, maintained on God, others, and actual good works, not on the gift itself nor the person expressing their spiritual gift.

The radical middle Simpson espoused was between charisma and charisphobia -- between an unhealthy fanaticism and credulity of excess, on the one hand, and an ultraconservative reaction of fear on the other, with a biblical balance between the fruit of a Christ-centered life and the gifts of a Spirit-filled life, with power for life and for service. The manifestation sought after was changed lives. God's power was seen as being balanced with the work of the cross, gifts with the Giver, blessings with avenues for service, spiritual experience with impetus to move toward global evangelism. Simpson's genius was to centre on Christ as the union between the work of the Holy Spirit and the work of the cross in spirituality. Both the power of God and death to selfishness were brought together simultaneously and held in biblical tension. Self-identity was found in union or partnering with Jesus Christ in both his sufferings through identification with his crucified life and his power through identification with his resurrection life. Historically, doctrinally and positionally, the Alliance was and is not cessationist nor Pentecostal. It was the radical middle for Simpson where Christ is to be found.

#### 4. SOCIAL JUSTICE STREAM

Another stream that Simpson absorbed into his spirituality was social ministry and action. This one area has been overshadowed denominationally since Simpson's day and is in need of greater reestablishment.<sup>(101)</sup> Feel Simpson's heartbeat:

There may be, in perfect keeping with the simple order and dignity of the church of God, the most aggressive work for the masses and the widest welcome for every class of sinful men; the ministry of healing for the sick and suffering administered in the name of Jesus; the most complete provision for charitable relief; industrial training and social elevation for the degraded classes, workshops for the unemployed, homes for the orphaned, shelter for the homeless, refuges for the inebriates, the fallen and the helpless; missions for the heathen; Christian literature for the instruction of the people, and every agency needed to make the church of God the light of the world and the mothering of the suffering and the lost.<sup>(102)</sup>

Simpson was concerned continually for the socially "neglected classes." Tozer announced that Simpson was in his glory when social differences dissolved:

No social lines separated his people from each other. His members came from every level of human society from the gutter to the penthouse. Any Saturday night "a brother of low degree" might be seen standing on a street corner giving his testimony while a well-to-do and cultured believer stood beside him holding his hat while he talked. It was a free church in the fullest sense of the word.<sup>(103)</sup>

The provision of the gospel was not just to meet spiritual needs, but also to meet temporal needs and material conditions. Simpson believed that Christ wants his church not merely to preach the gospel, but to "work for the poor and lowly; work for the destitute and the sick; [as well as] work for the rich and worldly."<sup>(104)</sup>

History records Simpson's involvement, sponsorship, advocacy, inspiration, endorsement and encouragement of various local social ministries, beginning with New York City, as well as foreign

social ministries -- rescue mission work for alcoholic men and "fallen" women, work in hospitals and prisons, orphanages, rest homes for faith and physical healing, feeding and clothing the poor and needy, medical clinics, industrial training classes, unemployment programs, famine relief, assistance to immigrants, the temperance union, and general and Bible education.<sup>(105)</sup> He was concerned for "the oppression of the poor" as seen in the

sweat shops of our manufacturing cities ... women and children ... toiling for a pittance in suffocating workrooms with long hours of half-remunerated toil ... struggling girls that have been told ... that they cannot expect to earn a living by honest toil, but must also expect to sell themselves as well.<sup>(106)</sup>

Simpson spoke out against economic injustices that the working man faced and attacked "modern business methods ... [of] hoarding, having and holding, immense wealth, luxury, and the oppression of the working people."<sup>(107)</sup> He preached that mutual responsibility was an essential element of human society. In reference to being our brother's keeper, he said,

It means most obviously that we should keep from doing our brother any harm, either in his material, physical, social or spiritual interests.... [and that] we should do good to our brother as we have opportunity. It is not enough to avoid injuring another, but God is constantly giving us opportunities for helping and benefiting one another.<sup>(108)</sup>

The aspiration for Simpson was to meet people's temporal needs with the hope that Christ could be shared with each person who was helped. Food given in the name of Christ and acts of kindness were done, "so that they might see Christ and His love in the act and be drawn to the gospel of Christ for salvation from sin."<sup>(109)</sup>

It would be difficult to argue that Simpson had a well-developed strategy for social change except for the phenomena of redemption and lift, that is, the social and economic improvement of people which frequently follows their spiritual transformation as they pattern their lives after biblical truths. He believed simply that society would be transformed and nations would be influenced when individuals were changed beginning with conversion to Christ. Simpson's priority was evangelism resulting in personal salvation. While believing that Christ is the only true remedy for humanity's problems, he also affirmed that a lack of social concern was a distortion of true Christianity. He created an environment in his movement where social concern and enterprises of many kinds in many places thrived. For Simpson, the centre from which all spiritual, physical, material and social ministries to the neglected classes revolved in motivation, passion and direction was Christ Jesus.

