The mystical theology of Jessie Penn-Lewis (1861-1927)

Haddad, M.R.

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I am the grateful recipient of the sacrificial and loving support of many. First I want to thank my supervisor, Professor Ann Loades, whose critical analysis, encouragement, and understanding of theology opened sky above my head and a universe within my heart. I wish to also thank Margaret Parkinson whose smile, wisdom and practical assistance made this journey so very pleasant.

The idea to write on the life and feminism of Jessie Penn-Lewis was inspired by Professor Richard Lovelace, a creative feminist and a profound Church Historian.

The search for primary documents was made fruitful thanks to the gracious service of many, including the Wheaton College Archives, the British Christian Literature Crusade, Biola University, Fuller Theological Seminary, Asbury Theological Seminary, Moody Bible Institute, and Michael Metcalfe, whose father (J.C. Metcalfe) worked beside Penn-Lewis in the Overcomer Crusade. Metcalfe allowed me to search the remains of the Overcomer Book Room, and I am indeed grateful. Thanks go also to the Donald Gee Center for Pentecostal Studies at Mattersey Hall, Doncaster. Special thanks are due to two individuals whose selflessness I will always treasure. First let me thank Dr. Keiichi Hirano, a Japanese scholar whom I met at the Wheaton University library. Dr. Hirano traveled a great distance to spend one precious day at the Wheaton Archives. Arriving one hour earlier than I, Keiichi surrounded himself with every Penn-Lewis document the library held. When I arrived and was told the documents had been checked out for the day, my spirits sank until I realized the man at the table next to me was reading every document I required. The meeting proved providential. Upon returning to Japan, Keiichi sent me documents unavailable in the US. The momentary inconvenience proved the beginnings of a rich exchange. Second, I wish to thank the late Brynmor Pierce Jones and his wife who welcomed me to their home in Wales where I consumed Penn-Lewis’s diary.
and letters Brynmor had collected over the years. I will always be grateful for his wise advice, and their gracious hospitality.

I wish to thank my family and friends whose love and prayers kept my fingers going late into the night. You permitted me to disappear from your lives for months on end without resentment. Thank you Mom, Dad, Pam, Baba, Julie, Danny, Gabby, Jeremy, Daniel and Xander. Gratitude is due also to the staff and Board of Directors of Christians for Biblical Equality, for providing me with regular sabbatical leave, so I might fulfill this dream.

Many have said that completing a thesis is often lonely and joyless. I confess to an experience quite the opposite. The more I read the greater was my delight. Had it not been for Professor Ann Loades who prodded me to completion, I might still be reading and rewriting to this day. As one said of Penn-Lewis: “It is difficult to explain the influence of your teaching has on my mind, but somehow it is teaching that teaches, and I find that few do that now.”

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ABSTRACT

M. R. Haddad

The Mystical Theology of Jessie Penn-Lewis (1861-1927)
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This thesis examines the life and mystical theology of Jessie Penn-Lewis (1861-1927). While Penn-Lewis has been the subject of historical research, particularly by scholars of the evangelical movement of the late 19th century, yet her theology has not received adequate assessment from the academic community. Therefore, this thesis undertakes an analysis of the mystical theology of Jessie Penn-Lewis whereby I demonstrate that Penn-Lewis was part of the classical mystical tradition, over and against the Quietism operative within the Keswick Conventions of her day. Following a brief summary of her life, international ministry, and mystical writings, I show that Penn-Lewis’s mystical path engaged suffering in the soul’s ascent to union with the Divine and this separated her from the Quietists who insisted upon the one-act of passivity in reaching the highest mystical states. I trace the Quietism within the early Keswick Conventions to a mishandling of the Prayer of Simple Regard by Quietists such as Madame Guyon and Thomas Upham. Upham’s reshaping of Guyon’s Quietism was readily assimilated by leaders within the early Keswick Conventions, excluding Mrs. Jessie Penn-Lewis who could not tolerate the passivity and absorption of the will demanded by Quietism. Penn-Lewis’s mystical theology, also called Cross Theology, was nurtured by the Romantic mood of the day, and was thus rooted in personal religious experiences, including the experience of suffering. In this way Cross Theology combines the apophatic tradition of Bonaventure with an experience of suffering, in the soul’s ascent, such that Cross Theology opposes the shallow mysticism of Keswick’s Quietists who rejected effort and suffering in the path toward the unitive state. Penn-Lewis’s mysticism also advances an egalitarian theology that challenged leaders within the Keswick Movement to consider the social ramifications of women’s union with Christ. According to Penn-Lewis, women
who are united with Christ bear the fruits and responsibilities of the highest mystical state, just as men. Cross Theology therefore had social consequences manifest in women’s equal service beside men in Christian work. Penn-Lewis’s mysticism was central to her ministry, her interpretation of scripture and her activism on behalf of women. Thus, Penn-Lewis was a Protestant mystic whose mysticism gave shape to an egalitarian agenda that challenged the gender bias of the Church at the turn of the century.
The Mystical Theology of
Jessie Penn-Lewis (1861 - 1927)

M.R. Haddad
09 JUN 2006

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2005
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PREFACE

It is to me a source of consternation that the evaluation of Jessie Penn-Lewis has been limited to two biographies, *Mrs. Penn-Lewis: A Memoir*, by Mary N. Gerrard (1930), and *The Trials and Triumphs of Jessie Penn-Lewis*, by B. Pierce Jones (1997). Even more disturbing is that neither Gerrard nor Pierce Jones attempt an assessment of Penn-Lewis’ theological work. While scholars have assessed the contributions of her many male colleagues, Penn-Lewis’s own theological accomplishments have been largely overlooked.

Perhaps the neglect of Penn-Lewis stems from what has commonly called the bias of history, i.e. that men, rather than women, are worthy of research. One may easily locate materials on revivalists such as Evan Roberts, F.B. Meyers, or Evan Hopkins, while Jessie Penn-Lewis’s achievements were as influential and prolific as the men with whom she worked.

Troubled by the gender bias I observed within the Church, the theological contributions of women became a keen interest to me as a young woman. Each time I discovered a woman leader in Church history, or a book on feminist theology, I was greatly encouraged. You can imagine my delight when I discovered a dozen books by Jessie Penn-Lewis—a proponent of gender equality at the turn of the turn of the last century. I was furthered intrigued to learn that Penn-Lewis was not only at the fore of the Keswick revivals, but she was also ardently opposed to the gender bias that she believed had stymied the Church throughout history. Moreover, Penn-Lewis advanced a mystical

theology that had transformed her frail and diseased body, and emboldened her international ministry, and was the impetus to great spiritual effectiveness.

Equality, an ideal furthered by the Enlightenment, was advanced within the early Keswick Conventions where women as well as men were encouraged to enter the highest mystical states. Adapting the Prayer of Simple Regard from the Quietists, Keswick suggested that sanctification could be accomplished through a mystical experience, which offered immediate release from all human weakness and sin. This was particular good news for women, whose spiritual infirmity was indivisible from the failings of Eve.

Women's participation in revival work had been, until the advent of Mrs. Penn-Lewis, limited to women's ministry. It was Jessie Penn-Lewis who provided the leadership as well as the theological support that advanced equality for women within the Keswick Conventions and beyond. She argued that in union with Christ, all weakness is transformed into strength, and this was particularly good news for women whose spiritual inferiority had been assumed. As a movement within the spectrum of Romanticism, Keswick welcomed the contributions of mystics, and thus Penn-Lewis's mystical theology received a broad hearing within Keswick circles around the world.

Penn-Lewis's life and work also addressed a modern dilemma I have noticed in the United States. A growing number of North Americans have expressed an interest in Church revival and renewal. Admitting a sense of spiritual ineffectiveness, many Christians, lay and clergy alike, have organized themselves by denomination (e.g. Presbyterians for Renewal and the Vineyard Christian Fellowship), and across denominational lines, (e.g. The Concerts of Prayer) calling on the Holy Spirit to quicken personal and corporate ministry.

These groups pray for an out-pouring of the Holy Spirit with an unspoken proviso—that God should honor their gender bias. God may pour out the Holy Spirit, but for many it is men alone who may exhibit the Spirit's empowering. Those familiar with women's contribution throughout church history, particularly noted within the revival narrative, argue that history is replete with examples of Joel's prophecy fulfilled—"Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy." (Joel 2:28).

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Jessie Penn-Lewis, however, did notice that the pouring out of God’s Spirit since Pentecost has engaged women’s preaching and leadership. Commenting on texts such as Psalm 65:11-12 and Joel’s prophecy, Penn-Lewis wrote:

The Spirit of God has never been poured forth in any company, in any part of the world, in any nation, without the Handmaidens prophesying, and this as the spontaneous and unvarying result of the Spirit of God moving upon women as well as men, as at Pentecost.4

Ultimately, Penn-Lewis’s feminism was guided by her mystical theology, aptly called Cross Theology. According to Cross Theology, mystical death with Christ infused men and women alike with inordinate power. Drawing upon Scriptures such as Romans 6:6,5 and Galatians 2:19b,6 Penn-Lewis suggested that to die mystically with Christ initiated the unitive state, whereby souls are not only freed from sin, but are also endowed with power for extraordinary ministry. Cross Theology was therefore the portal to the victorious life in the Spirit, where unity among believers was fully realized, and the failings of Eve overcome.

Penn-Lewis therefore represents a furthering of the liberation of women in ministry, as seen in her international ministry; her writings; her leadership within the Keswick Conventions; her feminism; and her mystical theology. By documenting the theological contributions of Penn-Lewis, I hope to redress the bias of history, while offering a theological critique of the early Keswick movement, the mysticism of Jessie Penn-Lewis and her advancement of women’s public ministry.

5 “We know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be destroyed, and we might no longer be enslaved to sin.” Romans 6:6.
6 “I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me.” Galatians 2:19b.
Chapter One

Setting the Scene

“From the point of Eternity, in whose light they lived, they attacked the sins of their generation.”

I. Christian Mysticism: A Brief History

In order to introduce the mystical theology of a late 19th century Protestant, it seems crucial to provide a brief historical overview of Christian mysticism whereby to explore the contributions of Jessie Penn-Lewis’s mystical theology. In a further section, I will offer a further historical assessment of Christian mysticism, but for our current purposes, the brief history that follows will provide a response to the following questions: What is Christian mysticism and how has it developed? Has mysticism been distilled into stages? What have Christian mystics shared over the centuries, and how does Jessie Penn-Lewis’s life and work relate to the longstanding or classical, mystical tradition within the Church?

Greek culture and philosophy contributed significantly to the development of Christian mysticism. The term “mystical” was first used by the Greeks (mystikos), and referred to the secret or unspoken initiation rites of the “Hellenistic mystery cults.” Greeks such as Plato and Plotinus spoke of the soul’s purification through a moral and intellectual ascent. The Greek notion of mystikos, coupled with the Platonic and Neoplatonic idea of the soul’s ascent through purification gave shape to early Christian mysticism.

The Apostle Paul employed the noun mysterion, to connote the mystery of salvation, which, for Paul, comes by way of divine revelation. Christ appeared to Paul on the road

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10 Ibid., p. 42 & ff.
to Damascus and this “revelation was the foundation of his Christianity.” Moreover, Paul’s frequent use of the phrase “in Christ” suggests not only his belief in a union with God, but that this union becomes personal through participating in the death and resurrection of Christ. The Christian mystery, therefore, has been viewed as God’s love enacted through Christ, revealed in the scriptures and aimed at joining “creation with God’s own existence.” Therefore, God’s love is not incomprehensible, as if “imprisoned in heavenly mystery.” Rather, the Christian mystery is God’s self-giving love which “races to rescue the lost sheep and hurries out to welcome and embrace the lost prodigal child.” At the heart of the Christian mystery is the drama of the Cross, rooted in “God’s decision not to be God apart from the lost creation.”

How do we participate in or acquire personal knowledge of Christ? This was the focus of early Christian mysticism. Prior to the Middle Ages, the “mind was not primarily a self-referential ratiocination machine.” Knowing meant that the “the known” has drawn me into an encounter with itself.” “In this sense, all believers are mystics in that they are plunged into the mystery of Christ.” Mysticism thus acknowledged an element of passivity, as the Divine acts upon the soul. Mystics were therefore conscious that their experiences were not produced in and of themselves. “They did not cause the experience and cannot retain it for a second longer than is desired by the one who produces it.” For the Christian, encounters with the Divine were said to be the product of the Holy Spirit, to which human volition responds and cooperates.

14 L. Boyer, as quoted by McIntosh, p. 43.
15 Ibid.
16 Ibid.
17 Ibid.
18 Ibid.
19 McIntosh, p. 70.
20 Ibid., See also Louth, p. 73, 196. See also G. Jantzen, Power, Gender and Christian Mysticism. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p. 33.
22 Aumann, p. 124.
23 Ibid. The American historian and Puritan scholar, Richard Lovelace, assessed the difference between Catholic and Protestant views of union with God as part of sanctification. Within the Reformed tradition, sanctification occurs as the “believer’s union with Christ [is] applied sovereignly by the Holy Spirit” such that the believer learns to cooperate with the Spirit’s prompting. Therefore, “Union with Christ is not the end but the beginning of the Christian life.” See R. Lovelace, pp. 312, 302, “English Devotional
In response to God’s initiative, the soul pursues holiness through the process of purification—resisting sin, and by participating in the sacraments, as well as in the life of the Church. Union with God meant not only union with Christ, but also union with other believers. Christian baptism was of course available to all, and in this sense Christian mysticism often had both a communal and egalitarian impulse.

While the formative period of mysticism considered the mystery of being a Christian, by the Middle Ages there was a concerted focus on the practical expression of the mystic’s intimacy with God. Mystics like Francis and Clare of Assisi, Marguerite Porete of France, the Finnish Hadewijch and the German Mechthild renovated religious life through a dedication to a life of poverty, by caring for the poor, through writing in the vernacular, often without the support of the established Church. During the late medieval period, mysticism also began to emphasize the Christian mystery in terms of private and personal experiences such as visions, raptures, erotic language for God, noted particularly within the affective tradition characterized by Bernard of Clairvaux (1019-1153). For Hildegard of Bingen, God’s hidden mysteries were revealed through her God-inspired visions.

The focus on personal experience coincided not only with the advance of Scholasticism, but also with the progressive exclusion of women from political and ecclesiastical power. Just as more women gained respect and authority as mystics, for union with God imparts spiritual authority, the “contemplative life comes to be

25 Louth, pp. 199 & ff.
26 Jantzen, p. 142 & ff.
27 Defining mysticism in terms of a private experience was significantly advanced in the Modern Era according to Jantzen. See Jantzen, p. 305 & ff. Jantzen insists that the modern notion of mysticism, expounded by W. James in The Varieties of Religious Experience. (London: Longmans Green & Co., 1937), is based on the work of Schleiermacher—who first characterized mysticism as “pre-rational immediate consciousness or feeling.” See Jantzen, pp. 314, 318.
28 According to Jantzen, Julian of Norwich also emphasized experience by recognizing the role of pleasure in knowing God, as well as the experience in receiving God’s love for our intrinsic “beauty and worth.” (Jantzen: 152) See also Jantzen, p. 147 & ff.
29 McIntosh, p. 63.
30 According to Jantzen, a “person who was acknowledged to have direct access to God would be in a position to challenge any form of authority, whether doctrinal or political, which she saw as incompatible with the divine will.” See Jantzen, p.1.
regarded as primarily a private affair (best kept cloistered and away from the corporate life of the church.)”31 While women mystics resisted this tendency and still do, yet there was a concerted effort to render women’s spiritual authority “a private and ineffable psychological occurrence,”32 thus constraining their influence and authority.33 Such suppression can be noted throughout history, and also in the life of Jessie Penn-Lewis—a matter to which we will return.

In the modern era, there has been great interest in identifying the psychological states or experiences of mystics,34 over and against those who believe that these states or experiences are modern constructs that focus on private rather than social matters, and are outside of the concerns of the mystics themselves.35 While we will resume this debate at a later point, it is our present concern to outline the salient characteristics of the mystical tradition of which, as I shall argue, Jessie Penn-Lewis was a part.

II. Stages of Mysticism

How does the mystical life progress? Are there stages within mysticism? According to historian Richard Lovelace, Christian mystics “share with Platonic (and, for that matter, Buddhistic) mysticism a common structure: that of a threefold path to God, consisting of purification, contemplation, and final union.”36 “The Christian mystic awakens to, is purified and illuminated by, and is eventually united with the God of love.”37

31 McIntosh, pp. 63-64.
32 Ibid., p. 64.
33 Jantzen, suggests that as mysticism came to embody different spiritual ideals, in each case, women were categorically excluded, rendering them powerless to effect significant social change or justice on their own behalf. See Jantzen, pp. xv, 80, 257 & ff, 262.
36 R. Lovelace, “English Devotional Literature,” L. Dupré L. & D. E. Sailers, Christian Spirituality: Post-Reformation and Modern. (New York: Crossroad Publishing Company, 1989), p. 318. The three-fold mystical path was observed first in the Christian writings by Origen, and also emphasized by other early Christian writers such as Dionysius the Areopagite, see Louth, pp. 54-55. See also King, p. 19 & ff. See also Jantzen, p. 88 & ff.
Purgation

The path towards union with God begins with purgation, or “purification of character and detachment from earthly interests,”\(^\text{38}\) whereby the soul, by God’s grace, is purged or detached from falsehood, self-love\(^\text{39}\) and other moral imperfections which create distance between God and the soul. Christian mystics turn to Christ as a model of the perfectly purified soul, for “Christ’s human nature was so utterly bereft of self, and apart from all creatures, as no man’s ever was, and was nothing but a ‘house and habitation of God.’”\(^\text{40}\)

Illumination

Through the process of purgation, the soul is led to that “peaceful certitude of God”\(^\text{41}\) in which “the mind is ravished into the abyss of divine Light.”\(^\text{42}\) Illumination is thus a state of visions, joy and ecstasies.\(^\text{43}\) Ecstasy “comes from the Greek ek-stasis, which literally means ‘standing outside oneself,’”\(^\text{44}\) often outside one’s intellect. In the state of illumination the soul is more God-centered than self-centered,\(^\text{45}\) the reward of which is peace and joy.

Union

Union is a state in which the soul is lifted into the very being of God and becomes one with the Divine. The unitive state is considered spiritual marriage, in which the soul’s love for God finds consummation. It is a perfecting of selflessness whereby the soul is immersed in the life of God’s Spirit.\(^\text{46}\)

\(^{39}\) Jantzen, p. 121.
\(^{40}\) Theologia Germanica, (Chapter 15) http://www.ccel.org/t/theo_ger/theologia21.htm
\(^{41}\) Underhill, The Mystics of the Church, p. 27.
\(^{43}\) Underhill, Mysticism, p. 241.
\(^{44}\) Jantzen, p. 106. See also McIntosh, p. 140.
\(^{45}\) Underhill, Mysticism, p. 234.
\(^{46}\) Underhill, The Mystics of the Church, p. 27.
Union with Christ: A Social Dimension

From the beginning, Christian mysticism evinced an egalitarian impulse. That is to say that the notion of being “in Christ” also implied a participation in the body of Christ. Mystical union was therefore more a bond between Christ and the Church, and between man and man as members of Christ, than between Christ and individual souls. Our Lord’s prayer is ‘That they all may one, even as Thou, Father art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us.’

Thus, Christian mysticism is not a private, ineffable affair. Nor is mysticism self-directed. Rather, Christian mysticism is participation in the Christian mystery—in the power of the risen life of Christ.

What is paramount are the central doctrinal truths of Christianity: that there has been a true incarnation in the true humanity of the true God, and that the church can only live as the true body of this incarnate Word by living ever more truthfully into Christ’s dying and rising—thus to participate in that self-giving love which is truly the life of the triune God. ‘All the history of Christian dogma unfolds itself about this mystical centre.’

Paul said that though we are many, yet we form one body, for “there is neither slave nor free, Greek nor Jew, male nor female, for we are all one in Christ Jesus.” Thus, mysticism “is not so much a unity of the individual soul with the heavenly Christ, as an

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47 Louth, p. 199 & ff.
48 Inge, p. 51.
49 McIntosh, p. 40.
51 Gal 3:28
organic unity of [Christians].”52 Christian mystical theology is communal for the
“relationship of the bride to the Bridegroom is both singular and corporate.”53

The mystics therefore shared an organic unity, based not only upon their unity with
Christ, but because of this they are also united to one another, a union rooted in faith and
love. The corporate life of the Christian then becomes the social dimension of Christian
mysticism, which, as Andrew Louth suggested, distinguished Christian from other forms
of mysticism.54

For Christians love is the love of Christ which unites us to him and
through him to one another. And so Christian theology, and in particular
Christian mystical theology, is ecclesial, it is the fruit of participation in
the mystery of Christ, which is inseparable from the mystery of the
Church.55

Therefore, “faith goes so closely hand in hand with love that the mystics seldom try to
separate them.”56 Love and action are inseparable because Christian “moral virtues are
the fruit of the Spirit, the evidences of the indwelling of Christ in the soul of the
Christian.”57 Quoting Gregory of Nyssa, Louth writes:

You are the master of your prayer if abundance does not come from
another’s property, and is not the result of another’s tears; if no one is
hungry or distressed because you are fully satisfied. For the bread of God
is above all the fruit of justice, the ear of the corn of peace, and pure and
without any admixture of the seed of tares.58

52 Inge, p. 68.
53 Louth, p. 200
54 Ibid., p. 199.
55 Ibid., pp. 199-200.
56 Inge, p. 8.
57 Louth, p. 198
58 Gregory of Nyssa, as quoted by Louth, p. 199.
It may be in this regard, through the social dimension of Christian mysticism, that mystics stand on the shoulders of each other bringing reform and renewal to each generation. As Evelyn Underhill suggested, “From the point of Eternity, in whose light they lived, they attacked the sins of their generation.”

The social dimension within the mystical tradition is perhaps best characterized as reform in that the mystics were known to address the moral and social failings of their day. Perhaps for this reason mystics, particularly women mystics such as Margerite Porete, Hadewijch and Jeanne Guyon wrote in the vernacular, or popularized more scholarly treatises. Through these means they made their reformist ideas accessible to many, undercutting the long and censuring arm of ecclesiastical and political authorities. For a life that aims at union with God is detached from earthly pleasures and accolades, and is therefore hard to control, as church officials discovered.

The social force of the Christian mystics has long been a matter of fascination. One need only recall the life of Francis of Assisi, whose devotion to Lady Poverty and whose desire to see the whole of the world through the “life of the Gospel of Jesus Christ” incited first local, then international admiration and reform. Consider, also, the work of the Beguines, or Catherine of Siena, or Hildegard of Bingen, or Teresa of Avila. Women mystics such as these resisted and in some cases denounced church officials in their pursuit of love, faith, and social justice. They cared for the poor, and though women, they did not fail to raise both voice and pen in challenging authorities, as inspired by God to do so. The social force of mysticism, then, is the very real activity “which is called humility, service, love of our neighbour.”

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59 Underhill, Mysticism, p. 414.
60 Inge, p. 138.
61 Underhill, Mysticism, p. 459.
63 Jantzen, p. 205 & ff.
64 King, p. 74.
65 McIntosh, p. 99. Contrary to McIntosh, G. Jantzen suggests that “there is little indication that mysticism and spirituality have anything to do with politics and social justice. Instead, they provide a private religious way of coping with life, whatever the external circumstances.” (Jantzen: 20) Further, Jantzen insists that because the mystical tradition affirmed notions such as submission to God, love of God, trust in God (Jantzen: 20), such mandates only furthered the powerlessness of women mystics in effecting social change on their behalf. Though Jantzen also admits that female mystics like Hildegard believed that “true mystical knowledge cannot be separated from efforts of justice,” (Jantzen: 171) she ultimately concludes that women mystics were powerless to challenge the patriarchy and social injustices of their day. Jantzen accuses modern scholars of neglecting the life and work of women mystics (Jantzen: 305 & ff) particularly
While male and female mystics arise from diverse cultures, the significance of their mysticism is often manifest in a spirit of reform—in addressing the social and theological failures of their day, and, in this way they were astonishingly similar. Mystics are reformers and troubadours whose intimacy with the God imparts vitality, not only to their own life, but also to those whom their life touches. Though joy, patience and energy characterized their lives, yet these attributes were never self-directed. Rather, the fruits of mysticism has social consequences; it serves a higher purpose.

III. Jessie Penn-Lewis: An Introduction

The mystical path, though briefly outlined, can now be related to our subject, Jessie Penn-Lewis (1861-1927). (The reader may find the Time-Line of Appendix A helpful at this point.) While her life had simple beginnings, yet she grew to become the most esteemed female preacher associated with the worldwide Keswick revivals. As a young woman, she developed a hunger for holiness, which led her steadily through a series of spiritual stages along the mystical path, culminating in the unitive state. Her mysticism was part of the classical Christian tradition embracing purgation, illumination and finally union.

Penn-Lewis’s spiritual journey, as well as her life work suggests that she was part of the tradition of Christian mystics whose intimacy with God was manifest in a vibrancy of faith and social reform. Though her mystical life is carefully documented throughout her diary and personal letters, some of which are compiled and published, yet her mysticism as such scholarship relates to social justice enacted on their behalf. It would seem that Jantzen has ignored the ways in which mystics such as Hildegard, Catherine of Siena, Teresa of Avila and others offered resistance and reform to the political and ecclesiastical structures, albeit within a patriarchal structure. There was no other to be had. Yet, resist they did, as Jantzen herself admits, at least in the case of Hildegard.

King captured the salient characteristic of Christian mysticism this way: “What is very striking in most of the mystics through the ages is their immersion in the world of their time. Most Christian mystics were not examples of self-absorption and union with God to the exclusion of everything else, but their special strength consists in the integration of contemplation and action. What wonderful examples we have of the practical involvement of different men and women mystics with the problems of their communities and time. (King: 246).

Underhill, The Mystics of the Church, p. 37. See also Underhill Mysticism, p. 362.

Louth, p. 54.
was largely unrecognized not only by her biographers, but by Keswick scholars as well. However, her writing pulsates with a vibrant intimacy with God, readily identifiable in her books, diary and letters. Penn-Lewis’s spiritual intimacy with God not only invigorated her own ministry, but that of others as well. Her life work exhibits that endless energy, indomitable courage and social reform so characteristic of many within the mystical tradition.

Penn-Lewis viewed herself as a prophet of the Cross, advancing a participation with Christ on Calvary whereby the soul undergoes first death and then resurrection—an experience with which she was intimately acquainted. Penn-Lewis believed that sharing Christ’s experiences on Calvary transformed her diseased body and frail psyche whereby she became a courageous leader who traveled the world imparting spiritual vitality to others. By advancing intimacy with the Cross, Penn-Lewis found herself at odds with the leaders of Keswick, some of whom resented her leadership as a woman almost as much as they distrusted the mortifications intrinsic to her Cross Theology. Keswick’s mystical theology preferred the ‘shorter path’ of the Quietists, which opposed effort and volition in the path to the highest mystical state—union with God. Having parted company with Keswick in later years, Penn-Lewis was to devote much of her life to opposing the spiritism and shallow mysticism of the early 20th century, whilst also confronting the gender bias within the Keswick Convention and affiliate Conventions in which she served. In contrast to the intellectualism of 19th century Church, Penn-Lewis’s Cross Theology advanced personal experiences of faith. Unlike those in Keswick who defined faith as an experience of rest, Cross Theology was a return to the classical, mystical tradition in which souls participate in the process of purification in the path to holiness or sanctification. In the end, Penn-Lewis’s Cross Theology resembled those mystics whose energies addressed the sins of their generation, and she was thus a loving spirit that “sets another spirit on fire.”

Neither Mary Gerrard nor Brynmoor Pierce Jones identifies the classical mysticism operative in the life or literature of Jessie Penn-Lewis. See Gerrard, Mrs. Penn-Lewis: A Memoir. (Leicester, UK: Alfred Tracey Ltd., 1947) and B. P. Jones, The Trials and Triumphs of Mrs. Jessie Penn-Lewis. (North Brunswick: Bridge-Logos Publisher, 1997) D. Bebbington, perhaps the most noted Keswick scholar, likewise does not identify Penn-Lewis’s mysticism as part of the classical tradition.

St. Augustine, as quoted by Underhill, The Mystics of the Church, p. 37.
Our exploration of Jessie Penn-Lewis’s mysticism will begin with an overview of the religious climate of the late 19th century, placing the theology of the Keswick Conventions within a historical context. Next, we shall note the sexism and Quietism or shallow mysticism intrinsic to the Keswick Conventions, compared to the egalitarian impulse and the classical mysticism of Penn-Lewis’s Cross Theology. Cross Theology therefore offered a corrective not only to the sexism and Quietism of Keswick, but also to the disdain for the doctrine of the Atonement noted among the more high-minded Church leaders of her day. Finally, we will observe how Penn-Lewis’s mysticism guided her own pursuit of social reform embodied in an egalitarian interpretation of Paul’s teaching on women, resulting in the publication of her *Magna Charta of Woman*—a biblical defense of women’s leadership. Penn-Lewis’s mystical theology suggested that the failings of Eve have been overcome in union with Christ.

**The Climate of the Times**

Any analysis of Jessie Penn-Lewis must include the historical and cultural context of the late 19th century in which she lived. Women seeking a place of equality within the Church were beneficiaries of both Enlightenment ideals and also the Romantic tenor of the late 19th century. While enlightenment ideals stressed the individual rights of both women and men, the Romantic Movement valued experience and feelings, and thus the contributions of mystics, even women such as Jeanne Guyon, were readily embraced.

In contrasting the Enlightenment with the Romantic Movement, we wish to understand the impact Romanticism had on the founders of the Keswick Convention, particularly with respect to their view of sanctification. Ultimately, we seek to address the following question: With the rise of Jessie Penn-Lewis within the Keswick Convention, how did she distinguish herself as a theologian and an emancipator of women?

The spiritual tenor of the late 19th century has been called Romantic. A reliance on feelings and experience overcame the call of logic and reason. A longing for the “the picturesque,” 71 with Coleridge, Wordsworth, Lord Byron, Carlyle, Emerson,

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Schleiermacher, and Rousseau, characterized the Romantic mood, with its “great alternations of mind and feelings which have convulsed Christendom.” In reaction to Enlightenment empiricism, rationalism and the slow grinding processes of reason, the Romantic mood celebrated “Pascal’s dictum that the heart has its reasons which the mind can never know” which became a slogan. Similarly, Schleiermacher claimed that “it is not knowing Doctrines ... It is feelings. It is an intuition of the Infinite” that characterizes faith.

Romanticism in England meant the “whole poetic movement of the time, with Wordsworth and Coleridge as well as Schiller and Goethe, as the hierophants of the new mysteries.” Of course the Romantic Movement produced its extremes. For example, “individuality was often driven to whim and self-pleasing, and the sacred rights of the feeling were too often conferred upon the shallow claims of sentimentality.” Appealing to artistic intuition, the great task of faith “was to expound ... the Universe, with its boundless variety in closest unity of design.” The Romantic mood readily engaged art and the emotions as a means of understanding and expressing spiritual truth.

It is perhaps no accident that the Holiness Conventions converged at Keswick, in the Lake District--one of the most romantic and picturesque locations in all of England. “The setting was essential to the experience,” argued David Bebbington. Romantic impulses collided with an emphasis on experience, and this was the soil that nurtured Holiness theology. Denouncing the products of the Enlightenment in favor of feelings and experience, the Reverend Figgis made the following observations after attending a Holiness revival: “The old way used to be too much of an effort--a way of self-control. The (new way) is a way of faith.” Miller, a Holiness enthusiast, suggests that the new

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72 Ibid., p. 584.
75 Flew, p. 347.
77 Ibid.
78 Bebbington, p. 168.
piety concerned heart not head, and those inspired by Holiness found the teaching a welcome comfort in the uncertainty, doubt, and mind-bending pace of modern life.\textsuperscript{80}

Religious experiences were framed in eclectic terms, as the apostles of Holiness viewed doctrine and dogma with disdain. Robert Pearsall Smith (1827-98), an eminent Holiness preacher said to a group gathered at Oxford: “We did not come to Oxford to set each other right or to discuss doctrines.”\textsuperscript{81} The shift was from the dogmatic and doctrinal methods of the Enlightenment of the previous century, to a new and experiential mood.

The late 19\textsuperscript{th} century easily assimilated Quaker spirituality, with its emphasis on spiritual experiences and “full surrender” which, according to the early Quakers, meant living in full submission to the Holy Spirit.\textsuperscript{82} Holiness circles extended the concept of “full surrender” to connote a second experience or baptism of the Spirit in which one is freed from the power of sin.

The Romantic mood fueled a delight in spiritual experiences and poised the Holiness thinkers to reject Enlightenment ideals of progress, struggle and effort. The most significant theological example of this is perhaps noted in Holiness’ reshaping of the doctrine of sanctification. Methodism grew in Enlightenment soil and therefore viewed sanctification as a lengthy battle with sin accomplished, if at all, only after a life-long struggle. By contrast, the Holiness Movement believed that sanctification could be achieved through an experience of rest and abandonment. One conquers sin without a struggle, by abandoning oneself to a spiritual experience. Holiness divines employed phrases such as “resting in faith,” “trusting God” and “reckon” to describe the Quietist’s abandonment of effort in the path of sanctification. The new way of holiness or sanctification, promoted by Holiness teaching, was to cease from one’s struggle with sin. Keswick embraced the shorter path of the Quietists in attaining holiness, and this was viewed as a refreshing and powerful alternative to the Enlightenment emphasis on effort and process. Everyone felt a need for an experience of rest.

\textsuperscript{80} Ibid., p. 183.
\textsuperscript{81} Bebbington, p. 171.
\textsuperscript{82} Undaunted Zeal: The Letters of Margaret Fell. Edited and Introduced by Elsa F. Glines. (Richmond, IN: Friends United Press, 2003), pp. 91, 95, 237 & ff.
The Holiness Movement: A Desire for Power

Pentecostal scholar Donald Dayton suggests that there was a growing sense of disempowerment during the late 19th century. Life was overwhelming and human effort seemed insufficient to manage the pressures and complexities of modern life. Power was the remedy for those who felt helpless in a modern world. Power became, therefore, a central theme of the Holiness Movement. By offering power, the Holiness divines promised “a means of coping” with modern life. The National Camp Meetings Association for the Promotion of Holiness had five years running the Days of Power in the Forest Temple. Power and victory were catch phrases of the Higher Life Movements. Pre-millennialists, who anticipated Christ’s imminent return, welcomed the Holiness teaching of power over sin as they prepared for Christ’s second return.

The understanding of the Holy Spirit as a source of power over sin was perhaps an idea grafted into the Holiness Movement first by Phoebe Palmer. Palmer was to assert that “holiness is power.” She turned to the teachings of William Law for her notion of baptism in the Spirit—a second blessing, as an infusion of power for sanctification. In Palmer’s view, sanctification is attained just as salvation was, through a crisis and by a decision. Likewise, sanctification within the Holiness Movement was accomplished by an instantaneous act of power, which overshadowed the Enlightenment view of a gradual and arduous path towards perfection.

Towards the end of the 19th century, even the Reformed branch of the revival camp began to speak of ministry in terms of power. However, the Reformed branch of the

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82 Bebbington, p. 152.
83 Dayton, p. 90.
84 Bebbington, pp. 170-174. See also Dayton, p. 105.
85 Bebbington, p. 152. See also Dayton, pp. 143-167.
86 Palmer, as quoted by Dayton, p. 94.
88 Dayton, pp. 87-88. See also Bebbington, pp. 164-165.
89 It was William Law who suggested that “virtues do not require length of time and variety of method for their attainment, but ‘a turning of the mind’ to Christ, whereby any one may have all the benefit of those virtues, as publicans and sinners by their turning to Christ, could be helped and saved by Him.” See Flew, p. 310.
90 Dayton, pp. 99-103.
Holiness Movement sought power primarily for the purposes of Christian service, since they were eager to avoid accusations of antinomianism which were hurled at the Holiness movement because of their claim to instantaneous sanctification. Moreover, a distinction was made between the Keswick or British branch of the Holiness Movement and the American Holiness Movement. While Keswick taught that sin was not eradicated but suppressed, moment by moment, in the power of the Holy Spirit, the American Holiness Movement insisted that sin was eradicated, in a single act of faith, through the agency of the Holy Spirit. Both sought power to overcome sin, to enhance ministry, and to find ways of coping with the rapid pace of the modern world.

The Holiness Movement of the 19th century was also called the Higher Christian Life (or Higher Life), entire sanctification, consecration, the Keswick Movement, the second baptism and perfectionism—each phrase implied the same ideal—an experience of power over sin. Thus in the broadest sense the Holiness Movement concerned the doctrine of sanctification.

The process of sanctification came under debate in the 19th century. The Reformed camp claimed that while sanctification begins at conversion, Reformed theologians also insisted that perfection is never completed in this life. Other groups such as the Wesleyans and Methodists argued that sinlessness in this life is possible, after a life-long struggle. The American Holiness Movement insisted that a second work of grace, following conversion, ushered in a state of sinlessness. While Wesley's notion of perfection entailed a process of "going on with God in obedient worship and service fueled by love," members of the American Holiness Movement suggested that an act of faith inaugurated a state of perfection. The Higher Life teaching of the American

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91 Ibid., pp. 103-104.
92 Ibid., p. 105.
97 Dayton, p.135.
Holiness Movement and the Keswick Higher Life teaching therefore differed in significant ways. While the Americans favored complete eradication of sin, the British Holiness Movement suggested that sin is suspended, moment by moment, through a continuous act of faith.\textsuperscript{101}

Higher Life teaching was perhaps first introduced in England by the American couple Hannah Whitall Smith (1832-1911) and Robert Pearsall Smith who lectured widely throughout England, beginning first in 1872. The notion that sin could be suspended became the platform of the Keswick Conventions, an annual Convention held in the Lake District of England beginning in 1875. Throughout these yearly Conventions, Christians, pastors, missionaries and students from around the world were introduced to Higher Life teachings.

The Holiness or Higher Life Conventions grew rapidly in England, both in numbers and influence. While the first Higher Life Convention was held in London in 1873, by 1907 attendance had grown to over 5,000.\textsuperscript{102} What was it about the Higher Life movement that attracted so many? Keswick itself was aware of its magnetic spirit. A.T. Pierson (1837-1911), author of \textit{The Keswick Movement: In Precept and Practice}, wrote:

One may read the whole series of addresses, [at Keswick] as reproduced verbatim in the \textit{Life of Faith}, and yet miss the most conspicuous charm of these assemblies—the very aroma of the flower. Those who have little knowledge of the matter often dismiss this teaching as a mere ‘school’ of religious opinion akin to one of many modern types of doctrine, the tendencies of thought which differentiate one theological school from another. This is a great mistake. Keswick stands for a great deal more than the truth, orally proclaimed from its platform.\textsuperscript{103}

\textsuperscript{101} Dayton, p. 105.
\textsuperscript{102} Bebbington, p. 179.
\textsuperscript{103} A. T. Pierson, \textit{Forward Movements of the Last Half Century}. pp., 40-41.
What was the spirit, vitality or essence of The Holiness Movement that enraptured and energized so many? The hymns of Charles Wesley are said to embody the “aroma” eluded to by A.T. Pierson.

[Wesley’s] homiletic prose and ecstatic hymns respectively, gave the Wesleyan version of the Christian life a quality of ardor, exuberance, and joy—joy of knowing God’s love, pursing his grace, and resigning oneself into his hands—that went beyond anything we find in Calvin, the Puritans, and the early Pietists. ¹⁰⁴

It is not coincidental that Keswick produced prolific hymn writers. They too expressed the spiritual vitality of Keswick music and prose, creating a milieu that characterized the religious experiences at the early Keswick Conventions.

A “motivating spirit of love to God and man; without [which] all religion is hollow and empty,” ¹⁰⁵ propelled Keswick goers into ministry of extraordinary proportions. They set others on fire, “as one loving spirit sets another spirit on fire” ¹⁰⁶ In this sense, Keswick resembled renewal groups throughout the history of the Church, whose motivating spirit energized its members to accomplish great feats for love of God and humankind. ¹⁰⁷ The milieu of Keswick therefore led to worldwide Christian service that was unusually fervent, productive and had far-reaching influence, particularly on the mission field. Among Keswick luminaries were women like Jessie Penn-Lewis, whose involvement with the Higher Life Movement took her to foreign countries, placed her in leadership positions, and ultimately led her to challenge women’s inequality within Christian ministry.

IV. Building Momentum

Throughout the 19th century, spiritual renewal was stirring in many branches of the Church. Whether it was from a High Church background, Brethren, Nonconformists, or...
from within the evangelical camp, there “was a felt lack of, and a great hungering for, a personal righteousness, which should really meet their too often starving spiritual natures.” In response, the Oxford Movement fed the spiritual cravings within the High Church Camp, whereas the Low Church party, under the influence of Methodism, quenched spiritual longing through spiritual experiences and by instilling the importance of scripture and the sermon “in the religious service.” The Nonconformists, the Plymouth Brethren, like the Low Church Party, responded by advancing “diligent Bible study and a return to the simplicities of the faith.” Through these means spiritual vitality was quickened throughout Great Britain.

In America, D.L. Moody, Whitefield, Finney, Mahan, Boardman and Robert Pearsall Smith established a system of camp meetings that offered spiritual experiences that satisfied the stated hunger for a deeper spiritual life. Modeled on the American camp meetings, the British Holiness Movement reached its zenith through a series of Conventions, orchestrated first in London in 1873, and later in Oxford, Brighton, the Broadlands, and finally in the Lake District in 1875. By 1875 the cumulative attendance at these Higher Life Conventions attracted nearly 10,000 people.