## 5. EVANGELICAL STREAM

An obvious stream from which Simpson drew his spiritual sustenance was evangelicalism. Though experience and Scripture are highly interrelated, Simpson endeavored to rely fully on the Bible as his ultimate religious authority. Before he experienced Christ as Sanctifier and as Healer, he searched the Scriptures to verify that the Word of God indeed taught these doctrines. As others in his era, his approach to the Scriptures was restorationist: "the impulse to restore the primitive or original order of things as revealed in Scripture, free from the accretions of church history and tradition."<sup>(110)</sup> The essential aspects of the New Testament church which he discerned as being restored in his generation were the lost truths of deeper spiritual life and divine healing. These truths were always in the Bible, somehow forgotten by most, yet always practiced by some throughout church history, which needed to be searched out in the Scriptures in order to be recovered to their original splendor. Simpson had a high

view of Scripture as the inspired Word of God. Coming out of his strong Presbyterian upbringing and training at Knox College in Toronto, graduating with high honours in 1865, he read the Bible consistently, studied it thoroughly, taught it totally, wrote about it extensively, and preached it fervently.

In his teaching and preaching of the Scriptures, Simpson focused squarely on Christ's redeeming work as the heart of essential Christianity. He understood salvation as the work of God apart from any human effort, and the basis of God's offer of salvation to fallen humanity provided through the death, resurrection and ascension of Christ. The finished work of Christ on the cross was the ground for salvation. Moreover, as an evangelical he stressed conversion through the new birth and had a passion to evangelize those lost apart from Christ. He perceived the genius of his movement as "an alliance of Christians for world wide missionary work."<sup>(111)</sup> This missionary movement was born simply out of Simpson's heart for God and for an entire world of people whom God loved. His activism of evangelistic and missionary zeal was the fruition and expression of his energetic approach to religious duties and contemplative practices. Communing in intimate fellowship with Christ as Saviour, living in mystical union with Christ as Sanctifier, dwelling in the resurrection fullness of Christ as Healer, and anticipating the blessed hope of Christ as Coming King in order to lead others passionately, and indeed, a whole world, into these same experiences of Christ in them, the hope of glory, was Simpson's central life passion.

## **C. SIMPSON'S CHRIST-CENTERED SPIRITUALITY**

### **1. SIMPSON'S UNMISTAKABLE CENTRE**

The genius of A. B. Simpson was to capture and contextualize broader streams of biblical and classical spirituality, synthesize them within his contemporary historical context, and cultivate his own integrated spirituality on a higher and deeper centre of Jesus Christ. He differentiated the interior life between an ordinary Christian life and what he called a Christ life:

Christian life may be nothing more than the acceptance of certain ideas and principles and the observance of certain forms and rites. Christ life is a vital and divine experience through the union of the soul with the living Christ Himself. Christian life may be an honest attempt to imitate Christ and follow His teachings and commandments, but Christ life is the incarnation of Jesus Himself in your own life. It is the Christ reliving His life in you and enabling you to be and to do what, in your own strength, you never could accomplish.... He is the Heart as well as the Head of Christianity.<sup>(112)</sup>

"Jesus Only" was a hymn Simpson wrote which well summarizes his Christ-centered spirituality.

Jesus only is our Message,  
Jesus all our theme shall be;  
We will lift up Jesus ever,  
Jesus only will we see.

Jesus only is our Saviour,  
All our guilt He bore away,  
All our righteousness, He gives us,  
All our strength from day to day.

Jesus is our Sanctifier,  
Cleansing us from self and sin,  
And with all His Spirit's fulness

Filling all our hearts within.

Jesus only is our Healer,  
All our sicknesses He bare,  
And His risen life and fulness  
All His members still may share.

Jesus only is our Power,  
His the gifts of Pentecost;  
Jesus, breath Thy power upon us,  
Fill us with the Holy Ghost.<sup>(113)</sup>

Simpson's Fourfold Gospel centering on Christ was the doctrinal heart and distinguishing mark of the *Christian and Missionary Alliance*. The spiritual centre was ultimately not a "why" for salvation, not a "how" for sanctification, not a "what" for healing, not a "when" for the second coming, but was and is a person, a living, divine person.<sup>(114)</sup> A later Alliance president, Dr. Louis L. King, underlined how Simpson's spirituality influenced the entire movement:

The genius of the Alliance is *Himself*. We organize around Him. Our attachment to Him is the bond that holds us together and determines our relationship to each other. Our message to the world is "Jesus only." Our mission is to make Him known in His fulness everywhere.<sup>(115)</sup>

Simpson stated the prime directive of his "Christ movement:"