The Oxford Movement, 1833

Keswick’s Higher Life roots can also be traced to the Oxford Movement through the person of Thomas Dundas Harford-Battersby. Harford-Battersby came under the influence of John Henry Newman and the Tractarians while a student at Oxford. Having trained at Oxford while Newman was “at his zenith,” he later became vicar in Keswick, during the first Conventions. Harford-Battersby embraced a passion for holiness while at Oxford, and he was thus a natural link to the Keswick’s Conventions that later ensued. Harford-Battersby was a founding member of the Keswick Convention and served as the Convention’s first chairman.

109 Barabas, p. 15.
110 Ibid.
111 Price & Randall, p. 20.
The Oxford Movement as well as the Keswick Convention sought to revive a radical commitment to personal holiness. Both were distrustful of higher criticism, both were influenced by the Romanticism of the 19th century\textsuperscript{112} with its deep religious sentiments, and both inspired broad support to their ideals. Interestingly, both groups produced a number of hymns that the Church continues to enjoy.\textsuperscript{113} Finally, both groups turned their sights outward. While Keswick worked tirelessly on the foreign mission field, the Oxford Movement focused its energies on the poor and the victims of industrial England. The Keswick Conventions as well as the Oxford Movement had a social focus.

They also had their dissimilarities. While the Oxford Movement was promulgated by intellectuals who cherished theological scholarship, Keswick shrank from theological discourse or, as they would say, from “handling the promises of God as abstractions.”\textsuperscript{114} From the standpoint of Keswick, authentic spirituality did not demand theological study. Rather, in Keswick’s view, the spiritual life was based on action, on decision and personal experience. Another contrast between the two Movements came in the form of denominational inclusivity. While the Higher Life Movement took pride in their denominational diversity, the Oxford Movement worked primarily within the Church of England. The two groups also differed on their inclusion of women. Unlike the Oxford Movement, women held positions of prominence within the American and Keswick Higher Life Movements.

London YMCA, 1873

The Higher Life message reached a larger audience when in 1873 The Christian, a London weekly paper, claimed that the Church had neglected a central biblical teaching “that Christ came to save His people from their sins; and not from the consequences only.”\textsuperscript{115} This story caught the interest of many Christians so that within the year a Convention for the promotion of scriptural holiness was held in London, at the YMCA.

\textsuperscript{115} A. T. Pierson, Forward Movements of the Last Half Century. p. 16.
At the London YMCA Convention it was suggested that the normal Christian life could be one of “victory over sin and sustained communion with God.” Holiness or sanctification, it was said, was the result of the “consecration of will and a completed trust in the Word of Christ.”

One year later a series of meetings for “self-dedication” to holiness were held in Dublin, Manchester, Nottingham and Leicester. These Conventions produced a sense of renewal where lay and clergy alike discovered that after years of feeling powerlessness over sin, they suddenly encountered a “marvelous uplift of soul, a supernatural courage and confidence in meeting the adversary,” with a peace that surpassed understanding. The Higher Life message brought power to those who were limping along spiritually, or who felt defeated in their moral and spiritual lives. Hundreds who had attended these Conventions said they had experienced “triumph over sin, purity of heart, peace with God … and power in service, quite unknown before.”

Broadlands Convention: 17-24 July, 1874

Within one year of the London Convention, the distinguished Lord Mount Temple, William Cowper-Temple, sponsored a similar convention for the promotion of holiness at Broadlands. For an entire week Hannah Whitall Smith and her husband Pearsall Smith promoted Higher Life teaching to an audience of one hundred. Other speakers included Canon Harford-Battersby, Canon Wilberforce, George MacDonald, Amanda Smith and Madame Antoinette Stirling. The intent was to spend a week in prayer, meditation and Bible readings, exploring the biblical offer of “victory over all known sin.”

Gatherings of Christians were convened alongside a river, and groups of Christians were

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116 Ibid., p. 17.
117 Ibid.
119 Ibid., p. 20.
120 Ibid., p. 23.
123 Account of the Union Meeting for the Promotion of Scriptural Holiness, held in Oxford, August 29 to September 7, 1874 (Chicago, Illinois: F.H. Revell, 1875), pp. 19-22, as quoted by Barabas, pp. 19-20.
seen around the grounds with Bibles open or heads bowed. Long prayer silences were thought to facilitate spiritual renewal.

One pastor from France, Theodore Monod, found the experience of the Broadlands Convention a “soul-satisfying and God-glorifying faith ... the sunshine of Jesus’ smile in your heart.”¹²⁴ Throughout the week, groups assembled outdoors along the river, throughout the woods, praying on their knees, singing and sharing personal experiences of victory over sin. The Broadlands Convention foreshadowed the milieu of what was to become the Keswick Convention, two years hence.

One Convention goer recalled the Higher Life message of the Broadlands Convention in these words:

We sought to have that which was true in God as to our judicial standing in a risen Christ, also true in personal appropriation and experience. Many secret sins, many a scarcely recognized reserve as to entire self renunciation, were brought up into the consciousness and put away in the presence of the Lord.¹²⁵

Under the spell of Hannah Whitall Smith, Pearsall Smith and other Higher Life visionaries, the longing for spiritual power deepened,¹²⁶ perhaps in part because the Higher Life meetings began by propounding the problem of besetting sins,¹²⁷ a practice Keswick would also adopt. Before the close of the Broadlands Convention, a similar conference was scheduled for Oxford, in three weeks hence.

**The Oxford Convention: August 29- September 7, 1874**

Notices were circulated throughout Britain, Europe and United States announcing the Oxford Convention for the “Promotion of Scriptural Holiness.” The summons read:

¹²⁴ Harford, p. 28.
¹²⁵ Harford, p. 27.
¹²⁷ *Account of the Union Meeting for the Promotion of Scriptural Holiness*, held in Oxford. August 29 to September 7, 1874 (Chicago, Illinois: F.H. Revell, 1875), pp. 21-24, as quoted by Barahas, p. 20.
In every part of Christendom the God of all grace has given to many of His children a feeling of deep dissatisfaction with their present spiritual state, and a strong conviction that the truths they believe might and should exercise a power over their hearts and lives, altogether beyond anything they have as yet experienced. They have been brought to see that personal holiness is God's purpose for them as well as His command ... They see with deep distress the grievous gap there is between what they know of Scriptural truth, and how they live. This is not a reaching out towards new forms of doctrine or of ecclesiastical system, but the felt need of more vitality in what has been already accepted. 128

The announcement drew an audience of one thousand to the week long Oxford Convention where once again Pearsall Smith served as Chairman. Hannah Whitall Smith delivered daily Bible readings alongside speakers such as Harford-Battersby and Evan Hopkins, the Americans Asa Mahan and W.E. Boardman, the Reformed pastor from France, Theodore Monod, and the Swiss pastor Otto Stockmayer. The success of the Oxford Convention evidenced the growing influence of Higher Life teaching.

Harford-Battersby, vicar of St. John's in Keswick, said that the Oxford Convention was ten days of being "taken out of themselves ... led step by step, after deep and close searchings of heart... to God." 129 Stories of defeated Christian lives were compared to testimonies of the "satisfaction and peace enjoyed by those who have attained" 130 consecration. The choice was obvious. Hundreds, from many branches of the Church, were said to have entered into "consecration," a state of power over sin. These individuals were given many opportunities to "confess what the Lord had done for them, and bear witness to the results of it in their own experience." 131

128 Barabas, p. 21.
129 Account of the Union Meeting for the Promotion of Scriptural Holiness, held in Oxford. August 29 to September 7, 1874 (Chicago, Illinois: F.H. Revell, 1875), preface pp. i-ii. as quoted by Barabas, p. 22.
130 Ibid.
131 Barabas. p. 23.
Consecration was said to be accompanied by physical changes, most commonly, a glowing face. Recalling the face of Moses after encountering God, Holiness Divines suggested that a changed appearance was the outer expression of an inner experience. The evidence of consecration was reflected “on the very countenances of their more favoured brethren.” Thus the skeptical onlooker might notice the glowing faces of those who enjoyed a Higher Life.

Higher Life Conventions were said to impart the choice of consecration through an “ordered scheme of teaching.” By beginning the Convention with a clear statement of the problem—sin and defeat—attendees were asked to take inventory of their lives. This was followed by a “renunciation of all idols of the flesh and spirit,” whereby the soul surrenders to and trusts Christ, “for the bestowal of the blessing asked.” Careful to avoid “fleshly excitement in the meetings,” Harford-Battersby reported that the Convention offered a spirituality that was “a still, calm, sober; though deeply earnest spirit,” which seemed to “animate both speakers and hearers.”

Robert Pearsall Smith, chairman of the conference, opened one meeting with a proclamation: “It is to bring you to a crisis of faith that they had come together—to a point at which you will say, ‘By God’s grace I will believe God’s promises.’” Pearsall Smith said he did not come to Oxford to debate theology, or to “set each other right or to discuss doctrines,” as perhaps the Oxford Movement had in years past. Rather, his visit to Oxford was to plead for action and a decision.

Evan Hopkins (1837 - 1918), vicar of Holy Trinity, Richmond, also addressed the audiences at Oxford Convention. Hopkins, a successful Bible expositor, had a steady and logical manner and was able to articulate Higher Life teaching with the highest clarity. His topic at Oxford centered on God’s promise to provide holiness.

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132 Ibid., p. 22.
133 Ibid., p. 23.
134 Ibid.
135 Ibid.
136 Ibid., p. 22.
137 Ibid.
138 Ibid.
139 Sloan, p. 16.
140 Bebbington, p. 171.
To those gathered at Oxford, Hopkins explained that “resting faith” was the “complete trust and dependence on God for everything he has promised … as something received.” According to Hopkins, the “rest of faith,” was like the rich man who appealed to Jesus for his son’s healing, to whom Jesus said; “Go thy way; thy son liveth.” Christ’s promise was the only assurance the rich man needed. The man chose to believe Christ and went home to find it so. It was not Christ’s word but the man’s “resting faith” that released Christ’ power. Go, said Hopkins, and choose likewise. Could holiness be reached by a decision, through act of faith? Few seemed to question the simplicity of this proposition.

Harford-Battersby was so impressed by Hopkins that he left the Oxford Convention determined to live a holy life by a “deliberate act of full surrender and enter a ‘rest of faith.’” Because of Hopkins’ teaching, Harford-Battersby said he found a new power through the Holy Spirit, “the means of effective, powerful and holy living and service.”

The Brighton Convention: May 29 - June 7, 1875

Nine months later, eight thousand attended the Brighton Convention, to hear holiness luminaries such Hannah Whitall, Pearsall Smith, Evan Hopkins, Theodore Monod, and H.W. Webb-Peploe. Hannah Whitall Smith offered Bible Readings to both women and men. Her theme centered on the “power of Christ to save, keep and unite.” The large crowd, from twenty-three countries, shared communion together and national and denominational boundaries were obscured. The chairman pronounced: “The Brighton Convention has now ended, and the blessings from the Convention have begun.” The crowd was larger than any Church. The promise of power over sin was unlike any message they had heard from the pulpit before. Everything seemed new.

141 Price & Randall, p. 25.
144 Price & Randall, p. 27.
145 Dayton, p. 104.
146 Pollock, p. 32.
147 Barabas, p. 24.
One woman said the Brighton Convention transformed her understanding of God. She wrote:

I never believed in any Saviour but a Saviour from sin; I never dreamed of any salvation, but a salvation from sin. Yet now, everything, every word of the Bible, every relation of human life, everything in nature—old familiar hymns, the Creeds, the services of the Church, the Holy Communion—glow, become translucent, with a new glory and significance.\(^{148}\)

The message of consecration—the suspension of every known sin—did not go unopposed. “Evangelical Leaders of that day felt it their duty to oppose what they believed to be a false doctrine of ‘Perfection.’”\(^{149}\) Higher Life luminaries denied that they were teaching a form of perfection. They insisted that sin continued in the life of the believer, though its manifestations were suspended by the power of the Holy Spirit, on a moment to moment basis.

Critics could not dissuade Higher Life leaders, whose mission it seemed to rouse the Church to effectual holiness. Holiness, or the Higher Life was not only freedom from “fret, and fear, and folly, but from all known and actual sins.”\(^{150}\) To be unencumbered by sin was the power of Pentecost, available to all Christians,\(^{151}\) the Apostles of Holiness insisted.

The Brighton Convention was therefore seen as a new Pentecost, a season of spiritual awakening. If the Convention created a longing for holiness, God would surely gratify that desire. “He who wakens holy desires also satisfies the longing He creates.”\(^{152}\)

Harford-Battersby, along with a prominent businessman, convened another Holiness Convention in the Lake District, a mere three weeks later. They entitled the Convention, the “Union Meetings for the Promotion of Practical Holiness.”\(^{153}\) Once again, notices

\(^{148}\) Harford, pp. 32-33.
\(^{149}\) Ibid., p. 38.
\(^{150}\) Ibid., p. 39.
\(^{151}\) Ibid., p. 40.
\(^{153}\) Price & Randall, p. 29.
were sent around the globe, inviting Christians to participate in the “Union Meetings for the Promotion of Practical Holiness.” The first Keswick Convention was aimed at those “conscious of the low state of vital religion in the Churches, [who] are hungering and thirsting after a fuller and richer life in the Spirit.” The meeting was like those before it, international and nonsectarian. All “Christians of every section of the Church of God” were encouraged to attend.

**The First Keswick Convention: June 1875**

Pearsall Smith, the featured speaker, cancelled at the last minute. Rumors circulated that Smith had been involved in a scandal, but the real facts concerning his sudden withdrawal were not known for some time. The promoters of practical holiness were eager to maintain credibility. Harford-Battersby replaced Pearsall Smith, whose plenary sessions centered on Christ’s sufficiency to cleanse from all sin. Other speakers included the Rev. H.W. Webb-Peploe, the Revs. George R. Thornton and T. Phillips, Mr. H.F. Bowker, Mr. T. M. Croome, and Mr. Murray Shipley.

Despite the absence of Pearsall Smith, the first Keswick Convention was considered a success. Keswick goers claimed to experience both personal and corporate renewal. They left the conference with a keen awareness that their experience might bring greater unity between Christians of differing denominations. Unity among Christians was based on the notion that the Higher Life experience was a modern Pentecost, uniting “Parthians, Medes and Elamites,” who together declared the wonders of God. (Acts 2:9) Therefore, a banner with the words “One in Christ Jesus” hung over the Keswick platform, where it remains to this day.

The decision was made to hold a second Keswick Convention the following year, and every subsequent year. Thus, the Lake District became known as the center of spiritual renewal and the focal point of Higher Life teaching. Within two years of its inception,

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154 Ibid.
155 Ibid.
156 Ibid., p. 31.
157 Ibid., p. 32.
the Keswick Conventions attracted nearly 1,000 people annually and Convention goers overran the town of the Lake district each summer.\textsuperscript{158}

V. Higher Life Luminaries

The influence, which the Higher Life Movement enjoyed was, attributed to the American couple, Hannah Whitall Smith and Robert Pearsall Smith. Their charismatic personalities gave the Keswick Higher Life Movement exceptional momentum. Following their return to America, the Higher Life platforms were filled by British luminaries who proved as articulate, enthusiastic and influential as their American counterparts.

Robert Pearsall Smith

While 19\textsuperscript{th} century evangelicals in England were confronted by the intellectualism of "highbrows" from the Oxford Movement, as well as by "higher critics,” who challenged the authority and reliability of scripture, the Higher Life message of the Pearsall - Smiths injected fresh religious sentiment without the burden of intellectualism.\textsuperscript{159} It also promised power over sin, through rest rather than by effort. The message must have seemed a welcome relief to life in a rapidly changing world.

Pearsall Smith had established himself as a man "full of fun and spirits but wonderfully interesting and edifying spiritually.”\textsuperscript{160} At the 1874 Broadlands Convention, he addressed his audiences with a familiar demeanor, always emphasizing the centrality of spiritual experience, just as the American Camp system had "aimed at direct experience with God."\textsuperscript{161} It was in part due to the influence of Pearsall Smith that the British Higher Life message focused on the spiritual experience of holiness by faith. "Rest;” “reckon;” “consider it complete;” or "the rest of faith” (the title of Pearsall

\textsuperscript{158} Ibid., pp. 41-42.
\textsuperscript{160} Pollock, p. 12.
\textsuperscript{161} Price & Randall, p. 33.
Smith’s book \textsuperscript{162} were phrases or slogans used by Keswick Conventions to connote an experience of consecration or holiness.

Pearsall Smith described his own consecration in terms of a sensible infusion of power, followed by a new-found capacity over sin. By praying with ten others, Pearsall Smith said he felt the earth shake around them as each person was filled with the Holy Spirit. Afterwards they were conscious of a transaction with God that left them not only redeemed, but also fully sanctified. Pearsall Smith wrote:

\begin{quote}
I entered into a complete soul-rest in Christ, a rest, through the cleansing blood, which my soul has never lost for one hour … Since then I have received answers to my prayers for holiness as never before … consciousness of the actual, in-wrought reality of the expression, ‘I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live; yet, not I, but Christ liveth in me.’ Instead of pining for rest, I am continually praising God for realized rest, the deep, inward Sabbath-keeping of my blood-cleansed soul. I can now see no limit to the possibilities of the life of Christ in my soul, since I have accepted the atonement in its full purposes, both pardon and holiness.\textsuperscript{163}
\end{quote}

Holiness divines like Pearsall Smith criticized the Church for appealing to Calvary solely for the purposes of justification, while failing to acknowledge that the Cross was also a place of sanctification. Through a second spiritual experience, Pearsall Smith suggested that souls receive power over sin.\textsuperscript{164} Entire sanctification, like salvation, is acquired through a choice, rather than through a moral struggle. The shift was from effort to rest, from reason to trust. A life of righteousness is also accomplished the very moment one trusts Christ for holiness.\textsuperscript{165 166} Pearsall Smith wrote:

\textsuperscript{162} R. P. Smith, \textit{Holiness Through Faith: Light on the Way of Holiness}.
\textsuperscript{163} Ibid., pp. 83-84.
\textsuperscript{164} Ibid., p. 87.
\textsuperscript{165} Ibid., p. 114.
\textsuperscript{166} Ibid., p. 90.
The scriptures are radiant with promises of present sanctification—a redemption from all iniquity—studied a thousand times, but never understood [until] now. Prayers for holiness are now answered, and a holy joy, a divine peace, a rest in God, and the witnessing of the Holy Spirit to the work of Christ, for the soul, ensue. 167

Pearsall Smith claimed the experience of entire sanctification was not unique. He and his wife were careful to provide personal accounts of many converts and skeptics alike. One Presbyterian minister, who rejected the notion of entire sanctification envied the “resurrection power in which some around him” 168 had experienced. These stories were compelling for Church leaders who longed for more effective ministry.

It was Pearsall Smith who influenced the young Anglican vicar, Evan Hopkins. Hopkins later became the most articulate expositor and leader associated with the early Keswick Conventions. 169

Hannah Whitall Smith

Born and raised a Quaker, Hannah left the fellowship of Friends and joined the Presbyterian Church, shortly after marrying her husband, Robert Pearsall Smith. Though Hannah underwent a conversion experience, she and her husband remained dissatisfied with their spiritual lives. Despite an intentional period of repentance and resolve, they found themselves powerless over besetting sin.

Hannah began to see that the apostle Paul was also unable to overcome the power of sin. It was not until Paul learned to die with Christ, that he acquired real moral victory and spiritual power. Hannah convinced her husband that Romans 6:6 was the key to a happy or victorious Christian life. The sixth chapter of Romans, the sixth verse became

167 Ibid., p. 90.
168 Ibid., pp. 150-151.
her “victory” passage and the secret to her happy Christian life. Upon this blessed
discovery Hannah wrote:

We had simply discovered the ‘secret of victory,’ and knew that we were
no longer the ‘slaves of sin’ and therefore forced to yield to its mastery,
but that we might, if we would, be made more than conquerors through
our Lord Jesus Christ. But this did not mean that temptations ceased to
come; and when we neglected to avail ourselves of the ‘secret’ we had
discovered, and instead of handling the battle over to the Lord, took it into
our own hands as of old, failure inevitably followed.

Secret of a Happy Life*. The success of her book launched the couple as Higher Life
advocates in many countries, particularly England.

Traveling throughout England in 1872, Hannah and her husband convinced both
clergy and laypersons that they too could become “overcomers.” Receiving “the
blessing,” “the consecration” or “rest” as it was called, meant victory over life’s trials and
personal failings.

The couple returned to the United States under a cloud of shame when it was learned
that Pearsall Smith had an inappropriate encounter with a young woman in his hotel
room. Yet, their Higher Life ideals were catalysts to the Higher Life Movement that
drove the Keswick Conventions for years following their return to America.

**Early Keswick Leaders**

A broad spectrum of talented leaders quickly assembled to fill the void left by Robert
Pearsall Smith and his wife. Men such as Webb-Peploe, Bowker, Evan Hopkins and
Harford-Battersby were not only capable leaders, but each also possessed unique, salient

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& Co., 1873)

171 H. W. Smith, p. 37, as quoted by Barabás, p. 18.
talents. Harford-Batterby was a “shy, cultured ex-Tractarian, Bowker [a] learned schoolmaster, Webb-Peploe the athlete squire, and Hopkins the scientist.”

South American by birth, Evan Hopkins trained as a civil engineer at London’s School of Mines. By 1865 Hopkins took holy orders, and in 1871 he became rector of Holy Trinity Church in Richmond, Surrey. Impressed by Robert Pearsall Smith, Hopkins embraced the Higher Life message, which, he claimed, imparted “a new ebullience, assurance, unflagging zest, and above all contagious joy.” Perhaps most importantly, Hopkins believed that the Higher Life message explained his own spiritual experiences. Once he had encountered entire consecration, the “secret of blessings in what was called ‘resting faith,’” he sought to make this experience the standard for others. Respected throughout Keswick for his unpresuming demeanor and affable nature, Hopkins was to become a guiding presence in the Keswick Conventions and Anglicanism. His influence should not to be underestimated.

Hopkins, Webb-Peploe and Bowker were different with respect to temperament and talent, yet together they represented both the Anglican and Nonconformist Church. Therefore Keswick boasted of unity among diverse believers, noted particularly in their leadership, which they believed represented a modern Pentecost—the new millennium. Though Keswick rarely boasted of their intellectual achievements, the early leaders were noted scholars. H.C.G. Moule for example, held a doctorate in divinity, served as Principal of Cambridge’s Ridley Hall, and later became Bishop of Durham.

VI. The Keswick Milieu

The Mood

The Keswick Conventions had a conspicuous charm, an aroma all their own. One newcomer to Keswick believed that the atmosphere was atypical of Christian Conventions. While theological discourse was absent, nonetheless this observer claimed

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172 Pollock, p. 56.
173 Ibid., p.15.
he had never received greater clarity on the scriptures, particularly as they related to faith as the means to Christian living. Nor had he attended a meeting with such newness of spirit. Some reported feeling dazed by the “glory that had burst upon”\textsuperscript{176} them. Held in the Lake District of England, one of the most picturesque locations on earth, the scenery added to the milieu. The “love, joy, peace, meekness, gentleness”\textsuperscript{177} and beauty of Keswick was inescapable.

The Keswick experience was above all else an experience of faith and rest. Therefore, strenuous intellectual or emotional activity was avoided. Striving of any form was considered a disruption to the rest and peace intrinsic to authentic encounters with God. It is no surprise that Keswick leaders were fond of citing the medieval mystics, and particularly the Quietists who suggested the highest forms of intimacy with God are attained through rest. The works of Madame Guyon, Fénelon, Thomas à Kempis, Faber and Brother Lawrence were frequently on the lips of Keswick luminaries, and prominently displayed in their personal libraries.\textsuperscript{178} Mystics such as Jacob Boehme, St. Theresa, Catherine of Siena, and William Law\textsuperscript{179} and others held a significant place in Keswick’s spirituality, and through Keswick their ideas were introduced to evangelical circles.

Despite the emphasis on rest, Keswick luminaries were quite industrious. Keswick’s spiritual milieu gave rise to an abundance of hymns, poetry, and spiritual literature by both women and men. Authors like Hannah Whitall Smith, Andrew Murray, Evan Hopkins, Bishop Moule, F.B. Meyer and Jessie Penn-Lewis were especially prolific. Their articles, journals and books underwent multiple reprinting, and in some cases were translated into over one hundred dialects and languages. The message of holiness through faith was infused into many denominations around the world through Keswick’s industry of hymns, books, pamphlets, journals, and articles. Much of their work remains in print today.

\textsuperscript{176} Harford, p. 125.
\textsuperscript{177} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{178} Ibid., p. 223.
\textsuperscript{179} Pierson, \textit{Forward Movements of the Last Half Century}. pp. 11-12.
The Method

Holiness through faith was propounded through a carefully structured week of sermons, lectures, hymns and testimonies. Higher Life teaching was imposed on conference goers at every turn. Even the hymns argued for rest and repose. In addition to writing their own hymns, Keswick reworked the lyrics of common hymns infusing them with the Higher Life message. These were incorporated into *The Keswick Hymn-Book*, which proved an effective and portable means of delivering their message to audiences around the world.

The Keswick week consisted of five days of carefully structured lessons. Each day of the week had a specific theme, and every hymn, each sermon or Bible reading, and each testimony added to the day’s theme. Each day built upon the previous one towards one end—to create a longing for victory over sin.

The Keswick week began by exalting the holiness of God. Monday offered a comparison of God’s perfection with human sin. Keswick was fond of propounding the exceeding sinfulness of sin. Tuesday rehearsed God’s provision for sin. Wednesday was the climax as Convention goers were invited to enter rest. Thursday’s teaching centered on the Spirit-filled life. Christian service was the topic of Friday’s lectures and Bible Readings. An example of a week’s sermons include the following:

- **Sunday**: The High and Lofty One whose name is holy and the glorious inheritance of the children of God.

- **Monday**: Sin in the life of the believer and its disastrous consequences.

- **Tuesday**: The perfect cleansing available in the precious blood of Christ, and the rest of faith that results.

- **Wednesday**: The whole-hearted surrender of the cleansed life to God, pointing to a God-controlled life of victory.
Thursday: The fullness of the Holy Spirit and the indwelling and abiding presence of Christ in the heart of the believer.

Friday: The life of disciplined and sacrificial service that must ensue, and the means of grace to make possible a holy walk in all circumstances. (An emphasis brought out in the great Missionary Meeting on Friday morning, the special teaching meeting in the afternoon, and the administration of the Lord’s Supper at night.)

The Music

The message of Keswick reached worldwide audiences in part through the vibrant hymns they wrote. The most famous hymnist associated with Keswick was Frances R. Havergal (1836-1879). An Anglican, Havergal wrote over fifty hymns including, “I am trusting thee, Lord Jesus,” “Who is on the Lord’s side,” and “Take my life and let it be.” Her hymn, “Like a River Glorious” secured a place in nearly every denominational hymnal, and remains in most Protestant hymnals to this day.

Frances Havergal wrote the lyrics to twenty-one hymns in the 1936 *The Keswick Hymn-Book.* She devoted six hymns for “consecration;” one for “Faith;” one for “Fulness of the Spirit;” two for “the Overcoming Life;” six for “Union;” one for “Conflict;” one for “Growth in Grace;” one for “Service;” one for the “Second Advent;” and one general hymn.

Havergal’s lyrics are sympathetic to Keswick’s call to rest. Her popular hymn “Like a River Glorious,” suggests that to remain in God, is to have perfect peace and rest. But perhaps more than this, Havergal’s hymn expresses a longing for God to provide a place to hide, perhaps from sin where “no foe can follow, no traitor stand, no surge of worry,” “not even a shade of care” can touch one’s spirit there. She then connects a longing for rest with God’s promise of peace and rest.

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Like a River Glorious

Is God's perfect peace,
Over all victorious
In its bright increase;
Perfect, yet it floweth
Fuller every day—
Perfect, yet it groweth
Deeper all the way.

Chorus—Stayed upon Jehovah,
Hearts are fully blest;
Finding, as He promised,
Perfect peace and rest.

Hidden in the hollow
Of his blessed hand,
Never foe can follow,
Never traitor stand;
Not a surge of worry,
Not a shade of care,
Not a blast of hurry,
Touch the spirit there.

Every joy or trial
Falleth from above,
Traced upon our dial
By the Sun of Love.
We may trust Him fully
All for us to do;
They who trust Him wholly
Find Him wholly true. ¹⁸²

The Keswick Hymn-Book was organized thematically. Unlike many evangelical hymnals however, The Keswick Hymn-Book included themes such as mystical union; the overcoming life; longings for holiness; fullness of the spirit; and consecration. While Keswick hymns were frequently sung to familiar church tunes, the lyrics were often new. The rephrasing of popular hymns popularized the Higher Life message to Christian audiences in many countries.

Just as Keswick began the week by emphasizing the problem of sin, likewise the Keswick hymnal provided forty-one hymns on “Longings for Holiness.” Every aspect of the Keswick Convention, including its hymns, created a longing for holiness and rest, and also encouraged a decision of faith.

A hunger for holiness and a longing to enter “rest” in made clear in the following hymn by A. W. Martson, entitled “Longing for Holiness.” Here we note that while the soul is ransomed or redeemed, it lacks the power to please God. The soul has yet to become fully sanctified. The ransomed soul acknowledges its “lack of strength” which has left God’s “will undone.” Powerless, the soul “cannot stand at all” and can only fall into “Thine everlasting arms.” The element of passivity whereby the soul completes God’s will in attaining holiness is noted.

_Longing for Holiness_

O Lord, I come to Thee
Thou knowest all my state;
My heart is longing so for rest,
No longer can I wait.

Thou knowest all my sin;
How I, Thy ransomed one,
Have gone the way my heart desired,

And left Thy will undone
Lord, Thou canst work in me
The will to do Thy will;
And Thou canst work in me to work,
Thy pleasure to fulfil
In utter lack of strength
Into Thine arms I fall;
For if Thou dost not hold me up,
I cannot stand at all
Thine everlasting arms
Will never let me go;
The arms of Him who fainteth not
Can never weary grow.

Lord, Thou wilt take me now;
I trust myself to Thee,
That as Thy will is done in heaven
It may be done in me. 183

After acknowledging one’s sins and one’s hunger for peace and holiness, Keswick offered God’s promise of rest. Correspondingly, the second category of The Keswick Hymn-Book devoted thirty-nine hymns to “consecration.” In the following hymn, Moule, Bishop of Durham, contrasted slavery to self with consecration or union to Christ. As the soul surrenders to God it is united to God’s will, just as a slave is united to a benevolent Master. The pierced-ear of the slave is willingly bonded or united to God, where the vassal-soul enjoys a vastness, a joy and a freedom from serving the cruel master—self. The following-hymn was based-upon the music of R.W. Dixon.

183 A.W. Marston. Hymn 5. Ibid., p. 4.
My glorious Victor, Prince Divine,
Clasp these surrendered hands in Thine
At length my will is all thine own,
Glad vassal of a Saviour’s throne.

My Master, lead me to Thy door;
Pierce this now willing ear once more:
Thy bonds are freedom; let me stay;
With Thee, to toil, endure, obey.

Yes, ear and hand, and thought and will,
Use all in Thy dear slav’ry still!
Self’s weary liberties I cast;
Beneath Thy feet; there keep them fast.

Tread them still down; and then I know,
These hands shall with Thy gifts o’er flow;
And pierced ears shall hear the tone
Which tells me Thou and I are one. 184

Faith, for Keswick, opened the door to fruits of the spiritual life. Faith was not only the portal to forgiveness, but faith was also the means to power over sin. Frances Havergal wrote the following hymn as a tribute to the fruits of faith. Her hymn, “I Am Trusting,” suggests that souls trust God for cleansing and holiness, as well as for power. Havergal wrote the following lyrics, though E.W. Bullinger composed the music. The hymn appears in the Keswick Hymn-Book without a title.

I AM trusting thee, Lord Jesus,
Trusting only Thee;

184 Bishop H.C.G. Moule. Hymn 47. Ibid., p. 42.
Trusting Thee for full salvation,
   Great and free.

I am trusting Thee for pardon,
   At Thy feet I bow;
For Thy grace and tender mercy,
   Trusting now.

I am trusting Thee for cleansing,
   In the crimson flood;
Trusting Thee to make me holy,
   By Thy blood.

I am trusting Thee to guide me,
   Thou alone shalt lead,
Ev’ry day and hour supplying
   All my need.

I am trusting Thee for power,
   Thine can never fail;
Words which Thou Thyself shalt give me,
   Must prevail.

I am trusting Thee, Lord Jesus;
   Never let me fall:
I am trusting Thee, Lord Jesus;
   Never let me fall;
I am trusting Thee for ever
   And for all. 185

The Keswick Hymn-Book included thirty-four hymns on the “Fulness of the Spirit,” the focus of Keswick’s mid-week lectures. The following hymn was sung to the music of M. J. Hammond. The lyrics, by B.P. Head, illustrate the function of the Holy Spirit to first cleanse from sin, and second to renew or restore “thought, will and heart.”

O Breath of Life, come sweeping through us,
    Revive Thy Church with life and power;
O Breath of Life, come, cleanse, renew us
    And fit Thy Church to meet this hour.

O Wind of God, come bend us, break us,
    Till humbly we confess our need;
Then in Thy tenderness remake us,
    Revive, restore, for this we plead.

O Breath of Love, come breathe within us,
    Renewing thought and will and heart;
Come, Love of Christ, afresh to win us,
    Revive Thy Church in ev’ry part.

O Heart of Christ, once broken for us,
    ’Tis there we find our strength and rest;
Our broken contrite hearts now solace,
    And let Thy waiting Church be blest.

Revive us, Lord! Is zeal abating
    While harvest fields are vast and white?
Revive us, Lord, the world is waiting,
    Equip Thy Church to spread the light.\textsuperscript{186}

\textsuperscript{186} B. P. Head. Hymn 149, Ibid., p.130.
Twenty-six hymns extol the victorious life. Havergal’s hymn below, sung to a tune by W.S. Bambridge, rehearsed the Keswick theme, that sanctification is initiated by faith, not by human effort. Faith initiates union so that God’s own beauty is “on our brow” and “God’s own holiness” is ours as well.

Church of God, beloved and chosen,
Church of Christ for whom He died,
Claim thy gifts and praise the Giver,

Ye are washed and sanctified.
Sanctified by God the Father,
And by Jesus Christ His Son,
And by God the Holy Spirit,
Holy, Holy, Three in One.

Holiness by faith in Jesus,
Not by effort of thine own,
Sin’s dominion crushed and broken
By the power of grace alone,
God’s own holiness within thee,
His own beauty on thy brow;
This shall be thy pilgrim brightness,
This thy blessed portion now.  

The 1936 Keswick Hymn-Book included fifty-eight hymns on mystical union, indicating the importance this theme held for Keswick. In the following hymn, “Abiding in Him,” that mystical union is celebrated as “rest in the Crucified.” Moreover, through mystical union, the soul is “dead” to itself but “alive to Him.” As the soul remains “dead,” divine power replaces human effort, so that it is not “I but Christ in me,” through which “mighty

188 Havergal. Hymn 163, Ibid., p. 143.
work is done.” One clearly notes the elements of Quietism in the following hymn, sung to music of D.C. Wright, entitled: “Abiding in Him.”

**Abiding in Him**

Abiding, oh, so wondrous sweet,
I’m resting at the Saviour’s feet,
I trust in Him, I’m satisfied
I’m resting in the Crucified.

Abiding, abiding,
Oh! So wondrous sweet;
I’m resting, resting
At the Saviour’s feet.

He speaks, and by His word is giv’n
His peace, a rich foretaste of heav’n;
Not as the world He peace doth give,
‘Tis thro’ this hope my soul shall live.

I live; not I; ‘tis He alone
By Whom the mighty work is done,
Dead to myself, alive to Him,
I count all loss His rest to gain.

Now rest, my heart, the work is done,
I’m sav’d thro’ the Eternal Son:
Let all my pow’rs my soul employ,
To tell the world my peace and joy

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Keswick’s hymns popularized their theological priorities. Because the hymns of Charles Wesley celebrated spiritual vibrancy, they were included among Keswick’s hymns. Similarly, since the hymns of Bernard of Clairvaux and F.W. Faber’s extolled union with Christ, they too found a home in the *Keswick Hymn-Book*. Keswick hymns created a longing for rest, and through their simple prose and vivid images, their message was accessible to many people, regardless of their educational background or denominational affiliation. Thus, at the close of each convention, the Keswick Convention celebrated communion en masse. Thus, Keswick’s *Hymn-Book* offered eleven hymns used during the Lord’s Supper. Keswick’s milieu easily incorporated the arts, and they were prolific writers not only of music and hymns, but of literature as well.

The Keswick Convention never established a creed or doctrinal statement. It preferred practical spiritual experiences to theological dogma. Though theological and biblical treatises were never developed, yet Keswick leaders produced quantities of practical and devotional literature.\textsuperscript{190} The most prolific authors included the British Hopkins, Bishop Moule, F. B. Meyer, the South African Andrew Murray, the Welsh Jessie Penn-Lewis, and the Americans W.E. Boardman, A.J. Gordon, A.T. Pierson, and Robert Pearsall and Hannah Whitall Smith.

The early Keswick literature was deeply influenced by the Romantic Movement, with its affinity for depicting spiritual ideals through pastoral images. Nature was the perfect metaphor for God, with its intoxicating beauty and its call to repose. Perhaps this explains why Higher Life Conventions convened in settings such as Keswick, Chamonix, and the countryside throughout North America. Some feared, however, that the frequency with which Keswick imaged God through nature revealed a pantheistic undercurrent in Keswick teaching.\textsuperscript{191,192}

\textsuperscript{191} Price & Randall, p. 65.
\textsuperscript{192} Bebbington, p. 167 & ff.
The Keswick Convention that produced theological poets such as the Rev. Charles A. Fox also served as the curate to William Pennefather. Fox's influential works such as: *Ankle Deep* and *The River of Pentecostal Power* and *The Spiritual Grasp of the Epistles*, combined the message of Keswick with the poetry of the Lake District. By expressing encounters with God through "the poetry of the spiritual," 193 Fox won the title of the poet of the Keswick Conventions. Fox, F.B. Meyer, and others captured the spirituality of Keswick in prose, and Keswick honored their works with a place in the Keswick *Hymn-Book*. Through the literature of Keswick, the Higher Life message was diffused to a world already well influenced by the Romantic mood.

In order to give account of their spiritual victories, Keswick leaders created a number of journals or magazines. As early 1874, Robert Pearsall Smith and Hannah Whitall Smith began *The Christian Pathway of Power*. Edited by Pearsall Smith, *The Christian's Pathway of Power* was conceived with one purpose in mind: to promote "personal consecration and Power for Service." 194 The stated mission of Pearsall Smith's journal read:

> We believe the Word of God teaches that the normal Christian life is one of sustained victory over known sin ... the Cross of Christ which has effectually separated us from the penalty or consequence of our sins is also the means by which we become separated from their power; and that the only true way of overcoming the evil within us is by recognizing our position as those that have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts; that the reckoning of ourselves to be dead indeed unto sin is the great duty of faith, and the secret of life of abiding communion with God. 195

By reporting on the events at the Oxford and Brighton Conventions, Evan Hopkins began writing for the *Christian's Pathway of Power* in 1874. After the return of Pearsall Smith to America in 1875, Hopkins became editor. In 1879, *The Christian's Pathway of Power*

193 Price & Randall, p. 45.
194 Harford, p. 224.
195 The editor of *The Christian's Pathway of Power*, as quoted by Harford, p. 224.
was renamed *The Life of Faith*, and became the main publication of the Keswick Convention. *The Life of Faith* remained in print for over one century. In order to include a full account of Keswick lectures and meetings, in 1882 the Keswick Conventions developed a second journal entitled *The Keswick Convention*. *The Keswick Convention Week* was eventually shortened to *The Keswick Week*.

As Higher Life teaching came under criticism, often from members of the Reformed camp, Keswick divines responded by publishing a twelve-pamphlet series defending their spiritual foundations. H.F. Bowker, chairman of the Keswick Convention, contributed a pamphlet entitled: “Sanctification: A Statement and a Defense.” Harford-Battersby authored a pamphlet called, “Bondage or Liberty.” Yet, it was Evan Hopkins work, *The Law of Liberty in the Spiritual Life*, which proved the most lucid articulation of Keswick’s Higher Life message.

Eager to defend sanctification by faith, the leaders of Keswick engaged in a prolific writing campaign. Perhaps the most scholarly proponent was Bishop Handley Moule. His most noted treatises included, *Thoughts on Christian Sanctity; Veni Creator; The Epistle to the Romans;* and *Thoughts on Union with Christ*. Moule’s affiliation with the Keswick Conventions lent credence to a movement under attack by the Church of England and Nonconformists alike.

Two other prolific writers associated with Keswick were Andrew Murray and Jessie Penn-Lewis. Murray’s *Abide in Christ*, became perhaps the most popular book in Keswick circles, while Jessie Penn-Lewis’s books, booklets and articles were in demand by international readers. Other popular Keswick authors included; E.E. Cummings, author of *Through the Eternal Spirit*, and *After the Spirit*; Hubert Brook, author of *Candlestick and The Temple of His Body*; G.H.C. Macgregor, author of *A Holy Life*; and F.B. Meyer author of *From Calvary to Pentecost, Elijah, Abraham, and Jacob*. These books were considered Higher Life classics as they ably communicated sanctification by faith.196

The literature of Keswick became an industry in itself. Marshall Brothers, (later known as Marshall & Scott) published Keswick authors, and sold these books at yearly conventions. Profits from the sale of books were returned to the Convention.