Let us never forget the special calling of our Alliance work. It is not to form a new religious denomination. It is not to duplicate a work already done. It is not to advocate any special system of theology. It is not to glorify any man or men. It is to hold up Jesus in His fullness, "the same yesterday, today, and forever." Next, to lead God's hungry children to know their full inheritance of privilege and blessing for spirit, soul, and body. Next, to witness to the imminent coming of the Lord Jesus Christ as our millennial King. And finally to encourage and incite the people of God to do the neglected work of our age and time among the unchurched classes at home and the perishing heathen abroad.<sup>(116)</sup>

Simpson's spirituality and theology grew directly out of his personal experiences with God as a point of departure. He experienced a conversion by believing in Jesus as his Saviour in 1858 and became a pastor and evangelist to preach the gospel. He experienced a crisis of a full surrender and was filled with the Holy Spirit in 1874 and promoted deeper life in Christ. He experienced a miraculous physical healing of chronic heart disorders in 1881 and advocated church ministers and elders to practice anointing with oil and prayer for the sick and that every child of God could claim this blessing for personal needs. He experienced a dream concerning the needs of the Chinese people in 1876 and sent out hundreds as missionaries globally in order to bring back the king. In all these expressions of primary spiritual experience, Jesus Christ was his unmistakable centre from which all things evolved and the axis from which all things revolved.

## 2. INTEGRATED SPIRITUALITY WITH CHRIST AS THE CENTRE

The integrated spirituality of Albert B. Simpson emerged from a particular theological, historical, social context and setting. Theologically, Simpson's Fourfold Gospel grew out of theological problems in

nineteenth century North America. Historically, he was responding to contemporary emerging movements with Protestantism. Sociologically, the *Christian and Missionary Alliance* developed a belief system based on the Bible that was interpreted by Simpson and reinforced by his own group. Anthropologically, and most significantly, the synthesis of Simpson's pastoral theology emerged out of his own personal experience.

Simpson also captured and contextualized five broader streams of biblical and classical spirituality in a contemporary way for his generation. The Fourfold Gospel was dynamic -- Jesus Christ as Saviour, Sanctifier, Healer and Coming King. The first Alliance president to follow Simpson, Dr. George Pardington, wrote: "From the beginning it has been the spirit of our movement not so much to preach doctrine as to preach Christ."<sup>(117)</sup> The centrality was on Christ. The need today is to recast and recontextualize the genius of early Alliance spirituality for our contemporary generation and into the twenty-first century. What could characterize such a spirituality?

If the core of the Alliance is an integrated spirituality with Christ as the centre expressed essentially in deeper life and global evangelization, could we not also address emerging currents in spirituality without abandoning our centre or core values?

### 3. ASSIMILATING CURRENT APPROACHES IN SPIRITUALITY

In light of these conclusions, how can the Alliance assimilate current approaches in spirituality? It is important for the Alliance to reposition ourselves with an authentic, balanced *social spirituality* and theology for the twenty-first century. Dorothy Day was able to bring her social consciousness into a Christian context.<sup>(118)</sup> Can we integrate biblical, social ministry in keeping with our heritage and without losing our focus?

For the past several decades we have been unable to resolve the *women in ministry* debate within the Alliance. Simpson pragmatically used women and men for global impact. Feminist spirituality is critical of the experience of inequality and oppression because one is a woman. The horizon is complex and diverse. But if we know our centre and affirm our core values, which this paper has proposed, can we stay on track as we wend our way forward to clarify a biblical role of women in the contemporary church?

A *spirituality of liberation* deals with the oppression of the poor -- men, women and children. It is concerned "for the human struggle for freedom and liberation from all that blocks the fullness of human flourishing as the very work of the Holy Spirit who empowers believers to live and do the truth in love freely."<sup>(119)</sup> Is it not right for a Christian movement to relate evangelism and social responsibility, to speak out for God against injustice, oppression, poverty, exploitation and alienation, and to bring about social, economic and political structural change even as the prophets?

It is the *marginalized*, the last and the least, the voiceless and forgotten, of whom the Scriptures are replete with examples of God's liberating and empowering activity and those of whom are often the most receptive to God today. Jean Vanier and his l'Arche communities are "founded upon the belief in the uniqueness and sacredness of each person, whether handicapped or not."<sup>(120)</sup> Why not, then, express solidarity with the poor in their struggle with oppression and pursuit of justice, showing care to the needy in their material and spiritual needs, being attentive to the marginalized in their needs of community and society, not just their individual demands for rights and liberties?

Some evangelicals today are also developing an *ecological consciousness* toward the importance of environment, the interconnectedness between humanity and all creation. All life is a gift of God, and

"consequently, all creation is to be accepted, affirmed, nurtured, and brought to fulfillment."<sup>(121)</sup> Will this be an unfortunate area of neglect, left for others while we do only what we perceive as the important, or will we be able to see as God sees? If we do hold a restorationist view of church history to any degree, then could this not be a present truth for us to acknowledge and recover?

In the midst of *cultural pluralism*, how will we maintain the uniqueness of Jesus Christ? This issue will only increase in the future and will influence our spirituality. These are some of today's concerns that inform our spirituality. If we use the same paradigm Simpson used, synthesizing current trends in spirituality and theology into practical life and ministry, why not also give attentiveness to fully listen to these current approaches in spirituality and incorporate them into an emerging Alliance? We need not fear. We need not bury our head in the sand of the past. We need not fret that we will somehow lose our essential identity and calling, especially if we know first what it is. If we continue to follow in the footsteps of our founder, Dr. Albert B. Simpson, then we will capture the heart of movements of God contemporary in our day, consolidate them into our experience, articulate them in a cohesive manner, and express them in effective ministry, all around the centre of Jesus Christ.

## CONCLUSION

Albert Simpson's encountered Christ in formative spiritual experiences within a particular historical, cultural context. Contemporary movements of God converged in Simpson's experience which he synthesized and articulated as his Fourfold Gospel message. He further enhanced his life and ministry from broader streams of spirituality. The spirituality of A. B. Simpson could be interpreted historically and recontextualized today as an integrated spirituality with Christ as the centre.

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## ENDNOTES

1. Annice Callahan, ed., Spiritualities of the Heart: Approaches to Personal Wholeness in Christian Tradition (=SH) (New York: Paulist Press, 1990), 1.

2. Karl Rahner proposed a "point of departure" which was still rooted solidly in the personal experience of God's self-communication. His theology emphasized "a mystical moment: the *experience* of the lived, root unity of self-possessing knowledge and love penetrated by God's Self-communication." Harvey Egan, "The Devout Christian of the Future Will ... be a 'Mystic'. Mysticism and Karl Rahner's Theology," (=KRT) in Theology and Discovery: Essays in Honor of Karl Rahner, S.J. ed. William J. Kelly (Milwaukee, Wisconsin: Marquette University Press, 1980), 141-142. (Author's italics.)

3. Michael Downey, Understanding Christian Spirituality (=UCS) (New York: Paulist Press, 1997), 125.

4. Martin Luther is a splendid example of someone who was carefully studying the Scriptures, particularly the Epistle to the Romans, and had what is called his "Tower Experience," that God justifies sinners through God's grace and sheer mercy, which completely changed his theology, life and ministry. "For Luther, this biblical understanding was like a new birth -- a dramatic experience of God in Christ that led him to see the Bible and everything else in a new light." Michael Downey, ed., The New

Dictionary of Catholic Spirituality (=NDCS) (Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1993), s.v. "Protestant Spiritualities," by Tiina Allik, 785. Theology is impacted by and interconnected with experience. A mind inflamed for the Word of God is met with a passionate heart of encounter with God. The inflamed heart then pursues a matching, passionate, living theology. This is an important part of Luther's legacy of spirituality. According to George Gallup, one out of three Americans claim to have had "a moment of religious insight or awakening that changed the direction of their lives." Gallup calls these God-encounters "one of the most significant survey results ever uncovered." Quoted in Chuck Smith, Jr., "What to Make of Mystic Moments," Leadership (Summer 1991): 34-39. Swiss theologian Emil Brunner (1889-1966) proposed a theology of encounter -- a personal meeting or experience with God. "To know God in trustful obedience is not only to know the truth, but through God's self-communication to be in it, in the truth that as love is at the same time fellowship." Brunner pointed out that God's revelation to humans is not primarily a doctrine but an act. He stated that revelation is a "personal correspondence" between God and humanity. "God does not reveal this or that -- he reveals himself by communicating himself." I. John Hesselink, "Emil Brunner: A Centennial Perspective," Christian Century (December 13, 1989): 1171-1174.

5. UCS 23-25.

6. UCS 91. (Author's italics.)

7. NDCS, s.v. "Experience," by Tad Dunne, 368. Dunne adds: "Experience is a test of truth; it is a ground of true authority; and it is ambiguous without the further experiences of faith, charity, and hope." NDCS 375.

8. UCS 72.

9. UCS 64, 69.

10. Evelyn Underhill, Mystics of the Church (Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: Morehouse Publishing, 1988), 17. In this paper, I am following the various authors' use of gender and their masculine metaphors for God.

11. A. E. Thompson, A. B. Simpson: His Life and Work, Revised Edition (=SLW) (Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: Christian Publications, Inc., 1960), ix-x. Also see 64.