VII. Keswick Markets the Message

The Keswick Conventions were opportunities to experience masterful communication and skillful marketing techniques. In contrast to the flamboyant American camp meetings, Keswick preachers preferred personal testimony, simple music, with sermons that everyone could understand. Thus, the Higher Life message was advanced without intellectual superiority or excessive emotion, as proponents of the Higher Life claimed that sanctification through faith improved life. By communicating ideas simply, the Higher Life message was made accessible to all walks of life. They packaged their message consistently, communicating a single truth with elegant simplicity—that victory over sin comes not by might or power, (emotionally or intellectually), but by faith, through resting in God’s Spirit. Daily Convention events were designed to create first a longing for rest, and second a decision of faith.

Keswick Conventions offered multiple venues to those whose lives were transformed from weakness to power, from addiction to freedom, and from fretfulness and ill-temper to peace and repose. D.L. Moody, for example, was said to have possessed an irritable and disagreeable temperament. After attending Keswick he claimed his life was altered and so full of Christ’s love that friends commented on the change. “He has been to Keswick,” 197 was the explanation.

Entrance to the Keswick platform was therefore tightly controlled. Prominence on the Keswick platform was rarely gained through academic qualifications alone. Ambition “and brilliant rhetorical efforts would not find a congenial atmosphere or a sympathetic hearing.” 198 Only those who shared the convictions of Keswick and “by experiment have tested them, are asked to take part, and no others.” 199

According to Keswick divines, figures from the Bible were said to have undergone a second experience, where they too found the power to overcome besetting sins and moral frailty. Keswick was fond of exploring what seemed like biblical evidence that Moses,

197 Harford, p. 82.
198 Barabás, p. 34.
199 A.T. Pierson, as quoted by Barabás, p. 33.
Peter and Paul had had a “second experience” with God. Paul, for example was a proud and ill-tempered Pharisee. He was bitter and ferocious, and threatened the slaughter of “the followers of the Meek and Lowly One.” Yet after Paul encountered Christ on the Road to Damascus, he too became humble and gentle, because, as he said, “The life I now live I live by the faith in the Son of God. I live, nevertheless, not I, but Christ liveth in me.”

Similarly, Peter underwent a second experience, according to W.E. Broadman. Following his transformational “experience,” Peter was changed from one who denied Christ, to one who proclaimed the Messiah with boldness. From the moment of Peter’s second experience he was a new man, as W.E. Boardman wrote:

[Peter] was the first to rise up before the Jerusalem populace who had put Christ to death, and ... tell them boldly that they had killed the Prince of Life. The fearless one also [stood] before the grand court of his nation, and when charged not to speak or to teach in the name of Jesus, and threatened with death if he should, he could answer their threatenings, by saying, Whether it be right to hearken unto you, more than unto God, judge ye; for we cannot but speak the things we do know, and testify the things we have seen.

Like Paul, Moses was a man enslaved by rage, egotism and cowardice. By “the fire of his own tempter,” he killed a man. He was angered “because his own people did not accept him at once as their deliverer.” Yet, after Moses encountered God in the burning bush, he was remade. “Nothing daunted, yet nothing offended him.” Though his own people rebelled, Moses, now transformed, remained courageous. “Oh how like that One did Moses become through the indwelling of that One in him!”


Ibid., p. 38.


Ibid., p. 162.

Ibid.

Ibid.

Ibid.
Following the model of Paul, Moses and Peter, women believed that their lives were also transformed and empowered by the Higher Life message. Women claimed they found strength at every "point where we are weakest, by nature or habit." One woman described her enslavement to anger and harsh-language. She felt hopeless and powerless until she attended a Keswick Convention. There she met Jesus, who was quicker than her temper. She said:

The grand truth was only to give herself up ... and this she could do and did do with delight. So given up, and so trusting in Jesus, she found herself perpetually and entirely in the Lord, and proved by happy and continual experience His keeping power. He was always quicker than the temper and the tempter. 

Burdened with domestic demands and many other pressures, women longed for Keswick’s “rest” as much as did their male counterparts. One woman, after listening to a houseguest describe her experience of “rest” wasted no time. She immediately embraced the “consecrated life” and afterwards insisted that all “her work and all her cares had been wonderfully sweetened, and thus wonderfully lightened and brightened.” Even her husband noticed the change and he too became a Keswick convert.

Like Pentecost, Keswick imparted spiritual power to both women and men. As one pastor explained that the baptism of the Spirit was not limited “to apostolic times,” his incredulous wife was won over by his message and began to pray the Lord’s prayer. By the time she reached the end she realized that:

The kingship of Christ was a present spiritual inner one, and the power by which He sets up His kingdom is that of the Spirit given unto us to dwell in us and work in us to will and to do the will of God. When she came to the amen ... Wonderful was her deliverance ... When next she went into

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207 Ibid., p. 39.
208 Ibid., pp. 40-41.
209 Ibid., p. 55.
210 Ibid., p. 62.
the meeting ... she was able herself to give in a testimony as unequivocal and as ringing of her husband’s. 211

Unsurprisingly, Keswick became a place of healing for those enslaved by various addictions. Freedom from tobacco, alcohol, gambling and the racetrack was said to be the result of a Keswick experience.212 When an addict is healed, and a “violent temper is made meek ... it brings a ceaseless revenue of glory to God which all the equable tempers in the world could not do.”213 One consecrated soul marked his release from drink and smoke in this way:

When I go to market now, the Lord He goes with me all the way, and I don’t want to stop at them drinkin’ places on the road, as I used to. I don’t have to stop to light my pipe, either, for I give it up at once when the Lord must have a clean temple to dwell in, and not one all filthy with the filthy weed. And I ain’t never had one bit o’ desire to touch either rum or tobacco from then till now.” 214

Each summer both men and women showcased their deliverance from “besetting sins of tongue and temper, habits of wrong-doing.”215 Infirmities once regarded as burdens to “be borne with and struggled against until death gives relief and release”216 were said to vanish through the experience of rest.

As the Keswick Conventions ushered souls into an experience of consecration, the result was not only release from physical and psychological additions. As noted earlier, consecration was also said to initiate physical renewal, noted particularly in one’s facial appearance. Just as Moses’ face glowed after encountering God, so too the faces of those who entered “rest.” For example, after hearing Canon Harford-Battersby preach at Keswick, one listener described his face as that of an angel’s. “It showed at once that

211 Ibid., p. 64.
212 Harford, p. 94.
214 Ibid., p. 27.
216 Ibid.
there was something there, which told its own tale." Following the consecration of Keswick’s chairman Bowker, one woman compared his new facial expression to that of an earlier painting saying she “had never seen a more remarkable change.”

**The Failure of the Church**

Is the average Christian characterized by victorious power and supernatural “joy in the midst of unhappy circumstances?” Does the world rather view many Christians as weak and unable to master sin and self-interest? Why are not most Christians composed, patient and loving when faced with “ingratitude and indifference, even hostility?”

These were the questions that the Keswick Conventions asked.

In Keswick’s view, most Christians are not only a disappointment to themselves but their moral failings also dissuade others from pursuing a life of faith. The absence of “real spiritual power” is worsened by the fact that many Christians are focused on material rather than spiritual pursuits. Crippled by sin, complacent Christians are of no real service to others, Keswick argued. How could they “lead others into a new life of purity, peace, and power” which they have not found themselves?

Who was to blame for the scarcity of power in the average Christian life? Churches and pastors, insisted Keswick leaders. The source of spiritual impotence rests in the fact that the Church acknowledges only a portion of the gospel message—pardon to the sinners. All too often preachers omit the Higher Life message, that “continuous victory over temptation [is] equally provided in the Gospel.” Such oversight has led to a spiritual feebleness as well as ineffective Christian service. The Keswick Convention therefore began a rigorous campaign to educate pastors on the Higher Life message. Ministers, after all, are those most in need of the spiritual power. They face constant pressure from “higher critics” that attack the faith and the authority of the scripture.

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217 Harford, p. 55.
218 Ibid., p. 56.
220 Ibid.
222 Ibid.
223 Ibid., p. 16.
Pastors also come under attack from the devil. They are targets, said Keswick, of "the deadliest temptations in the arsenal of Satan."\textsuperscript{224}

What better place to revive and empower beleaguered pastors than in the Lake District? At Keswick, "Bible ideals begin to appear as divine possibilities—Alps to be attempted, not stars to be admired."\textsuperscript{225} The "very atmosphere helped."\textsuperscript{226} Keswick promised victory to Christian leaders who faced the modern world and higher criticism with shrinking defeat. "No one can visit Keswick without feeling its power—no one can leave Keswick and not carry away some of the joy."\textsuperscript{227} What vicar could resist the promise of power? After attending Keswick, even the "dullest of preachers"\textsuperscript{228} were said to have "resistless power in the pulpit."\textsuperscript{229} Keswick offered power to the weary and defeated so that they might substitute "the old 'I cannot,' [with] the triumphant 'I can do all things in Him that strengtheneth me.'"\textsuperscript{230} Even competent people derived new strength from a Keswick experience, it was claimed.\textsuperscript{231}

Of course, not everyone enjoyed the company of Keswick goers. Affiliation with Keswick was said to produce Christians who were divisive and self-righteous. Claiming to possess power over sin, these individuals seemed to view themselves with a sense of superiority.\textsuperscript{232} Because Keswick called their Higher Life converts to infuse their "new life into dead and formal service,"\textsuperscript{233} their local parishes often resented the inference. In defense, Keswick devotees claimed that their holiness was rooted in authentic humility, an admission of personal inadequacy, and an utter dependence on the Holy Spirit.\textsuperscript{234} A truly consecrated Christian, they argued, is the "last to assert their own sanctity, and would be shocked, should others ascribe to them holiness or perfection."\textsuperscript{235} Despite such disclaimers, many viewed Keswick's enthusiasm as insincere.

\textsuperscript{224} Harford, p. 177.
\textsuperscript{225} Ibid., p. 179.
\textsuperscript{226} Ibid., p. 179.
\textsuperscript{227} Sloan, p. 106.
\textsuperscript{228} A.T. Pierson, \textit{The Keswick Movement in Precept and Practice}, pp. 117-118.
\textsuperscript{229} Ibid., p. 117.
\textsuperscript{230} Harford, p. 182.
\textsuperscript{231} Ibid., p. 181.
\textsuperscript{232} A.T. Pierson, \textit{Forward Movements of the Last Half Century}, p. 41.
\textsuperscript{233} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{234} Ibid., p. 42.
\textsuperscript{235} Ibid.
Every aspect of the Keswick Convention had one purpose—to lead each soul to a decision of faith. Every hymn, each testimony and sermon, even the scenery, poetry and literature made a case, built momentum, and aimed towards one goal—consecration. Will you choose holiness? Will you enter rest? Who could resist? As Pearsall Smith said in 1875, he did not come to Oxford to bend minds around theology, but to beg for a decision. Thus, every evening, following the general session, while music was playing gently in the background, an invitation was made. Delegates were asked to “rise in their places as token that they desire to consecrate themselves wholly unto God.” Keswick avoided the pitfalls and delays of over intellectualization. They offered a simple call and fully expected a positive response.

**Faith Overshadows Effort**

Because Keswick leaders claimed that holiness was attained through passivity, emotional or intellectual effort was copiously avoided. The consecrated Christian shunned strain of any sort, for spiritual union was initiated by faith, through a resting in Christ alone. Thus, Keswick speakers were earnest, without exhibiting intellectual rigor or sensational emotion. Similarly, Keswick sermons were void of brilliant rhetoric, oratory or anything that might appear intellectually superior. Rather, sermons were “simple expositions of the Word of God, that impress the hearer as quite devoid of attempts at mere literary effect.” To participate in a Higher Life experience did not require a brilliant mind or an education. A childlike faith was the only prerequisite. This of course made the Higher Life experience accessible to almost everyone. Yet, while Keswick avoided theological discourse, the intellectual capacity of Keswick speakers was deemed to be high. One observer noted that:

> [The] intellectual level of the addresses has been astonishingly high—I have never seen it equalled, and yet I have never detected one word that was self-conscious or egotistical, or that savoured of intellectual display.

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236 Harford, p. 11.
There has been no clever talking about holy things, but a lowly, self-forgetting, showing forth of the things themselves. 238

Bible readings and lectures at Keswick were intelligible and personal; they were also void of theological abstractions. This was particularly true when it concerned the Cross. To intellectualize rather than to experience Calvary was, for Keswick, to circumvent the Higher Life experience. Penn-Lewis for example had no desire to “dogmatise or systematise” her understanding of Calvary. Rather, she preferred to pursue “the experimental pathway” to God through Calvary. Keswick’s insistence upon a personal encounter with the Cross stood in contrast to the modern repugnance for doctrine of the atonement common in the 19th century church. Against this Keswick sought to restore the centrality of the doctrine of the atonement by promoting personal experience with the Cross. Robert Pearsall Smith, for example, argued that the doctrine of the atonement had for him “too much of a theological doctrine, rather than the glorious effective reality which I now find it to be, meeting fully every present need of my soul.” P.T. Forsyth (1848-1921) along with Jessie Penn-Lewis railed against an intellectual rather than an experiential grasp of Calvary, and thus a personal and vibrant Crucicentrism became a pressing concern not only within Keswick circles, but also within the broader evangelical Movement in the 19th century.

Keswick not only avoided an intellectual expression of faith, it also resisted emotional sensationalism. Any rigor, be it intellectual or emotional was viewed as draining and wearisome. It also suggested human rather than Divine control. Keswick was about rest. Excessive fervor, like that encountered during the Welsh revival of 1904-1905, was believed to oppose God’s presence and peace. Therefore, unrestrained emotions were seen as a deterrent to faith. Faith, rather than effort, ushered in the Pentecost experience,

238 Sloan, p. 55.
239 Gerrard, p. 56.
240 Ibid.
241 Bebbington, p. 156.
243 The Stephen Barabás Collection, part of the Wheaton College Archives, offers many examples of the American crucicentrist who were active within the early Keswick and Holiness movement. The most prominent included Charles G. Trumbull, from Yale University, and Gordon Watt, of Massachusetts. See also Bebbington, pp. 14-15.
244 Price & Randall, p. 177.
insisted Keswick. “True Faith has the authority of a fiat, as Christ has taught us.” Keswick boldly claims what is the rightful possession of every follower of Christ—holiness.

Therefore, Keswick Conventions sought simplicity in all things. In particular, they avoided the fanfare and marketeering noted among American revivalists. According to Keswick, the Americans placed too much emphasis on big name “evangelists and great choirs with far-famed Gospel singers,” without which they anticipate “no divine outpourings.” The sensationalism of the American revivals seemed to minimize the simple and ordinary means of God working through ordinary Christians, through faith and rest. In contrast to American revivalists, Keswick avoided extremes that pointed to human power, over and against the power of God. Keswick insisted upon simplicity and modesty, therefore Keswick’s speakers, music, and literature resisted sensationalism of any kind.

Though the Keswick Conventions avoided American marketeering techniques, yet their movement influenced Christian communities around the world. Within a few years Christians from around the globe began attending Keswick Conventions, and many of these began writing, speaking and developing affiliate conventions in their own countries. Moreover, Keswick leaders were often invited to address audiences around the world, and their literature was translated in many languages. Women like Jessie Penn-Lewis, addressed audiences in Denmark, Sweden, Russia, India and America. Moreover, Penn-Lewis’s writings were translated into more than 100 languages and dialects. Likewise, men like Macgregor addressed audiences in Canada, while F.B. Meyer led a Convention in Germany. Theodore Jelinghaus and Otto Stockmayer, after attending Keswick Conventions in England, preached the Higher Life message throughout Germany. Andrew Murray, a prolific writer, led Keswick affiliate Conventions in South Africa. By 1907, attendance at the Keswick Convention grew to six thousand and as a result many smaller offshoot Conventions sprung up around the world.

246 Ibid., pp. 36-37.
247 Ibid., p. 61.
248 Ibid.
249 Keswick developed a focus on missions early on. They expressed their dedication to missionary endeavor through the funds they raised to send Keswick-missionaries overseas.
One way Keswick gained influence around the world was through its outreach to Christian pastors. Keswick viewed itself as a “hospital” to weak and ineffective Christians, particularly those in Christian leadership. In 1903 the Keswick Convention established an informal “Ministers Meeting” for pastors interested in practical holiness. According to Dr. Elder Cummings, these meetings were opportunities for self-disclosure and propagation of Higher Life teaching. Ministers were said to:

[B]are their own personal history in order to help their brethren; and many must have gone back to their spheres of ministry, with a new vision of what was possible for them as the servants of Christ. 250

Building a nexus of professional clergy was a successful method of creating a global, Higher Life Community. As faith was affirmed and sins confessed, pastors entered “mystical union between Christ and the believing soul.”251 Keswick reported “hundreds of ministerial lives have been transformed in influence and power through the reception of the message.” 252

The denominational diversity among the Ministers’ Meetings was viewed as a monument to the power of Keswick’s message. Nothing but the power of Christ could unite leaders of Churches who differed on so many issues. Clergy from High and Low Church traditions along with leaders within the Nonconformists Churches all admitted their failings and also agreed that “the things on which they differ are as nothing compared to the living Unity in Christ.” 253 Pastors affiliated with Keswick began to redefine the Church as a group of Christians who admit their need of power. As in the time of Pentecost, so now, let believers identify not along denominational lines, but according to their experiences in Christ. “Spiritual affinities are felt to be stronger than denominational divergences.”254

250 Sloan, p. 56.
251 Harford, pp. 190-191.
252 Ibid., p. 191.
253 Ibid.
254 Ibid.
Just as Keswick sought to influence pastors, it made similar inroads to college students. Outreach to college students began in 1893 with two graduates, Donald Fraser from Scotland, and Robert Wilder from the United States. Together they established the Keswick Student Movement and held meetings for students at yearly Keswick Conventions. This fledging group became the precursor of the worldwide Evangelical Unions "which attracted students in universities who would forge strong Keswick links." 255

Meetings for students were held each year at the Keswick Convention, where students and young people were said to have embraced

[the] spiritual realities and enduements to which the Convention witnesses, and many of them received a fulness of blessing which has powerfully influenced the whole Student Christian organization to this day. 256

Fraser and Wilder’s efforts to draw students into a personal Christian faith eventually led to the development of InterVarsity Christian Fellowship—an international mission organization which continues to this day.

Keswick’s missionary impulse was felt early on, though with some reluctance. While Keswick leaders were initially reticent to incorporate international missions within the scope of the Convention, they began funding missionaries who were already on the field. Over time however, Keswick hosted its own missionaries, provided they agreed with Keswick’s Higher Life teaching.

Similarly, the Keswick’s Ladies’ Meetings allowed for missionary activity almost immediately, though Chairman Bowker initially opposed a separate track for missions, as part of the Keswick Convention. It was the solicitor Reginald Radcliffe, who convinced Bowker of the “paramount claims of the non-Christian world.” 257 Bowker agreed to hold a tent meeting for missions and over thirty individuals expressed an interest in missionary service. These events convinced Bowker that missions and consecration “ought to go

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255 Price & Randall, p. 118.
256 Harford, p. 208.
257 Ibid., pp. 134-135.
together," and thus began the Keswick missionary meetings. By 1887 Hudson Taylor, founder of China Inland Mission, was a featured speaker at Keswick Conventions. His dynamic presence and his passion for missions inspired others to dedicate their lives to foreign missions. By 1888, Keswick hosted its first session focused on missions, and the sum of £860 was raised for foreign work. Within one year, Keswick established a fund to bring missionaries to the Keswick Conventions, but a policy was adopted to support only those missionaries who embraced the "'Keswick message' in its fulness." 259

The first missionary to receive Keswick funding was Amy Carmichael, perhaps the best-known missionary of her era. Her successful work in South India was a powerful example of women's service in foreign lands. Keswick also supported missionaries in countries such as China, Japan, Africa, Canada, Australia, South America, Germany, Sweden, Egypt, New Zealand and Palestine.

As funds for missionary effort increased, Keswick began to pay the expenses of missionaries on furlough, bringing them to Keswick Conventions for rest and renewal. Imparting Keswick’s message of power to exhausted and discouraged missionaries was viewed as integral to the Higher Life cause. Thus, Keswick “proved such a means of blessing” 260 in the lives of beleaguered missionaries.

The Missions Meeting was said to be “the best and brightest of all the week,” 261 in no small part because of the unity evidenced amid the ethnic and denominational diversity of Keswick delegates. For example, there were more than twenty different missionary societies with seventy nationalities represented at the 1909 Missions Meeting. 262

Though Keswick missionaries were some of the brightest anywhere, sheer intelligence was believed practically useless to the Higher Life cause. What was needed, insisted missionaries like Paget Wilkes, were missionaries with power. Referring to the perceived spiritual needs of Japan, Wilkes said that we have “enough intellect among ourselves, but we do need men and women filled with the Holy Ghost.” 263

258 Ibid., p. 136.
259 Ibid., p. 138.
260 Sloan, p. 34.
261 Ibid.
262 Ibid., pp. 65-66.
263 Ibid., p. 66.
The message of Keswick was said to empower the work of missionaries like Miss Stevenson, a member of the Church of Scotland. Stevenson had received a second blessing at the Bridge of Allan Convention, a Keswick affiliate meeting in Scotland. There she encountered not only a call to missions, but also power for service. In documenting her life years later she said:

I believe that neither my health nor my courage would stand the strain of the life I have lived out here were it not for the enabling and keeping power of the Holy Spirit. 264

Testimonies from missionaries like Stevenson underscored the importance of consecration to empower Christian service. It is no wonder that Keswick saw the significance of its message for missionary activity. 265

VIII. The Women of Keswick

Because women’s Higher Life experience was initially limited to the home, women’s worldwide ministry (in missions, evangelism, in the development of spiritual literature and music, etc.) did not have “the universal and recognized position” 266 it would eventually enjoy. The Ladies’ Meetings were considered an ancillary or “after-meeting,” where application of Keswick’s Higher Life message was made to women’s roles within home. Like all events at Keswick, the Ladies’ Meetings provided additional opportunities to seek victory over sin. During these meetings, women were compelled to relinquish their willfulness to Christ. One woman was said to have abandoned her “high intellect” for the sake of Christ. 267

Eventually, however, the women of Keswick used the Higher Life teaching to challenge sexist presuppositions. If the victorious life was followed consistently, then women might finally gain victory over Eve’s sin, which had hitherto limited their

264 Ibid., p. 75.
265 Ibid., p. 34.
266 Ibid., p. 195.
267 Ibid., p. 197.
influence within the Church. Moreover, young, single women longed for a greater scope for service. Perhaps because of this, women were among the first to serve as Keswick-sponsored missionaries overseas. 268 Indeed, it was initially the women of the Keswick Conventions who supported missionary work in prayer, through their finances, and ultimately by giving their lives on the mission field. It was often through women missionaries that individuals around the world embraced the Higher Life teachings of Keswick.

As more and more women embraced the Higher Life message, they gained greater scope of service, as well as established a worldwide reputation as missionaries, authors, hymn writers and speakers. Women such as Jessie Penn-Lewis and Sophia Nugent quickly became renowned for their preaching abilities both within and outside Keswick circles. 269 Even so, they were rarely invited to preach on the main Keswick platform. Annoyed by such inconsistency, both Nugent and Penn-Lewis challenged the gender bias of Keswick. It was Penn-Lewis who devoted much of her life to aligning the message of Keswick with the empowerment of women.270

The Holiness revival half a decade earlier extended leadership to women such as Phoebe Palmer. Palmer’s visible authority was a model and impetus to the leadership of women like Catherine Booth, co-founder of the Salvation Army. The Salvation Army in turn gave women positions of equality in areas such as evangelism. Recalling the service of Phoebe Palmer, Sophia Nugent challenged the male-dominated leadership of Keswick. Why, she asked, are so few women within Keswick receiving “the commission given by Christ to Mary to pass on his message openly?” 271 Nugent recalled the fact that women’s ministry had been a vital part of the heritage of the Holiness Movement, a tradition Keswick seemed unwilling to adopt.

Women like Phoebe Palmer, Catherine Booth and Hannah Whitall Smith set a precedent for leadership among Holiness women. Keswick could not therefore, deny that the claim of women’s service to both men and women was part of the Holiness

268 Ibid., p. 198 & ff.
269 Sloan, p. 71.
270 Penn-Lewis wrote a short, but powerful book in support of women’s public ministry. See Penn-Lewis, The Magna Charta of Woman. (Minneapolis, MN: Bethany Fellowship, 1975)
271 Nugent, as quoted by Price & Randall, p. 149.
experience. After addressing a crowd of six thousand, at the 1875 Brighton Convention, Whitall Smith claimed that her “congregation” was larger than that of Charles Spurgeon. However, Keswick leadership was reluctant to expand the sphere of women’s service beyond the home and family.

Yet, women’s attendance at Keswick continued to grow. In fact, the “Ladies’ Meetings” were so well attended, particularly when Penn-Lewis spoke, they required a larger meeting hall in order to accommodate the growing interest. As her influence grew, Penn-Lewis eventually expressed an unwillingness to be confined to the Ladies’ Meetings. In doing so, she challenged “the male hegemony of the Convention platforms.”

Jessie Penn-Lewis had distinguished herself as a speaker during the Welsh revival of 1904-5, where the ministry of women was more prominent. Perhaps because of this the trustees of Keswick invited Penn-Lewis to address the weekday Bible Readings, and this meant preaching to men and women. Her influence was becoming hard to ignore.

Penn-Lewis’s popularity at Keswick led to speaking engagements around the world, and throughout Britain including Keswick affiliate Conferences such as the Bridge of Allan Convention, in Scotland. Her favorite topic was always victory through the Cross of Calvary, which elicited both “commitment to the transformed life,” as well as criticism for what some thought an obsession with the Cross. The American revivalist, A.T. Pierson, recoiled at what he perceived Penn-Lewis’s theory of self-mortification. Yet, the demand for Penn-Lewis was undeniable. Her skills as a preacher led to speaking engagements in places such as India, Russia, Scandinavia and America. Yet, despite her international reputation, Keswick continued to restrict the teaching of women, even women like Penn-Lewis.

In 1908 Penn-Lewis wrote openly to Evan Hopkins. She reminded him that her ministry to both men and women went unchallenged for many years. She also informed

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272 Price & Randall, p. 149.
273 Ibid., p. 155.
274 Ibid., p. 156.
275 Ibid. See also Sloan, p. 60 & ff.
276 See Appendix C.
him that “God had set his seal of blessing on her messages.” Penn-Lewis also told Hopkins that her teachings on the Cross had influenced and empowered Keswick men and women. Penn-Lewis warned Hopkins that restricting the influence of women would have dire consequences for the Church as well as the Higher Life Movement. If Keswick continued to shut out the ministry of women to “mixed” groups, Penn-Lewis threatened to take her ministry elsewhere.

The leadership of Keswick, however, remained recalcitrant and Penn-Lewis was no longer welcome to address the main platform or mixed gatherings at Keswick Conventions. By 1910, she retreated from Keswick altogether and turned her attention to audiences outside the Keswick Convention. At the same time she began to write books and articles, and she also launched a journal entitled *The Overcomer*. The readership of *The Overcomer* grew to 10,000.

Confronting the issue of women’s service in the Church, Penn-Lewis published a popular defense of women’s equality, entitled *The Magna Charta of Woman*. Published in 1919, *The Magna Charta of Woman* not only offered a biblical and historical basis for women’s leadership, but also attributed the suppression of women to the work of Satan—the ultimate perpetrator of women’s subordination. Penn-Lewis insisted that limiting the equality of women in the Church not only undermines the work of the Cross, it also impedes the fruit of Calvary—unity among believers. *The Magna Charta of Woman* warned against viewing women through Eve’s sin, rather than in women’s victory over sin, through union with Christ. Consecrated women should be included as equal partners with men so that they might infuse ministry with the power of the Cross. All around the world, Penn-Lewis concluded, women are gaining equal access to service in the public domain. If the Church continues to prohibit women’s equal service, Penn-Lewis predicts that women will reject a Church that disenfranchises them.

While women were rarely invited to preach from the Keswick platform, they were allowed to speak of their experience of rest and consecration. Keswick’s pedagogy often took the form of personal experience; the distinction between men preaching and women speaking from their experiences may have appeared minimal.

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278 Bushnell, as quoted by Penn-Lewis, *The Magna Charta of Woman*, p. 72.
Whether preaching or speaking from personal experience, the message of Keswick centered in overcoming weakness, and this offered new opportunities for women such as Jessie Penn-Lewis, Sophia Nugent—an affiliate with Eaton Chapel in London, and the missionary Lilias Trotter. Both Nugent and Trotter spoke of yielding to God such that the "'weakest places' in a woman's life became strong." Keswick's message of transformation "generated female confidence." 

Amanda Smith, a freed slave from America, took the Keswick platform in 1915 by an invitation from the Rev. Hubert Brook. Brook reminded his audience that in 1882, Smith stood on the Keswick platform where she said: "You may not know it, but I am a princess in disguise. I am a child of the King." Smith realized that "if she was a child, she was an heir of God!" An heir, regardless of gender or race, is entitled to all the privileges of the children of God, including the privilege of engaging their God-given gifts. Smith was also a recognized missionary, and her self-confidence was infectious.

Responding to the call of consecration, Keswick women like Amanda Smith began to exhibit a growing sense of assurance that they too might contribute to Christian service alongside men. One woman admitted that though she longed to yield herself fully to Christ, she resisted self-abandonment for fear that God might "require me to plead his cause before mixed assemblies of men and women: that I can never do." Perhaps God would ask her to speak to the "intelligent and refined." She finally surrendered to Christ and afterwards she claimed that Christ filled her life "with His own sovereign presence, and enthroned Himself in her heart of hearts." Through Christ she found the confidence to speak to the refined, to the educated, and to men. Her intimacy with Christ gave her the confidence to do what Keswick had discouraged, to speak to men. However, she believed she also received the Baptism of the Holy Ghost through which God gratified the cravings of her soul. She said:

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279 Price & Randall, p. 151.
280 Ibid.
281 Sloan, p. 91.
282 Ibid.
284 Ibid.
285 Ibid.
Every good thing her soul craved ... He unfolded to her as assured in Him, in His boundless wisdom, power, and love ... she found herself rejoicing in the good, acceptable and perfect will of God, and joying in the God of her salvation with unalloyed satisfaction and ineffable delight ... she was called to speak to mixed assemblies of the refined and intelligent, and did it with great delight. 286

The experience of consecration was an impetus to the emancipation of women, though Keswick was slow to grasp this. Ultimately, Keswick women were not content with inner experiences alone, as Pierce and Randall point out. They longed for an avenue, an opportunity to use the spiritual power gained from a second experience. Unlike the Keswick Conventions, the mission field offered wider ministry possibilities for women. Thus women were among the first to respond to the call from the mission field. Amy Carmichael was the first missionary funded by Keswick, but others soon followed. Notable women missionaries funded by the Keswick included Pandita Ramabai, who worked primarily in India, and Evangeline and Francesca French who served in China. In 1930, Keswick missionaries Miss Nettleton and Miss Harris 287 were martyred in China.

Perhaps the most eminent missionary affiliated with Keswick was Amy Carmichael. Born in Northern Ireland, Carmichael authored 35 books and was one of the best known missionaries of the modern era. Carmichael lived and worked more than fifty years in the land of India. She devoted her life in service to the children of Donavur, rescuing young women and girls from a life of temple prostitution. It is said that Carmichael saved over two thousand children from prostitution, a practice the Indian government tried to keep secret. Carmichael established a home and school for these children who might otherwise have lived a life of sexual slavery. 288

Another revered female missionary was Pandita Ramabai, also one of the most highly esteemed women in India during her era. She had distinguished herself by translating the

286 ibid., p. 112.
287 Sloan, p. 99.
Bible from Greek and Hebrew into Marathi. Pandita established the Home of Mercy, which offered aide to the many destitute individuals. In 1898, Ramabai addressed audiences at Keswick on the plight of Hindu women. She spoke of her vision to see 140 million women filled with the Holy Spirit. Ramabai began by saying that she had come "to speak for the 140,000,000 of Hindu women in India." She said:

It was through a missionary from Keswick she had learned, three years ago, how to receive the Holy Spirit, and she knew that apart from that she could never have been of any use. She wanted 1000 Spirit-filled missionaries for India's women, and she asked for prayer that 100,000 Christian women might be raised up in India to carry the Gospel to their needy sisters. When a request was made that those in the meeting, who were prepared to offer themselves for Missionary Service, should stand, about 200 rose, and the Rev. W.E. Burroughs led in prayer commending them to the Lord, and asking His guidance for them.

Keswick women frequently responded to the call of missionary work, and their achievements were reported each year from the main-platform. News from Carmichael was always well received, even though it often came through a letter. Reading one such letter, Mrs. Streeter said:

Donavur is very closely allied to 'Keswick,' not only because two of its missionaries are there, but because Donavur is working out what 'Keswick' stands for—practical holiness.

Keswick women had distinguished themselves as missionaries in places such as China, India, Africa, Palestine and Persia. Florence Young, for example, worked with the

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289 Ibid., pp. 258-268.
290 Sloan, p. 49.
291 Ibid., pp. 49-50.
292 Ibid., p. 80.
293 Ibid., p. 51.
294 Ibid., p. 53.
“South Sea Islanders, at work in the sugar plantations in Queensland” and those she won to Christ donated “50 pounds per annum towards the support of missionaries in China.” Because of her notable work in Algiers, Lilias Trotter addressed Keswick’s missionary meeting. Her work was said to be one of “faith and prayer, the full results of which are still to be made manifest.” Women missionaries preached to mixed crowds overseas, yet the same activity was restricted in Great Britain. Some noted the inconsistency and grew resentful.

The women’s meetings developed their own spirituality, which at times included forms of self-mortification. Living simply, avoiding materialism and “listening to God in times of silence” was introduced to the Ladies’ Meetings by Sister Eva, a leader of an order of women within the Lutheran Church in Germany. Many women gave up their precious jewels to fund missionary work, as woman after woman, young and old, brought up jewelry and placed it on the Bible.” Walter Sloan recalled the sacrificial giving of the Ladies’ Meeting in the following way:

Mrs. Penn-Lewis had spoken on the Tuesday about bringing of gifts to the altar, and the need of a cleansing of our inner relationships with one another; on the next day Miss Nugent said a few words as to everything being set right in outward things, expenditure, dress, house-keeping, and so on, when a lady from Germany rose and said that during the previous day’s meetings she had seen a new vision of the heathen world in its darkness, calling for the sending of the Light, she told of how she had already disposed of all her possessions for the Lord’s work; but she had two things left, precious to her because of their associations, then she presented a ring and a clasp. The hand of God was upon the meeting, and one after another went up to the front and laid jewelry, watches, or coins on the table, and this continued until the meeting closed. Sister Eva of

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295 Ibid., p. 54.
296 Ibid.
297 Ibid., p. 24.
298 Price & Randall, p. 158.
299 Pollock, p. 125.
Friedenshort, for it was she, went home to prove in a new way the power of God in her own work, which had already been much blessed in Germany. It began to spread out into other lands, and now Sisters from Friedenshort are at work in China, at Dohnavur, in Syria, Central Africa, and Guatemala.

Sister Eva along with Jessie Penn-Lewis fostered the “depths of spiritual experience at the women's gatherings at Keswick,” not simply through a proclamation of holiness by faith, but with good actions of sacrifice on behalf of others.

Summary Remarks

Here we have shown that the Holiness Movement was nourished by the Romantic mood of the day in which crisis overcame process, where mood and milieu overwhelmed debate and dialectic. As a branch from the Higher Life tree, the Keswick Conventions did not concern theology or doctrine. Rather, The Keswick Conventions nurtured a mood, a spirit, a form of spiritual energy that was often articulated through music, poetry, image and metaphor, rather than by theological discourse. The Keswick experience was undeniable. Their prolific production of hymns and devotional literature brought renewal and a longing for holiness to Christians around the world. Their inflamed spirits set others on fire. Keswick's mystical articulation of faith was marketing widely, and as a result the Convention grew in number and influence.

Keswick's Higher Life message centered on power, accessed through faith. By way of surrender and faith, Keswick promised instantaneous power of the highest mystical state—union with Christ. “I live, yet not I but God in me,” was a watch-phrase of the Keswick Convention. Every element of the Keswick experience, the music, the literature,

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300 Sloan, p. 60.
303 St. Augustine, as quoted by Underhill, The Mystics of the Church, p. 37.
304 Underhill, Mysticism, p. 417.
the personal testimonies, the setting, the absence of erudition and emotional fervor was geared towards one goal, a decision of "rest" through faith. By denying human effort in favor of faith, Keswick suggested that union with Christ could be obtained through a decision, through a crisis. In union with Christ, the soul acquired the fruits of union—power over sin and extraordinary ability for Christian service. In essence, Keswick promoted a mystical Quietism that suggested that through faith and passivity the soul reached the highest mystical state—union. Union, via rest and without purgation, was the shorter path of Keswick’s Quietism. Classical mysticism however, does not omit purgation in the path to union, a discussion we shall pursue in detail further on.

Because Keswick promised union with God, release from sin, and extraordinary power for Christian ministry, the Higher Life message appealed to many moderns, particularly women. Women, in union with God, were finally freed from the stigma of Eve’s sin whereby they also accessed the fruits of union—power for extraordinary service, particularly on the mission field where many women found greater opportunity for service. Ultimately, Higher Life teaching fueled the emancipation of women, though Keswick resisted this.

While scholars admit that Keswick’s path to holiness was one of crisis rather than process—through a decision of faith, they overlook the ways in which Keswick’s shorter path engaged the Quietist’s prayer of simple regard, over and against the arduous path of “classical mysticism.” Historians suggest that Keswick was fueled by the Romantic mood, with its dreamy and inarticulate expression of faith, such that Keswick devotees articulate holiness or sanctification not as an arduous process but as a “living union with the living Saviour.” Many admit that Keswick used mystical language to describe union and holiness, yet a theological distinction has not been made between Keswick’s Quietism to that of the “classical mysticism” of Jessie Penn-Lewis. Therefore, this thesis will now compare the shorter path to holiness promoted by Keswick to the classical mysticism of Jessie Penn-Lewis which engaged the process of purgation.

305 Bebbington, p. 167 & ff, see also Latourette, p. 1168.
306 Bebbington, p. 172. See also page 174 in which Bebbington interprets Keswick’s favored image of “the branch abiding in the vine of Christ,” as organic and Romantic. Yet, this is often an image used of the unitive state, the final stage of classical mysticism.
307 Bebbington, p. 172.
Chapter Two

The Call of Holiness: An Introduction to Jessie Penn-Lewis

We must turn to the finished work of our Redeemer
and thankfully recognize our place with Him upon His cross.\textsuperscript{308}

I. Introduction

The early experiences of Jessie Jones can be characterized as two-edged. On the one hand
she was surrounded by vibrant religious and social activities. Raised in a Calvinistic,
Methodist family, her grandfather was a minister and her mother was an ardent
Temperance worker. She recalled how her home was the great rendezvous point for
leaders and ministers as "they passed hither and thither on their Master's business."\textsuperscript{309}
Unlike her siblings however, Jessie was never given full physical rein. She was often
constrained indoors, or by the seashore because she suffered from tuberculosis.\textsuperscript{310} Her
eyears offered opportunity to fight illness and fatigue, and perhaps through this
Penn-Lewis developed an inner resolve that would serve her in years to come.

Her early years were also opportunities to sample the equality of women. Educated by
the Quakers as a child, and empowered by the Holiness Movement as a young woman,
Penn-Lewis observed equality for women within the spiritual realm.

Gender equality, an ideal furthered by the Enlightenment,\textsuperscript{311} was advanced by the
early Keswick Conventions through a spirituality that promised the highest mystical
states to anyone, without regard to race, class or gender. Keswick suggested that holiness
or sanctification comes through a mystical experience that overcomes human weakness

\textsuperscript{309} Gerrard, p. 1.
\textsuperscript{310} Jones, \textit{The Trials and Triumphs of Mrs. Jessie Penn-Lewis}, p. 5.
\textsuperscript{311} Olive Banks, \textit{Becoming a Feminist: The Social Origins of 'First Wave' Feminism}. (Brighton,
Wheatsheaf, 1986)
and sin. This was good news for women whose spiritual infirmity was indivisibly linked to the failings of Eve. The writings of female and male mystics were welcomed at Keswick, and women such as Madame Guyon served as model to Keswick women like Jessie Penn-Lewis, before either she or the movement fully understood its possible implications. Eventually, Keswick's version of sanctification was to be seen as defective by Penn-Lewis's standards, as her mystical theology engaged effort and suffering in attaining holiness, whereas Keswick advocated rest through faith as the path to union with Christ.

Women's leadership in the Keswick Conventions had, until the advent of Mrs. Penn-Lewis, been limited to ministry among women alone. After her experience with the transforming power of union with Christ, Penn-Lewis rose to positions of leadership within the early Keswick Conventions. Her leadership gave advanced egalitarian ministry within Keswick through her biblical teachings, her service on platforms around the world, and ultimately through a mystical theology that she claimed transformed her life from frailty to power. She thus emerged as the key advocate and example of the equality of women first within the Keswick Convention, but also within Christian circles around the world.

Penn-Lewis's mystical theology promoted a mystical "death" with Christ whereby men and women alike were united to a Divine source of inordinate power. Drawing upon Scriptures such as Romans 6:6 and Galatians 2:19, Penn-Lewis suggested that to die with Christ initiated the highest mystical state—union with God. In union with God souls are freed from sin and endowed with extraordinary power, and they were thus equipped for extraordinary ministry. Union with Christ was therefore the portal to the victorious life in the Spirit, where unity among believers was realized, and the failings of Eve overcome. Thus her vision for an organic unity with Christ made her a crucicentrist of the highest order, a role she shared with P.T. Forsyth whose work she cited.