12. A brief theological introduction to the Fourfold Gospel is found within the current *C & MA Statement of Faith*. For the doctrine of **salvation**: "6. Salvation has been provided through Jesus Christ for all men; those who repent and believe in Him are born again of the Holy Spirit, receive the gift of eternal life, and become the children of God." Supporting Scriptures are: Titus 3:5-7; Acts 2:38; and John 1:12. For the doctrine of **sanctification**: "7. It is the will of God that each believer should be filled with the Holy Spirit and be sanctified wholly, thereby being separated from sin and the world and fully dedicated to the will of God, receiving power for holy living and effective service. This is both a crisis and a progressive experience wrought in the life of the believer subsequent to conversion." Supporting Scriptures are: 1 Thessalonians 5:23; Acts 1:8; Romans 12:1-2; and Galatians 5:16-25. For the doctrine of **healing**: "8. Provision is made in the redemptive work of the Lord Jesus Christ for the healing of the mortal body. Prayer for the sick and anointing with oil as taught in the Scripture are privileges for the Church in this present age." Supporting Scriptures are: Matthew 8:16-17; and James 5:14-16. For the doctrine of the **second coming**: "11. The second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ is imminent and will be personal, visible, and premillennial. As the believer's blessed hope, this vital truth is an incentive to holy living and faithful service." Supporting Scriptures are: 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17; Acts 1:7-11; 1

Corinthians 1:7; and Titus 2:11-14. To say that Jesus Christ is Saviour, Sanctifier, Healer and Coming King is to say that Jesus Christ is the centre of lived truth and an encounter with these central truths is a living encounter with Jesus Christ. Any authentic study of Alliance spirituality must revolve around the Fourfold Gospel.

13. Robert L. Niklaus, John S. Sawin and Samuel J. Stoesz, All For Jesus: God at Work in the Christian and Missionary Alliance Over One Hundred Years (=AFJ) (Camp Hill, Pennsylvania: Christian Publications, 1986), 23.

14. SLW 16-17. Augustine's conversion experience also took place through a chance reading. Augustine, Confessions, trans. Henry Chadwick (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 152-153.

15. SLW 1-23; AFJ 18-24; and A. W. Tozer, Wingspread: Albert B. Simpson -- A Study in Spiritual Altitude (=W) (Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: Christian Publications, Inc., 1943), 11-29.

16. Clyde McLean Glass, "Mysticism and Contemplation in the Life and Teaching of Albert Benjamin Simpson" (= "MC") (Ph.D. diss., Marquette University, 1997), 70.

17. "MC" 69-70; and W 46-49.

18. SLW 130-131.

19. A. B. Simpson, The Christ Life (=CL) (Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: Christian Publications, Inc., 1980), 22-23.

20. A. B. Simpson, The Epistles to the Philippians and Colossians (Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: Christian Publications, n. d.), 98; quoted in "MC" 137.

21. CL 23.

22. For representative Scripture references of this double union, see John 14:20; and 15:5.

23. See "3. In Christ," CL 28-32. For representative Scripture references of the believer being "in Christ," see Romans 8:1; 2 Corinthians 5:17; 12:2; and Ephesians 1:7.

24. A. B. Simpson, The Gospel of John (=GJ) (Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: Christian Publications, n. d.), 300.

25. See "4. Christ in Us," CL 33-39. For representative Scripture references of "Christ in the believer," see John 6:56; 17:23, 26; Galatians 2:20; 4:19; Colossians 1:27; and Revelation 3:20.

26. GJ 301.

27. "MC" 139.

28. See GJ 225-228.

29. W 79. (Author's italics.)

30. CL 9-10; also see SLW 65-66.

31. A. B. Simpson, The Fulness of Jesus (New York: The Christian Alliance Publishing Co., 1890), 66; quoted in AFJ 8.
32. SLW 63-71; AFJ 4-16; and W 43-59.
33. Samuel J. Stoesz, Understanding My Church (Camp Hill, Pennsylvania: Christian Publications, 1983), 89-98.
34. CL 23-24.
35. The nineteenth century holiness movement divided into two major camps. The Wesleyan position emphasized *eradication* of sin and advocated a *crisis* sanctification which for some was an entire sanctification. The Calvinist position emphasized *suppression* of sin and advocated *progressive* sanctification. The unfortunate focus for both models became sin rather than Christ. The *C & MA Statement of Faith*, Article 7, advocates sanctification as both a crisis *and* a progressive experience.
36. A. B. Simpson, Correspondence Bible School: Deeper Truth and Life, second year, no. 1 (n. p., n. d.), 4; quoted in "MC" 89.
37. SLW 67.
38. A. B. Simpson, A Larger Christian Life (=LCL) (Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: Christian Publications, Inc., n. d.), 5-6. The concept of a second conversion is understood as "primarily an affective conversion involving feelings, emotions, and a change of heart" which follows an "initial conversion experience [as] a call to a radical turning toward a new way of living and being." Paul V. Robb, "Conversion as a Human Experience," Studies in the Spirituality of Jesuits 14/3 (1982): 7, 5. Teresa of Avila would provide an excellent example of a woman already serving as a Carmelite religious and then experiencing a second conversion when she saw an image of the wounded Christ. Teresa of Avila, The Book of Her Life, Volume 1, trans. Kieran Kavanaugh and Otilio Rodriguez (Washington, D.C.: Institute of Carmelite Studies, 1976), 100-101; and Margaret Brennan, "Teresa of Avila: "...Undaunted Daughter of Desire," in SH 117. Some Protestants may struggle with the semantics of a "second conversion."
39. This threefold emphasis of sanctification on separation, dedication and infilling is elaborated on in A. B. Simpson, Wholly Sanctified (Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: Christian Publications, 1925), 12-24. It is also articulated in The C & MA Statement of Faith, Article 7: "It is the will of God that each believer should be filled with the Holy Spirit and be sanctified wholly, thereby being separated from sin and the world and fully dedicated to the will of God, receiving power for holy living and effective service. This is both a crisis and a progressive experience wrought in the life of the believer subsequent to conversion." For supporting Scripture references, see 1 Thessalonians 5:23; Acts 1:8; and Romans 12:1-2.
40. LCL 138.
41. For elaboration on reckoning, surrendering and abiding, see "MC" 150-156, 259.
42. "MC" 140-156.
43. "The Gift of Tongues: Seek Not Forbid Not: A Critique of the Revived Tongues Movement" (Nyack, New York: The Christian and Missionary Alliance, n. d.), 4.