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312 "We know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be destroyed, and we might no longer be enslaved to sin." Romans 6:6.
313 "I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me." Galatians 2:19 b.
314 Underhill, Mysticism, p. 413 & ff.
Penn-Lewis's egalitarian theology, perhaps forged by her mystical experiences, gave rise to a biblical defense for the equality of women in her *Magna Charta of Woman*. Summarizing the extensive scholarship of the physician-missionary Katharine Bushnell, the *Magna Charta of Woman* also included Penn-Lewis's interpretation of the demonic forces that oppress women, particularly during revival movements. Penn-Lewis believed that the Holy Spirit empowered both women and men throughout history, and such activity is always in harmony with Scripture. Acknowledging the power of Christ to abolish the "old Adam" and the hierarchy of men over women, Penn-Lewis's *The Magna Charta of Woman* sought to harmonize the leadership of Christian women throughout history with Paul's teaching on women.

Penn-Lewis therefore represents a furthering of the liberation of women in ministry, as seen in her international ministry, her writings, her leadership within the Keswick Conventions, and her mystical theology. This chapter will therefore offer an introduction to Jessie Penn-Lewis through a review of her life: her marriage, conversion, ministry, and her struggle to serve as a coworker alongside men in the gospel.

**Childhood**

Jessie Jones was born in Neath, South Wales in 1861. She was the daughter of an engineer, and the granddaughter of a Calvinist Methodist minister.\(^\text{315}\) Her earliest memories were of great Church meetings and the "constant coming and going of ministers."\(^\text{316}\)

At ten years of age Jessie began to recognize the "limitations of her body."\(^\text{317}\) \(^\text{318}\) Lacking the stamina and physical capacity of other children, she was placed under the careful watch of the school proprietress. The diagnosis was tuberculosis.

She joined a Quaker school at twelve and during the same year her mother inducted her into the Temperance Movement. It was within the context of the Temperance Movement that Jessie began to demonstrate leadership ability. She was made "Chief

\(^{315}\) Jones, p. 3.

\(^{316}\) Gerrard, p. 1.

\(^{317}\) Ibid., p. 4.

\(^{318}\) Jones, p. 5
Presiding Officer of the juveniles," and at fourteen she was promoted to Honorary Secretary to the Adult Temperance Lodge, a post she held until the age of sixteen.

**Marriage**

At the age of nineteen Jessie married a member of the Church of England, an English accountant by the name of William Penn-Lewis. Prior to their marriage, Jessie’s uncle warned her fiancé that he was “practically taking an invalid for life!” Undeterred, the couple married and two years later they relocated to Richmond, Surrey—where William was appointed the Borough Accountant.

Shortly after their relocation to Surrey, the young couple joined Holy Trinity Church, where the Rev. Evan H. Hopkins served. Hopkins was known as “the chief mentor” and “theologian of the early Keswick Conventions.” It was Hopkins who first introduced Jessie Penn-Lewis to the notion of “victory over the bondage of besetting sins.” Because of his influence, Jessie became acquainted with the spiritual and theological foundations of the early Keswick Conventions, with their emphasis on the “Spirit-filled life.” Penn-Lewis was not only attracted to the idea of holiness through spiritual power, she was also impressed by the powerful preaching of Evan Hopkins. When Hopkins preached, she said it was like the “opening of the heaven.”

The call to holiness, in preparation for Christ’s imminent return, was part of the premillennialism of the 19th century. The Keswick Conventions therefore “had a ready affinity for premillennialism,” and embraced Adventist teaching at their first Convention. It was under the preaching of Hopkins that Jessie became uncomfortable with the thought of Christ’s return. Eager to know that she was a child of God, Mrs.

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319 Gerrard, p. 4.  
320 Jones, p. 11.  
321 Gerrard, p. 6.  
322 Jones, p. 7.  
323 Bebbington, p. 168.  
325 Jones, p. 33.  
326 Gerrard, p. 8.  
327 Ibid.  
328 Bebbington, p. 152.  
329 Dayton, Theological Roots of Pentecostalism, pp. 143-167. See also Bebbington, p. 152.
Penn-Lewis began to read the Bible voraciously. She readily acknowledged both her sinfulness and Christ's atonement. Making a rapid assessment of whether she believed her sins were forgiven, she cried, "Lord, I do believe, and ... the Spirit of God instantly bore witness with my spirit that I was a child of God, and deep peace filled my soul." 330

Mr. Penn-Lewis joined his wife's interest in Christian activity, and together they opened their home to the work of Holy Trinity Church. In this new environment, Jessie became assiduous in Christian ministry. She led Bible classes, served as librarian at a Rescue Mission, and she also worked in various capacities within the YWCA Institute in Richmond. 331

Despite a prolific ministry in Richmond, Mrs. Penn-Lewis remained dissatisfied with her Christian service. Specifically, it was her apprehension of public speaking that paralyzed Jessie and stalled her development as a leader and speaker. According to her biographer, despite hours of preparation, the idea of speaking to a handful, even in her own home, produced great pangs of fear. Her diary reads:

> Those who knew this servant of God in later years were often amazed to hear her speak of the agony of fear with which she used to go forth to speak, even at the smallest meeting, and the hours of hard and painful preparation which preceded such a service. 332

Penn-Lewis struggled to overcome not only emotional frailty, but her physical weakness as well. Her lung disease always threatened to narrow the scope of her activities. The promise of power, offered by Holiness teaching, must have captured her attention. Eager to study Keswick's promise more thoroughly, Mrs. Penn-Lewis read Madame Guyon's, *Spiritual Torrents,* 333 which circulated widely within Keswick circles. Through Guyon, Penn-Lewis learned more about the promise of spiritual union, with its subsequent power,

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330 Gerrard, p. 7.
331 Ibid., p. 11.
332 Ibid., pp. 15–19.
333 Jones, p. 16.
joy, and fruitfulness.\textsuperscript{334} Penn-Lewis was tired of failure and defeat. She was eager to exchange her restricted life for that which was limitless.\textsuperscript{335}

II. Called to be Crucified: A Mystical Path

According to Higher Life teaching, the power to become holy in preparation for Christ’s imminent return was initiated by a second blessing—a baptism in the Spirit. It was through Hopkins that Mrs. Penn-Lewis first learned of the power available through a second blessing.\textsuperscript{336} Hopkins called Christians to seek a second blessing beyond conversion, after which they “no longer would feel themselves ensnared by wrongdoing, for they would have victory over sin.”\textsuperscript{337}

Prompted by the Higher Life imperative to encounter Christ experientially, Penn-Lewis acknowledged her own spiritual ineffectiveness and prayed for a second experience, a baptism in the Holy Spirit. Eager to possess greater effectiveness and composure in Christian service, it occurred to Penn-Lewis that her longing for a second blessing might actually be a desire for self-aggrandizement. Her conscience was sensitive to selfish motives. She asked herself:

Would I be willing to have no great experience, but agree to live and walk entirely by faith on the Word of God? This, too, was a new aspect, but I quickly answered ‘Yes.’\textsuperscript{338}

Penn-Lewis was conscious that her self-orientation not only limited her confidence and her sphere of spiritual service, but more importantly it seemed “truly a horror”\textsuperscript{339} to God. The keen awareness of her selfishness led Penn-Lewis through a “deep abasement to the

\textsuperscript{331} Ibid., p. 16.
\textsuperscript{333} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{334} Bebbington, p. 151.
\textsuperscript{335} Penn-Lewis, \textit{The Leading of the Lord: A Spiritual Autobiography}, pp. 7-8. See also Gerrard, pp. 24-25.
\textsuperscript{336} Gerrard, p. 25.
Blood of Christ for cleansing. Her final abasement or purgation came through a mystical encounter with the Cross, as she later came to realize. Her diary notes:

Then came the still, small voice once more, and this time it was the one little word—'Crucified'. 'Crucified!' What did it mean? I had not asked to be crucified, but to be filled.

The call to be purged of self through a mystical crucifixion with Christ provided Penn-Lewis with a personal understanding of Paul's words in Romans 6: 6-11. Classical mysticism suggested that union with God can come only after an awareness, abhorrence, and final shedding of one's self-orientation, through a "baptism into the death of Christ (Rom. vi. 3)." This was the path to abundant life where "the human spirit [is] set free from sin and "the domination of the flesh." To experience mystical union required purification, according to the classical tradition. For Penn-Lewis, "Calvary must always precede Pentecost." Her words are not a mere recounting of Christ's death and resurrection. Rather, they suggest her awareness that a self-orientation impedes union with Christ and must therefore be eliminated in order for her soul to enter the unitive state.

She thus discovered that while she asked for a second blessing in the Spirit, anticipating a life of power afterwards, she was called instead to a mystical encounter

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340 Ibid., p. 25.
342 Romans 6:6-11: "We know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be destroyed, and we might no longer be enslaved to sin. For whoever has died is freed from sin. But if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; Death no longer has dominion over him. The death he died, he died to sin, once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God. So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus." These verses are central to Penn-Lewis's Cross Theology.
343 Underhill, Mysticism, p. 199 & ff.
345 Ibid.
346 Ibid.
348 Gerrard, p. 26
349 Underhill, Mysticism, p. 417.
with the Cross. "The Cross leads to the Spirit, and the Spirit leads back to the Cross,"\(^{350}\) she claimed. God, according to Penn-Lewis, never gives power to "the old creation, nor the uncrucified soul... Satan will give power to the ‘old Adam,’ but God will not."\(^{351}\) Penn-Lewis seemed to both understand and accept the call to purification through a mystical death with Christ. She wrote the following description of her Baptism in the Spirit, her mystical awakening:

Traveling alone in a railway carriage ... it seemed as if suddenly my spirit broke through into the spiritual world and I was caught up into the bosom of the Father. For days afterwards I felt that I was as a babe lying in the Father’s bosom with all the world below lying in darkness whilst I was in Light, clear as crystal and so pure... the Lord stood by me and I clasped his very feet ... the room seemed filled with glory, and from this time there broke out upon the ‘work’ a very river of life from God, which ever since has been flowing on the ends of the earth. It was my Baptism with the Holy Ghost.\(^{352}\)

Like Paul on the road to Damascus, Penn-Lewis believed she was thrust into the invisible, spiritual world, an experience that was difficult to describe. "I have had to weep for joy today, and at His feet no words came, only ‘Master!’!"\(^{353}\) For Penn-Lewis, these experiences were "the first drops of the showers which were to become a very river of ‘waters to swim in.’"\(^{354}\) Her diary states that her entrance into the spiritual realm was unexpected:

Suddenly and unexpectedly, not in an hour of ‘waiting’ upon God, nor in a meeting with others seeking the same blessing—but, at the breakfast table in her own home one morning in March, the glory of the Lord was

\(^{351}\) Ibid., pp. 26-27.  
\(^{352}\) Ibid., pp. 27-28.  
\(^{353}\) Ibid., p. 29.  
\(^{354}\) Ibid., p. 25.
revealed in her spirit as to Paul on his way to Damascus, with such blinding power that she fled to her own room to fall upon her knees in worship and speechless adoration. 355

Months after her mystical awakening, Penn-Lewis experienced a continual “breaking through into the supernatural world,” 356 which like St. Francis, left Penn-Lewis weeping uncontrollably at the mention of Christ. Penn-Lewis said:

I lived in a very heaven of joy and light and gladness, and the very Name of Jesus was so sweet that the sound of it caused me to melt into tears, and to be filled with exquisite joy. 357

Like many mystics, Penn-Lewis was to experience the classical stages of mysticism: Awakening, Purgation, Illumination, the Dark Night and finally Union with God. 358 Each stage along the mystical path drew her further from the visible or sensible world, leading her soul into union with God. At a later point, we will explore the fullest expression of each stage, both in her personal life as well as in her writings. Our purpose here is to become acquainted with Penn-Lewis’s mystical path, as it began during the early years, while she and her husband attended Holy Trinity Church, in Richmond, Surrey.

Her mystical awakening had an immediate impact on her physical health, according to her biographers. Quite abruptly, Jessie was “released from the worst symptoms of her lung disease and people marveled at the power of her voice.” 359 As her physical stamina improved, she was able “to labor for the kingdom in ways beyond all expectations.” 360 Her mystical encounter translated into an empowered Christian service, “a flood-tide of blessing to others.” 361 Whether it was through private discussion or formal lectures,
the presence and power of God were such that scarcely any soul went away untouched by Him. Many passed from death unto life, some being convicted of sin without even being spoken to, and numbers of God’s own children were led to fuller surrender of heart and life, and realised ‘the exceeding greatness of His power’ to save to the uttermost. To come over the threshold of the Institute was to come into the felt presence of God, and thus many stepped down into the river of blessing quite apart from any human instrument. The prayer meetings, always the pulse of any work, were now times of great liberty and rejoicing in free access to the Throne of Grace, though in the past they had often been so lacking in liberty. 362

A continual invasion of “the supernatural world” enabled Penn-Lewis to enjoy both physical health as well as a new-found “liberty and power of utterance ... blessed freedom of power with others never known before.”364 In the past she devoted hours to prepare a short speech, only to be gripped by stage fright. Following these extraordinary spiritual encounters however, Penn-Lewis gave extemporary speeches “without a tremor of the self-conscious misery of the past.”365 Her self-orientation had been subdued following her mystical encounters with Christ.

These early mystical awakenings, therefore, mark a new beginning, a transformation observed not only in her improved health, but also in her ability to speak and engage audiences. One biographer suggests that her “once-dead prayer meetings” were now thronged. First through the YWCA Institute, but later around the world, Penn-Lewis attracted crowds in the thousands. The scope of her ministry eventually developed a world-focus and thus Penn-Lewis received invitations to address audiences throughout Scandinavia (1896, 1898), India (1903), Russia (1897, 1898), the U.S. (1900), Canada (1900) and Egypt (1904).

362 Ibid., pp. 29-30.
363 Ibid., p. 28.
364 Ibid., p. 32.
365 Ibid. See also Jones, p. 29.
366 Jones, p. 25.
Jessie Penn-Lewis’s early life was marked by both activism and a lively spiritual life, initially within the context of her Christian family; her Quaker education; and her involvement with the Temperance Movement. As a young married woman Penn-Lewis’s spiritual life was shaped by her affiliation with Evan Hopkins, her work at the YWCA and the Rescue Mission. All along, we observe a leader emerging, though not without difficulty. She had very real limitations both physically and perhaps psychologically. Despite her talent as a leader and her openness to spiritual experiences, her effectiveness was stunted not only by tuberculosis, but also by a paralyzing self-consciousness.

While eager for the spiritual power promised by Holiness teaching, Penn-Lewis recognized the need of purification, perhaps an early indication of her vocation as a mystic. Her desire to be holy was followed by a call to the Cross—to purgation. On the Cross, Penn-Lewis found release not only from her paralyzing self-consciousness, but she also received strength to manage her physical weaknesses. Her mystical life enabled her to overcome not only frailty and fear, but also it gave her the means to battle the gender bias she experienced as a successful female leader.

As Penn-Lewis’s international ministry grew, she proved not only a success as a speaker and leader, but she also possessed, despite her tuberculosis, an astonishing physical capacity to manage a demanding schedule. In the end, she becomes a spokesperson for power accessed through mystical encounters with the Cross. Her spiritual leadership was a model of women’s power. Her mystical theology also redressed the shallow mysticism of the Keswick Convention, as I plan to demonstrate.

III. Domestic and Foreign Evangelism

Throughout her international ministry, Penn-Lewis claimed that her spiritual power emanated from a mystical experience with Christ’s death and resurrection. Holiness Divines insisted that a second spiritual experience or baptism in the Holy Spirit was initiated by faith and resulted in an unleashing of power. \(^{367}\) Penn-Lewis, however, was unwilling to separate a baptism in the Spirit from sharing in Christ’s passion, a passion that most certainly embraced purgation. Calvary always proceeds Pentecost for Penn-

\(^{367}\) Bebbington, pp. 162-162.
Lewis, and she frequently insisted that the Spirit always leads to the Cross. She therefore evoked a fully-bodied mysticism that embraced the path of purgation as well as illumination, both of which she had experienced personally so that “it might be said of her, as Paul said of himself, ‘in me first, for a pattern.’”

As a prophet of the Cross, she maintained that all spiritual truth, every biblical theme, all that is just, holy and true radiated from the Cross. Within Keswick and affiliate Conventions, in her writings, in her correspondence and personal interactions, Penn-Lewis took every opportunity to extol a personal encounter with the Cross as integral to the mystical path.

Here we will highlight Penn-Lewis’s message and the people who received it, noting the receptivity of her audiences, as well as the challenges she posed. Compelling souls to experience the Cross mystically or personally, Penn-Lewis attracted men, women, rich and poor, from many nations. The ultimate outcome of a mystical experience with Calvary was for Penn-Lewis an organic unity within the body of Christ. Therefore, Penn-Lewis’s furthered an egalitarian momentum among her followers and acquaintances, which her letters and diary demonstrate.

Russia and Scandinavia

In 1896 Mrs. Penn-Lewis traveled to Sweden to address delegates from “Norway, Sweden, Finland and Denmark,” at the first YWCA Scandinavian Conference. At the time of this journey, Penn-Lewis had begun to interpret passages such as Romans 6:6 – 10 through her own spiritual experiences. Hence, in discussion with a British couple, Penn-Lewis suggested that Paul, in Romans 6, promoted a mystical death to self as a prelude to union with Christ. The following day the woman confessed that her life had been too self-focused, and, after giving Penn-Lewis’s mystical interpretation of

369 Ibid., p. 147.
370 Ibid., p. 169.
371 Ibid., p. 68.
372 Ibid., p. 69.
373 Underhill, The Mystics of the Church, p. 41.
Romans consideration, the woman acknowledged a desire for self-abandonment that Christ might “[work] through her.”

It is interesting to note that Penn-Lewis’s first trip to Scandinavia combined two themes that remain coupled throughout the remainder of her life—union with Christ and the equality of women. Penn-Lewis’s egalitarian focus emerged during this 1896 Scandinavian YWCA Conference. After delivering her message; “God’s Army of Women Who Publish the Tidings,” the delegates confessed that Scripture had been used to exclude them from preaching and teaching activities. Penn-Lewis’s diary reads:

I did not know then that our sisters were yet in the battle of strong prejudice against the handmaidens’ prophesying. Strong prejudice based upon a misunderstanding of Paul’s word of rebuke to the chatterers of his day, the women who would persist in taking questions at the wrong time and in the wrong place; while the same letter he gives instructions to the women who did prophesy and preach, how they should dress when so engaged.

Penn-Lewis further reasoned that Peter, in Acts 2:17, extended biblical authority to women’s public ministry by associating the events of Pentecost with the fulfillment of Joel’s prophesy. Therefore, Pentecost represented a mystical experience in which Christians, especially women, exchanged their finitude for God’s infinite power. She writes:

In what a matter-of-fact way it is recorded that Philip had four daughters who ‘prophesied’ (Acts xxi.9). How delightful it is to read 1 Cor. 1.27, 28, 29, as the list of the ranks of God’s army of women. Yes, thank God,
‘foolish’ enough to depend upon God for their wisdom; ‘weak’ enough for the endynamiting with God’s strength; ‘base’ enough to have no ‘honour’ but God’s honour; ‘despised’ enough to be kept in the dust at His feet, and better than all, ‘Not’ -- ‘nothing’ enough for God to be everything! \(^{380}\)

Once more we observe Penn-Lewis’s understanding that self-abnegation is a prerequisite to Divine union. Souls that participate in the self-naughting of Calvary, also receive “God’s... everything.” As self is held “as dust at His feet” the result is an “endynamiting” of power. While suggesting that the Bible supports women’s public ministry, Penn-Lewis also argued that authentic spiritual authority results from an utter dependence, a mystical death to self, through which God’s power is accessed.

If self is made as dust, and the soul receives Christ’s life in return, then all who are so united to Christ possess an intrinsic equality. Hence the mystical life not only initiates parity between women and men, but it also creates an organic unity among humans. \(^{381}\) Viewing Pentecost as the model for harmonious union of Parthians, Medes, and Elamites, Penn-Lewis also noted that the delegates of the first YWCA Scandinavian Convention were “Swedes, Norwegians, Finns, Russians, and English.” \(^{382}\) “How like Pentecost,” \(^{383}\) she observed. The harmony of diverse Christians was thought the outcome of a powerful experience with the Holy Spirit. Keswick Divines took pride in the blurring of denominational and cultural boundaries, \(^{384}\) which lent credibility to their spiritual experiences.

The following year, Penn-Lewis was invited to Russia where she spoke to gatherings of young people, German workers and Russian nobility. Interestingly, her audiences were once again diverse ethnically and economically. In Russia she remained true to her calling as a prophet of the Cross, for she again advanced the experiences of mystical death as a prelude to union. \(^{385}\) Union with Christ will also facilitate unity among believers.

\(^{380}\) Gerrard, p. 74.  
\(^{381}\) Inge, p. 68.  
\(^{382}\) Gerrard, p. 72.  
\(^{383}\) Ibid.  
\(^{384}\) Harford, p. 191.  
\(^{385}\) Gerrard, p. 109.
Once again, her diary suggested that her message won the praises of her audience. As her listeners showered Penn-Lewis with thanks, she was quick to remind them she had no part “in it at all.” Their praise for her service she said, “passed over me to Him, for ‘I am not.’” Penn-Lewis mystical theology was unmistakably coupled with expressions of self-abnegation.

Penn-Lewis returned to Russia in 1898. This time secrecy was required as “fines, confiscations, imprisonments, exile, were remorselessly imposed” upon any whose religious expression differed from that of the Czars. Penn-Lewis recalled the breakdown of class among her audience. The consequence of a Pentecost experience, when viewed as mystical union, is the unmistakable unity among believers regardless of class, race or gender. She wrote:

The princess and her Christian coachman might be seen kneeling together with others to partake of the Lord’s Supper, the company dispersing afterwards in twos and threes through different exits that it might not be known that there had been a meeting. Unity among believers was viewed as a manifestation of mystical union, a union that was often unrecognized by spiritual and political leaders.

Penn-Lewis told a group in Russia that she had been sent to deliver the message of “the revelation of the Risen Christ within the heart.” She said, “‘if Christ for you’ has meant such deep work in the Russian Christians, what will ‘Christ in you’ mean?” The phrase “Christ in you” was undoubtedly intended to imply mystical union.

As Penn-Lewis promoted personal encounters with the Cross, she also suggested that the fullest experience of Calvary is available to all people, regardless of age, acumen or education. In 1898 she urged an audience in Sweden to:

386 Ibid., p. 111.
387 Ibid.
388 Ibid., p. 132.
389 Ibid., p. 133.
390 Ibid., p. 110.
391 Ibid.
Learn that there is a need in hearts that only the Cross will meet, and that the Holy Spirit can make simple the deepest mystery of the Cross to the youngest believer! Let us not withhold God’s secret of the Cross.\(^{392}\)

In the mood of her day, feeling and experience overshadow logic and reason. Even so, here we observe Penn-Lewis engage an earlier understanding of mysticism, also seen in Paul. “For St. Paul it is clear that the most complete form of knowledge would not finally be our own act at all, but an event in which I yield myself to God.”\(^{393}\) Anyone, of any age, is able to surrender to an encounter with the Cross, Penn-Lewis reasoned.

**North America and India**

In 1900 Penn-Lewis journeyed to North America, where she lectured to a variety of audiences, beginning with a conference for Christian Workers held at Moody Bible Institute. Lecturing to workers, students and faculty at Moody, her theme centered on the negation of self. Penn-Lewis called her audience to disown themselves and to take up their Cross so that they might become like wheat, “sacrificing its life for fruitfulness.”\(^{394}\) She drew such a large crowd that “people stood in the doorways, and along the passages”\(^{395}\) to hear her preach. She ended her tour of the United States by speaking to workers in Harlem, and to groups in New York and Philadelphia. Penn-Lewis’s North American tour evidenced a consistent theme: Death to a self as the pathway to an abundant life in Christ.

Despite a chronic illness, the stress of international travel, a heavy lecture schedule coupled with her innate fear of public speaking, Penn-Lewis ventured to India in 1903. In India, she offered “instruction and reproof”\(^{396}\) to those who exalted in spiritual experiences to the exclusion of encountering the Cross. Therefore, Penn-Lewis called her audiences to resist spiritual experiences that are based on “the power of the flesh and the

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392 Ibid., pp. 159-160.
393 McIntosh, p. 69. Thomas Aquinas said: “Divine things are not named by our intellect as they really are in themselves, for in that way it knows them not.” T. Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Pars I, Q. 13. 1
394 Gerrard, p. 185.
395 Ibid., p. 186.
396 Ibid., p. 205.
True spirituality, according to Penn-Lewis, is to know the Cross with its self-emptying. Spiritual experiences, in and of themselves are powerless to displace “the old life of nature and continually ‘making to die’ its inclinations and habits (Rom. viii.13; Col. ii. 20-23; iii. 1-4.).” While the Holiness Movement at the turn of the century stressed the centrality of spiritual experiences, many in Keswick were shaped by the experiences of mystics and quietists, as this was part of the growing Romantic mood. Yet, Penn-Lewis expressed concern for the priority given spiritual experiences to the exclusion of an experience with the Cross. Writing from India Penn-Lewis said:

All error is ‘truth pressed to extreme’... I feel most deeply that the ‘experimental’ side has hidden the power of the Divine side ... I have seen the disastrous confusion and despair produced by preaching an experience instead of the work of Christ.

One of her achievements while in India was to complete a small booklet entitled, The Word of the Cross. The Word of the Cross won such enormous popularity that the Foreign and British Bible Society requested 100,000 copies for distribution. The Word of the Cross was reportedly the first gospel booklet to reach Tibet. Oswald Chambers wrote to Penn-Lewis in 1903, saying “Your Cross of Calvary is pre-eminently of God ... Your book teaches clearly and grandly what the Spirit witnesses to in the Bible and in our hearts.”

Keswick and Llandrindod Wells Conventions

In addition to her international lectures, Mrs. Penn-Lewis was active in the Keswick Conventions of 1899, 1901, 1903, and offshoot Keswick Conventions such as the Bridge of Allan in Scotland (1901), and the Llandrindod Wells Conventions in Wales (1902,
1904, 1927). Some argue that Penn-Lewis was perhaps the most gifted female speaker involved with the Keswick and affiliated Conventions. 403

In 1896, the Rev. J. P. Davis, D. Wynne Evans and thirteen other Church leaders determined that God was leading them to hold Convention in Wales “for the deepening of spiritual life.” 404 Before proceeding, they decided to “go and see Mrs. Penn-Lewis and confer with her.” 405 She agreed to assist, and in 1903 J. S. Holden, Charles Inwood, F.B. Meyers, and Jessie Penn-Lewis led the first Llandrindod Wells Convention. Penn-Lewis addressed audiences again at Llandrindod Wells in 1906. Her last public appearance was at the 1927 Llandrindod Wells Convention. The Rev J. R. Morgan described Penn-Lewis’s final lecture in these words:

When Mrs. Penn-Lewis arrived at Llandrindod, we saw how weak and frail she was ... to take her little delicate hand into yours, and feel ... deep sympathy and real fear that one so frail would undertake any duty at all. However, her ministry at Llandrindod was really marvelous ... She spoke on schism in the Body of Christ, and her words were one great intense appeal for sympathy between the members of the body of Christ one for another ... unable to walk ... we were amazed to hear how her voice filled the tent so that some twelve hundred people heard her distinctly ... Mrs. Penn-Lewis came to speak at our little church on the Sunday following the convention. I was distressed to see her looking more like an invalid than one come to undertake a service ... but when I led the congregation in the chorus, ‘There is power in the Blood of the Lamb’ I saw her stirring! She pulled herself together, and in her characteristic way threw off her cloak and walked up to the platform. ‘We are made nigh by the Blood, we have access to God by the Blood, we are redeemed by that precious Blood, we enter into the Holiest by the Blood ... The Blood cleanses from sin, the Cross delivers from the power of sin ... The Cross of Christ is the

403 Bebbington, p. 175.
404 Gerrard, p. 221.
405 Ibid.
instrument God uses to deal with the Flesh, the old nature, the Adam life. God does not cleanse the flesh, He condemns it to death.’. She spoke with wonderful power, holding the whole congregation in intense interest ... She pleaded ... for over an hour, but for the last quarter of an hour her voice was growing weaker, and weaker, until it became almost inaudible ... She closed her address in prayer ... her spirit seemed to rise, and she appeared as strong as ever. We shall never forget that visit. 

After her lecture, Penn-Lewis nearly collapsed and her biographer said that she gave “the last drops of the sacrifice” to the Christians of Wales. One observer noted that God had answered her own prayer: “So then death worketh in us but life in you. (2 Cor iv.12).” In her last sermon, Penn-Lewis implored her audience to grasp that the power of the Cross not only justifies, but it also eliminates sin in order that unity among believers might become a living reality. Again, we note the egalitarian and corporate impulse of her mysticism; Union to Christ imparts organic union among believers.

For over forty years Jessie Penn-Lewis exalted a mystical death with Christ as the portal to spiritual power. Therefore, Penn-Lewis’s audiences included “factory girls, Conference delegates, Military men, fashionable ladies, Christian workers of all kinds.” Her ultimate mission was to articulate a theology that not only offered liberation from weakness, sin and oppression, but also united souls to Christ as well as to each other. Therefore, Penn-Lewis’s notion of mystical union was organic in so far as it was a “unity of the individual soul with the heavenly Christ” as well as a unity among all people. “We being many, are one body in Christ, and severally members of one another.” During her last sermon, preached on the brink of death, Penn-Lewis’s mystical theology pleaded for spiritual equality not only of class, but of gender as well. Perhaps for this reason, Keswick “was seen as a landmark in the emancipation of women,

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406 Ibid., pp. 300-303.
407 Ibid., p. 304.
408 Ibid.
409 Ibid., p. 75.
410 Romans 12:5 as cited by Inge, p. 68.
at least in religious spheres."\textsuperscript{412} Prior to Keswick, few women delivered the gospel message in mixed meetings. Penn-Lewis, deemed "the most accomplished lady speaker associated with Keswick,"\textsuperscript{413} provided a biblical basis for the public ministry of women that was rooted in a mystical theology. Her mystical theology also provided her with unusual strength that astonished many.

IV. Publications

In addition to her busy speaking schedule, Penn-Lewis authored over thirty books and countless booklets, articles and tracts.\textsuperscript{414} Her literature was published in many languages and dialects, and several have undergone seven or more editions. In 1909, Penn-Lewis established \textit{The Overcomer}, a publication that focused on revival work, though it eventually narrowed its focus to the demonic forces that opposed revival. \textit{The Overcomer} remains in print today.\textsuperscript{415} According to her biographer, approximately 45,000 excerpts of \textit{The Overcomer} circulated among Christian workers and missionaries world-wide.

Writing from Persia, one missionary wrote the following in appreciation of Penn-Lewis's journal:

I can testify that I count my great spiritual victories over spiritual hosts of wickedness ... from the day when I learnt ... to deny 'ground'... to the devil and his agents; to re-assert my freedom from the power of sin ... and to reaffirm my trust and confidence in the law of the Spirit of life in Christ ... And--I am not the only one who has profited by the Message of the 'Overcomer' in Persia.\textsuperscript{416}

\textsuperscript{412} Bebbington, p. 175.
\textsuperscript{413} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{414} Penn-Lewis was fond of revising her earlier works under new titles. I have attempted to collect as many of these as possible. For a complete list of her works refer to Appendix C.
\textsuperscript{415} Michael Metcalfe, son of J.C. Metcalfe with whom Penn-Lewis worked, now oversees the publication of \textit{The Overcomer} through The Overcome Literature Trust, Ltd., located at 10 Bydemill Gardens, Highworth, Wiltshire, SN6 7BS, England. See also http://www.freedomsing.com/overcomer/.
\textsuperscript{416} Gerrard, p. 265.
The Overcomer journal was published quarterly, and maintained a worldwide readership. Serving as editor, Penn-Lewis published her journal during the years of 1909-1914 and 1920-1927. While publication of The Overcomer was halted at the time of World War One, Penn-Lewis sent subscribers “Occasional Papers,” which explored the modern disdain for the doctrine of the atonement. Penn-Lewis resumed publication of The Overcomer in 1920, with a shift in focus. Apostasy, demonic activity, and contempt for the Cross became the primary concerns of the Overcomer in the post-war years. In addition to her own publications, Penn-Lewis also contributed to other Christian journals including the Christian Press, Our Onward Way, and The Christian.

Upon the request of her audiences, Penn-Lewis began publishing her lectures. Her mystical theology was a common theme throughout her books and booklets. In the preface to an early publication, The Pathway to Life, Penn-Lewis states:

The booklet has been written to interpret in some degree the death with Christ on the subjective side of the Holy Spirit’s dealings with the soul. There is no desire to dogmatize or systematize but only to show the main experimental pathway.

Brynmor Pierce Jones, a scholar of the Welsh revival and author of The Trials and Triumphs of Mrs. Jessie Penn-Lewis, astutely suggests that Penn-Lewis’s literature was not “intended for the ordinary believer.” According to Pierce Jones, her work “was designed to meet the needs of dedicated disciples and witnesses.” While Pierce Jones provides a stellar summary of her work, and while he readily acknowledges the mystical

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417 Ibid., p. 262.
418 Ibid.
419 Ibid., p. 271 & ff.

The most extensive collection of Penn-Lewis publications is the National Library of Wales. Other locations which offer a substantial number of Penn-Lewis’s work include: The Donald Gee Centre for Pentecostal and Charismatic Research, Mattersey Hall, an Assemblies of God college in Doncaster, England; The Wheaton College Archives, the Stephen Barabas Collection; the British Christian Literature Crusade, in Alresford, Hants, England; The Overcomer Literature Trust, Wiltshire, England, and Biola University Library, La Mirada, California.
420 Jones, p. 60.
421 Penn-Lewis, The Pathway to God, as quoted by Jones, p. 61.
422 Jones, p. 219.
423 Ibid.
quality operative in Penn-Lewis’s *Song of Solomon, Thy Hidden Ones*, and *The Story of Job*,他 does not explore either the anatomy of her mysticism, or the way in which her mystical theology shaped not only her feminism, but also her understanding of spiritual warfare and revival work.

Similarly, David Bebbington, a noted historian, exhibits the same oversight. Bebbington provides helpful insights into the background of the 19th century in which Keswick developed, and he notes that as an “early twentieth-century holiness advocate”*426* Penn-Lewis taught “that there must be a decisive experience for the believer of crucifixion of the self.”*427* Yet, he fails to see that the crucifixion of self is rooted in the classical mystical tradition. Penn-Lewis’s biographers (Gerrard and Pierce Jones) as well as a key biographers of the early Keswick Conventions (Bebbington), all fail to note the centrality of her mysticism which directed her life and literature. When scholars do acknowledge her mystical impulse, they neglect to provide a comparative or theological study of her mystical theology.

Pierce Jones, perhaps the most thorough Penn-Lewis biographer, suggested that her work, *The Song of Solomon* was a

> God-inspired answer to our confusions and disobediences and to our longings to enter that Garden and to seek intimacy with that beautiful Bridegroom standing there. Any failure to find the Great Lover signified a loss or lack of that enriching experience.*428*

Such a description of Penn-Lewis’s mystical literature fails to identify her works as part of the classical mystical tradition. Nor does it provide insights into Penn-Lewis’s specific contributions to mysticism. Pierce Jones does not appear to observe that union with God was the final climax and the just reward of an arduous mystical path, which takes the soul through a crucifying, transmutation of self—a journey Penn-Lewis herself experienced.

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426 Ibid., p. 220.
426 Bebbington, p. 16.
427 Ibid.
428 Jones, p. 220.
Pierce Jones offers greater insights in his summary of Penn-Lewis’s *The Story of Job*, which he says is a description of the path to intimacy with God through suffering. *The Story of Job*, Pierce Jones tells us, clearly reflects “her own experiences” \(^{429}\) of suffering. Both statements are not only true of mysticism as a whole and of Penn-Lewis’s personal path of purgation, but also clearly reflect the core purposes of the mystical path—the transmutation of self in preparation for union with God.

Though Pierce Jones and Gerrard indicate the influence mystics such as Guyon and Fénelon had on Penn-Lewis, \(^{430}\) they left the mysticism central to Penn-Lewis generally unexplored. There seems to be inadequate scholarship on Penn-Lewis’s mysticism by both Keswick and Penn-Lewis biographers. Moreover, no one has explored in detail, Keswick’s path to holiness as a deviation of classical mysticism, a deviation that the mystical theology of Jessie Penn-Lewis appears to redress.

### V. Gender Prejudice

Penn-Lewis’s egalitarian concerns are informed, it seems, by her mystical theology. As souls enter mystical union with Christ they are joined organically to one body, with one head—Christ. Therefore, the members of Christ’s body, whether Jew or Greek, slave or free, male or female, transcend hierarchies associated with “self,” as “self” dies with Christ on the Cross. In union with Christ, the soul, now freed by the limitations of self accesses endless power, and indeed gains new perspectives on spiritual matters. Life in the spiritual realm is uninhibited by the limitations of “self,” and the soul receives an enlightened understanding of the Scriptures, and fresh insights into issues such as the subordination of women. Empowered by mystical union with Christ, Penn-Lewis offered a biblical defense for her egalitarian theology, in concert with Katharine Bushnell. Both women suggest that the Bible has been misinterpreted by generations of expositors and translators. Just as the Church has overlooked the fullest message of the Cross, so too the Church has missed God’s real message concerning the equality of women in Christian work, an equality accomplished by Christ’s completed work on Calvary.

\(^{429}\) Ibid., p. 221.

\(^{430}\) Ibid., p. 61. See also Gerrard, p. 34.
Penn-Lewis’ egalitarian consciousness was not only steeled by the gender prejudice she had encountered, but also by the suppression of Christian women she met throughout her life. During Penn-Lewis’ first international tour to Sweden, she witnessed the devastation of gifted women whose ministries were diminished by a sexist reading of the Scriptures. Penn-Lewis opposed gender bias through her books and lectures, and in her confrontation with the leaders of Keswick.

For example, in 1901 overt prejudice prevailed against Mrs. Penn-Lewis during the Scottish Keswick, at the Bridge of Allan. While many expected Penn-Lewis to address mixed meetings as was her custom in many countries, in Scotland she was invited to speak only to the Ladies’ Meetings. However, the man scheduled to address the general meeting “failed to appear,” and Penn-Lewis was asked to preach in his place. As she ascended the platform, Penn-Lewis was conscious of her calling as “a crucified messenger of the crucified Lord.” She decided to preach to the ministers and “white haired Divines” on the need for a “deep circumcision of the heart.” Perhaps her intention was to provide these leaders with a pride-mortifying encounter with the Cross that they might forever abandon gender prejudice and receive women as equal members of Christ’s body. So powerful was her sermon that the man who had convened the Scottish Conventions wrote in appreciation to Penn-Lewis saying:

I am your son in this service. You have seen what I did not see, and believed for what I did not think to be possible, and have cheered and helped me when all was dark and blank ... It was like the ‘mighty ordination of the pierced hands.’ Please take me still as one of your burdens to the Master’s feet... It is difficult to explain the influence of your teaching on my mind, but somehow it is teaching that teaches, and I find that few do that now.
Another leader with a self-professed prejudice against women’s preaching admitted to her afterwards that he did not believe it was possible for God to use women as God had used her. In response, Penn-Lewis reminded him that “God never does use a woman like that, or a man either! God only uses the new creation.” Her implication was obvious. Gender is irrelevant when souls are united to Christ. The failings once associated with women are overcome as women are mystically united to their Divine Lord.

During the 1902 Bridge of Allan Convention, Mrs. Penn-Lewis was again asked to speak to the Ladies’ Meetings. Once more, her lectures were so evidently filled with “the Presence and Power of God that ... numbers of the Ministers came into the ‘Ladies’ Meetings’ to share in the blessing.” Following her lecture, Penn-Lewis was asked to explain “the deep things of God” to the educated divines in attendance. Those who sought to limit Penn-Lewis’s lectures to the Ladies’ Meetings were the first to solicit her understanding of the Cross, once they heard her preach.

Some accused the Keswick Conventions of doctrinal errors and excessive emotion because they permitted women such as Penn-Lewis to teach at mixed audiences at Keswick and affiliate events such as the Welsh Convention. Welsh revival scholar Eifion Evans suggested that the Scriptures forbade the public ministry of women, and thus the failure to enforce such prohibitions led not only to a weak doctrinal foundation, but also to the excessive emotions noted in the Welsh revival of 1904. Evans argued that the teaching of Scripture

clearly defined limits to the public ministry of women in the life of the church ... At the time of the (Welsh) revival this Scriptural norm (the prohibition of the public ministry of women) was not always observed. Its omission left the movement open to emotional excesses and to a related failure in providing adequate doctrinal foundations. 439

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436 Ibid., pp. 266-267.
437 Ibid., p. 196.
438 Ibid.
In contrast to Evans, J. C. Pollock maintained that it was men rather than women who displayed an excessive emotional element. Critiquing the Welsh revival, Pollock stated that during

the young Men’s Meeting ... someone ‘began to cry out’ in such
paroxysm of agony that no man, except 2 or 3 of that great number, dare
lift his face from his hands to see who this sufferer was. 440

Pollock contrasted the emotional display among the men to the Ladies’ Meeting under the leadership of Jessie Penn-Lewis. Her sessions were reportedly less fervid, less melodramatic and more balanced. 441

According to Piece Jones, it was Penn-Lewis’s powerful sermons and passion for the Cross that led to the criticism by “conservative gentlemen who queried whether there should be any room for a woman’s ministry, except in the ladies’ meetings.” 442 As a result of these criticisms, in 1909 the Trustees of Keswick began to limit the scope of Penn-Lewis’s public ministry. In defense of her of freedom to serve alongside men, Penn-Lewis wrote the following letter, and shortly thereafter withdrew entirely from the Keswick Conventions. 443 She wrote:

It will be a very grave importance to the whole Church of Christ if
Keswick officially sets its face against women speaking to mixed audiences when, at this time, God is using women in a very marked way. The whole current of life moving through the spiritual Church is towards clear and open ground for women in the work of God. I have been invited to take a service in one of the chapels and I have no alternative but to accept. I cannot stay in line without a sacrifice of principle and disobedience to God. The Lord has set the seal of Blessing on my

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440 Pollock, p. 124.
441 Ibid., p. 125.
442 Jones, p. 196.
443 See Appendix C.
messages at Keswick, where many have come up to receive the message not the messenger. Out of loyalty I must state the people’s wishes.\footnote{Jones, p. 197.}

She also warned the leaders of Keswick that gender bias, such as she had experienced from the leaders of Keswick, would ultimately quench God’s renewing of the Church. Believing that opposition to women’s public ministry was a result of demonic activity and shallow exegesis, she promoted her Cross Theology as an antidote.\footnote{Gerrard, p. 267.} Penn-Lewis believed that Satan and the forces of evil are unable to harm those in union with Christ.

While Penn-Lewis’s Cross Theology received a warm welcome from many quarters, she had her critics as well. Her views of sanctification engendered fierce opposition and many resented the prominence she gained as a woman. When doors closed either because of her gender or her message, Penn-Lewis was not rebuffed. She found other venues for her message. Perhaps her courage was rooted in her belief that in the revivals of the late 19th century, as with the early Church, the Spirit of God is no respecter of persons.

VI. Introduction to Cross Theology

The victorious life, for Penn-Lewis, was acquired through an experience of death, a mystical mortification with Christ on the Cross. Through this process the soul is released from enslavement to self and is freed to enjoy union and the fruits of union—power over sin. The Church throughout history has failed to apprehend the fullest meaning of the Cross, Penn-Lewis lamented. While some turn to the Cross solely for salvation, Penn-Lewis believed it was her mission to unveil the power of the Cross to unite souls mystically to Christ’s death and resurrection, the only path to a victorious life.

Penn-Lewis’s Cross Theology eventually came into conflict with those in Keswick who asserted the shorter path of the Quietist, as means to sanctification. Whereas the Holiness Movement believed that faith and rest initiated union with God, Penn-Lewis insisted that union is the fruit or consequence of a soul that has undergone a mystical death and a purgation and transmutation of self. To be united with Christ is also to share
in Christ's passion. Therefore, Cross Theology embraced the path of purgation as an unavoidable process in the path towards union. Purgation is necessary because without the stripping and negation of "self-life," or "Adam life," union with God is impossible. Moreover, to seek spiritual or Pentecostal experiences without including the Cross was spiritual folly, and led to a rise in demonic activity, Penn-Lewis argued.

**Power Through Death**

Penn-Lewis, in sympathy with Keswick divines, agreed that too many Christians have failed to experience the fullest victory of Calvary. Where she went beyond them was in denying that faith and passivity mediate the highest mystical states, for she drew on the resources of the classical mystical tradition by suggesting that the purgative path is required in order for the soul to enter the unitive state.

Despite these differences, both Keswick and Penn-Lewis agreed that the power of Calvary extended beyond justification. Both believed that souls are identified with Christ as our substitute, whereby sins are forgiven. Keswick and Penn-Lewis therefore sought power over sin. However, for Penn-Lewis, solidarity with Christ's death was the means whereby souls are separated from the power of sin. Beyond that, in mystical union with Christ we follow Christ who was the first of many to overcome sin. Therefore, an experience of the Cross imparted not only solidarity with Christ's righteousness, but also solidarity to Christ's holiness—his power over sin. 446 She wrote:

The Cross and the Fall exactly and perfectly correspond- the one as the remedy for the other. First, by the death of the Saviour on the Cross ... sin had to be put away, and the way made possible for the Holy God to pardon the sinner, and (2) then the sinner must be given a way of escape from the bondage. 447

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Too often the Church has failed to understand that organic union with Christ also unites the soul to Christ's power over sin. Cross Theology, in its fullness, was the call to follow the mystical path through purgation and into the unitive state whereby deliverance from the power of cancelled sin is realized. 448 Penn-Lewis wrote:

It is one thing to have your sins blotted out, it is another thing to be delivered from their power so that you are not under their mastery. You may get rid of the guilt of sin, the burden of sin, without understanding how to get the victory over the power of sin... So also the way of victory over and freedom from sin is not only to believe that the Lord Jesus Christ bore our sins on the Cross, and that God will, on that account, forgive them... you must also understand that you yourself died with Jesus Christ on the Cross... It is just as if you yourself were on Calvary's Cross, looking at your old life with a gulf of death between you and it. 449

The deeper meaning of the Cross was a message Penn-Lewis believed the apostle Paul had received through special revelation, 450 a message that God had also revealed to her. In her view, Paul's notion of the Cross was like her own, a call to the mystical path, a journey that included the "crucifixion of our 'old man' with Christ." 451 To die mystically with Christ is to embrace the "two-fold message of the Cross," 452 that of sanctification as well as justification. Again, drawing on Paul, she wrote:

This is why the Apostle so remarkably interchanges in Romans 6 the Magna Charta of the Church of Christ- the words 'HIS DEATH' and 'WE DIED', as if it meant one and the same thing, which spiritually it does in

452 Ibid., See also Penn-Lewis, The Centrality of the Cross. p. 83. See also Underhill, The Mystics of the Church, p. 41.
God's marvelous plan of redemption ... Christ's death- 'His death'- set up in the central depths of the inner man as a barrier, like the whirling sword at the gate of Eden, between you and the tyrant 'Sin'. You have 'died to sin,' and by the powerful application of the Holy Spirit in response to your faith in the working of God (Col. ii.12), you are set free to 'live unto God.'

Romans 6: 5-6 functioned as the mystical Magna Charta of Cross Theology because it described a death and resurrection experience that Penn-Lewis had herself undergone. She made it her life mission to beckon souls to die with Christ, so that they might reap the benefits of union with the Lord who conquers all. By dying with Christ, sinners enter union and fully "break with sin," and embrace "freedom from the results of the Fall through the recognition of the old creation crucified with Christ."

Through purgation with Christ on the Cross, souls are separated from their carnal life. As the soul identifies with Christ's death on the Cross, Christ terminates the old order-a fleshly order, and initiates life in the spirit. In the writings of Paul we observe that there is a union with Christ's death which admits us into a new sphere of life, whence we look back upon the Cross as a gulf fixed between us and the past.

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454 Romans 6:5-6: "For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. We know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be destroyed, and we might no longer be enslaved to sin."
455 Penn-Lewis, Soul and Spirit, p. 10.
456 Penn-Lewis, More Than Conquerors. (Copy provided by the B.L. Fisher Library, Asbury Theological Seminary, Asbury, Kentucky), pp. 5-6. See also Bebbington's survey of the different ways Romans 7 was interpreted by Calvinists, Methodists, and Holiness divines, p. 172.
457 Penn-Lewis, More Than Conquerors, p. 5.
Penn-Lewis’s Cross Theology concerned power, to be sure, and many within Keswick eagerly sought power through spiritual experiences, which in Penn-Lewis’s opinion was an erroneous pursuit. Just as the Church overlooked the fullest message of the Cross, at the same time the Church had overlooked the purpose of spiritual experience, she argued. While many Christians longed for spiritual encounters similar to those of Pentecost, Penn-Lewis insisted that the purgative path of the Cross must precede a mystical resurrection or an outpouring of Pentecostal power. The highest mystical states are dependent upon purification or mortification. Yet, in their hunger for spiritual power, some have circumvented the need for “a deep work of the Spirit, in the old Adam life being nailed to the Cross, and rendered inoperative.” According to Penn-Lewis, spiritual power is not only unavailable to those seeking solely after power through spiritual experiences, power is likewise inaccessible to those who know only forgiveness of sins through the Cross. Christians need to recognize the personal element of the Atonement— that they died with Christ. To encounter transcendent power in union with Christ, is to first die with Christ. She wrote:

This is the position and privilege which the Cross is purposed to bring us into. Not only identification with Christ in His death, as a judicial fact, but a practical life where the ‘I’ is kept ‘in the place of death’, so that there results such a union with the Risen Lord... As Christ becomes our centre, and the ‘I’ is yielded to the Cross, the whole life is brought into light to be placed under His control.

Penn-Lewis recognized the human longing for the transcendent, as well as the desire to overcome human failing and weakness. As prophet of the Cross, she insisted that all transcendent encounters are located in an encounter with that Cross. Penn-Lewis

therefore integrated all spiritual experiences, justification and sanctification in union with Christ at Calvary.

According to Penn-Lewis it is only as self dies that God can become the center of existence. The primitive or sinful self cannot attain the highest mystical states because the natural self is never God-oriented. We cannot tame, ignore or conquer our sinful nature, claimed Penn-Lewis.\(^467\) Human failings, as well as human strength have a proclivity towards a self-orientation that cannot be overcome except in a purgative death, a transmutation of self. Death, therefore, re-orientes the soul's spiritual allegiance. Death was also the source of authentic spiritual productivity, whereby Pentecost power is unleashed.\(^468\)\(^469\) What happens as self dies with Christ? "Life springs up spontaneously,"\(^470\) explained Penn-Lewis.

We struggle to conquer our sins and deliver ourselves ... and yet victory appears more and more hopeless ... At this point of bitter despair and darkness the Spirit of God shows us that deliverance must come from another source, and that self cannot conquer self or sin... The Spirit of God then leads us again to Calvary... and we agree to live the crucified life, 'Always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake that the life also for Jesus may be manifested.'\(^471\)

Central to Cross Theology was the transmutation or death of self whereby God, rather than self, becomes the center of existence and the source of fecundity. Therefore, all of the failings as well as strengths of self were subjected to the purgative path, where the soul agrees "to live the crucified life."\(^472\) One must die to a bad temper, to a bad attitude, or for that matter to one's strengths. All "creaturely activity" that is self-oriented, that

\(^{472}\) Penn-Lewis, *Dying to Live*, p. 6.
arises from the “old Adam life” must cease, and from its dying a God-centered soul is born. She writes:

[God] has brought to naught the ‘creaturely activity’, that the energy of God may come into you in resurrection power of abundant life ... God wants you to see yourself ‘cut off’ with Christ’s death, ‘cut off’ from the old strength and power. (Ezekiel 37:11) Has He brought you to see the deep mystery of the Cross, that you have died in Him? ‘Cut off’ in Christ’s death, ‘cut off’ with Christ from your friends, from your old work, ‘cut off’ from that blessed experience even of the ‘Garden of Eden’: all the fruitfulness apparently gone, the beauty, and the power. He is leading you on to know the Lord.\textsuperscript{473}

Ceasing from “creaturely activity” through a purgative death included the loss of consolation which brings “the believer to an end of all resources in himself, and makes a way for the life of God.”\textsuperscript{474} According to Penn-Lewis, besetting sins cannot be resisted though they can be overcome through a death.\textsuperscript{475} As the self dies it becomes conscious of “a new force taking possession of it- a silent power taking control and pervading its whole being.”\textsuperscript{476} The soul has entered a life that springs from death. “It possesses no longer; it is possessed. God being the principle of life cannot want for anything. The soul has lost the created for the Creator; nothingness for all things (Colossians 2:9-10)”\textsuperscript{477}

**Quietism and Cross Theology**

Union with the Divine was a notion widely promoted by the Mystics and Quietists alike. For both the Quietist and the Mystic, human activity was wholly identified with God’s

\textsuperscript{473} Penn-Lewis, *Fruitful Living*, pp. 34-35.
\textsuperscript{474} Penn-Lewis, *All Things New*, p. 9.
\textsuperscript{476} Penn-Lewis, *Life Out of Death*, pp. 41-42.
\textsuperscript{477} Ibid., p. 42.
actions in the unitive state. "'I am no longer alive, it is Christ that lives in me.'" The Quietists however had an emphasis quite different from that of the Mystics. As a deviation or "perversion of a great mystical truth," the Quietists suggested that through utter passivity the highest mystical states were attained, whereby the soul is absorbed by and fully identified with the Divine. Quietism was therefore the "doctrine of the one act; passivity," after which the soul needs only to rest "in the Divine Life, be its unresisting instrument." The ideals of Quietism were therefore indifference and passivity. Quietism forebade the purgative path as well as all effort, and from passivity and indifference "the Quietists strove in vain to identify with that state of Pure Love which 'seeketh not its own.'" A complete identification with God, through passivity, led not only to a "holy indifference" but also to a complete "stultification of the mental and moral life." In a state of utter passivity, the Quietists insisted that the soul is absorbed by "the divine life and therefore exempt from the usual duties and limitations of human existence." This, many believed, led to a doctrine of irresponsibility. As a deviation from classical mysticism, the Quietism within the Higher Life Movement was based upon the passivity of "rest" as the impetus to union.

Nurtured in the Keswick milieu, Penn-Lewis's Cross Theology often engages the language of Keswick's Quietism, yet without embracing the conclusions of the Quietist, that passivity of soul is the portal to union or complete identification with the Divine. For example, Penn-Lewis asked: "Have you ever been to the foot of Calvary and seen hanging on that cross not only the Lord Jesus Christ but yourself? Yourself in Him?" Her emphasis, however, differed from the Quietist's insistence that the Divine absorbs the soul in the unitive state. Penn-Lewis viewed the soul with Christ, rather than as Christ on the Cross, whereas the Quietist demanded full identification such that "'the good man,' ... 'is the only begotten Son of God.'" The soul sees not only Christ on the

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479 Underhill, Mysticism, p. 325.
480 Ibid.
481 Ibid.
482 Ibid.
483 Ibid., p. 323.
484 Ibid.
486 Knox, p. 351.
Cross, but itself in Christ. Cross Theology thus overcomes the complete identification through participation, cooperation of the human with the Divine such that the soul finds itself “in Him.”

In what ways then does Penn-Lewis’s “dying” differ from Keswick’s “rest” as the one-act eliciting union? At times the “rest” of Keswick certainly resembles Penn-Lewis’s “dying.” Yet, a review of Penn-Lewis’s mystical literature makes it clear that the soul must progress through a process of purification that leads to union, and therefore the highest mystical state is not elicited by the one act of dying. For dying, unlike rest, requires a painful transmutation whereby “self” is purified within the soul. The power of self cannot be overcome through passivity or rest, but must be overcome through an active and organic union with Christ’s death. For the “Cross and the Fall exactly and perfectly correspond.” In this sense death is both more radical and also more active than “rest” in uniting the soul to Christ. Thus, the death of Cross Theology engages not the Quietist’s one-act of rest, but the purification and mortification of classical mysticism where, like Job, the soul loses all things and is

‘Cut off’ in Christ’s death, ‘cut off’ with Christ from your friends, from your old work, ‘cut off’ from that blessed experience even of the ‘Garden of Eden’; all the fruitfulness apparently gone the beauty, and the power. He is leading you on to know the Lord.

As we have just shown, Cross Theology differs from Quietism by first resisting complete identification with the Divine. Second, as we have suggested, Penn-Lewis’s Cross Theology embraces the purgative path intrinsic to the classical tradition of mysticism. Both Keswick and Cross Theology offered victory over sin, but Keswick was a call to resist effort, whereas Cross Theology was a call to undergo a mortification more typical of the classical mystical tradition.

487 Ibid.
488 Ibid.
489 For a full exploration of the purgative path of Cross Theology chapter six as it explores Penn-Lewis’s mystical literature.
490 Penn-Lewis, Soul and Spirit, p. 10.
491 Penn-Lewis, Fruitful Living, pp. 34-35.
While Cross Theology at times harnessed the language of Quietism, and while admitting that her earliest mentor was Madame Guyon, in 1903 Penn-Lewis expressed a concern for the priority given to passivity and the abandonment of volition within subjective spiritual experiences. This she believed led to spiritual folly and demonic torment. Therefore, Penn-Lewis's Cross Theology included the state of purgation as an unavoidable path towards union. We will explore the similarities and differences between Quietism and Cross Theology more thoroughly at a later point.

Within the revival camp, there were those whose spiritual experiences, second blessings and baptisms in the Holy Spirit Penn-Lewis believed were demonic in root, and this must have been a bitter pill to swallow. For Penn-Lewis, Keswick's emphasis on passivity was based on a misunderstanding of what "dying rather than doing" entailed. For Penn-Lewis dying resisted passivity by engaging volition. However, as Keswick insisted upon passivity and the abandonment of volition and Penn-Lewis feared that such a stance would leave souls vulnerable to the demonic world.

Penn-Lewis suggested that to experiment blindly with spiritual experiences, without encountering the purification of self on the Cross, was to lose one's stability and spiritual moorings. This for Penn-Lewis accounted for the emotionalism, glossolalia and spiritism that divided and disrupted the Revival Movement. Cross Theology therefore, encouraged not only the purgative path, but also active human volition as a corrective to the hysteria and spiritism that trailed the Keswick Revivals. In heedless pursuit of spiritual encounters, based on a "wrong interpretation of a real truth," souls were left vulnerable to counterfeit spirits. She wrote:

Devoted believers have permitted evil spirits to enter and manipulate their bodies, so that with delight they relate any experience which shows they

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492 Gerrard, p. 205 & ff.
493 Bebbington, p. 170. See also Dayton, p. 105, and Barabas, p. 94.
were made to act without their power to control! ... 'I was thrown down by
the power;' and such like statements, showing that the will was dethroned
for the time being by the satanic deceiver who obtained their surrender of
will by feigning to be God. 497

By calling attention to the dangers of passivity and a blind experimentation with spiritual
experiences, Penn-Lewis hoped to protect the Church from encounters with the demonic.
Penn-Lewis’s extensive treatment of evil and spiritual conflict led her to conclude that a
passive will was the portal to demonic activity. 498

By pointing to a middle way—one of human co-operation with God, Penn-Lewis affirmed
classical mysticism that struck a balance between God’s initiative and human volition. 499
Cross Theology, therefore, stressed the importance of human agency and free choice.
According to Penn-Lewis, God’s initiative never overwhelms human choice. 500 Penn-
Lewis wrote:

God will not change even the tone of your voice for you, as if you were a
machine. He will put His laws into your mind and write them on your
heart, but you are the person to act upon them ... It is for you to choose the
way you will speak, think, and act, and as you choose, the Holy Spirit will
enable you to carry out God’s laws. 501

As we exert our wills, as we choose to resist or die to sin, God’s Spirit empowers our
choice and secures our victory. 502 Cross Theology called for moral action, for moral
choice, for resisting evil. For example, when Christ called the disciple to walk on the
water, the disciple found he could do so by obedience and by faith. Our will must be as
active as our faith. 503 Most importantly, we must purposefully resist sin. Only in so far as

497 Ibid.
499 Aumann, p. 124.
501 Penn-Lewis, Face to Face. Glimpses into the Inner Life of Moses. (Dorset, England: Overcomer
502 Penn-Lewis, Fruitful Living, p. 46.
we actively oppose sin will "the Holy Ghost seals our faith with real deliverance."  
Penn-Lewis’s plea to resist sin stood in clear opposition to the passivity promoted by the Quietists.

Moreover, Penn-Lewis suggested that God’s action is dependent upon human choice. She wrote:

The manifestation of Divine power depending upon our human cooperation has ever been strange to finite creatures. It lies mainly in the freedom of will that belongs to us. God cannot deliver us from bondage unless we desire Him to; therefore He must permit pressure to come upon us in the one way or another, so as to bring us to the point of asking Him to do what He has been ready and able to do all the time. \(^{505}\)

Penn-Lewis, with her emphasis on a co-operation of human volition and the Divine, was therefore uneasily poised between Quietists and Calvinists. Her theology was fundamentally Arminian.

It comes as no surprise that the Calvinist, B. B. Warfield, was a strident critic of Holiness Theology. Warfield opposed the notion that God was in any way bound by human action. For Warfield, the Divine is never obligated by the demands of creatures. The supernatural cannot be dependent on the natural. \(^{506}\) For Warfield, God’s grace always and everywhere takes the initiative. God is never dependent on human activity, Warfield insisted. \(^{507}\)

**The Role of the Holy Spirit**

What role did the Holy Spirit play in the life of a Christian according to Higher Life teaching? This question was often the subject of debate. Some claimed that a second act of grace or a second experience with the Holy Spirit followed conversion, and was thus a
prerequisite to entire sanctification. Yet, there were those in Keswick who viewed the primary work of the Holy Spirit as that of “empowering for ministry,” and this view was more closely linked with the Reformed camp, over and against the Methodist notion of entire sanctification.

The Holy Spirit assumed two interrelated roles within Cross Theology. First, it was the Holy Spirit that transformed the soul in the purgative process. Second, the Holy Spirit quickened and empowered souls for ministry or service. For Penn-Lewis, the “Cross leads to the Spirit, and Spirit back again to the Cross.” It is through the Spirit that souls are released from the power of sin through the Cross.

According to Penn-Lewis, the Holy Spirit purges the soul of the old life, or carnal life thereby giving rise to the unitive or victorious life. Entrance into the unitive state is an organic participation in the Cross implemented by the Holy Spirit. As the Holy Spirit leads both “sin and the sinner to the Cross,” to “subjectively apply the power of that death to the sinner himself,” a partnership between the Holy Spirit and the soul is forged so that the soul has access to Divine power. In her own life, Penn-Lewis believed that the Holy Spirit drew her to the Cross where she exchanged her weakness for Christ’s strength; she overcame her timidity and frailty and became a woman whose ministry was filled with boldness, and with “with liberty of utterance.” She claimed that the Holy Spirit so empowered her own ministry that “souls were convicted of sin the instant they entered the room, without one word being spoken to them.” The Holy Spirit therefore lifted her life to “a different plane, as if it were raised by the incoming of some tidal wave.” Thus, Penn-Lewis exhorted her audiences to cooperate with the Holy Spirit not

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509 Dayton, p. 100.
510 Penn-Lewis, Power for Service, pp. 5-6.
512 Penn-Lewis, Thy Hidden Ones: Union with Christ as Traced in the Song of Songs, p. 129.
513 Penn-Lewis, Dying to Live, p. 31.
514 Penn-Lewis, All Things New, p. 44.
515 Ibid., p. 50.
516 Ibid., p. 50.
517 Penn-Lewis, Power for Service, p. 56.
518 Ibid.
only to attain spiritual power in serving, but beyond that also for “aggressive warfare against Satan.”

Finally, as free moral agents, each soul must prepare for union with God by purification. By removing all known sin and pursuing “what you know to be right, up to your light,” the soul acts in co-operation with God’s Spirit. Souls that cooperate with the Holy Spirit exert effort in the path to holiness, whereas the Quietists promoted passivity as the portal to union. For Penn-Lewis, as the soul enters the unitive state they embrace extraordinary spiritual power for service without signs, wonders or glossolalia. Penn-Lewis never associated the baptism of the Holy Spirit with spiritual experiences such as speaking in tongues.

**Overcoming Satan**

Cross Theology, as it drew souls into the unitive state, offered not only release from the flesh, from human weakness and sin, it also provided protection from the spiritual forces of evil. Sin, self and the devil were thus overcome at Calvary, insisted Penn-Lewis. Because Satan was defeated at Calvary, agents of evil endeavor to conceal the power of the Cross from the Church. “The Cross is the one place where [Satan] is powerless,” and it is for this reason that the devil endeavors to omit “the message of the Cross, in all religions.” Penn-Lewis wrote:

The mind blinded by Satan is made to reject the Cross; revolt against the Cross; tone down the meaning of the Cross; shrink from the language of the Cross; all because the Deceiver of men knows that the ‘word of the

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519 Ibid., p. 35.
520 Ibid., p. 50.
521 Penn-Lewis disdained the hysteria and glossolalia that often accompanied revival meetings. These, she believed, were the result of demonic activity. Demons, she argued, gain entrance to souls who passively pursue spiritual experiences, abandoning their wills in spiritual activity. Thus, Penn-Lewis favored “power” motifs that called spiritual seekers to engage their wills, thus resisting blind acceptance of spiritual experiences. See Penn-Lewis’s *Warfare on the Saints* and *The Spiritual Warfare*.
Cross' as the 'power of God' will destroy by the working of the Spirit of God, his veil. 525

Therefore, any aspect of life which has not endured the mortifications of the Cross, Satan may exercise influence over. Satan may tempt the old creation—our Adam-life, or any aspect of life that remains “uncrucified.” 526 She wrote:

If the old life is not kept in the position of death every moment, it is the material Satan puts his ‘fiery darts’ in. Satan has full rights over all the old creation. He knows that part of the old life in you which is not ‘crucified,’ and he directs his fiery darts to that spot. 527

Souls are therefore vulnerable to Satan only if the “the knife of the Cross” 528 has not been applied. For if “there is any self indulgence or anything doubtful in your life,” 529 the evil one will attack you or “fastening on that uncrucified ‘ground’ in you will press against you with appalling power.” 530 Victory is found only as the Cross is “steadily, persistently, and unbrokenly applied.” 531 As the mystical path of the Cross is pursued, the failings of the spiritual and physical realm are conquered and overcome. This was the promise of Cross Theology.

**The Crucicentrism of Penn-Lewis**

As we have seen, Cross Theology countered what Penn-Lewis believed to be an inadequate form of spirituality, a shallow mysticism that rendered souls vulnerable to sin and Satan. Penn-Lewis’s mystical theology had yet another important focus. Along with

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526 Penn-Lewis, *The Clinic Hour*. (Bournemouth, England: The Overcomer Book Room, actual date of publication is uncertain, though 1903 is approximated.), p. 4.
527 Penn-Lewis, *More that Conquerors*. (Copy provided by the B.L. Fisher Library, Asbury Theological Seminary, Date of publication is uncertain.), p. 7.
529 Ibid.
530 Ibid.
531 Ibid.
her contemporary P.T. Forsyth, she rallied against the modern disdain for the Cross through a tenacious crucicentrism. Crucicentrism was seen as a hallmark of the evangelical Movement in the late 19th century, and it vigorously opposed individuals like Bernard Shaw who held the doctrine of the Atonement with contempt. Shaw wrote:

I detest the doctrine of the Atonement ... ladies and men cannot as such possibly allow anyone else to expiate their sins by suffering a cruel death.

An Anglican priest declared, “in a sermon in 1921 that God’s anger was not appeased by the offering of his son. The idea was revolting.” Similarly, Leslie Weatherhead, a young Methodist, denied the traditional axiom that Christ’s death was the means of “‘forgiveness of sins.’ ‘In our modern view,’ he boldly asserted, ‘this is simply not true.’”

Evangelicals like Forsyth and Penn-Lewis sought to bring “back, and by an aggressive movement, the Cross, and all that the Cross essentially implies.” Recalling the words of John Wesley, “nothing in the Christian system is of greater consequence than the doctrine of Atonement.” Thus the call went out to glory in nothing so much as the Cross. At the Annual Address of the Methodist Society in London, in 1892, the plea to realize a personal experience of the Cross was clear:

We must be careful lest the Cross passes into the background, from which it is the glory of our fathers to have drawn it. Give to the death of Christ its true place in your own experience, and in your Christian work- as a witness to the real and profound evil of sin, as an overwhelming

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532 The Stephen Barabás Collection, within the Wheaton College Archives, offers examples of crucicentrist preaching within the early Keswick movement in the U.S., the most prominent was Charles G. Trumbull, from Yale University, and Gordon Watt, MA.
533 Bernard Shaw, as quoted by Bebbington, p. 16.
534 Bebbington, p. 201.
535 Weatherhead, as quoted by Bebbington, p. 201.
536 William Gladstone, as quoted by Bebbington, p. 14.
manifestation of Divine love, as the ground of acceptance with God, as a pattern of sacrifice to disturb us when life is too easy, to inspire and console us when life is hard, and as the only effectual appeal to the general heart of men, and above all, as the Atonement for our sins.\(^{538}\)

P. T. Forsyth insisted that the doctrine of the Atonement is “not a piece of mediaeval dogma.” \(^{539}\) On the contrary, Forsyth suggested that the Cross lies at the center of the gospel. While many of his contemporaries abhorred the Cross, Forsyth claimed that the Cross is the “centre of gravity”\(^{540}\) within the gospels. He said:

I met a poor and mischievous pulpit influence, and he said, ‘It is time we got rid of hearing so much about the Cross of Christ; there should be preached to the world a humanitarian Christ, the kind of Christ that occupies the Gospels.’ There was nothing for it but to tell that man he was the victim of smatterers, and that he must go back to his Gospels and read and study for a year or two. It is the flimsiest religiosity, and the most superficial reading of the Gospel, that could talk like that. What does it mean that an enormous proportion of the Gospel story is occupied with the passion of Christ? The centre of gravity, even in the Gospels, falls upon the Cross of Christ and what was done there, and not simply upon a humanitarian Christ. \(^{541}\)

Both conservatives and liberals argued over the meaning of the Cross. While liberals dismissed the centrality of Calvary, conservatives championed the Cross. Among twentieth century Crucicentrists, P.T. Forsyth was perhaps the most powerful, writing “a series of vibrant treatises”\(^{542}\) on the doctrine of the Atonement. Forsyth battled the “new

\(^{538}\) ‘Annual address to the Methodist Societies,’ \textit{Minutes of Several Conversations ... of the People called Methodists} (London, 1892), p. 374 f. As quoted by Bebbington, p. 15.


\(^{540}\) Ibid.

\(^{541}\) Ibid., pp. 51-52.

\(^{542}\) Bebbington, p. 14.
theology" of 1907-1910, an idealistic philosophy that embraced forms of pantheism. Singled out by arch proponents of this “new theology,” Forsyth found himself defending the Cross as central to Christianity. For the Cross, he posited, “is either the life of our religion, or it is the death of our religion.”

Like Forsyth, Penn-Lewis challenged those who neglected Christ’s achievement on Calvary. Penn-Lewis complained that “higher critics” portrayed Christ as a moral leader while revival enthusiasts pursued spiritual experiences. Both overlooked a personal encounter with the Cross. We are told by some “to look to the Lord Jesus Christ as a ‘hero’ and Example, with no preaching of his Atoning Death.” Others tell us that the spiritual world is accessed solely through personal experiences, again omitting the Cross. These preachers, argued Penn-Lewis:

Are unaware that they preach of their ‘experience’… forgetting that others need the message that ‘Christ died,’ he now proclaims to them the ‘Risen Christ’ waiting to receive and save, with the message of the Cross left out.

Modern preachers too often ‘theologize’ the doctrine of the Atonement; they treat Calvary as a mere abstraction. Such impersonal renderings of the Cross circumvent the power of the gospel, Penn-Lewis complained. In response to the popular dismissal of the Atonement, Penn-Lewis shored up her call to Calvary by quoting Forsyth. According to Penn-Lewis the vital message of the Cross is:

…rarely heard even in evangelical pulpits, and then only but a reference, or few words, as if it were only a ‘doctrine,’ ‘God help us,’ said Dr. Forsyth at Queen’s Hall, ‘if when we come to think of the Cross of Christ, as His redemptive atonement, we only theologise them.’

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543 Ibid., p. 199.
546 Ibid.
547 Ibid., p. 23.
The Higher Life camp however, was consumed by the pursuit of power and spiritual experiences, and they too overlooked the transforming power of Calvary. Quoting Forsyth, Penn-Lewis asked whether Calvary was

‘The one final treatment of sin’ (Dr. Forsyth), so that for ever afterwards all men are to be invited to come to Him as the Risen Saviour; or, is it absolutely necessary that the atoning death of Christ ... should be proclaimed and revealed to every man personally, by the Holy Spirit, ere he can be saved by the life of the Risen Lord; or, in other words, is the gospel proclamation, ‘Come to the Risen Christ as Saviour,’ or ‘Christ DIED for you?’ We are ‘reconciled to God through the death of His son,’ and ‘saved in His life.’

Revivalists promoted power in spiritual experiences; power in Pentecost; and power through a Baptism in the Spirit. Yet, any pursuit of power that does not elicit death to self, through a sharing in Calvary’s dark night, is incomplete at best, and inauthentic and counterfeit at worst, insisted Penn-Lewis. Authentic spiritual power, she argued, emanates from death to self on the Cross, and will therefore engage purgation in the path to holiness. “The Cross leads to the Spirit, and the Spirit leads back to the Cross.”

Like Penn-Lewis, P.T. Forsyth was a prophet of the Cross and he too challenged rationalists as well as revival enthusiasts, both of whom omitted the centrality of the Cross. To the mystics and the “many rationalist mystics today, who think we have outgrown historic Christianity,” Forsyth reminded them that “the real source of the Spirit is the Cross.”

Because Forsyth viewed Christ as the federal head of a new race, the Atonement was not solely substitutionary in nature. The Cross also created solidarity between the soul

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551 Ibid.
and Christ. Through union with Christ, souls are made not only righteous \textsuperscript{552} they are also “integrated into a New Goodness.” \textsuperscript{553} The “Son of God was not an individual merely; He was the representative of the whole race.” \textsuperscript{554} The Cross was not only personal, but also collective. \textsuperscript{555} In so far as one dies with Christ, one also rises as a member of a new race. \textsuperscript{556} Through solidarity with Christ on the Cross souls are joined to Christ in “an organic spiritual unity- one will in two parties or persons.” \textsuperscript{557}

Through union with Christ each Christian becomes a holy member of a new race, for the Cross is “but the under and seamy side of that solidarity whose upper side is the beauty of our corporate holiness in Him.” \textsuperscript{558} Therefore the Cross which laid “sin on Him lays His holiness on us, and absorbs us into His satisfaction to God.” \textsuperscript{559} The same “act that redeems us produces holiness, and presents us in this holiness to God and His communion.” \textsuperscript{560} The “same act of Christ which delivered from the guilt of sin delivered also from its power.” \textsuperscript{561}

While the Holiness Movement tended to bifurcate justification and sanctification into separate experiences, yet Forsyth argued that the Cross accomplished both forgiveness as well as sanctification, as sinners are mystically united to Christ’s death. Apart from the Cross, there is no higher spiritual experience. Yet throughout Church history the message of Calvary has not been fully apprehended, complained Forsyth. Over the centuries a misguided Church has attempted to acquire, through impotent means, what the Cross alone provides. \textsuperscript{562}

For example, the Higher Life camp advanced a “baptism in the Spirit” as a second act of grace. Can a second act of grace impart holiness apart from the Cross? This was the challenge Forsyth posited. It is erroneous to claim, said Forsyth

\textsuperscript{552} Ibid., p. 84.
\textsuperscript{553} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{554} Ibid., p. 116.
\textsuperscript{555} Ibid., p. 119.
\textsuperscript{556} Ibid., pp. 225-226.
\textsuperscript{557} Ibid., p. 226.
\textsuperscript{558} Ibid., p. 227.
\textsuperscript{559} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{560} Ibid., p. 208.
\textsuperscript{561} Ibid., p. 221.
\textsuperscript{562} Ibid., p. 218.
...a subsequent action of the spirit over and above faith- almost as if the Spirit and His sanctification were a second revelation, a new dispensation.\textsuperscript{563}

While an overemphasis on religious experiences was a reaction to the errors of rationalism, yet to overstate the need for spiritual encounters led to an overly subjective faith, with its weak moral note. Forsyth writes:

\begin{quote}
We have yet another extreme ... We have moved the accent from the objective to the subjective work of Christ; and we fall victims more and more to a weak religious subjectivism ... so that people say, ‘I will believe whatever I feel ... My soul will eat what I enjoy, and drink what makes me happy.’ They are their own test of truth, and ‘their own Holy Ghost.’ ... to think together the various aspects of the Cross, and make them enrich and not exclude one another ... The secret, therefore is not change of accent but balance of aspects ... To think together the various aspects of the Cross.\textsuperscript{564}
\end{quote}

Perhaps because Jessie Penn-Lewis was not theologically trained, by citing Forsyth she lent legitimacy to her own position that Calvary united souls to Christ in “an organic spiritual unity- one will in two parties or persons.”\textsuperscript{565} As ambassadors of the Cross, Forsyth and Penn-Lewis locate human solidarity with Christ on Calvary, and together they beckoned to a modern world to embrace power of the Cross, which they insisted was the sole reality of faith and the only means of holiness.\textsuperscript{566}

\textsuperscript{563} Forsyth, \textit{The Work of Christ}, p. 218.
\textsuperscript{564} Ibid., pp. 220-221.
\textsuperscript{565} Ibid., p. 226.
\textsuperscript{566} Ibid., pp. 228-29.
Summary Remarks

The Crucicentrists of the late 19th century opposed a rationalistic expression of faith as noted within the liberal branch of the Church. They also rejected a religious subjectivism that had penetrated the revivalist camp. Whereas some within the Church portrayed Christ only as a moral leader, revival enthusiasts pursued spiritual experiences. The former overlooked a personal need for the Cross and the latter pursued spiritual encounters independent of the Cross. Both allowed the centrality of the Cross to drop into the background of Christian experience, complained Forsyth and Penn-Lewis. Crucicentrists like Forsyth and Penn-Lewis sought to return the Cross to a central place within Christian experience.

Penn-Lewis's Cross Theology expressed a crucicentrism in which she opposed first the rationalists, who omitted a personal encounter with the Cross. To the subjectivists, she likewise insisted that all spiritual experiences be rooted in the ultimate source of Divine power—Calvary. For "all error is truth pressed to an extreme," \(^{567}\) claimed Penn-Lewis.

It is unclear whether Penn-Lewis had any direct communication with P.T. Forsyth, even while she was known to cite his work. Her affinity for Forsyth seems to rest in their shared belief that the Cross alone imparts authentic holiness and spiritual power. While holiness, through union with Christ, was for Penn-Lewis attained through the process of dying to self, as outlined by classical mysticism, for Forsyth, holiness was located in union or solidarity with Christ—the federal head of a new, holy race. To die with Christ is to rise a member of a new race, an experience that unites rather than bifurcates justification and sanctification. \(^{568}\) Regardless of the process, be it one experience or many, both Forsyth and Penn-Lewis insist that the Cross mediates holiness because it establishes solidarity with Christ's will.

We have shown that the purpose of Cross Theology concerned the acquisition of power attained through mystical death with Christ. Union with Christ, initiated by the

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\(^{567}\) Gerrard, p. 205.
Holy Spirit, drew the soul through the purgative path in which the soul overcomes the power of sin and the devil. The internal dynamics of Cross Theology included an affirmation of free will as a means of avoiding demonic possession. Moreover, because Cross Theology asserted the primacy of volition as well as the purgative path, Penn-Lewis avoided the passivity and full identification with the Divine, noted among the Quietists. Unlike the Quietists who shunned purgation and mortification in preference to the one-step of “rest” toward union or holiness, Penn-Lewis taught that mystical union with Christ involved mortification. Her insistence on purgation in the path to union aligned Cross Theology with the classical mystics.

Before examining the dynamics of Cross Theology in detail, we will turn our attention to the theological convictions of Keswick. We will also explore those who served as theological antecedents to the early Keswick Convention. Our intention is to provide an understanding of the Quietism intrinsic to Keswick to which Cross Theology was an alternative.
Chapter Three
Faith Imparts Holiness: Keswick’s Shorter Path

Take my hands and let them move at the impulse of thy love...
Take my intellect, and use every power as thou shalt choose...
Take my will, and make it thine; it shall be no longer mine... 569

I. Introduction

Holiness or sanctification, according to Keswick, was attained through a second act of grace, following conversion. Many within Keswick suggested that union with God—the highest mystical state—was mediated not by effort, but through “rest” or faith. For Keswick, therefore, justification and sanctification were both elicited by faith, and each occurred as a separate event or crisis. Because Keswick advanced an experience of sanctification following justification, they received steep opposition from outspoken critics, particularly from the Reformed branch of the Church. 570

Holiness or sanctification based upon faith was roundly promoted throughout the Conventions, through their literature, hymns, sermons, and through personal testimony. Keswick’s Holiness theology was rooted in a one-act of faith and this was promoted over and against effort in the path to perfection. For Keswick, “rest” or faith, rather than effort, was the only path to perfection and union with the Divine. To circumvent effort in attaining sanctification separated Keswick not only from the Reformed tradition, but also from the classical mystical tradition, for both Reformed Christians as well as classical mystics embraced effort in the path to holiness.

570 Warfield, pp. 579-584, as quoted by Barabas, p. 72.
It is the purpose of this section to explore Keswick’s view of sanctification as an act of faith rather than effort, and as an experience subsequent to and separate from justification, which the soul received upon conversion. Here, I will introduce the similarities between Keswick’s “rest of faith” and the Quietists’ Prayer of Simplicity, both of which offered a shorter path, void of effort, to attaining the unitive state. It is also the purpose of this chapter to note the ways in which Higher Life teachers adopted Quietism, and how this differed from the classical mystical tradition fundamental to the Penn-Lewis’s Cross Theology. Because Cross Theology embraced purgation, she offered an alternative to what she saw as the deficient teachings of Keswick, a matter that led some within Keswick to criticize Penn-Lewis and her views of the Cross. Penn-Lewis’s differences with Keswick on this and other matters ultimately led to her withdrawal from the Keswick Conventions.

II. In Christ Twice

As discussed earlier, the Keswick Conventions created a sense of dissatisfaction with the ordinary Christian life. Most Christians had not, in Keswick’s perspective, attained the victory over sin that the Scriptures promised. Keswick’s Higher Life message was directed at those who felt beleaguered by besetting sin and the failures of their Christian service. In particular, Keswick solicited Christian ministers who above all others should evidence spiritual efficacy. To lay and clergy alike, the Keswick experience promised a more effective and holy Christian life. Through a second experience of grace, Keswick offered an infusion of power that enabled the soul to overcome failure and sin. The power to surmount sin and failure was mediated by the “rest of faith,” Keswick suggested.