44. AFJ 114.

45. AFJ 115.

46. AFJ 115.

47. "MC" 146.

48. SLW 75-76. (Author's numbering and italics.)

49. SLW 72-81; AFJ 32, 55-57; and W 75-83.

50. "MC" 80.

51. Stanley M. Burgess and Gary G. McGee, ed., Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements (=DPCM) (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1988), s.v. "Healing Movements," by Paul G. Chappell, 357.

52. DPCM 357.

53. A. B. Simpson, The Gospel of Healing, Revised Edition (=GH) (Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: Christian Publications, Inc., 1915), 6. Once when challenged to pursue exclusively a healing ministry, Simpson said, "I have four wheels on my chariot. I cannot agree to neglect the other three while I devote all my time to the one." W 134-135. For Simpson, the primary parts of the gospel to be emphasized are salvation and sanctification. GH 182. The Gospel of Healing contains a full forty percent discussing the scriptural texts that testify of God's healing work through both Old and New Testaments. For representative Scripture references on healing, see Exodus 15:25-26; Psalm 103:2-5; Isaiah 53:4-5; Matthew 8:16-17; Romans 8:11; 1 Corinthians 6:12-14; James 5:13-16; and 1 Peter 2:24. In the formative years of the Alliance, literally thousands of people were healed of life-threatening and incapacitating sicknesses in answer to prayer. Simpson further believed that the gospel of healing was linked to global evangelization, given by God as a testimony to the nations as a sign to point people to Christ.

54. CL 24.

55. Drake W. Travis, Christ Our Healer Today: The Ministry of Healing in the Christian and Missionary Alliance (Camp Hill, Pennsylvania: Christian Publications, Inc., 1996), 122-123. Again, Simpson's focus was upon Christ to whom nothing is impossible, not upon sin nor Satan as the cause of sickness, although these could be among the sources of an affliction.

56. GH 170.

57. Simpson explained that divine healing is not: *medical healing*, *metaphysical healing* by mental force like Christian Science, *magnetic healing* like some energy current that flows from one body into another, *spiritualism* by calling on any spirit other than Jesus Christ, *prayer cure* as if the power of prayer itself will effect healing, *faith cure* as if faith itself heals (like auto-suggestion?), *will power* to take hold of oneself and lift themselves up, *defiance of God's will* as if to say, "I will have this healing, whether God wills it or not!", *physical immortality*, or *mercenary healing* that seeks to adopt healing as a professional trade. A. B. Simpson, The Four-Fold Gospel (=FFG) (Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: Christian Publications, Inc., n. d.), 47-56. (Italics mine.)

58. It does seem that Simpson overemphasized his own healing experiences beyond the parameters of the Bible when he stated that, though it was not wrong to use doctors, for believers "there is a more excellent way." GH 68. He believed that healing was available for all of God's children and normative within a life of faith. His own religious experience influenced his theology. God apparently and uniquely healed *him* on every occasion of his own need, but the Bible does not state unequivocally, nor is it the experience of every believer, that God heals everyone all the time. The Alliance still practices physical healing, acknowledging that the kingdom of God has come and is not yet.

59. "MC" 161.

60. Gerald E. McGraw, "A. B. Simpson as a Missions Advocate: His Philosophy and Methodology," in Alliance Academic Review (=AAR95) (May 1995): 2; and W 12, 18.

61. W 62. Also see 63-64.

62. SLW 120.

63. SLW 120.

64. Simpson's missionary journal has gone through several developments and name changes: *The Gospel in All Lands* (1880-1881), *The Word, Work and the World* (1882-1887), *The Work and the World* (1882), *The Christian Alliance* (1888-1889), *The Christian Alliance and Missionary Weekly* (1889-1893), *The Christian Alliance and Foreign Missionary Weekly* (1894-1896), *The Christian and Missionary Alliance Weekly* (1897-1911), *Living Truths* (1902-1907), *The Alliance Weekly* (1911-1958), *The Alliance Witness* (1958-1987), and is now known as *Alliance Life*. His missionary training Bible college formerly known as the *New York Missionary Training Institute* is now *Nyack College*, a Christian liberal arts college.