Keswick therefore advanced a notion of total depravity, exploring in depth the desperate condition of human sinfulness. Every thought, motive and deed was at enmity with God, Keswick insisted. For this reason, Romans chapters four through seven were

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571 Price & Randall, p. 156.
572 A.T. Pierson (1837-1911), the American Holiness leader complained that Penn-Lewis’s view of the Cross engaged mortification. See Price & Randall, p. 156.
well known to Keswick delegates. Held hostage to sin, Paul said that he was not the master of his own actions. “For I do not what I want to do.” 573

According to Keswick, only a force of equal or greater strength can subdue the tyrant sin. That force was Pentecost, Keswick claimed. Sin is conquered, they reasoned, by a “Pentecostal experience,” following conversion. While conversion provides release from the guilt of sin, sanctification offers power over sin. Justification, through faith, freed sinners from the condemnation of sin. Sanctification through faith was, according to Keswick, a second act of grace whereby the soul attained holiness or power over sin. At the center of the Pauline epistles are two “in Christ” experiences. 574 The first was justification in Christ, and the second was union with Christ. 575

A fully sanctified Christian enjoyed “salvation from sinful attitudes and actions,” 576 such that the Christian was transformed into “the likeness of Jesus.” 577 Through a second act of grace, souls attained “complete and permanent sanctification,” 578 argued Keswick. One can achieve justification by overcoming “sin as a fault,” 579 while remaining enslaved to the power of sin as an “inwrought tendency of the will.” 580 To live a pardoned but powerless life was to live a carnal Christian life, “a life of condemnation in the daily experience.” 581 Evan Hopkins writes:

Sin thus robs us of the power by which alone we are able to perform the functions that belong to our renewed being. And it not only undermines our strength, it hinders our growth. 582

573 Romans 7:15: “For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate … Wretched man that I am. Who will rescue me?”
574 Dieter, Hoekema, Horton, McQuilkin, and Walvoord, p. 154.
575 Ibid.
576 Ibid., p. 159.
577 Ibid., p. 160.
578 Ibid.
580 Ibid.
581 Ibid., p. 47.
582 Ibid., p. 28.
Everyone begins as a carnal Christian, but some remain carnal or powerless for many years. Carnal Christians succumb to what Keswick calls the “self-life.” While they understand their judicial standing before God, they are unaware of the “in-Christ of sanctification.” To those who know only justification, Paul said: “I could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ (1 Corinthians 3:1).” The Keswick Conventions offered a higher life. Through an experience of Pentecost, souls were freed from the “self-life” and attained a new “personal Center [Christ], about which all else is to revolve.” The “idol-room often proves afterward the Throne-room.”

According to Keswick, the prominence of carnal Christians was the result of two factors, ignorance and a lack of faith. Through ignorance, the Church has failed to perceive the “possibility and necessity of living triumphantly.” As a result the Church, as “an aggregate of individual impotent members,” limped along only now and again successful in its commission. The “normal experience of every Christian should be one of victory rather than defeat.” Thus, it became Keswick’s mission to educate Christians to the vast riches available through a Pentecost experience.

Apart from ignorance, Evan Hopkins suggested that holiness is hindered by an absence of faith and a reliance upon effort. If Christians trusted only God to make them holy, they would not attempt to overcome sin through their own efforts. Self-reliance, according to Keswick, was the path of spiritual impotence. Therefore, Keswick encouraged Christians to abandon moral effort in the path to holiness. It was faith, rather than effort, that offered power over sin.

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583 Ibid., p. 45.
584 Ibid., p. 47.
586 Ibid., p. 78.
587 Dieter, Hoekema, Horton, McQuilkin, and Walvoord, p. 163.
588 Barabás, p. 58.
589 Ibid., p. 99.
591 Dieter, Hoekema, Horton, McQuilkin, and Walvoord, p. 164.
592 Ibid., p. 165.
Turning to the experience of the disciples, Keswick reasoned that the events of Pentecost were “both subsequent and different from conversion.” 593 Since the disciples received the Holy Spirit after conversion, and this led to effective ministry, Keswick insisted that all Christians should experience a Pentecost, that they too might receive “an exhaustless reservoir” 594 of power.

A second experience following conversion was noted not only in the lives of Christians at Pentecost, but can also be traced in the life of the Apostle Paul. Paul spoke of his struggles to overcome sin (in Romans 7:14-15), and he described his emancipation from sin in Romans 6:1-14. In both instances, Paul was “in Christ,” argued Keswick. According to Hopkins, Paul, though redeemed, was yet a carnal Christian, even though he was “enveloped in Christ the Righteous One, who has met all the claims of the righteous law.” 595 As Paul was sanctified through a second experience, he was capable of abiding “in Christ the Holy One, who has satisfied all the desires of a Father’s heart.” 596 Paul’s first experience related to justification or redemption, and his second experience was sanctification.

In Keswick’s view therefore, the soul is freed from the power of sin through two, separate encounters with grace. Both encounters with grace are mediated through faith. Faith was the means to justification. Faith was also the means to sanctification, because faith releases the Holy Spirit to exercise a counteracting force whereby “we are freed from the dominion of sin.” 597 Through faith, the Christian is “brought positionally into such a relationship to sin that he is beyond the reach of sin’s dominion and lordship.” 598 Therefore, faith rather than effort, was the portal to the highest mystical states where the soul receives extraordinary power over sin. The absence of effort in the path to holiness was a notion Keswick derived from the Quietist’s adaptation of the Prayer of Simple Regard, a matter we will explore further on. 599 The Quietists suggested that inactivity or

593 A. T. Pierson, *The Keswick Movement in Precept and Practice*, p. 82.
594 Ibid., p. 83.
596 Ibid.
597 Barabas, p. 97.
598 Ibid., p. 100.
a simple gazing at God mediates a state of union. We will explore this notion more thoroughly in another section.

W.E. Boardman (1810-1886), a noted American Holiness teacher, compared the experience of justification to that of sanctification and concluded that both are founded on faith. He suggested that “the first experience [conversion], and the second [Baptism in the Holy Spirit] were received immediately when there was willingness and faith for its acceptance.”

How permanent is the state of holiness attained by faith? The tendency to sin is ever present. The downward pull of sin continually “fixes our thoughts on ourselves.” Because sin poses a constant threat, even those who have enjoyed a second experience must remain in a state of rest or faith in order to sustain union with Christ. Thus, while the American Holiness Movement suggested that sin was eradicated by a second experience of faith, Keswick favored a moment-by-moment suppression of sin.

To explain how sanctification is sustained moment-by-moment, Evan Hopkins employed the following analogy. Carnal Christians are like iron, they are cold, black, hard and stiff. But place the Christian or iron in the furnace of the Holy Spirit:

What a change takes place! It has not ceased to be iron; but the blackness and the coldness and the hardness are gone! It has not lost its nature ... as long as it remains in the fire it is red and hot and malleable, and the fire and iron are still distinct, and yet how complete is the union—they are one ... So it is with the believer ... as long as he abides in Christ.

The higher Christian life was a matter of being not doing. We become holy, or Christ-like, not by imitation but through faith, asserted Hopkins. Moral bricks assembled by

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601 Ibid., p. 24.

602 Ibid., p. 173.


605 Ibid., p. 108.
human effort cannot build the house of practical holiness, suggested Hopkins. Until we come to an end of our own abilities, we cannot experience "the beginning of God." Too often, complained Keswick, we "make more of our cooperation than of God's operation."

Hopkins considered how our efforts might in any way overcome sin. He wrote:

Shall we try to help Christ to live in us? Shall we try to make Christ more living? Shall we help Him to put forth His own power in us? Shall we try, in other words, to grow—to produce fruit? Surely not. And yet is not this the grand mistake multitudes are making?

Holiness, according to Hopkins, cannot be the product of human effort. It is by faith and not effort that the carnal life is raised "to another platform," to the state of union. Faith was for Hopkins an absence of effort, and was thus a state of passivity. This represents a profound difference from Penn-Lewis's Cross Theology that denounced passivity as the portal to holiness.

Like Hopkins, Hannah Whitall Smith also rejected human effort in acquiring holiness. She wrote:

You need make no efforts to grow. But let your efforts instead be all concentrated on this, that you abide in the Vine ... Give up all your efforts after growing, and simply let yourself grow. Leave it all to the Husbandman whose care it is, and who alone is able to manage it ... Abide in the Vine. Let the life from Him flow through all your spiritual veins. Interpose no barrier to His mighty life-giving power, working in you all the good pleasure of His will. He is not asking thee in thy poor weakness, to do it thyself; he only asks thee to yield thyself to Him that He

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606 Ibid., p. 109.
608 Ibid.
609 Hopkins, Practical Holiness. p. 11.
may work in thee to will and to do of His good pleasure. Thy part is to yield thyself: His part is to work: and never, never will He give thee any command, which is not accompanied by ample power to obey it.  

Humans cannot obtain justification through striving, nor can the soul conquer sin by effort, claimed Keswick. Our exertion and “resolutions will utterly fail in effecting it, and leave us in despair.”  

To struggle against sin is like a drowning person who struggles against the water. Hopkins suggests that there is a force—a buoyancy in the water that permits the body to float. That force is faith.  

According to Keswick, Christians who strive to please God advance pride and self-reliance. “They made a start ‘in the Spirit,’ as Paul says, but now are foolishly attempting to live the Christian life in their own strength.”  

A truly spiritual life, a life pleasing to God is a life rooted in faith and rest, claimed Keswick. “Faith throws the switch, releasing the current of divine power.” Faith opens the soul to the power of the Holy Spirit and appropriates “God’s provision for successful Christian living.” Consider the following analogy. The Holy Spirit is God’s gift and “faith is the Christian’s hand which takes the gift from God.”  

The Higher Life teachers therefore viewed their movement as a second Reformation. Whereas the first Reformation was “the development of justification by faith, so is this to be by the unfolding of sanctification by faith.” All spiritual power is accessed through a covenant of faith, for both the “unredeemed sinner and for the redeemed sinner.” Victory over “sin’s dominion is a blessing we may claim by faith, just as we accepted pardon.”  

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613 Hopkins, Practical Holiness, p. 30.  
614 Dieter, Hoekema, Horton, McQuilkin, and Walvoord, p. 164.  
615 Ibid.  
616 Ibid., p. 167.  
617 Ibid.  
619 Ibid., p. 5.  
620 Dieter, Hoekema, Horton, McQuilkin, and Walvoord, p. 166.  
Mastery over sin is dependent upon a “relationship of faith,”\(^{622}\) rather than some “complex doctrinal system or upon achievement.”\(^{623}\) Simple faith and a trusting relationship with Christ were attainable by anyone, regardless of age or education. The Keswick Conventions were therefore designed to lead to a decision of faith, which for Keswick was the only source of spiritual vitality.

Therefore, all events at Keswick were intended to lead to a “crisis” or a profound dissatisfaction with one’s weakness and failings. The music and scenery, the extraordinary stories of powerful Christian service created a longing and built towards a decision. Will you enter rest and receive holiness? How faith mediated sanctification was less important than the fact that it does, if one so chooses. Lengthy theological discourse was avoided. Keswick Conventions concerned “decisions not discussions,”\(^{624}\) and few seemed interested in theology. Even Keswick’s most distinguished theologian, Bishop Moule, suggested that holiness did not “not depend on wearisome struggle,”\(^{625}\) but that the “inmost secret of deliverance and purification, behind all ‘means’, is faith.”\(^{626}\)

The emphasis was on simple faith as the means to union, where the soul and the Divine are indistinguishable. For example, according to Keswick leaders such as W.E. Boardman, faith initiates such identification with God that God can “speak by us as He spake by holy men of old. He can write by us, print by us, preach by us, teach by us, give to us, do anything and everything by us.”\(^{627}\)

Or again, Hubert Brooke, an early Keswick Convention leader, suggested that it is not only an abandonment of effort, but also through a state of passivity that the Christian enters the unitive state, receives power over sin, and is identified with the Divine.\(^{628}\) To enter holiness, or consecration, Brooke said, one must abandon the “powers of the body, the affections of the heart, and the possessions of the offerer.”\(^{629}\) In doing so, the soul undergoes a “tremendous upheaval... [a] transference of rule, choice, decision and

\(^{622}\) Dieter, Hoekema, Horton, McQuilkin, and Walvoord, p. 166.

\(^{623}\) Ibid.

\(^{624}\) Ibid.

\(^{625}\) Moule as quoted by Pollock, p. 74.

\(^{626}\) Ibid.

\(^{627}\) Moule as quoted by Pollock, p. 77.


\(^{629}\) Barabas, pp. 112-113.

\(^{627}\) Ibid.
selection in life from self to God." 630 The unitive state, initiated by an abandonment of effort and a state of passivity, is likened to soldiers who "obey only one voice; the engagement of the servant to recognize only the master's will." 631

Though the modern Church had failed to lead souls to holiness "of heart and conduct," 632 Keswick recalled a time in history when Christians had enjoyed the fruits of union with Christ. Exalting in the lives of superlative saints from the past, Keswick remembered how these souls were "grounded in love, and filled with the fulness of God." 633 Saints such as Madame Guyon, Tauler, Zinzendorf, Tersteegen, Fénelon and John and Charles Wesley, 634 at a certain moment had been "lifted up into Christ and filled with the Spirit in an experience which stood at the beginning of a higher plane of Christian life and power." 635

Keswick viewed itself as part of a great tradition, a tradition extolled by the Apostle Paul in the sixth chapter of Romans, experienced by the Church on the day of Pentecost, and by mystics ever since. Like Paul and the mystics after him, Keswick believed all Christians can, through faith, experience the "self-abandoned energy and freedom, which ... [makes] every real Christian a 'new creature,' and constitutes the essential character of Christian mysticism." 636 To recover the Church's true source of power was to reclaim spiritual union with Christ, Keswick insisted.

However, unlike the classical mystical tradition that favored effort over passivity and purgation over rest, the highest mystical states were, for Keswick, the product of faith alone. And, this separated Keswick from many classical mystics, a fact of which they seemed unaware.

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630 Ibid., p. 113.
631 Ibid.
632 Sloan, p. 9.
633 Ibid.
634 Ibid.
636 Underhill, The Mystics of the Church, p. 46.
III. Opposition to the Higher Life Message

Keswick Charged with Perfectionism

Eminent Keswick leaders such as Scroggie eventually rescinded his support for sanctification through "rest of faith" alone. By 1950, Scroggie indicated that a life of faith "was achieved by effort." Spiritual progress must involve work, he now insisted. We cannot "rely on God to do what we can do ourselves," Scroggie argued.

Like Scroggie, the reformed theologian B.B. Warfield was critical of the Higher Life's system of sanctification. In particular, Warfield railed against a method of sanctification that separated justification from sanctification. Warfield insisted that conversion alone freed us from the principle of sin. To suggest that the power of sin was suspended by means of a subsequent act of grace called into question the first act of grace, and was itself an "inadequate conception of salvation." According to Warfield, Higher Life teaching was simply another version of perfectionism. Any notion of sinless perfection in this life is theologically misguided, charged Warfield.

In defense of Higher Life teaching, Moule rejected the charge of perfectionism by insisting that the tendency to sin will always be a part of our earthly pilgrimage. We are sinners, argued Moule, and we are therefore always ready to exert our tyranny against God, neighbor and self. For Moule, therefore, the soul has "abundant work to do, in watching and prayer, in self-examination and confession of sin, in diligent study of the divine Word." Such holy activity is pursued with the purpose of "maintaining and

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637 Scroggie, as quoted by Price & Randall, p. 75.
638 Ibid.
639 Ibid.
640 Ibid.
641 Warfield, as quoted Barabas, p. 72.
642 Warfield, p. 240 & ff.
643 Moule, as quoted by Pollock, p. 76.
644 Moule, Outlines of Christian Doctrines, p. 193-194, as quoted by Barabas, pp. 97-98.
deepening that sacred practical contact with Christ by faith, the one ultimate secret of spiritual success," which is a continual process never fully accomplished in this life.

While many Christians, pastors and missionaries around the world welcomed the message of Keswick, yet the Higher Life teaching of Keswick also received fierce and articulate opposition. Particularly within the Reformed branch of the Church, the Higher Life teaching of Keswick was denounced as perfectionism, and as Quietism. Against these critics Keswick divines rigorously defended both their message and their experience.

J.C. Ryle (1816 - 1900)

Made Bishop of Liverpool in 1880, J.C. Ryle was an outspoken proponent of Reformed theology as well as an ardent opponent of the Higher Life Movement. Ryle published a blistering assessment of Pearsall Smith’s 1875 Brighton Convention lectures in The Record, an Anglican publication. Ryle suggested Pearsall Smith was a dangerous American import whose teaching trades “emotional sentimentalism and visionary mysticism for solid piety and Scriptural experimentalism founded on the Word of God.” Comparing the teaching of D.L. Moody to that of Pearsall Smith, was, according to The Record, the difference between “sunshine and fog.”

In 1877, Ryle offered a critique of Keswick’s view of sanctification in his book Holiness. Fundamentally, Ryle rejected a version of sanctification acquired without a struggle, as an act of faith distinct from conversion. Sanctification, according to Ryle, can not be separated from conversion. Representing the Reformed position, Ryle insisted that one receives conversion and sanctification simultaneously. At the moment of conversion, one acquires new life in Christ wherein begins the work of the Holy Spirit to make the soul holy. Ryle also asserted that sanctification is a process that is never completed in this

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645 Ibid., p. 98.
646 Price & Randall, p. 211.
647 J.C. Ryle, to the editor, R, 28 May 1875. A letter regarding Mr. Pearsall Smith’s contributions to the Brighton Convention. by the Rev. J. C. Ryle (Stradbroke, Suffolk, 1875) as quoted by David Bebbington, p. 171.
life. Moreover, Ryle objected to Keswick’s lack of theological precision, and the vague and devotional prose used to forward their views of holiness through faith alone.

Ryle observes that the Higher Life teaching of Keswick did in fact differ from the Reformed view of sanctification. For Reformed thinkers like Ryle, sanctification and justification are simultaneous events in which the Holy Spirit separates the sinner from a “natural love of sin and the world, puts a new principle in his heart and makes him practically godly in life.” 648 For Keswick however, sanctification was a transforming event, initiated by faith, where the “old sinful nature is not changed or improved but replaced...” 649 The sinful life is supplanted by the life of Jesus, and the Christian is transplanted or fused into Christ by the Holy Spirit. The old is replaced by the new, such that the soul is fully identified with Christ. “Yield,” “be crucified,” “rest,” “reckon,” were terms used by Keswick to suggest that by faith, the Christian is fully sanctified because the self-life has been absorbed by the Divine life. For this reason Keswick viewed effort as futile in reforming the sinful nature. What is needed, from Keswick’s view, was a new life—not more energy from the old, self-life.

What is noteworthy for our purposes is that Ryle did not appear to notice that Keswick’s view of sanctification is simply borrowed from the Quietists, and is itself an aberration of classical mysticism. Again, the reformed critics of Keswick fail to observe the theological or historical alterations of classical mysticism operative within Keswick’s view of sanctification.

**B. B. Warfield (1851 – 1921) & Dwight Moody (1837 – 1899)**

As mentioned, the American Calvinist, B.B. Warfield, was an articulate opponent of Keswick’s Higher Life teaching. In his extensive work *Perfectionism*, Warfield suggests that salvation is inseparable from sanctification. According to Warfield, throughout the life of a Christian, sin is gradually eliminated, a process that begins at conversion. That any group would separate “deliverance from the penalty of sin and from continued acts of sin, as to permit to fall out of sight deliverance from sin itself—that corruption of heart

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648 Price & Randall, p. 213.  
649 Ibid.
which makes us sinners,” was for Warfield “a fatally inadequate conception of salvation.” Contrary to Keswick’s notion that sin is arrested through a second act of grace following conversion, Warfield posited that sin diminishes only as God’s grace works daily in the life of a converted soul. For Warfield, sanctification can never be separated from justification. The Bible, he argued, not “merely in Rom. viii.30, but everywhere—very explicitly in vi.—join justification and sanctification indissolubly.”

While Warfield rightly identified the Higher Life teaching as “quietistic mysticism,” he failed to articulate the ways in which the Higher Life message deviated from classical mysticism. For example, Warfield did not appear to observe that the Higher Life’s “rest of faith” resembled the Quietist’s Prayer of Simple Regard, a matter we will explore, in greater detail, in the next section. Both served as the portal to union, via passivity. Despite Warfield’s lengthy treatise on the perfectionism of Higher Life teaching, he does not note how the American Holiness leader—Thomas Upham—adapted and reshaped Guyon’s Quietism, a matter to which we will give greater attention.

Like Warfield and Ryle, D. L. Moody was also critical of Keswick’s Higher Life teaching. He too rejected a theology of sanctification that did not engage in “a life of moral struggle.” Advising new Christians that their fallen natures would be with them all through life, Moody denied the teaching of complete victory over sin. While he spoke from Keswick platforms during his life, and though he shared Keswick’s summons to holiness and its emphasis on missions and evangelism, Moody did not support the Keswick view of sanctification.

Henry A. Boardman (1808 – 1880)

Pastor of the Tenth Presbyterian Church of Philadelphia, H.A. Boardman, like other Reformed leaders of his day found Keswick’s view of sanctification out of “harmony

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650 Warfield, as quoted by Barabas, p. 71.
651 Ibid.
652 Warfield, p. 234.
653 Ibid., p. 250.
654 Bebbington, p. 163.
655 Ibid.
with the current traditions of the Historic Church." 656 According to Boardman, Higher Life teaching ignored "the rich stores of Christian Biography, from Chrysostom and Augustine to Martyn, Brainerd and Payson." 657 However, Evan Hopkins and other Keswick leaders did in fact derive their views of sanctification from Fénelon, Guyon, and others that were very much a part of the historic Church, a fact Boardman failed to observe.

As a Reformed theologian, Boardman's fundamental complaint with Higher Life teaching concerned the role of free will or human initiative. Faith, for Boardman, is a gift of God rather than the product of human free will. Similarly, just as faith was God-given, intimacy between the soul and Christ is accomplished at Christ's initiative, at conversion. It is God's work not ours. "Christ entereth first into the soul, to join himself to it by giving it the spirit of faith." 658 Boardman thus rejected Keswick's notion that God cannot act in the absence of faith. God is never dependent upon human initiative. Rather, faith is dependent upon God's initiative, he insisted. 659

Boardman's complaint, echoed by B.B. Warfield, centered on the Calvinist presupposition that human actions can never direct the actions of God. God is the preeminent initiator for the Calvinist. To say we will love, or believe something by willing it was absurd to a Reformed thinker such as Boardman. You cannot "will" sin inoperative. This is the work of God alone. To suggest that sin can be suspended or eradicated through faith, by believing one has died to sin, is to believe oneself regenerate while sin is ever active. Moreover, to suggest that holiness be initiated through an act of faith is moral blindness, and hence Keswick was accused of antinomianism—a neglect of the moral law.

According to Boardman, throughout the New Testament Paul called believers to fight the good fight, to run the race, to press towards the mark. Reciting passages such as Philippians 3:12-14: "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect," 660 Boardman pressed his point. Sinlessness is unattainable in this life, he

657 Ibid.
658 Ibid., p. 49.
659 Ibid., p. 56.
insisted. The Christian life is one of pressing onward, straining with effort to make Christ ours. To fail to resist and fight sin is to run the risk of sloth, pride and moral neglect, he warned.

In retort, Keswick claimed that it is Christ’s work within the soul that alone must fight the “good fight of faith; and let Him lay hold of eternal life. This one thing I do: I ‘let’ the indwelling Christ press toward the mark.” 661 Boardman, however, insisted that life is fraught with difficulty and conflict. Paul in Romans 6 described his own life of struggle, his failures and successes, which we should not, suggested Boardman, view as a summons to sinlessness. Romans teaches that though sin was conquered on the Cross, and though the Christian is regenerate and freed from condemnation, sin torments those it “cannot destroy. Sin had received a death wound; but it has vitality enough to struggle on—the old man against the new—as long as life lasts.” 662

To imagine one sinless in this life is to underestimate the grip of sin. A perfect person would be the “last to know it.” 663 It is only the pious, claimed Boardman, that understand in detail their imperfections. Boardman recounts saints such as Charles Simeon, William Wilberforce, Adelaide Newton, John Newton, all of whom were self-reproaching, yet certain that God will fully redeem their failings on that last day. Charles Simeon wrote:

I have desired, and do desire daily, that God would put (so to speak) a telescope to my eye, and enable me to see, not a thousand only, but millions of my sins, which are more numerous than all the stars which God himself beholds, and more than the sands upon the seashore. There are but two objects that I have ever desired for these forty years to behold; the one is, my own wileness; and the other is, the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ; and I have always thought that they should be viewed together. 664

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661 Ibid., p. 151.
662 Ibid., p. 111.
663 Ibid., p. 256.
Trials will ever be with us as they were with the children of God throughout history. In this life the redeemed will always suffer, as the Canaanites did, with “thorns in our eyes and scourges in our sides, to sweeten the place of our future rest.”

The Pentecostal Complaint

Because Pentecost was upheld as the ideal, with an emphasis on spiritual experiences, miraculous healings, speaking in tongues, and other manifestations of the Spirit, Keswick’s spirituality attracted many Pentecostals. While Keswick admitted that the disciples spoke in tongues during Pentecost, this, they argued, was not the only sign of Spirit baptism. Prophesying was also a manifestation of the Spirit at Pentecost. The main point of Pentecost, argued Keswick, was that the gift of the Holy Spirit was imparted to each and every Christian, though the manifestation of gifts differed from Christian to Christian. W.E. Boardman wrote:

[The] Holy Ghost was in them, and that by Him they did so speak of the wonderful works of God, that a whole city was awakened in a few hours, and three thousand converted in a day. That they could heal in the name of Jesus … was indeed a blessed thing for the healed ones, and a real attestation of the power of God with them; but that they all could, by the Holy Ghost dwelling in them and working mightily with them, become glad and glorious witnesses for Jesus and witnesses for Jesus and win such multitudes to acknowledge Him as the Son of God in a single generation, and heal myriads of souls, was immeasurably more blessed. The logic of all this leads to the inevitable conclusion that the baptism of the Spirit is not a gift of miraculous power conferred upon a few, but the gift of the Holy Ghost Himself to us, to dwell in us, provided for every child of God who will receive Him.

665 Ibid., p. 117.
Keswick’s view of sanctification therefore permitted glossolalia as one of many outward expressions of an inward experience. However, the inward experience for Keswick was union with Christ. Pentecostal power, initiated through the Holy Spirit, was aimed at supplanting the self-life, and this for Keswick was the primary point of Pentecost. Glossolalia was a secondary manifestation and thus Keswick leaders could not accommodate the Pentecostal claim that glossolalia was the only sign of Holy Spirit baptism. While Pentecostals readily accepted Keswick’s claim that the Holy Spirit was received by faith, that glossolalia was merely a corollary dismayed Pentecostals such as Alexander Boddy and Donald Gee. 667 Both Gee and Boddy eventually parted company with Keswick because of this.

While Pentecostals viewed glossolalia as the singular manifestation of spiritual power, they therefore failed to observe that Keswick’s Higher Life teaching was fundamentally an experience with God, initiated by faith, imparting power over sin and thus part of a long-standing tradition of Quietism.

Summary Remarks

Keswick concerned spiritual experiences rather than intellectual treatises, and this proved dissatisfying to many theologians, particularly within the Reformed camp. Aware of the limitations of reason, Keswick leveled a counter-attack claiming that often those who were theologically trained were also spiritually ineffective. Keswick therefore called the Church to experience power through faith rather than through effort, which they insisted initiated union with God. Keswick’s Higher Life teaching impelled believers to enter transformation through the “rest of faith,” that was inaugurated by faith, an experience available to anyone, just as in the day of Pentecost.

As we have noted earlier, historians have suggested that Keswick’s rest of faith was part of the Romantic mood of the late 19th century 668 and this reflected a shift from “the

668 Bebbington, p.167 & ff, see also K. S. Latourette, p. 1168.
mechanical to the organic, “mechanical to the organic,” from the “classical to the Romantic.”\footnote{Bebbington, p. 172.} While historians like Bebbington admit that Keswick likened sanctification to a “living union with the living Saviour,”\footnote{Ibid.} he failed to identify the prominence of Quietism, as it operated in Keswick leaders of Evan Hopkins. Moreover, Bebbington also failed to observe the difference between Hopkins’ view of sanctification compared to that of Penn-Lewis who favored a more classical mystical tradition, though both were part of Keswick and both advanced union with God through different means. Thus, it was not the Romantic mood alone that gave rise to Keswick’s system of sanctification. What seems more likely is that Keswick’s Quietism was a derivation from the classical mystical tradition, the recovery of which was made possible by the Romantic mood of the 19th century. Thus, it was the classical mystical tradition that gave foundation to Keswick’s versions of holiness.

Keswick’s theology of sanctification was based on the notion that through passive faith, rather than effort, one enters the highest mystical states—union with God. Moreover, union with God—the highest mystical state—is also a “condition of continual deliverance from the self-life,”\footnote{Hopkins, The Law of Liberty in the Spiritual Life, p. 118.} such that the power of Christ’s life is manifest.\footnote{Ibid., p. 118 & ff.} To suggest that faith rather than effort initiates and sustains the fruits of union—Christ’s “glorious emancipation from sin’s power,”\footnote{Ibid., p. 119.} is not Romanticism alone. Rather, such a notion is dependent upon the tradition of the Quietists who asserted that passivity and a continuous act of naked faith elicited the highest mystical states.\footnote{Pourrat, p. 186 & ff.}

Keswick therefore offered a shorter path to the unitive state, which was dependent not upon effort,\footnote{Hopkins, The Law of Liberty in the Spiritual Life, p. 119.} but upon faith. Moreover, for the Quietists such as those within Keswick, a continual act of faith not only circumvented purgation and effort, but also initiated states of being in which God “puts forth His own power and manifests His own life”\footnote{Ibid.} where

\footnote{Ibid. See also Bebbington, p. 174 where Bebbington suggests that Keswick’s frequent use of “the branch abiding in the vine of Christ,” reflects a poetic and romantic notion of faith, rather than an image of the unitive state, the final stage of classical mysticism.}
there is "no lack of vitality." As we shall see, this is an adaptation to the Prayer of Simple Regard in which a simple gazing at Christ was said to initiate the fruit of union. Keswick's view of sanctification, therefore, was inevitably challenged by Reformed theologians, while being inadequate from the perspective of Pentecostalism because Keswick did not insist upon glossolalia as a sign of the Holy Spirit's power.

In the next section we will examine the similarities between Keswick's path to holiness and that of the Quietists. Observing the transmission of Quietism from Guyon through Upham, and from Upham to the Holiness Movement, we shall identify the theological alterations along the way. From this perspective, we are then in a position to assess Cross Theology, which offered an alternative to Quietism by including purgation in the path to union, thus providing the Holiness Movement with a version of classical mysticism, from which many in Keswick had selected only some elements.

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678 Ibid.
679 Warfield, p. 397.
Chapter Four

Theological Antecedents to Keswick:
Phoebe Palmer, Madame Guvon and Thomas Upham

The true mystic never tries deliberately to enter the orison of quiet: he regards it as a supernatural gift beyond their control, though fed by his will and love.\(^{680}\)

I. Introduction

The Quietism advanced by Keswick has historical antecedents reaching as far back as Madame Guyon. It is our purpose here, to evaluate the components of Quietism as it was imparted to Keswick through a historical continuum.

The notion that passivity mediated the highest mystical states was advanced by Quietists such as François Fénelon (1651 - 1715), Brother Lawrence (1611 - 1691), Madame Guyon (1648 - 1717),\(^{681}\) as well as Thomas Upham (1799 - 1872), all of whom were widely read within the early Keswick Conventions.\(^{682}\) While Keswick was fond of Guyon, a Quietist from France,\(^{683}\) she was introduced to Keswick circles primarily through the American, Thomas C. Upham.\(^{684}\) A professor of religion, Upham published a number of popular books on Madame Guyon.\(^{685}\) Upham was drawn to Guyon because he found in her an advocate for his view of holiness, that “rest” or passivity played an

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\(^{680}\) Ruysbroeck, as quoted by Underhill, *Mysticism*, p. 323.

\(^{681}\) Knox, p. 232 & ff. See also Pourrat, Chapters 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11.


\(^{683}\) Gerard, p. 34.

\(^{684}\) Dieter, *The Holiness Revival of the Nineteenth Century*, p. 53.

efficacious role in mediating sanctification. Thomas Upham and Madame Guyon thus functioned as theological antecedents to the Higher Life understanding that passivity is the portal to sanctification.

Whether Upham identified Guyon as a Quietist is unclear. It is also uncertain whether Upham understood the Quietists' innovations to classical mysticism in which passivity becomes the main obligation of the soul. For Quietists, all effort is shunned in the path to holiness, while the will is subdued in higher mystical states. Classical mysticism, however, engaged both effort and human volition in the path to union.686 Church officials denounced the Quietists' reshaping of classical mysticism and this ultimately led to the imprisonment of Guyon because she insisted that the soul is absorbed by grace and thus remains passive.

One century after Guyon, Thomas Upham promoted her notions of Quietism within the Higher Life camp by suggesting, during meetings of the American Holiness Movement, that passivity mediated holiness. Because of this, Upham and Phoebe Palmer parted company over the role of the will in the path of sanctification. 687 Phoebe Palmer (1807 - 1874), an ardent Methodist and Arminian, insisted that the will is always active and at no time is it absorbed in either salvation and sanctification. For Palmer, volition is never subdued by grace.

Phoebe Palmer, a leader in the American Holiness Movement, developed her own shorter route to holiness, known as her Altar Theology. Altar Theology suggested that sanctification is acquired in the same way salvation is—through a crisis experience, and by decision of faith.

In 1839, Dr. and Mrs. Palmer hosted the original meetings of the Tuesday Meetings for the Promotion of Holiness in their drawing room in New York. Christians from all denominations were invited to experience sanctification through a "single act of consecration and faith."688 These early Holiness gatherings engaged both lay and clergy and their "common experience of holiness united Presbyterians, Baptists, Methodists, Episcopalians, Quakers, United Brethren in Christ, Jews and proselytes."689 The

686 Pourrat, p. 149.
687 Barbara A. Howie, West Virginia University, http://are.as.wvu.edu/phebe.htm.
688 Dieter, The Holiness Revival of the Nineteenth Century, p. 34.
689 Ibid., p. 39.
experience of sanctification was viewed as a modern Pentecost and served to unite Christians from widely different backgrounds, and this became part of the ethos of later Holiness and Revival meetings. For Palmer, her Tuesday Meetings for the promotion of Holiness represented Pentecost and therefore overcame divisions among Christians and “sectarian evils so strongly lamented by so many.” As the holiness meetings grew in influence, and spread across the Atlantic, Palmer suggested that the unity achieved among differing Christians served as a model of heaven, for every soul gathered was cemented in love ... The room seemed filled with the Holy Spirit. It was a truly Pentecostal season ... Are not these meetings for holiness ... the germs, the dawning of millennial glory? Are they not strikingly imitative of Pentecost?

Little did she realize that her New York home meetings would become a “major impetus in setting off a world-wide movement.” Thus, Palmer is thought to have had a preeminent influence on 19th century Holiness theology, not only in terms of its message, but also with respect to its milieu and method.

Phoebe Palmer’s experience of sanctification, or second blessing, stressed the importance of human decision. God is willing to give; are we willing to receive sanctification? Like Charles Finney (1792 - 1875), the American revivalist who gave human volition preeminence in receiving salvation, Palmer likewise claimed that souls receive sanctification in a similar way, through a crisis, a choice, and as an experience. Any delay in receiving sanctification is not because God is unwilling to impart holiness. Rather, it is because we are unwilling to receive or chose holiness. Palmer believed, therefore, that human beings might choose to respond to God, over against the Calvinist notion of divine predestination. The late American revivalist and Higher Life leader, Asa

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690 Ibid.
692 Dieter, The Holiness Revival of the Nineteenth Century, p. 34.
Mahan (1799 - 1889) believed that Palmer’s work, *The Way of Holiness*, was the most significant book next to the Bible.\(^{693}\)

II. Palmer’s Altar Theology

Palmer not only stressed the role of choice or volition in attaining holiness, but also emphasized the function of faith. For Palmer, faith played a pre-eminent role in attaining perfection. Palmer’s popular tract, *The Way of Holiness*, recounted her discovery of a shorter route to sanctification mediated by faith whereby the Holy Spirit led her “into a solemn, most sacred, and inviolable compact... I was to be united in eternal oneness with the Lord my Redeemer.”\(^{694}\) Since faith always engages the will, Palmer argued that as we place ourselves on the “altar,” God readily responds to our decision of faith by making us holy. Everything placed on the altar becomes holy because the altar is Christ, and the altar sanctifies the gift. As we put ourselves without reserve on the altar, God who is faithful, acts through our faith.\(^{695}\)

The belief that the altar sanctifies the gift is perhaps first observed in the work of Hester Ann Rogers (1756 - 1791), whose works Palmer read as a child.\(^{696}\) Rogers, a close associate of John Wesley, suggested that despite her unworthiness, by “offering up myself and my services on that altar which sanctifieth the gift”\(^{697}\) the soul is made perfect. The notion that an act of faith is the portal to holiness was developed more completely in Palmer’s Altar Theology.

Palmer’s view that sanctification ensues through a decision of faith was a theme shared by Thomas Upham, with one significant difference. Upham was a Quietist and for him, the human will is subdued by grace in sanctification. However, with Palmer and later with Penn-Lewis, the path toward holiness engaged volition. Inevitably Upham and Palmer crossed swords over the role of the will in attaining holiness.\(^{698}\) Upham claimed

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\(^{695}\) Raser, p. 160.

\(^{696}\) Ibid., p. 247.

\(^{697}\) Hester Ann Rogers, *An Account of the Experience of Hester Ann Rogers,* p. 188.

that "the heart is free from all personal desires and passions" when united with Christ. For Upham, union with God required an abandonment of volition, whereas Palmer consistently opposed any notion that the will should be annihilated in union with God, as Penn-Lewis did years later.

Half a century after Palmer, Penn-Lewis articulated her own understanding of holiness, not on the altar as seen by Palmer, but on the Cross, though both Palmer and Penn-Lewis assert the primacy of human volition in responding to God's grace. While Penn-Lewis did not refer to the work of Phoebe Palmer, she insisted that the path to holiness engaged purgation, and hence she selected the Cross as a metaphor for holiness.

Despite their differences, however, Upham suggested that Palmer's notion of entire consecration was not a new teaching but was part of a tradition belonging not only to Wesley and the German Pietists, but to Catholics mystics before them, particularly Madame Guyon and Fénelon. Compelled to publish his discoveries, Upham wrote a book on Madame Guyon, a book that garnered enormous approval from Holiness circles. In addition to his book on Guyon, Upham completed another popular work, *Life of Faith*, and both books advance a Quietism that the Keswick Conventions readily embraced.

Let us now explore the fundamental elements of Quietism.

### III. Quietism

Quietists asserted that through passivity and a "self-annihilation and a consequent absorption of the soul into the Divine Essence," the highest mystical states are attained. Through a state of complete passivity and annihilation, God therefore becomes wholly active in the soul. Because Quietism circumvents human effort and therefore

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699 Ibid., p. 111.
700 Ibid., pp. 111-113.
701 Ibid.
702 Ibid., p. 8.
human responsibility, it was viewed as a shallow, or false mysticism which, if followed "consistently, would prove fatal to morality." 707 Quietists were known to say that, "one moment’s contemplation is worth a thousand years’ good works." 708 Considered a perversion of the mystical tradition, Quietists claimed that the "half-hypnotic state of passivity" 709 placed them in "touch with the divine life, and they were therefore exempt from the usual duties and limitations of human existence." 710 Ruysbroeck (1293–1381), a Flemish mystic, was openly opposed to Quietism. He suggested that the passivity or the quiet of the false mystic was "nought else but idleness," 711 and wholly "contrary to the supernatural repose one possesses in God." 712 The repose and therefore idleness of the false mystics or Quietists was, for Ruysbroeck, an error that led to spiritual degeneration and a "holy indifference" which "ends in the complete stultification of the mental and moral life." 713 Authentic mystics, according to Ruysbroeck, never attempt to enter a state of passivity. Rather, they regard such a state as a "supernatural gift, beyond [their] control." 714 An authentic state of mystical repose was in reality a "rest most busy," 715 in which the personality is not absorbed but surrendered and therefore renewed.

Four conditions or states characterize Quietism, and we will examine each one in detail in order to trace these characteristics within the Quietism of the Keswick Conventions.

The first condition of Quietism was a belief that holiness or perfection could be acquired in this life by a “shorter path,” through a “continual act of contemplation.” 716 The more one entered a state of repose with Christ, the more one might “continually abide with Him, without repeatedly straying and having to return.” 717 What was once a

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709 Underhill, Mysticism, p. 322.
710 Ibid.
711 Ruysbroeck, “De Oranatu Spiritualium Nuptiarum,” 1. ii caps. lxvi. (condensed), as quoted by Underhill in Mysticism, p. 322.
712 Ibid.
713 Ruysbroeck, as quoted by Underhill, Mysticism, p. 323.
714 Ibid.
715 Ibid.
716 Ibid., p. 148.
conscious and sporadic attempt to become holy now becomes “continuous, without interruption. A continuous inner act of abiding begins to take place within you.” 718 Falconi, writing in 1657, described this first condition of Quietism as follows:

I should like ... all your days, months, years, your whole life, to be passed in a continual act of contemplation with the simplest faith and purest love possible ... in such a disposition it is not always necessary when you pray to give yourself to God anew, because you have already done so. If you give a jewel to a friend and hand it over to her, there is no need to repeat every day afterwards that it is hers ... you simply leave it where it is, in her possession. 719

Secondly, a continuous state of contemplation was also a state of mental, emotional, and volitional passivity, which Quietists believed satisfied or included “all other acts of religion and of Christian virtue in an eminent degree.” 720 Once engaged in a state of passivity and repose, acts of charity, mortification, verbal prayer, or other forms of spiritual discipline were considered unnecessary or even contrary to the Quietist’s call to complete passivity. To assume that a passive and continuous state of contemplation could satisfy all religious duty advanced slothfulness, or worse, a doctrine of irresponsibility.

Thirdly, the Quietists also forwarded a “holy indifference and complete abandonment to God,” 721 whereby God, they insisted, absorbed human personality, ability, desire and, most dangerously the human will. Without the full engagement of human volition, some feared the Quietists had developed a spirituality that not only ran contrary to the mystical tradition, but also beckoned spiritual and moral irresponsibility. “The true mystics have always taught that the will, with the help of grace, must fight strenuously against temptation, however strong it may be.” 722

718 Ibid., p. 110.
720 Pourrat, p. 148.
721 Ibid., p. 149.
722 Ibid.
Lastly, as the Quietists demanded complete passivity of human emotion, intellect as well as human volition, these innovations were said to induce the highest mystical states for any soul, regardless of calling or spiritual maturity. Because the Quietists imposed their "shorter path" to perfection on any and all Christians without discrimination, they practically "involved them in the mystical way and passive prayer, for which they were neither ready nor called." 723 As the "weak and strong, the mediocre and the good, the most unmortified and ignorant as well as the most understanding" 724 followed the Quietist's "shorter path," the result was "not prayer but reverie," 725 complained Pourrat. "False mysticism was the inevitable consequence." 726

The "shorter path" of the Quietist, which promised the highest mystical state to all people, was made possible by a mishandling of the Prayer of Simple Regard. The Prayer of Simple Regard, was a form of acquired contemplation which, coupled with ordinary grace, enabled the soul to transcend "discursive prayer" 727 because the energies of the soul and mind were stilled. The more arduous mystical path of illumination, purgation and union were thus circumvented by a "simple act of faith in God's presence." 728 Thus the innovation to classical mysticism were the result of imposing the Prayer of Simple Regard on all people as a "shorter path" to perfection, a matter I will now explore in greater detail.

IV. The Prayer of Simple Regard

The Prayer of Simple Regard, also called the Prayer of Simplicity, was commonly "practiced almost everywhere in France about 1670." 729 A form of spiritual discipline or acquired contemplation, the Prayer of Simple Regard advanced a spiritual state in which the mind and all human activity are stilled. Through ordinary grace and "a simple act of faith in God's presence," 730 the soul "is content with a 'loving looking at God and at

723 Ibid., p. 126.
724 Ibid., as quoted by Pourrat, p. 131.
725 Ibid.
726 Ibid., p. 126.
727 Ibid., p. 124.
728 Ibid.
729 Ibid., p. 123.
730 Ibid., p. 124.
Jesus Christ.” As long as the mind is active, the soul cannot enter the highest mystical states. Guyon wrote:

Those who turn toward God merely by their intelligence may enjoy some spiritual contemplation but they will never enter into an intimate union … He who knows God primarily by the light of his intellect never enters those imperceptible passes of the spirit which are reserved for the abandoned soul alone. 732

By “putting aside feeling and thought” 733 the Prayer of Simple Regard “consists in going down into the deeps of the spirit,” 734 735 there to rest in God’s presence. Guyon wrote:

Now, when the soul, by its efforts to abandon outward objects, and gather itself inwards, is brought into the influence of this central tendency, without any other exertion, it falls gradually by the weight of Divine Love into its proper centre; and the more passive and tranquil it remains, and the freer from self-motion and self-exertion, the more rapidly it advances, because the energy of the central attractive virtue is unobstructed and has full liberty for action. 736

It has been suggested that Quietists like Guyon mishandled the Prayer of Simple Regard in two fundamental ways. First, they confused simplicity, which the Prayer of Simple Regard advanced, with passivity. “It was not inactivity, but simplification that characterized the prayer of simple regard.” 737 However the Quietists did not perceive this nuance. They entered God’s presence believing that all activities “should come to a stop

731 Ibid.
733 Ibid., p. 125.
734 Ibid.
735 Guyon, Experiencing the Depths of Jesus Christ. Formerly entitled: A Short and Very Easy Method of Prayer, pp. 22-23.
737 Pourrat, p. 125.
and that their faculties should be as it were dead, in order that they may receive but not do anything."\(^738\)

Second, through confusing simplicity for passivity, the Quietists advanced their “doctrine of the One Act”\(^739\) of passivity, via the Prayer of Simple Regard, on all people, suggesting that everyone might enjoy the highest level of contemplation or union with God,\(^740\) through passivity. Quietism was, therefore, the “doctrine of the one act; passivity,”\(^741\) after which the soul needs only to rest “in the Divine Life, be its unresisting instrument.”\(^742\) The Quietists “pressed the Prayer of Simple Regard on all the faithful without distinction,”\(^743\) whether they had a mystical call or not. “False mysticism was the inevitable consequence.”\(^744\) Because of the popularity and accessibility of the Prayer of Simple Regard, “short and easy methods were provided which allowed (they said) of high contemplation being reached quickly and surely.”\(^745\)

In so far as the Quietists viewed the Prayer of Simple Regard as accessible to every Christian, regardless of their maturity or calling, the “popularizing” of the mystical path led, some thought, to a false mystical experience, and placed many on the “brink of falsehood.”\(^746\) Thus the error of the Quietist rested in making “what is special to high mystical states into a general rule for contemplation.”\(^747\)

Because the Quietists offered their shorter path to all people, a cult of passivity was said to have resulted by the masses that practiced the Prayer of Simple Regard. As those with and without a mystical vocation elevated the Prayer of Simplicity to embody and circumvent “the whole substance of the mystical life,”\(^748\) the result was a “self-abandonment, so excessive that it was inevitably condemned by all religious teachers”\(^749\) familiar with the classical mystical path. Moreover, because the Prayer of Simplicity did

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\(^{738}\) Guilloré as quoted by Pourrat, p. 125.
\(^{739}\) Underhill, \textit{Mysticism}, p. 325.
\(^{740}\) Pourrat, pp. 124, 126 & ff.
\(^{741}\) Underhill, \textit{Mysticism}, p. 325.
\(^{742}\) Ibid.
\(^{743}\) Pourrat, p. 126.
\(^{744}\) Ibid.
\(^{745}\) Ibid., p. 131.
\(^{746}\) Father Surin, as quoted by Pourrat, p. 132.
\(^{747}\) Pourrat, p. 139.
\(^{748}\) Underhill, \textit{The Mystics of the Church}, p. 208.
\(^{749}\) Ibid.
not require piety, intelligence, education, or effort, Quietism had an egalitarian impulse that attracted the masses, as well as the suspicion of Church officials.

V. Quietism and Madame Guyon (1648 - 1717)

The works of Madame Guyon were widely promoted by Keswick luminaries, including the prominent Keswick spokesperson, Evan Hopkins. It was Mrs. Evan Hopkins who first gave Jessie Penn-Lewis a copy of Guyon’s Autobiography. Because of Guyon’s influence on the early Keswick Conventions, any theological analysis of the Keswick Convention would also require an assessment of Jeanne Guyon’s theological perspectives.

Jeanne Bouvier De La Motte was born in 1648, into a wealthy French family. After twelve years of marriage, Jeanne was widowed at the age of twenty-eight. Now a woman of wealth and mother of three, Jeanne was determined to pursue a religious life. Noted for her prolific energy, and an ability to discuss “religion in an engaging way also fueled her innate charm and spiritual enthusiasm.” Guyon’s qualities enabled her to become influential, attracting and persuading “many people of distinction, churchmen, religious, legal luminaries.”

Guyon believed that God had called her to the mystical life by revealing to her that she would become the mother of many spiritual children. To produce spiritual progeny was considered a distinguishing mark of a “true ‘mystic marriage,’” as mystics were often “founders of spiritual families.” Souls united to God are believed to be spiritually fertile, and all great mystics were said to “give birth,” to spiritual offspring. Guyon’s spiritual followers were rallied as evidence of her vocation as a mystic. In a letter to her spiritual director, Guyon wrote: “God wants to give me spiritual progeny, plenty of children of grace, that He will make me fruitful in Himself.” Father La

750 Gerrard, p. 34.
751 La Camsus, as quoted by Pourrat, p. 185.
752 Ibid.
754 Underhill, Mysticism, p. 432.
755 Ibid., p. 431.
756 Pourrat, p. 188.
Combe and Abbé Fénelon were two spiritual children of Madame Guyon, so she insisted, and all three (Guyon, La Combe and Fénelon) were charged with being Quietists. 757 In her culture, mystics were “widely read and admired,” 758 and yet there were also inferior versions of mysticism circulating. Many followed the “fatal inclination to copy the contemplative life in cheaper materials” 759 which eventually appeared. In a similar fashion, Guyon claimed to have discovered the “prayer of interior silence,” 760 so popular in her day, which “she promptly elevated ... into the whole substance of the mystical life.” 761 Guyon’s “shorter path,” she believed, embodied the entire mystical path, and was the means to union with God whereby God substituted the Divine will for the human will. By promoting such a doctrine, Guyon established herself as a Quietist for she advanced passivity coupled with the annihilation of the human will, believing that human effort worked to limit and impede God’s action within the soul. She said: “I was seeking to get through effort what could be had only by giving up all effort.” 762 Guyon advanced her Quietism by writing works such as Spiritual Torrents; A Short Method to Prayer; Autobiography; The Song of the Bride; Experiencing the Depths of Jesus; Union With God; and Final Steps in Christian Maturity.

Bossuet (1627 - 1704), a theologian associated with the Sorbonne, examined Guyon and scrutinized her writings. He found Guyon guilty of promoting theological error in the form of Quietism, for which she was imprisoned for more than four years. In particular, Bossuet could not tolerate Guyon’s “shorter path” to holiness, in which she insisted that the soul is overwhelmed or absorbed by the Divine, a notion Bossuet believed minimized moral responsibility and led to a doctrine of irresponsibility, or antinomianism. 763 Thus Bossuet attempted to persuade Guyon that:

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757 Ibid., p. 186 & ff.
758 Underhill, The Mystics of the Church, p. 208.
759 Ibid.
760 Ibid.
761 Ibid.
762 Ibid.
763 Pourrat, pp. 146, 181.
True mystics have never insisted [upon] a destruction of the soul, for they are most careful to avoid any expression that might suggest that human personality disappears in supernatural states. 764

Quietists insisted that God absorbs the human will and thus becomes the principal source of all human activity. If it is “God’s working in life and the life of the soul and, however real and true, it is not seen as the action of the creature,” 765 the deed cannot therefore be judged as “good or bad.” 766 This was the ultimate challenged posed by the Quietists. The true mystical tradition has “always taught that the will, with the help of grace, must fight strenuously against temptation, however strong it may be.” 767

We will now assess the four characteristics of Quietism within Guyon’s shorter path, which Thomas Upham later adapts and imparts to the Holiness Movement of the late 19th century.

The Quietists assert, first, that uninterrupted contemplation is the portal to holiness. 768 According to Guyon, the “more you progress in Christ, the more you will continually abide with Him, without repeatedly straying and having to return.” 769 “In this state of continually being turned to God, you are abiding in the love of God, and the man who abides in love abides in God.” 770 What was once a conscious and sporadic attempt to become holy, now becomes “continuous, without interruption. A continuous inner act of abiding begins to take place within you.” 771 Abiding in God is likened to “a sweet sinking into Deity,” 772 or like a ship as it catches the wind. So too our souls. At first we are “bound by sin and by self.” 773 Then the soul learns to abide in God continually, and just as a boat in favorable winds, “the pilot rests from his work … Oh, what progress they

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764 Ibid., p. 196.
765 Beriot, as quoted by Pourrat, p. 146.
766 Ibid.
767 Ibid., p. 149.
768 Pourrat, p. 148.
770 Ibid., p. 111.
771 Ibid., p. 110.
772 Ibid., p. 111.
773 Ibid., p. 113.
make without becoming the least bit tired.” 774 Similarly, the soul who has continually abandoned itself to God achieves spiritual heights without effort.

Second, Quietists suggest that in an absence of effort, by way of passivity, the soul fulfills all religious obligations and attains perfection. In a state of passivity, the soul undergoes a complete loss of all human attributes, including “virtue as virtue.” 775 To “place the whole of religion in an unconditioned self-yielding to God,” 776 was a second characteristic of Quietism, which many believed “easily glides into the cult of passivity.” 777 While some believe this mistake was a noble one, since it grew out of an exaggeration of the “turning of the religious consciousness toward pure adoration and away from mere self-consideration,” 778 and though characteristic of the great French mystics, 779 it was ultimately condemned by the Church. Quietists like Guyon were thus accused of false mysticism because their shorter way was void of the arduous path of purification and mortification so carefully documented in the lives of those mystics whose experiences were considered authentic. 780 The passivity of the Quietist implied not only a disregard for spiritual disciplines such as confession, discursive prayer, mortification and good work, but also these endeavors were viewed as unnecessary to the Quietist’s “shorter path.” Guyon said those who have died mystically have “no further need of mortification.” 781 A passive soul has abandoned all human gifts, graces, favors, the desire for service, the capacity to do good, to fast, to help his neighbor. He has lost everything except that which is divine … What am I saying? The Christian loses virtue as virtue. He will find it again as it is Jesus Christ. It seems the soul has now lost everything—that is, everything but the Lord’s beauty. 782

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774 Ibid., p. 114.
776 Underhill, The Mystics of the Church, p. 188.
777 Ibid.
778 Ibid.
779 Ibid.
780 Underhill, Mysticism, p. 198 & ff. See also Pourrat, p. 149.
782 Guyon, Spiritual Torrents, p. 52.
The passivity of the Quietist therefore included a “holy indifference,” that left no room for volition and had no need of contrition, and “did not even prefer heaven rather than hell.” Critics of Quietism questioned the moral moorings a religious system based on passivity and a denuded will; that is, can the soul be responsible for immorality when stripped of virtue? If a soul, in a state of passivity, is equally content to receive from the “hand of God either good or evil,” is the Quietist also indifferent to good and evil?

This leads to the third characteristic of Quietists who, by insisting upon the destruction or absorption of all human activity, advanced a doctrine of “holy indifference.” As the human will is absorbed by “the will of God,” the soul desires and accomplishes only that which God wills. Such self-abandonment, the Quietist argued, enabled the soul to refuse temptations as well as “every personal desire ... just as soon as it arises.” Those who have been absorbed by the Divine are utterly indifferent to any impulse or desire beyond “complete abandonment to God’s good pleasure.” They are equally willing “to be damned as to be saved.”

As human volition is annihilated in a mystical death, the soul remains indifferent to all physical amenities such as food, clothing and shelter, as well as inward comforts such as God’s sensible consolations during periods of distress. Souls so detached from sensible or physical comfort yet remain at peace, despite periods of prolonged deprivation. According to Guyon, the soul absorbed by God is like a child and has “no other will in itself.” Such a death marks the end to the individual’s “desire, inclination and choices.” Guyon wrote:

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783 Underhill, The Mystics of the Church, p. 208.
784 Ibid.
785 Guyon, Madame Guyon, an Autobiography, p. 240. See also Guyon, Spiritual Torrents, p. 52.
787 Ibid.
788 Guyon, A Short and Easy Method of Prayer, p. 21.
789 Pourrat, p. 149.
790 Ibid.
792 Ibid.
793 Guyon, Experiencing the Depths of Jesus Christ. Formerly entitled: A Short and Very Easy Method of Prayer, p. 34 & ff.
794 Guyon, Madame Guyon, an Autobiography, p. 186.
795 Guyon, Spiritual Torrents, p. 64.
Death is recognized by that which is absent; inability to feel pain or to have any care or any thought of self. Death is recognized by a permanent indifference ... Death is an insensitive state, insensitive to everything that concerns itself. Let God reduce that soul to any extremity; the soul knows no distaste. 794

Why must the soul undergo annihilation or absorption into the Divine? In Guyon’s view, the absence of self brings purity to the soul. “In fact, the soul’s purity is increased in exact proportion to the loss of self!” 795 Guyon’s shorter way therefore called for a mystical death of “everything born of the will of flesh.” 796 A soul completely possessed by God is in a state of pure love, so that the soul may claim, as did the Apostle Paul; “‘It is no more that I live, but Jesus Christ that liveth in me.’ ‘It is He in whom I live, move, and have my being.’” 797

Moreover, a spiritual marriage or union between the soul and the Divine is possible only as the human nature becomes divine. “Self is the source of defilement, and it prevents any alliance with Purity.” 798 Guyon wrote:

For two things to become one, the two must have similar natures. For instance, the impurity of dirt cannot be united with the purity of gold. Fire has to be introduced to destroy the dross and leave the gold pure. 799

The Lord therefore “annihilates the Christian only to transform him into Himself.” 800 To make room for God, the Quietist wanted to eliminate “the Adamical life” 801 through a

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794 Guyon, Union with God, p. 50.
796 Guyon, Union with God, p. 54.
799 Ibid.
801 Guyon, A Short and Easy Method of Prayer, p. 45.
complete elimination of self, and all the activity of self, so that "that the activity of God may be substituted in its place."\textsuperscript{802} Self-annihilation was for Guyon "the true prayer of worship."\textsuperscript{803} "All that is of your doing, all that comes from your life—even your most exalted prayer—must first be destroyed before union can come about."\textsuperscript{804} True adoration, the supreme acknowledgement of God's existence, is known only by the destruction of self. Guyon wrote:

We can pay due honour to the All God, only in our own annihilation; which is no sooner accomplished, than He, who never suffers a void in nature instantly fills us with Himself."\textsuperscript{805}

Mystical death was the means whereby the finitude of self was exchanged or absorbed by the Infinite Self—God.\textsuperscript{806} Souls are thus perfected by a destruction of self through which they access power beyond the visible world. In "oneness with the Spirit of God"\textsuperscript{807} the soul is released from "the cramped and limited quarters."\textsuperscript{808} The soul, in union with God, is "more energetic, more vibrant than anything we could ever initiate within ourselves."\textsuperscript{809} Guyon thus suggested that through the loss of self, we pass into the Lord, our will is made one and the same with that of the Lord, according to the prayer of Christ, 'As thou Father are in me, and I in thee, grant that they also may be one of us.' John 17:21. Oh, but it is then that the will so rendered marvelous, both because it is made the will of the

\textsuperscript{802} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{803} Guyon, \textit{Experiencing the Depths of Jesus Christ}. Formerly entitled: \textit{A Short and Very Easy Method of Prayer}, p. 90.
\textsuperscript{804} Ibid., p. 125.
\textsuperscript{805} Guyon, \textit{A Short and Easy Method of Prayer}, p. 41.
\textsuperscript{806} Guyon, \textit{Spiritual Torrents}, p. 80.
\textsuperscript{808} Ibid.
Lord, which is the greatest of miracles ... Scarely has it willed but the thing is done.\textsuperscript{810}

Thus, Quietists like Guyon favored a mystical absorption of “self” so that the activity of the soul is said to be God’s activity; the principle acting “in and through her; and that principle is God.”\textsuperscript{811} A soul absorbed by God is both freed and forgetful of self-ambition and desire, and as a result displays a holy indifference to all events, be they good or evil. Some feared that a doctrine of irresponsibility resulted from the pursuit of passivity and holy indifference.

Like many Quietists, Guyon mishandled the Prayer of Simplicity by insisting not upon simplicity, but passivity. Guyon thus adapted the Prayer of Simple Regard\textsuperscript{812} and promoted her one act of passivity to all people. This then was the fourth quality of Quietism, that through the “shorter path” of passivity, any soul may enter the unitive state regardless of maturity, education or godliness.\textsuperscript{813 814} According to Guyon, the Prayer of Simplicity was practiced by all ranks of people, by “kings, by priests, by soldiers, by laborers, by children, by women, and even by the sick.”\textsuperscript{815}

Obviously Quietism had an egalitarian impulse, for in engaging all people in their cult of passivity, the Quietists sought to elevate all souls into the highest mystical states, whether or not they had a mystical vocation. Too often, Guyon complained, education and human ability had replaced actual experiences and intimacy with God. Those who are faithful are more often intimate with God “than those with great intellect and reasoning... those who would rather study about prayer and spiritual matters than experience them.”\textsuperscript{816} According to Guyon, the intellect can never pray with the depth of the heart, and it is prayer that “comes out of the heart [that] is not interrupted by thinking.”\textsuperscript{817}

\textsuperscript{810} Guyon, \textit{Madame Guyon, an Autobiography}, pp. 234-235.
\textsuperscript{811} Beriot, as quoted by Pourrat, p. 145.
\textsuperscript{812} Guyon, \textit{Experiencing the Depths of Jesus Christ}. Formerly entitled: \textit{A Short and Very Easy Method of Prayer}, p. 21.
\textsuperscript{813} Ibid., p. 4.
\textsuperscript{814} Pourrat, p. 131.
\textsuperscript{815} Guyon, \textit{Experiencing the Depths of Jesus Christ}. Formerly entitled: \textit{A Short and Very Easy Method of Prayer}, p. 4.
\textsuperscript{816} Guyon, \textit{Spiritual Torrents}, p. 11.
\textsuperscript{817} Guyon, \textit{Experiencing the Depths of Jesus Christ}. Formerly entitled: \textit{A Short and Very Easy Method of Prayer}, p. 4.
Nothing can interrupt the Prayer of Simplicity, because it is an experience “of Christ deep within.” All who have abandoned human strength live with “less difficulty and with less interruption than you now live by the air which you take into you.”

Intellectual effort is useful in reading the Bible, yet “that studious kind of reading will not help you when it comes to matters that are divine!” Books, even the Bible, cannot impart that intimacy with God that the higher mystical states provide. The best book of all is not a book, but a relationship, an experience that even the illiterate may enjoy. She wrote:

Because you cannot read, you may feel that you are in a weaker state than most Christians. You may feel you are unqualified to know the depths of your Lord. But in fact, you are really blessed. The blessing in not being able to read is that prayer may become your reading! Do you not know that the greatest book is Jesus Christ Himself? He is a Book who has been written on within and without. He will, teach you all things. Read Him!

Here we observe Guyon elevating personal experience over religious learning. Her reluctance to acknowledge theological scholarship as an authoritative element in faith may have offended the ecclesial authorities who ultimately critiqued and condemned her work. Perhaps Guyon was referring to the doctors of the Sorbonne when she suggested that there are those who believe only the intellectually gifted can know Christ, and that the less educated or the simple are “incapable of this inner relationship with Christ.” In her opinion, however even simple souls often makes great progress in relationship with Christ. For God can turn “factory workers into Prophets!” Believing that the highest mystical states are attained by the ignorant and powerless, Guyon argued that clever words can never replace the speechlessness of a heart that is awestruck with love for God. She wrote:

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818 Ibid., p. 5.
819 Ibid.
820 Ibid., p. 8.
821 Ibid., p. 15.
822 Ibid., p. 120.
823 Ibid., p. 123.
That is right! Your Father is far more pleased with these words—words which He sees pouring out from a heart that is full of love—than He could ever be by elaborate-sounding words that are dry and lifeless. 824

Guyon’s advocacy of Quietism was also an advancement of equality, in that anyone might attain spiritual authority and power without the consent from Church officials. Since ability, education, gender or class did not preclude one from attaining the highest mystical states, Guyon therefore advanced her Prayer of Simplicity on all people.

We have just shown that Guyon’s work exhibited the four assertions of Quietism, that holiness or perfection can be attained through a “shorter path,” through a continuous state of contemplation, mediated by passivity, whereby the Divine absorbs the human self including the will, and this then fulfills all religious duty.

While the Quietists’ innovations were welcomed by many in Europe during the 17th century, some claimed these alterations were pernicious, and the innovators were often interrogated and in some cases imprisoned. Despite a strenuous critique of Quietism, two centuries later the Holiness and Keswick Movements embraced aspects of Guyon’s Quietism. The scholarly community overlooked the characteristics of Quietism that Keswick shared not only with Madame Guyon but also with Thomas Upham, as we shall explore shortly. Scholars have likewise failed to observe how the Quietists’ adaptation of the Prayer of Simple Regard became part of Keswick’s system of sanctification, in that passivity or “rest” was said to usher in the highest mystical state of perfection. Moreover, no scholar has noted the rejection of Keswick’s passivity by leaders such as Jessie Penn-Lewis.

The appeal or attractiveness of the Prayer of Simple Regard is obvious. It functioned to still the mind and imagination, through “a simple act of faith in God’s presence.” 825 Through the Prayer of Simplicity, the “soul is content with a ‘loving looking at God and at Jesus Christ.’” 826 By deliberately resisting images, actions or emotions in prayer, one

824 Ibid.
825 Pourrat, p. 124.
826 Ibid.
remained quietly “attentive to God’s presence,” 827 through which one was promised to bring forth “‘good fruits of purity and union with God to the soul,’” 828 under the supervision of a wise spiritual director. 829 What was missing at Keswick, of course, was the advice of skilled spiritual directors.

Though subtle, the alterations made to the Prayer of Simplicity by the Quietists had far reaching consequences not only for the 17th century, but also for generations to come. Guyon’s Quietism can be followed through the work of Thomas Upham, who suggested that faith rather than passivity mediated the highest mystical states leading to perfection. It was Upham who served as a proponent of the Higher Life notion of sanctification by faith, and it is to Thomas Upham that we now turn our attention.

VI. The Quietism of Thomas Upham (1799 - 1872)

As we have seen, for both Phoebe Palmer and later with Penn-Lewis, sanctification was always an act of the will—a cooperation of human volition with the Divine. However, for Thomas Upham the highest mystical states were attained by a passive and an annihilated will, a notion he undoubtedly acquired from Madame Guyon. In addition, Upham promoted Guyon’s Quietism by suggesting first that perfection can be attained through a continuous state of contemplation or passivity, and second, that a continuous state of passivity encompasses the whole of religious duty. The now perfected soul resists the inward tendency of human activity, aware that human effort circumvents God’s work in the soul. 830 Third, from a state of passivity the human will is absorbed by the Divine and thereby assumes a holy indifference, a passive condition of “complete abandonment to God’s good pleasure.” 831 Finally, Upham stressed in a new way the notion that passivity is the work of faith. Faith, void of words, images and emotion ushered souls into a high mystical state, and thus passivity played an efficacious role in perfecting the soul, a notion he promoted to all who would listen.

827 Knox, p. 247.
828 Pourrat, p. 123.
829 Ibid.
830 Ibid., pp. 148-149.
831 Ibid., p. 149.
The first quality of Quietism was the assertion that a continuous state of contemplation was the portal to perfection. We observe this characteristic of Quietism in Upham’s call to a moment by moment faith which he believed subdued not only the “natural desire and human strength,”171 but the will as well. Through a continuous act of faith the soul is united to God, where it receives “what is necessary for the restoration and perfection of [its] nature.”172 “The doctrine of religious faith involves the doctrine of living by the moment.” For faith, insisted Upham, “concentrates eternity in each moment, as it passes, and regarding God in every event of that moment, pronounces him righteous.”

Quoting the Flemish Quietist, Antonia Bourignon (1616 - 1680), Upham claimed that the true condition of the Christian is a “state of continual prayer.” Such prayer is unceasing and ongoing, whether we walk, sleep, work, or even at rest. “In our sleep our affections and will ought to be in such a state, that we may regard them as blessing God always.”

Therefore the prayer of faith is a moment by moment acquisition of perfection. For such a prayer enables the soul to glorify God one moment after the next. The continual prayer of faith is one in which the soul is therefore always right.

In whatever his hand finds to do, God approves him... He who thus prays, glorifies God moment by moment; wherever he goes, and whatever he does, whether in the place of retirement, or in the place of public action, or in whatever other diversities of situation Providence has seen fit to place him. He meets all occasions in a proper manner, because he always meets them in the divine relation.

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173 Ibid., p. 233.
174 Ibid., p. 323.
175 Ibid., p. 397.
176 Ibid., p. 398.
177 Ibid., p. 403.
178 Ibid.
The soul united to God through a continual prayer of faith \(^{840}\) participates in a "deep experience in holy living." \(^{841}\) They have "a real and permanent foundation," \(^{842}\) based on the doctrine of 'Living By the Moment.' \(^{843}\) The continual prayer of faith elicits "a perpetual foundation laid of permanency, the perpetuity, the everlastingness" \(^{844}\) of God's immediate presence.

This then is the first quality of Upham’s Quietism, that perfection is reached through a continual act of contemplation, a ceaseless prayer based and rooted in faith. Upham suggested that there is a connection between "the state of continual prayer with that of continual faith." \(^{845}\) All of the religious life is built upon faith, Upham reasoned. \(^{846}\) Thus, faith, rather than effort, is the portal to holiness.

Upham, like the Quietists before him, embraced a "shorter path" to perfection that circumvented the more arduous path of mortification and purification. \(^{847}\) This then was the second quality of Quietism, that a continuous state of contemplation was also a state of mental, emotional, and volitional passivity, which also encompassed or satisfied "all other acts of religion and of Christian virtue in an eminent degree." \(^{848}\) According to Upham, acts of mortification can never replace faith in sanctifying the soul. Once united to God through continuous faith, systems of purification, purgation or mortification are no longer necessary. \(^{849}\) "The end for which mortification was practiced is accomplished, and all is become new." \(^{850}\) "Acts of austerity and mortification" \(^{851}\) do not furnish an expiatory or "an atoning element." \(^{852}\) Guyon said those who have died mystically have "no further need of mortification." \(^{853}\) By adapting a Shorter Method of Prayer, Guyon believed that passivity supersede spiritual disciplines and purgation in the path towards

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\(^{840}\) Ibid., pp. 408-409.
\(^{841}\) Ibid., p. 414.
\(^{842}\) Ibid.
\(^{843}\) Ibid.
\(^{844}\) Ibid., p. 400.
\(^{845}\) Ibid., p. 401.
\(^{846}\) Ibid., p. 48.
\(^{847}\) Underhill, Mysticism, p. 198 ff.
\(^{848}\) Pourrat, p. 148.
\(^{849}\) Upham, Life Religious Opinions and Experience of Madame Guyon, p. 59.
\(^{850}\) Ibid.
\(^{851}\) Ibid.
\(^{852}\) Ibid.
\(^{853}\) Guyon, Madame Guyon, an Autobiography, p. 85.
mystical union. Therefore passivity assumed the totality of spiritual duty, a notion Upham likewise embraced.

At this point we should note that what Upham perceived in the work of Guyon was a like-minded ally—a fellow Protestant whom he believed made faith the basis of salvation as well as sanctification. Upham therefore hailed Guyon as an “honorary Protestant,” and as such he suggested that she suffered persecution from the Catholic Church, not because she was a Quietist, but as a result of her alleged Protestant profession of salvation and sanctification by faith alone. According to Upham, since human accomplishment leads to spiritual pride, Guyon advanced faith or passivity rather than effort not only as the path to spiritual heights, but also as the means of satisfying all religious duty. The great premise of the religious life, and thus all Christian virtue, stems from faith argued Upham. Faith enveloped all that is holy. By faith “we are justified from the sins of the past.” The same faith is “equally necessary to keep us from sin in time to come … faith is the great foundation of the religious life.” He wrote:

Take almost any other Christian grace, such as the spirit of submission, of gratitude, or of prayer, and it will be found that they sustain intimate relations with other states of the mind, particularly with faith; and that in reality they cannot possibly exist without faith. When they are closely examined, all the Christian graces, however divergent and remote they may now appear, will be found to converge to one centre, and to rest upon one foundation.

Faith, therefore, sustains or encompasses all other Christian virtues and duties. According to Upham, faith is to the soul what gravity is “to the physical universe; uniting all, harmonizing all, but always without confusion and noise, and with the greatest simplicity of operation.” A form of simplicity or rest, those who enjoy the higher mystical states

854 Knox, p. 235.
855 Ibid., p. 236.
856 Upham, Life of Faith, p. 48.
857 Ibid.
858 Ibid.
are like “the great masters of science—a Newton for instance,” whose genius appears effortless.

Upham also followed Guyon in suggesting that as human action and volition are absorbed or replaced by God, whereby the soul enjoyed freedom “from all personal desires and passions.” This then was the third characteristic noted in Upham’s work, that through a state of passivity volition, desire and effort are absorbed by the Divine after which the soul experiences a holy indifference, a passive condition of “complete abandonment to God’s good pleasure.” Divine control ensues as the soul reaches a state of pure faith and self-annihilation such that the absence of earthly approbation produces no pain. In a state of pure faith and perfection, the soul has no pleasure, no desire, no will of its own. Therefore God allowed Christians to undergo many severe trials in order that they might learn to relinquish every support “separate and distinct from that of unmixed, naked faith. ‘We walk by faith,’ says the Apostle, ‘and not by sight.’ (2 Cor. V. 6,7)” The highest mystical states demanded, Upham claimed, a silence and still soul, a soul completely empty of self and self-interest. Passivity of mind and will were prerequisites to Upham’s “shorter path” of faith, a phenomenon he claimed existed in the lives of many the great mystics. Upham wrote:

The reader, who is acquainted with the history of ecclesiastical opinions, will probably recognize in them the old Mystic doctrine, that the soul must become a ‘Tabula Rasa,’ a tablet without inscription, a canvass without line or color upon it, in order to experience the divine union. That is to say, we must be divested of every thought, which is not of divine inspiration, and of every feeling, which is not in harmony with God, in order to be in God without any thing intervening or separating. And it is undoubtedly true, as a general doctrine, that, the freer the soul is from the

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860 Ibid., p. 361.
862 Pourrat, p. 149.
864 Upham, Life of Faith, p. 104.
images of human things and the more exempt from human prejudice and passion, the more direct, the more easy, and the more intimate and deep, will be its communion with the Infinite Mind. 865

Until self is completely annihilated, the soul is overly active and acutely self-conscious. Those who enjoy the highest mystical states are detached, disinterested, freed from a self-orientation. Guyon was tormented by an acute self-consciousness, prior to entering mystical union with the Divine. According to Upham, Guyon even had trouble walking the streets without noticing “the impulse of the ‘life of self.’” 866 Such comments suggested to Upham that Guyon was redeemed, but not yet sanctified. Upham writes:

She seemed to be in the condition described in the seventh chapter of Romans—a description which will apply both to the struggles of the enlightened sinner when deeply convicted of his transgressions, and to the inward conflicts of the partially sanctified Christian. “I delight in the law of God after the inward man; but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin.” 867

Without faith the soul remains self-oriented and enslaved to human adulation. To live “by emotions, to draw our activity and our hope from sensible joys, is to live by sight rather than by faith.” 868 Faith then works to “purify and subordinate the lower principles,” 869 the appetites of the ‘self-life.’ Those who have truly abandoned themselves to God through faith, “will remain calm, peaceful, and thankful, under interior as well as exterior desolation.” 870 There is power in faith to initiate a “meekness or quietness of spirit,” 871 and the “grace of silence.” 872 The fruit of faith gives rise to a quiet mind that “has no

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865 Ibid., p. 394.
866 Upham, Life Religious Opinions and Experience of Madame Guyon, p. 68.
867 Ibid.
868 Ibid., p. 103.
869 Ibid., p. 103.
870 Ibid., p. 175.
871 Ibid., p. 182.
872 Ibid., p. 253.
873 Ibid., p. 270.
preference, no election, which results from the impulse of its own tendencies." Once God absorbs human volition, then all the soul’s activity is centered in faith, and there it remains, peaceful and holy because it is wholly of God.

Upham recalled the experiences of Madame Guyon who in a state of quiet enjoyed the efficacy of a purified soul.

I possessed God after a manner so pure and so immense, as nothing else could equal. In regard to thoughts or desires, all was so clean, so naked, so lost in the divinity, that the soul appeared to have no selfish movement ... both the powers of the mind, and the very senses being wonderfully purified. Sometimes I was surprised to find that I was destitute, so far as I could perceive, of any intellectual action. Everything was calm and quiet within me. The imagination, formerly so restless, now no more troubled me. I had no more perplexity or uneasy reflections. The will, being perfectly dead to all its own tendencies, was become void of every human inclination, both natural and spiritual, and only inclined of God to whatever he pleased ... The limitations of self seemed to be demolished; and the soul went cheerfully out into the unbounded freeness of God’s will.

A state of perfection was, for Upham, initiated by faith. Faith was the means whereby the Divine evacuated from the soul all human activity, limitations and inclinations, including volition. As a Quietist, Upham postulated that God perfects the soul first by destroying the will and by replacing it with the Divine will. For though the soul can submit “to God in the matter of its salvation through Christ, it was still proud of its own wisdom, and inordinately attached to its own will.” Nothing opposes God’s operation in the soul more than willfulness, insisted Upham. Until self-will is eliminated, the soul is enslaved to sin and hence disjoined from the Divine. Therefore, the will must die in a

873 Ibid., p. 360.
874 Guyon, as quoted by Upham, Life of Faith, pp. 325-326.
875 Upham, Life Religious Opinions and Experience of Madame Guyon, p. 90.
876 Ibid., p. 100.
“crucifixion of nature” so that it might live a “life of sanctification.” In union with God, through “an inward death,” the soul is perfectly obedient, with the simple faith of a child who “recognizes no will but God’s will.” As a state of self-volition is terminated, the soul “yields readily and without reluctance,” when “it comes in conflict with others.” Because volition is the last authority within the soul, if God controls the will, God “has control of the man.”

Harmony with the Divine is found by a “continual losing our will in the will of God.” In return the soul receives peace, perfection, and “God’s eternal order.” Living through God’s will each moment, the soul regards their efforts “as nothing more nor less than God’s plans, begun, prosecuted, and either continued or abandoned as God chooses.” Upham wrote:

He, who approaches nearest to an annihilation of his own will, approaches nearest to the state of entire sympathy and harmony with the Divine Mind. The prostration of our own will, in such a sense that it shall not in any respect oppose itself to the will of God, seems to be the completion or consummation of those various processes, by which the inward spirit is purified.

For Upham, the distinguishing mark of intimacy with the Divine was not mystical experiences of visions or revelations, but a will subdued. As we give ourselves to God, we become closely engaged in God’s purposes. Upham writes:

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877 Ibid.
878 Ibid.
879 Ibid.
880 Ibid.
881 Ibid.
882 Ibid.
883 Ibid.
884 Upham, Life of Faith, p. 219.
885 Ibid., p. 21.
887 Ibid., p. 21.
888 Ibid., p. 213.
889 Ibid., p. 211.
Isaiah, and Ezekiel, and Daniel, and Peter, and John, and Paul experienced God's favor and were his beloved and adopted children, not exclusively or chiefly because they had visions and proclaimed God's revealed messages and wrought God's miracles; (missions and attributes, which, so far as we can perceive, might have been assigned to other less holy persons or even to unholy persons,) but because, they had given themselves to God in consecration and in faith, because their hearts were sanctified and their wills were subdued. 888

Upham broadly displays the centrality of his Quietism by suggesting that a denuded will produced a state of blessedness, a "holy disinterest." "There is no result so desirable, and no blessedness so pure and heaven-like as that of entire union of the human will with the divine." 889 Those who enjoy the highest mystical states are untroubled by the trials of life because they have no "desire, no choice, no will of their own." 890 Bernard, according to Upham said that: "He, who destroys his self-will, destroys hell." 891 To destroy hell is to enter heaven. Upham argued:

He, who lives in his self-will, just so far as he does so, lives in hell; and he, who lives in the will of God, just so far as he does so, lives in heaven.
As those therefore, who have confidence in the power of faith. 892

In Upham's system of Quietism, faith served as the portal to perfection. Through faith the will is absorbed into "God's overruling providence," 893 whereby the soul entered perfection or heaven and became an unresisting instruments of God. 894 Through a passive faith all human action is thus fully identified as the action of God alone. There is a complete "transformation of the soul's activity into God's." 895

888 Ibid., pp. 88-89.
889 Ibid., p. 224.
890 Ibid.
891 Bernard, as quoted by Upham, Life of Faith, p. 224.
892 Bernard, as quoted by Upham, Life of Faith, pp. 224-225.
893 Ibid., p. 213.
894 Ibid.
895 Pourrat, p. 144.
Upham therefore extended faith an efficacious role in mediating perfection. A passive, "pure and naked faith" was the portal to perfection in Upham’s Quietist formulation of holiness. Faith accessed a mystical or interior death that united "the soul immediately with the divine essence." We can trace this idea to Abbé Bertot, Guyon’s first spiritual director, who wrote:

When the soul has been given the spirit of faith she remains for a very long time in interior darkness and solitude ... dying through faith to self and all its inclinations. And so, losing and dying, she gradually reaches a state of nakedness; or rather, she becomes so simply unadorned that at last she is only a bare point, or nothing.

The soul that has thus been annihilated possesses a "spirit of faith," and through such faith comes "a repose [that] gradually overtakes the soul," whereby all self-activity is transformed into God’s activity. As the activity of the soul is absorbed by and transformed into God’s, the Quietist insists upon a “holy indifference,” and thus emerges the “doctrine of more or less irresponsible passivity,” the third characteristic of Quietism.

Through passive faith the soul transcends the finite world, enters into God and enjoys not only a “holy indifference” but also an infinite capacity, “not every hour of every day, but every minute.” In his turn, Upham was to write:

When we arrive at full faith ... the soul enters upon the state of broad and full emancipation; knowing all things by being willing to be ignorant of all things; enjoying all things by renouncing everything; and by rejecting the

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896 Ibid., p. 142.
897 Ibid.
898 Ibid., pp. 142-143.
899 Ibid., p. 142.
900 Ibid., p. 144.
901 Ibid.
902 Ibid.
903 Ibid.
904 Beriot, as quoted by Pourrat, p. 145.
905 Ibid.
contracted and contracting desires of the creature, enlarging itself, so far as our present capacity will permit, into the infinity of God’s desires.  

A soul absorbed by Christ therefore possesses perfection because the soul enters Christ’s disposition and claims as the “apostle Paul did, ‘I live; and yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.’” Upham, like Quietists before him, insisted upon full identification with the Divine. The soul in union with God attains moral perfection, as their actions are thus “entirely acceptable to God.” A person perfected by faith might commit a physical or prudential error; he may perhaps take a course which will be followed by the loss of his property or an injury to his person, but he cannot commit a moral error.  