65. "MC" 77.

66. SLW 118-127; AFJ 13-14; and W 60-69.

67. AFJ 14.

68. The Great Commission is found in all four Gospels and the book of Acts: Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16; Luke 24:46-48; John 20:21-23; and Acts 1:8.

69. "MC" 72-79.

70. SLW 178.

71. AAR95 5-6.

72. FFG 68-70. For representative Scripture references emphasizing future aspects of the gospel and being linked to the second coming of Christ, see 1 Peter 1:5 (salvation); 1 John 2:2-3 (sanctification); 2 Corinthians 5:5 (healing); and 1 Corinthians 15:1 f. (resurrection).

73. CL 24.

74. CL 24.

75. Franklin Arthur Pyles, "The Missionary Eschatology of A. B. Simpson," in The Birth of a Vision (=BV), eds. David F. Hartzfeld and Charles Nienkirchen (Beaverlodge, Alberta: Buena Book Services, 1986), 32.
76. Pyles, in BV 36.
77. AAR95 6-7.
78. "MC" 164-165.
79. DPCM, s.v. "Albert Benjamin Simpson," by Charles Nienkirchen, 786.
80. Rahner stated that "the devout Christian of the future will ... be a mystic,' one who has 'experienced' something." Karl Rahner, Theological Investigations 7, trans. David Bourke (New York: Herder and Herder, 1971), 15; quoted in KRT 139, 149.
81. "MC" 38. For other recent works that emphasize the mystical and contemplative aspects of Simpson, see Charles Nienkirchen, "'Deep Calleth Unto Deep': Stillness in Early Alliance Spirituality," His Dominion 14 (Regina, Saskatchewan: Canadian Theological Seminary, Summer 1988): 2-22; and Dwayne Ratzlaff, "An Old Mediaeval Message: A Turning Point in the Life of A. B. Simpson," in BV 165-194. A contemporary of Simpson, Benjamin Warfield (1851-1921) criticized him for his "extravagant mysticism," a reference to his holiness teaching in which sanctification was seen as a second work of grace and received by faith. Benjamin B. Warfield, Perfectionism vol. II (New York: Oxford University Press, 1932), 556, 569, 597-600; quoted in "MC" 10, 89-92.
82. See "MC" 122-123, 191-199, 423-427.
83. "MC" 30-31.
84. SLW 171-193. Thompson placed Simpson alongside these Christian mystics who had a knowledge of the mysteries of God: Augustine, Luther, Calvin, Knox, Wesley, Edwards, and Finney. SLW 173. A. W. Tozer also described Simpson as "a mystic" and having a "mystic temperament" characteristic of other "God-intoxicated ... dreamers and mystics of the Kingdom" like Thomas Upham, Brother Lawrence, Francis of Assisi, and Madame Jeanne Guyon. W 131, 73, 72. Also see 116.
85. SLW 184.
86. SLW 175.
87. SLW 177.
88. "MC" 22; and Karl Rahner and Herbert Vorgrimler, Theological Dictionary, trans. Richard Strachan (Montreal: Palm Publishers, 1965), s.v. "Christ-Mysticism," 77.
89. W 116.
90. SLW 174.
91. Ritamary Bradley provides a valuable summary of Christian mysticism which is reflected in Simpson: "The core of mysticism in the orthodox Christian tradition is a way of life. The authentic

mystic is purified, illuminated, and transformed as the God of love reveals himself in such a manner that the mystic is explicitly conscious of the way of life demanded by God's own self-communication. The goal of a mystic is conscious union with God. The fully matured contemplative is ultimately united with the source of Love in a profound union, in which, nonetheless, God remains God, and the creature remains a creature. Transformed by God's love and wisdom, the Christian mystic discerns more than ever before how the Christ-life affects every dimension of human activity -- not only of the individual but of the people of God." Ritamary Bradley, "8. Julian of Norwich: Writer and Mystic," in An Introduction to the Medieval Mystics of Europe, ed. Paul E. Szarmach (Albany, New York: State University of New York Press, 1984), 212.

92. SLW 185.

93. Bill Pitts, "12. Holiness as Spirituality: The Religious Quest of A. B. Simpson," in Modern Christian Spirituality: Methodological and Historical Essays, ed. Bradley C. Hanson (Atlanta, Georgia: Scholars Press, 1990), 237.

94. SLW 180.

95. A. B. Simpson, The Christian Alliance and Foreign Missions Weekly (October 2, 1895): 216; quoted in "MC" 92.

96. GH 55, 57.

97. Charles Nienkirchen, "A. B. Simpson: Forerunner and Critic of the Pentecostal Movement," in BV 125-164.

98. Charles W. Nienkirchen, "Simpson's Views on the Gifts of the Holy Spirit" and "Appendix B: Excerpts from Simpson's Presidential Report (1906-1907)," A. B. Simpson and the Pentecostal Movement: A Study in Continuity, Crisis, and Change (=S&PM) (Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishers, 1992), 65-68, 149-150. Sydney Ahlstrom characterized Simpson of having "a strong Pentecostal tendency." Sydney Ahlstrom, A Religious History of the American People (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1972), 812; quoted in "MC" 4.

99. Nienkirchen, in BV 130.

100. Believers are commanded to "eagerly desire" gifts in 1 Corinthians 12:31 and 14:1.

101. Apparently, Simpson's strong practical ministry to the poor began to fade during the later part of the first decade of the twentieth century. BV 40, 64-66. Was his movement overextended? Did the losses from Alliance circles that joined the emerging Pentecostal movement have its effect? Was he personally weary from overwork? Was his age catching up with him? Did his theology influence his practice? Was he distancing himself theologically from the social gospel movement?

102. A. B. Simpson, The Christian Alliance & Missionary Weekly (March 13, 1893): 165; quoted in John V. Dahms, "The Social Interest and Concern of A. B. Simpson," in BV 51.

103. W 89.

104. A. B. Simpson, The Fullness of Jesus (New York: The Christian Alliance Publishing Co., 1886), 25; quoted in Dahms, in BV 50.

105. Dahms, in BV 49-74; and W 92-93.
106. A. B. Simpson, Practical Christianity (New York: Christian Alliance Publishing Co., 1901), 135-136; quoted in Dahms, in BV 63.
107. A. B. Simpson, "The Practical Hope of the Lord's Coming," The Christian and Missionary Alliance 34, no. 19 (August 6, 1910): 305; quoted in Pyles, in BV 39.
108. A. B. Simpson, "Mutual Responsibility," The Christian Alliance (August 1894): 148-149; quoted in Daniel J. Evaritt, "The Social Gospel vs. Personal Salvation: A Late Nineteenth-Century Case Study -- Walter Rauschenbusch and A. B. Simpson," in Alliance Academic Review (=AAR97) (1997): 11.
109. Evaritt, in BV 12.
110. Daniel G. Reid, ed., Dictionary of Christianity in America (Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 1990), s.v. "Primitivism," by the Editors, 940. Also see S&PM 52-58.
111. W 101.
112. CL 20, 22.
113. A. B. Simpson, Songs of the Spirit: Hitherto Unpublished Poems and a Few Old Favorites (Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: Christian Publications, Inc., n. d.), 36. The phrase "Jesus only" was not intended as a de-emphasis on the Trinity, nor a modalistic view of God as with Oneness Pentecostalism or United Pentecostalism. Augustine would be a good example of someone who exemplified a Trinitarian spirituality. See Mary T. Clark, "Augustine: The Eye of the Heart," in SH 23-32. Ignatius embodied both a Trinitarian and Christocentric spirituality. See Harvey Egan, "Ignatius of Loyola: Mystic at the Heart of the Trinity, Mystic at the Heart of Jesus Christ," in SH 97-113.
114. David Schroeder, "Asking the Right Questions," Alliance Life (July 13, 1994): 6-9. Simpson proclaimed, "I thank God it is not the blessing, not the healing, not the sanctification, not the *thing* or the *it* that we want, but *Someone* far better. We want Christ, Christ *Himself*.... Christ in you -- this is the great secret. And I share it with you, if you will take it from God." Keith M. Bailey, ed., The Best of A. B. Simpson (Camp Hill, Pennsylvania: Christian Publications, 1987), 5, 11. (Author's italics.)
115. Louis L. King, He Has It All Together: A Perspective on the Christian and Missionary Alliance (Nyack, New York: The Christian and Missionary Alliance, 1982), 6. (Author's italics.)
116. A. B. Simpson, Alliance Weekly (November 11, 1899): 173; quoted in "MC" 133. Simpson had written ten years earlier: "The great movement of today, the greatest movement of the Church's history is a *Christ movement*; a revealing in our day, with a definiteness never before so real, of the person of the living Christ as the center of our spiritual life, the source of our sanctification, the fountain of our physical life and healing, the Prince-Leader of our work, and the glorious coming King." SLW 153. (Author's italics.)
117. George P. Pardington, The Crisis of the Deeper Life (Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: Christian Publications, Inc., n. d.), 20.
118. Dorothy Day, The Long Loneliness: An Autobiography (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1981), 113-166.

119. UCS 134.

120. Michael Downey, "Region of Wound and Wisdom: The Heart in the Spirituality of Jean Vanier and l'Arche," in SH 187-188. Also see Jean Vanier, "Part 3. Restoring the Broken Body to Wholeness," The Broken Body (Toronto: Anglican Book Centre, 1988), 70-145.

121. UCS 135.

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