The Quietists constructed a religious and moral system in which passivity was not only the sole requirement of religion, but also the basis where human action was fully identified with Divine activity. Because of this, Bossuet condemned the Quietist’s “shorter path” as a doctrine of irresponsibility, which he believed, ultimately led to antinomianism.  

Though Guyon was denounced as a Quietist, and her teachings were damned as pernicious, despite her “bonds and imprisonments,” Upham believed Guyon was led “by infinite wisdom” and through obedience to this wisdom she followed the road to perfection through faith, despite persecution. Upham considered her fate similar to those of the Protestants during the Reformation, who, in Upham’s view, also made faith rather than effort the means of true spiritual fecundity. While Protestants were persecuted for insisting upon faith as means of salvation, according to Upham, Guyon likewise received

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906 Upham, Life of Faith, p. 330.
907 Upham, Life Religious Opinions and Experience of Madame Guyon, p. 163.
908 Knox, pp. 334, 350-351.
909 Upham, Life of Faith, p. 240.
910 Ibid.
911 Ibid., p. 126 & ff.
912 Ibid., pp. 146, 181.
913 Upham, Life Religious Opinions and Experience of Madame Guyon, p. 156.
914 Ibid.
harsh treatment from Church for suggesting that faith rather than effort ushered in perfection. Upham’s admiration for Madame Guyon was therefore constant. He wrote:

[Guyon] uttered a word from her burdened heart, in her simplicity, without knowing or thinking how widely it would effect the interests of humanity, or through how many distant ages it would re-echoed. And that word was Sanctification by Faith ... In the Protestant Church, it would have been hardly tolerable; but in the Roman Catholic Church, which is characterized by ceremonial observances, the toleration of a sentiment which ascribes the highest results of inward experience to faith alone, was impossible. So that, instead of being regarded as a humble and devout Catholic, as she supposed herself to be, she found herself suddenly denounced as a heretic. 915

To live by faith, rather than works, was an affront to the Catholic Church, insisted Upham, and any “life which rests upon faith ... could reasonably expect nothing but persecutions.” 916 According to Upham, Guyon was imprisoned in the Bastille because she advanced sanctification by faith, over and against the religious rituals such as acts of mortification promoted by the Catholic faith. Just as the apostle Paul was persecuted because he advanced faith over Jewish ritual observances, any soul who advances the truth which Upham himself championed—sanctification by faith 917 will suffer persecution. According to Bossuet, however, it was not Guyon’s view of sanctification by faith, but her Quietism that led to her inquisition and subsequent four-year stay in the Bastille. 918 Yet Upham clearly understood her significance quite differently.

Of course Upham does not appear to understand sacramental theology, but the crucial point for him seems to have been Guyon’s freedom from clerical authority, apart from that of her spiritual director. Independent of clerical authority, Guyon advanced the doctrine of sanctification by faith, which had been forgotten by the medieval Church,

915 Ibid., p. 155.
916 Ibid., p. 156.
917 Ibid., p. 261.
918 Pourrat, p. 184 & ff.
though not unfamiliar to the “pious of former times.” In Upham’s view, Guyon dedicated herself to proclaiming “holiness based upon faith,” as the “privilege and possession” of all Christians. Taking up her cause, as he viewed it, Upham also advanced a “shorter path” to perfection through faith just as widely as Guyon imposed her “shorter path” through passivity on all the faithful. Both Upham and Guyon endeavored to make accessible to every Christian “what is special to high mystical states into a general rule for contemplation.” The “popularizing” of the Quietists’ “shorter path” was thought to lead to an inauthentic mystical experience, and placed many on the “brink of falsehood.” To promote the one act of passivity on the “weak and strong, the mediocre and the good, the most unmortified and ignorant as well as the most understanding” is thus the fourth characteristic of Quietism, a characteristic noted in the work of Upham.

VII. A Critique by Ronald Knox

Ronald Knox, a convert to Catholicism and an ordained Catholic priest, offered a critique of the Quietism of Guyon and Upham. According to Knox, Upham reworked Madame Guyon’s Autobiography with one goal in mind, to “substitute, at every turn, the jargon of Evangelical piety for the Quietist jargon in which Madame Guyon wrote.” Upham viewed Guyon as an “honorary Protestant,” who suffered at the hand of the Catholic Church which Upham supposed was hostile to her Protestant profession of sanctification by faith. Upham seemed unaware that Guyon’s Autobiography was written to defend her Quietism. For Upham, Guyon had discovered the true foundation of religion—faith, the means of both justification as well as sanctification. Knox wrote:

919 Ibid., p. 163.
920 Ibid., p. 158.
921 Ibid.
922 Pourrat, p. 139.
923 Father Surin, as quoted by Pourrat, p. 132.
924 Guilloré, as quoted by Pourrat, p. 131.
925 Knox, p. 231 & ff.
926 Ibid., p. 236.
927 Ibid., p. 235.
928 Ibid., p. 236.
Whether we call this state of experience pure love, or whether we call it ... *assurance of faith* is perhaps not very essential ... ‘The way of forgiveness and salvation by faith in Christ alone,’ ‘Sanctification by faith’ ... ‘A heart truly redeemed and sanctified through the blood of Christ’ such phrases as these, by constant repetition, hypnotize the reader into the impression that he is studying the experiences of some Evangelical lady in the early nineteenth century. But they are not her phrases, they are the phrases which Upham has considerately lent her ... It is true enough that the Quietists described their approach to the interior life as ‘the way of faith’. And, to a mind saturated with Reformation thought, the word ‘faith’ inevitably suggests a contrast between faith and good works. 929

Upham seemed to have one concern with respect to his advocacy of Guyon. He harnessed her “shorter path” to perfection, through passivity and naked faith, as an endorsement for his scheme of sanctification by faith, apart from effort. Moreover, while Upham suggested that eminent saints throughout history achieved sanctification without effort, he failed to observe that the purgative path often characterized classical mysticism. Instead, Upham relied upon the Quietist’s mishandling of the Prayer of Simple Regard, which embraced passivity rather than simplicity, an error easily promoted to many people.

Certainly, Upham is vulnerable to criticism here, as Ronald Knox was to discern in his book on *Enthusiasm*, first published in 1950. Knox was right to note that Upham assimilated Guyon into a form of Evangelical Piety. What Knox does not seem to have noticed was that Madame Guyon’s “shorter path” was being assimilated by Evan Hopkins and Jessie Penn-Lewis, much closer to his own time (and within his own country), and both Hopkins and Penn-Lewis did a better job of it than Thomas Upham. Moreover, at least in the case of Penn-Lewis, she did not have to convert to Roman Catholicism (or become a priest at that) to

929 Ibid.
appreciate the apparent problems associated with Madame Guyon’s Quietism, as Underhill has also noted.931

Knox and others vigorously resisted the Quietists’ assertion that a continuous state of passivity encompassed the whole of religious duty.932 A state of “complete abandonment to God,”933 whether it leads to salvation or damnation, was nothing more than the doctrine of irresponsibility.934 Equally repugnant to Knox was the notion that through a state of passivity the soul was fully absorbed and thus identified with the Divine.935 For such souls, even the most horrible deed could not “contaminate.”936 “Whoever has ceased to be, cannot sin,”937 for “that is done in them is the work of God.”938 Fasting, mortifications and “acts of virtue”939 were thus viewed as “useless to those in the ‘way of the spirit.’”940 To render moral effort unnecessary was viewed as a dangerous departure from classical mysticism.941

The Quietists demanded passivity in the same way Keswick and Higher Life teachers like Upham demanded rest, and thus both shunned effort while advancing the one act of passivity in attaining perfection. The goal was to make holiness God’s work alone. However, by doing so, the Quietist, through their “shorter path,” offered the highest mystical state to any soul, regardless of their maturity. By contrast, the classical mystical tradition suggested that union with God is the result of years of spiritual discipline and direction. With the Quietists however, union with God—the highest mystical state was now being offered indiscriminately to anyone, regardless of their calling or their spiritual development, and this through spiritual inactivity. Quietists like Guyon and Upham promoted their “shorter path” indiscriminately. An inadequate or shallow mysticism was thought to result.942

932 Knox, p. 243 & ff. See also Pourrat, pp. 148-149.
933 Knox, p. 149.
934 Knox, p. 263, See also Pourrat, pp. 146, 181.
935 Knox, pp. 334, 350-351.
936 Pourrat, p. 181.
937 Ibid.
938 Ibid., p. 172.
939 Ibid., p. 171.
940 Ibid.
941 Knox, pp. 334, 350.
942 Pourrat, pp. 131-132.
Summary Remarks

Palmer, Guyon and Upham shared a passion for holiness, and each explored the mystery of faith in the path toward perfection. In the case of Upham and Guyon, their “shorter path” to perfection was a deviation from classical mysticism as they insisted that the highest mystical states were acquired through passivity, free from effort and purgation. Moreover, for Quietists such as Guyon and Upham, the will is absorbed in the highest mystical states. For Palmer and eventually Penn-Lewis however, sanctification always engaged the will, but as we will observe shortly, Penn-Lewis’s mysticism engaged the states of purgation as well, and thus she clearly re-aligned herself with the classical mystical tradition.

We have analyzed the elements of Quietism in the work of Guyon and also Upham. Both, perhaps unaware, adapted the Prayer of Simple Regard, confusing simplicity with passivity in the case of Guyon, and passive faith in the case of Upham. By advancing a “shorter path” to holiness void of the purgative path, Upham and Guyon represent a deviation from classical mysticism. According to classical mysticism, “grace perfects nature,” and that “the will, with the help of grace, must fight strenuously against temptation, however strong it may be.” Quietists like Guyon and Upham insisted that “grace conquered nature.” Upham’s rereading of Guyon advanced Quietism among his followers by suggesting that higher mystical states were attained through a denuded will. Inactivity coupled with indifference, and holiness mediated by faith, were concepts Upham claimed came directly from Guyon, though it does represent a reinterpretation of Guyon’s Quietism. Upham also suggested that Guyon was persecuted for her emphasis on faith (not passivity) as mediating sanctification, just as in his view the Apostle Paul was condemned for preferring faith to the observance of Jewish laws.

The Holiness Movement as it was expressed within the Keswick Conventions adopted Upham’s “shorter path,” i.e. that faith, void of human effort, mediated the highest mystical states. Like the “shorter path” of Upham and Guyon, Keswick’s sanctification

944 Pourrat, p. 149.
by faith also initiated the fruits of union whereby the soul attained the holiness of God. Through a continuous act of faith, it was suggested that sin was suspended—a notion Keswick expressed through their moment by moment motif, whereas the American Holiness Movement argued that sin was eradicated by a single step of faith. Upham, however, goes even further by insisting on full identification with God such that human volition is not only passive, but also ultimately annihilated and replaced by God’s will. Therefore, the actions of a soul in a state of perfection originate completely with God.

Both Upham and Keswick suggest that sanctification by faith occurs as an event after conversion, and both attempt to align their views with the historic Church, particularly with mystics—most of whom did engage moral effort and purgation in the path to holiness. Thus, both fail to notice that their “shorter path” was a deviation from classical mysticism, which did embrace both effort and spiritual discipline.

We now turn to the distinctive contributions of Jessie Penn-Lewis.

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926 Barabas, p. 80.
948 Sloan, p. 9.
Chapter Five

Mysticism & Jessie Penn-Lewis

"True mystical achievement is the most complete and most difficult expression of life." 949

I. Introduction

Authentic mystics, according to Evelyn Underhill, embrace the mortifying path of "self-surrender," and because of this the mystical path represents the most arduous "expression of life." The transmutation of self, intrinsic to classical mysticism, engaged effort and volition, as well as purgation in the path toward union with the Divine. However, once the primitive self is fully purified, the soul enjoys, in the unitive state, an impenetrable serenity and inordinate power for service in which "heroic activity and creative work" often characterize the mystical life. Through union with the Divine the soul has access to enormous fecundity, an "amazing strength, that immovable peace, that power of dealing with all circumstances." Hence, history is replete with examples of mystics who were great "religious and social reformers," and whose prodigious energies attracted many disciples.

The fruit of the unitive life, however, is never self-directed. Rather, the industry of the mystic has social meaning. For the mystics give to others out of their abundance. Freed from a false self by the purgative path, and from a position of self-abandonment and abundance, the mystics "attacked the sins of their generation." They were often

949 Underhill, Mysticism, p. 84.
950 Ibid.
951 Ibid.
952 Ibid., p. 416.
953 Ibid., p. 417.
954 Ibid., p. 414.
955 Penn-Lewis, Thy Hidden Ones: Union with Christ as Traced in the Song of Songs, p. 125.
956 Ibid., p. 437.
957 Underhill, Mysticism, p. 459.
“pioneers of humanity,” for they challenged the moral and social ills of their times, frequently without human or divine consolation.

It is the purpose of this section to outline the salient qualities of Penn-Lewis’s mysticism as evidenced in her personal experiences with the Divine. To accomplish this, we will draw upon her letters, diary, and mystical writings. We will also consider the history of mysticism as it developed over time, giving attention not only to the stages of the mystical path, but also analyzing the way in which mysticism came to focus upon God’s actions upon the soul, through a consciousness of the inner life. I will then show that Penn-Lewis passed through the stages of mysticism herself, as outlined by Evelyn Underhill. Underhill has described the process by which the soul undergoes purification, along the mystical path, as a five-stage process. It is of interest that Penn-Lewis’s mystical theology resembles the five stages of mysticism as suggested by Underhill. While Penn-Lewis (1861-1927) and Underhill (1875-1941) were contemporaries, though both were British and Anglican, yet they appear unfamiliar with each other.

Let us begin, then, with an analysis of the mystical tradition, as the development of mysticism came to include an awareness of suffering and transcendence, as part of the interior path toward union.

II. The Development of Christian Mysticism: From the Early Church to the Modern Era

Oliver Quick in his significant essay, “The Value of Mysticism in Religious Faith and Practice,” noted the difficulty in identifying the characteristics of mysticism. Religious mysticism, however, is described as a particular type of consciousness. Quick writes:

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958 Ibid.
959 Ibid.
960 Though Jessie Penn-Lewis (1861-1927) was born fourteen years before Evelyn Underhill (1875-1941), they do not appear to have been familiar with one another.
The word ‘Mysticism’ has been used with many and diverse significations, from what is little more than a fanciful use of an epithet up to an over-mastering experience which has been the guiding power of a life. In speaking, however, of religious mysticism ... we are dealing with a kind of consciousness which claims to give the mind a certain knowledge of reality. 962

William Inge, in agreement with Quick, argued that the mystics are those who have been initiated into “some esoteric knowledge of Divine things.” 963 Encounters with the Divine gives rise to a mystical consciousness, according to Evelyn Underhill, which for Underhill cannot come by way of ascension to religious “objects or facts,” 964 but through an encounter with “living facts experimentally known at first-hand.” 965 According to Underhill, a mystic is one who is conscious of having had

to a greater or less degree, such a direct experience—one whose religion and life are centred, not merely on an accepted belief or practice, but on that which [they] regard as first-hand personal knowledge. 966

Throughout history, there are those who claim to have acquired knowledge of the Divine through spiritual encounters. Moses, Ezekiel, Isaiah, Hannah, and Mary the mother of Christ were said to have had experiences with God whereby they attained divine insights. The initiates (or mystae) of the Greek mystery cults 967 (from which the term mysticism arises) claimed to have had a divine vision through which they possess not only esoteric knowledge, but also the ability to live on a higher plane. 968

As the Christian Church arose from within the Greco-Roman world, there were those who spoke of the Christian mysteries as teachings that were “carefully guarded from the

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962 Ibid., p. 161.
963 Inge, p. 4.
964 Underhill, The Mystics of the Church, p. 10.
965 Ibid.
966 Ibid., pp. 9-10.
968 Underhill. The Mystics of the Church, p. 10.
knowledge of the profane.'

It was Philo (20 BCE - 50 CE) who suggested that Christians were those who have received some hidden or secret insight into the Scriptures. Thus, the early Christians also used the term “mystery,” preserving much of its original meaning.

Efforts to characterize Christian mysticism have inspired differing responses from scholars throughout the years, as we have shown. Therefore, a historical review of mysticism reveals the fact that the Church has stressed different aspects of the mystical tradition over the centuries. Christian mystics in the early centuries, as we have indicated, were those who professed knowledge of the hidden meaning of the Scriptures. The early Church did not understand “mystical” as a private experience. On the contrary, the Christian mystery centered on the “hidden meaning and transformative understanding” that God seeks to be united to creation through Christ’s life, death and resurrection. To experience the mystery of Christ was not a solitary but a corporate journey, enacted sacramentally, through a eucharistic community. Thus, early Christian mysticism was bibliocentric, Christocentric and communal.

909 Herbermann, p. 662.
901 Underhill. The Mystics of the Church, p. 10.
907 For example, J. Aumann in his work, Spiritual Theology (London: Sheed and Ward, 1980), pp. 16, 81-82, 123-132, made a distinction between Ascetical Theology and Mystical Theology. The former refers to the mystical path of purification, illumination and union acquired through effort or “ordinary grace,” whereas the latter refers to infused contemplation and the “epiphenomena” which may accompany this state. B. McGinn argued that mysticism should not be defined as an experience but as a consciousness. Yet, to what extent is a consciousness an experience? See McGinn, The Presence of God: A History of Western Christian Mysticism, Volume One, The Foundations of Mysticism. (New York: Crossroad, 1991), pp. xiv-xvii. E. Underhill followed a similar path by suggesting that there is a mystical consciousness that conforms or coincides with mystical experiences. See Underhill, The Mystics of the Church, p. 10 & ff. See also Quick, O. “The Value of Mysticism in Religious Faith and Practice.” The Journal of Theological Studies, January, Volume XIII, 1912, p. 161. In contrast to E. Underhill, G. Jantzen insisted that there is no “essence of mysticism.” See Jantzen, p. 331. McIntosh suggests that a mystical consciousness is first noted in the late Middle Ages and reaches new heights in the Modern Era. See McIntosh, p. 44 & ff.
904 McIntosh, p. 42. See also Herbermann, p. 662.
907 McIntosh, p. 43.
Among the early Christian mystics, most notably Origen and Pseudo-Dionysius, Christian mysticism was understood through the soul’s interior ascent by way of a three-fold process of purification, illumination and union. However, this process did not center solely on inner experiences, but borrowed significantly from Neoplatonic notions of moral and intellectual purification.  

By the 12th century, Christian mysticism and the soul’s interior ascent was greatly influenced by the affective tradition of St. Bernard (1090 - 1153). It was Bernard who gave greater attention to personal experience as a means of assessing God’s activity within the soul. As Louth and McIntosh observe, mystics of the late medieval period also ascribe affective and experiential meaning to the work of earlier mystics such as Pseudo-Dionysius (also called Denys). Whereas patristic mysticism concerned an intellectual and moral ascent, by the time of Bernard, emotion and experience more typically characterized the interior path toward union. The attention given to mystical experiences, and an interest in a mystical consciousness, reaches full bloom in the modern era. 

Not only was the work of early mystics reinterpreted through the affective tradition, there was also a decided shift in the language used to describe the soul’s ascent by late medieval mystics. Take for example the use of personal language. With the Fathers, such usage was rare, but by the late medieval period it was common to describe the ascent of the soul in personal terms. It was as if the affective tradition gave rise to the notion of an inner self upon which God acts. The shift in language is believed to represent a historical shift within mysticism so that the soul, rather than the intellect, becomes the locus of God’s activity.

Earlier mystics such as Denys believed that the soul transcends the intellect, and in that way negates it: but the intellect is only rejected because it is no longer useful, not because it is of no use at all. On the contrary, the stage of intellectual purification can only be accomplished by means of the intellect. During the Middle Ages there develops the idea

977 Pourrat, pp. 69 & ff. 219 & ff.
978 Louth, p. 181.
979 McIntosh, p. 68.
980 Louth, pp. 182-188. See also McIntosh, p. 62 & ff.
that the mystical organ in the soul is not intellectual at all but affective: it
is in virtue of the principalis affectio, which is the apex mentis, the summit
of the mind, that the soul has contact with the divine. 981

Later mystics understand Denys to say, not that the intellect must be transcended, but that
the intellect must be rejected “in favour of the will or feelings.” 982 Denys is thought to
reject the intellect in preference of emotion. Such a reinterpretation of early Christian
mystics takes the mystical tradition in a new direction and explains the “contrast between
the theoretical character of Patristic mysticism and the dramatic and affective character of
later Western mysticism.” 983

Or again, as Denys explored the soul’s interior ascent, he used the term “darkness” in
a metaphoric sense to note a theoretical concept—the transcendence of the ontological
difference between God who is not a created being, and the creation of humankind. For
Denys, the soul’s interior ascent carries it beyond images (which are created), into the
darkness—the image-less, transcendence of God. For the late medieval mystic—John of
the Cross (1542 - 1591)—the “Dark Night is the night of faith when images and concepts
are stripped from the intellect as part of its preparation for union.” 984 The more abstract
language of Denys thus becomes the language of experience, so that the Dark Night is a
painful and tormenting experience for late medieval mystics. 985 According to John of the
Cross, as the soul endures the Dark Night, the influx of Divine Light has a purifying
effect and renders the soul suitable for union. John then ponders why anyone should call
it a night when in fact the Divine Light is illuminating the soul? He offers the following
answer:

There are two reasons why this divine wisdom is not only night and
darkness for the soul, but also affliction and torment. First, because of the
height of the divine wisdom which exceeds the capacity of the soul.

981 Louth, p. 183
982 Ibid.
983 Ibid.
984 Ibid. p. 184.
985 Ibid.
Second, because of the soul's baseness and impurity; and on this account it is painful, afflictive, and also dark for the soul. 986

John's language is clearly more introspective and experiential, whereas the language of the Fathers was theoretical. Mystical thought has now moved closer towards private piety, 987 as the mystery of being a Christian gives way to the discovery of an inner self, for medieval mystics were now focused on the inner life upon which, they believe, God acts.

The focus on the inner self and its alterations, as influenced by God, thus became a primary feature of the later mystical tradition. Though earlier mystics sought the mystical meaning of Scripture, Bernard suggested that only personal experience can "unfold the meaning" 988 of the Song of Solomon. Moreover, Bernard proposed that personal experience is an interpretative method, best used in private, rather than in a corporate context.

An awareness of the inner self grew in tandem with the expansion of Scholasticism. Inasmuch as the early Christian mystics understood knowing God as being drawn into God such that loving God was inseparable from knowing God. Medieval mystics were concerned with love as it altered the inner self. Knowing God was, for medieval mystics, the work of theologians. Whereas in the early period, mysticism was a transcendence of intellect, for the mystics of the affective tradition, abandoning the intellect came too easily. Thus, by the 1600s, the Quietists of France were not only abandoning the intellect in their ascent toward the unitive state. They were also abandoning effort and volition as well. By the modern era, many considered personal experience the essence of mysticism.

While the affective tradition of the medieval period may be responsible for the chasm between knowing and loving God, it has been proposed that the apophatic tradition of the late medieval period bridges this gulf. 989 It was the apophatic tradition of Bonaventure (1217 - 74) that placed Neoplatonism "in the context of the paschal narrative," 990 thereby

986 Louth, p. 185.
987 McIntosh, p. 64.
988 Ibid., p. 66.
989 Ibid., p. 77 & ff.
990 Ibid., p. 78.
uniting an interior ascent with personal experience, as part of the mystical path. For Bonaventure, mystical union “entails a participation in the bodily apophasis of the Cross,” and this serves as a vehicle “within which the believer passes over into the presence of the Father.” Christ’s bodily passion becomes the juncture or medium whereby “divine meaning and human knowing are able to converse.” The apophasis of the Cross, according to Bonaventure, engaged real human suffering, not simply bodily, but also emotional as well as spiritual suffering. It is in “bodily terms that God chose to communicate divine meaning.” Moreover, the knowing that is shared in bodily suffering, is, as McIntosh suggests, a form of public and communal theological speech. So the pouring out of bodily pain was an imitation of Christ, noted first in the Middle Ages. Thus, the way of the Cross is a means of describing the mystical journey in terms of Christ’s passion. The way of the Cross is not merely a symbol of the soul’s interior ascent. The imitation of Christ was also the inchoate and inexplicable interior darkness is ... a concrete manifestation of the paschal mystery. This ‘bodily’ mysticism, therefore, might be said to effect a crucial transposition: ultimate detachment is transposed from a metaphysical problematic into the salvation—historical terms of Jesus’ suffering and death. The significance of this lies precisely in its ability to transpose the fundamental key of late medieval mystical thought—from a personal and possibly self-preoccupied spiritual journey (in which attention is focused on the states of the soul’s inner accomplishments), to a more communal mystical theology in which the contemplative journey is seen in terms of participation in the common, ecclesial, mystery of Christ.

The more bodily the incarnation, the more available Christ was to humanity, and as we

991 Ibid.
992 Ibid.
993 McIntosh, p. 79.
994 Ibid.
995 Ibid., pp. 81-82.
participate in the apophasis of the Cross, we too become available to others. McIntosh writes:

The knowledge that comes from sharing in the bodiliness of Jesus, from feeling the burden of his grief, the pain of his suffering, the scintillating joy of being given new life to forgive those who had betrayed him—this is not a case of being ‘trapped’ in a world of physical sensations, but rather these actual sensations are, Christians believe, the very structures of a new creation. They are the patterns of a new, emergent reality which is fully noetic and intelligible, but which cannot be ‘known’ apart from the practical bodily commitment of one’s whole being.\footnote{McIntosh, p. 82.}

This form of apophatic mysticism, noted first in the late medieval period, stressed the radical release from the limitations of ego, and the desire to manipulate, possess and control persons and things for the ego’s own ends. Such an ecstatic freedom... means to discover the foundations of one’s true self; the higher the soul ascends into God, ‘the deeper it descends into itself; the union (of the soul and God) take place in the innermost sphere of the soul, in its deepest ground. So the journey into God is seen not ultimately as a loss of self but as a homecoming in the divinely beloved self, beyond the false selves.\footnote{Ibid., p. 206.}

Thus we have seen how the early period of Christian mysticism understood the soul’s interior ascent through intellectual and moral purification, articulated in non-personal, communal terms. By the late medieval period however, the interior ascent was expressed by personal, experiential means so that a divorce ensued between a spiritual consciousness and doctrinal truth. Yet, it was the apophatic tradition of the late medieval period that joined early patristic mysticism with the affective tradition through a sharing
in the sufferings of the Cross. The soul is united to God and humanity, through the apophasis of the Cross.

It is through the apophatic knowing of the Cross that the soul finds purification and union with God, and this form of mysticism closely resembles the mysticism of Jessie Penn-Lewis, as we will see.

Thus, the transition from the early mystical tradition, to the late medieval period, enables us to observe why the stages of mysticism now incorporate personal experience in the soul’s interior ascent along the mystical path. Let us take a closer look at this matter.

III. The Soul’s Ascent: The Stages of Mysticism

As I have said, the early Christian mystics believed, as did the Greeks, that union with God meant overcoming the “ontological gulf between God and his creation, a real difference of being.” 998 This gulf is bridged, according to Plato, through the soul’s ascent, beginning with awakening—the first step in the mystical path.

Awakening occurs as the soul recognizes that it is “immersed in what only appears to be reality, that our knowledge is mere opinion.” 999 The awakened soul embarks on the process of detaching itself from all illusions and “from false reality.” 1000 According to Plato, detachment is also a process of purification, a process of educating the mind, the body, and the moral or ethical life. For Plotinus, purification is ultimately a longing within the soul “for its true self,” 1001 which was also a necessary component of the soul’s search for God. Purification is required not only because “the fallen soul has become self-centered,” 1002 but also because the soul has become focused on a false self. After having passed through purification and detachment, the soul is suddenly “swept out of itself into union.” 1003 Ecstasy means to stand outside oneself, a condition in which the soul finds

998 Louth, p. xv.
999 Ibid., p. 6.
1000 Ibid.
1001 Ibid., p. 42.
1002 Ibid., p. 43.
1003 Ibid., p. 48.
itself "overwhelmed by the reality of its union with the One."\(^{1004}\) The soul has passed beyond itself into God.

Origen explored the soul’s ascent through the three-fold process “of purification, illumination and perfection.”\(^{1005}\) For Origen, the successive stages noted in the soul’s ascent began with ethics, or the “formation of virtues,”\(^{1006}\) coupled with a struggle against passion. Thus, the early Christians mystics were dependent upon Platonic ideals that aimed at freeing the soul by subduing the body.\(^{1007}\) For the Greeks, the soul undergoes education and purification within the mystical path in order to return to its source—God. For the Christian, however, seeking union with God is the soul’s response to God’s love as demonstrated in the Divine’s “descent and condescension in the Incarnation.”\(^{1008}\) Hence, the epicenter of Christian mysticism, which distinguished it from Greek mystical thought, was love of God and love within the body of Christ. To be united to God “is both singular and corporate,”\(^{1009}\) and is therefore “inseparable from the mystery of the Church.”\(^{1010}\)

Thus, in response to God’s love and initiative, the soul seeks intimacy with God through holiness by way of the purgative path, the resisting of sin, and by participation in life of the Church.\(^{1011}\) Union with God meant not only union with Christ, but also union with other believers.\(^{1012}\) Christian baptism was, of course, available to all, and in this sense Christian mysticism was derived from both a communal and egalitarian impulse, and was viewed as the root of the Christian life.

Having briefly assessed the mystical tradition from the early centuries to the late medieval period, we have noted that the early Christian mystics shared “with Platonic (and, for that matter, Buddhistic) mysticism a common structure: that of a threefold path to God, consisting of purification, contemplation, and final union.”\(^{1013}\)\(^{1014}\) Evelyn

\(^{1004}\) Ibid., p. 49.
\(^{1005}\) Ibid., pp. 170-171.
\(^{1006}\) Ibid., p. 59.
\(^{1007}\) Ibid., p. 60.
\(^{1008}\) Ibid., p. 197.
\(^{1009}\) Ibid., p. 200.
\(^{1010}\) Ibid., pp. 199-200.
\(^{1011}\) King, p. 18 & ff. See also Louth, p. 168 & ff.
\(^{1012}\) Louth, p. 199 & ff.
Underhill, who studied the mystical tradition during the same era as Jessie Penn-Lewis, outlined five states or stages of the mystic's path that incorporate the notion of an inner self, as acted upon by God. Hence, Underhill explored a “mystical consciousness” that evinces five stages, and each stage assessed God's actions within the soul, as well as the soul's response to, and experience of, God. Underhill’s five stages: Awakening, Purgation, Illumination, the Dark Night, and Union with God, incorporate the affective tradition (of Bernard) which considered early Christian mysticism (awakening, purgation and illumination) according to the experiences of the inner life. Thus Underhill expands the three-fold path of the mystic, mentioned in the first few pages of this thesis, into a five-stage path as she explores, for example, purgation through the Dark Night which, as we have seen, understands the abstract language of Denys in terms of personal experience. Like Bernard, Penn-Lewis also assessed the transmuting and painful experiences of the Dark Night within the soul as the soul suffers with Christ on the Cross. Perhaps because Underhill was keenly interested in the inner psychological manifestations of the mystical path, she therefore often appraised the lives of the mystics through their experiences of the Divine. According to Underhill, each of the five stages along the mystical path drew the mystic into union with the transcendent God, though not all mystics achieved the fifth and final stage—the unitive state. Nor does every mystic demonstrate all the characteristics of each stage, and therefore no one mystic “can on that account be treated as typical.” Moreover, to attempt to categorize the inner life of the mystic is, as Underhill suggested, “delicate and elusive.”

The mystical path was observed first in the Christian writings by Origen, and also emphasized by other early Christian writers such as Dionysius the Areopagite, see Louth, pp. 54-55. See also King, p. 19 & ff and Jantzen, p. 88 & ff.


Underhill, *Mysticism*, p. 167

Ibid., p. 168.

Ibid., p. 167.
However incomplete a systematization may prove, Underhill suggests we will gain more by the effort than we will lose.\footnote{1021}

A brief description of the five stages, according to Underhill, will provide a framework whereby to assess the mystical path within Penn-Lewis’s Cross Theology.

i. **Awakening:** The awakened soul has become aware of the Transcendental.\footnote{1022} It has seen for the first time, the landscape of the invisible world. As an awareness of the Divine is born, it disrupts the equilibrium and turns the focus of the soul in a new direction.\footnote{1023} Recognition of the Divine places the things of the present world out of sight, if for only a brief moment. As the awakened soul begins to recognize false reality, it turns away or detaches from illusion.

As the soul awakens, it experiences a joy that is short lived. An awareness of its inadequacies, egotism, sinfulness and self-centeredness\footnote{1024} is a painful realization. There is thus an oscillation between joy and pain. After encountering the invisible world there develops a disturbing awareness that one is too flawed to remain in such a perfect world. To fully enter the invisible world will ultimately require a complete reorientation or transmutation of self, not the mere change of focus, which the awakened state provides. A complete reorientation of the soul is required if it is to reach the final state—union with the Divine.\footnote{1025} This may come in time, but until it does, habitation in the invisible world is denied.\footnote{1026}

ii. **Purgation:** The awakened soul responds by efforts of purification, by ridding itself of sin, deceit and illusion, and dedicates itself to the pursuit of holiness.\footnote{1027} The purgative stage is a call to holiness. Purgation, then is the “purification of character and detachment from earthly interests,”\footnote{1028} so that the soul is purged or detached from falsehood, self-
love and other moral imperfections which create distance between God and the soul. Christian mystics turn to Christ as a model of the perfectly purified soul, for “Christ’s human nature was so utterly bereft of self, and apart from all creatures, as no man ever was, and was nothing but a ‘house and habitation of God.’”

iii. Illumination: The effort exerted in the purgative state results in a “peaceful certitude of God” in which “the mind is ravished into the abyss of divine Light.” Illumination is thus a state of visions, joy and ecstasies. Ecstasy “comes from the Greek ek-stasis, which literally means ‘standing outside oneself,’” often outside one’s intellect. Thus, in the state of illumination the soul has become decidedly more God-oriented rather than self-oriented. Though supreme intimacy with God or union has not been achieved, nonetheless the soul that has been cleansed and purified now contemplates God more often than self, though without being fully immersed in God. This is betrothal, not marriage. Visions and artistic expressions of joy often typify illumination. The mystic is often an artist-minstrel, who in the state of illumination longs only to enjoy the Divine Beloved. But a further stage has to be endured.

iv. The Dark Night: Negation and pain most clearly characterize the Dark Night of the soul. It is a slipping away of that joy experienced in the state of illumination. Moreover, it is a state of loss and an absence of communion and comfort of one’s closest relations, and most importantly the consolations of the Divine. As the mystic outgrows their “illuminated consciousness, these selves begin also to realize how partial and symbolic that consciousness—even at its best—has been.” The suffering of this state

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1029 Jantzen, p. 121.
1031 Underhill, The Mystics of the Church, p. 27.
1032 Richard of Saint – Victor, The four Grades of Violent Love
1033 http://home.earthlink.net/~livingflame/Mysticism.html
1034 Jantzen, p. 106. See also McIntosh, p. 140.
1035 Underhill, Mysticism, p. 234.
1036 Louth, p. 43.
1037 Underhill, Mysticism, p. 240.
1038 Ibid., p. 239.
1039 Ibid., p. 382.
1040 Ibid., p. 394.
is so terrible that it "plunges the self into the state of negation and misery." 1041 The mystic feels utterly abandoned by God and their dearest relations. Through the Dark Night the last grip of self is purged completely, and the ego has been transcended, subdued, and it ceases to "be its 'own centre and circumference." 1042 The soul has learned to surrender all to God—"the price of final peace." 1043

v. Union: The final stage of mysticism, the unitive state, is often imaged as spiritual marriage between the soul and the Divine Lover. 1044 Union with God is the proper response to God's love. 1045 Lost in the love of the Divine, the soul has perfected self-forgetfulness, it is a complete harmony between the soul and the Divine. The surrender of the human will to the Divine renders the mystic at one purpose with the Divine will. The mystic is to God "what his own hand is to the person." 1046 God is the vine, and the soul is the branch (John 15:5). It is not 'I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me,' said Paul (Gal 2:20).

Union represents the transmuted self, and elimination of egotism, of the "I, the Me, the Mine," 1047 through the "self-naughting which the trials of the Dark Night tended to produce." Through the Dark Night, the false self has been fully conquered, an "imperative condition of the attainment of the unitive life." 1049 Because the false self has been purified and penetrated by the Divine, union with God opens a universe of power, strength, and energy for ministry and work. "I live, yet not I but God in me." 1050

IV. Jessie Penn-Lewis: Conversion and the Mystical Path

Introduction

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1041 Ibid., p. 382.
1042 Ibid., p. 397.
1043 Ibid., p. 398.
1044 Ibid., p. 415.
1045 Louth, p. xv.
1046 Underhill, The Mystics of the Church, p. 27
1047 Underhill, Mysticism, p. 425.
1048 Ibid., p. 416.
1049 Ibid., p. 425.
1050 Ibid., p. 417.
The soul’s interior ascent, in the life and work of Jessie Penn-Lewis was a crucicentric path. Penn-Lewis’s apophasis was expressed within a paschal context which we will now assess.¹⁰⁵¹

Penn-Lewis’s spiritual leadership, feminism and prolific industry are inseparable from, and driven by, a perception that she had been united with Christ on the Cross. Her literature thus radiates a profound mystical element and she herself walked the mystical path, as documented by her letters, diary and biographers. Her mysticism also had social meaning, as she championed several causes, chief among these was her support of women’s public ministry. Despite her life-long battle with tuberculosis, she managed to write for, and speak to, international audiences, admitting that the power to do so came through an intimate encounter with the Cross.

Penn-Lewis was adamant about one matter, that her ongoing capacity to serve Christ was fueled by an inner awareness that she has died in Christ in order to live life anew with Christ. Like the apostle Paul, Penn-Lewis repeats over and again the proclamation of St. Paul, “I live, yet not I.”

Penn-Lewis’s mystical understanding that she had been crucified with Christ represented an inner reality that her primitive self had died and transmuted so that she might walk in newness of life in Christ. When Penn-Lewis implied that the crucified Christ must have crucified messengers she was suggesting that the path of interiority, the path to union with God, was located in a participation in the purgations of the Cross.¹⁰⁵² Not only does she participate in the mystical path and preach a mystical theology, through her crucicentrism she compelled others to also experience the path of interiority through the Cross.

Penn-Lewis therefore, viewed herself as a prophet of the Cross, a role she shared with P.T. Forsyth. Like all prophets, Penn-Lewis received criticism not only from her contemporaries, but also from the leaders of Keswick. Yet, she had her own complaint against the Church. Penn-Lewis charged that the “message of the Cross was rarely preached, except in its first application to the forgiveness of sins,”¹⁰⁵³ an interpretation

¹⁰⁵¹ McIntosh, p. 78.
¹⁰⁵² Price & Randall, p. 156.
¹⁰⁵³ Gerrard, p. 197. See also Bebbington, p. 156.
she found inadequate. The Cross, she argued, was not only the means to justification. The Cross was also the path to holiness through an "identification of the sinner with Christ in His death to sin and to the world." The path of interiority that Penn-Lewis associated with the purgations of the Cross was the "half-forgotten truth which God ordained Mrs. Penn-Lewis to proclaim." Holiness, or power over sin, was, according to Penn-Lewis, attained in a mystical union with Christ's death and resurrection, a message she took to pulpits around the world. In more detail then, I now trace the mystical path of Penn-Lewis, which gave shape to the person she became.

Our analysis of Penn-Lewis will include an assessment of her conversion and mystical awakening. Our purpose is to identify and analyze the sequence of events that helped form her mystical theology. We will then observe the spiritual experiences of Penn-Lewis, as she proceeds along the mystical path. Lastly, we will explore the social implications of Penn-Lewis's mysticism, noted foremost in her feminism and her call for women's emancipation within Christian work, but also in her insistence upon unity within the body of Christ. Another consequence of Penn-Lewis's Cross Theology resulted in her opposition to the inadequate mysticism that trailed the Keswick revivals.

**Breaking Through: A Mystical Call**

Penn-Lewis was born "in the midst of religious surroundings." She was the granddaughter of a Calvinist, Methodist pastor and the daughter of a Temperance worker. Her conversion came as a "true inward change of heart," only after she married William Penn-Lewis, and after the couple moved to Brighton, some distance from her family. Once settled in Brighton, the couple decided to attend the Church of the Annunciation. Jessie, however, became dissatisfied with the Anglo-Catholic vicar whose

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1054 Gerrard, p. 197.
1055 Ibid.
1056 Ibid., p. 271.
1057 Ibid., p. 6.
1058 Ibid.
high Church views she found unpersuasive. For example, Jessie had no interest in confession, a rite the vicar tried to impose upon her.\footnote{1059}

Eighteen months later, Mrs. Penn-Lewis found herself driven by a “deep inward desire to know that [she] was a child of God.”\footnote{1060} Her longing for a more personal relationship with God led her into an experience she calls conversion, which occurred, she claimed, like the Apostle Paul’s, “without the aid of any human instrument.”\footnote{1061} Following her conversion, Penn-Lewis developed a longing for holiness. Thus, she set out to conquer sin, even though her best efforts “ended in abject failure, and the succeeding few months were a record of bitter repentance and many tears”\footnote{1062} over sin and weakness she could not master.

Simultaneous with these events, Mr. and Mrs. Penn-Lewis relocated to Richmond, Surrey, where they joined Holy Trinity Church. In contrast to the High Church atmosphere of Brighton, here the couple enjoyed “the deep spiritual teaching of the Reverend Evan H. Hopkins, whose every sermon was ‘an opening of heaven’”\footnote{1063} to Mrs. Penn-Lewis’s “intense and hungry soul.”\footnote{1064} Hopkins, as we have suggested, was the chief theologian and mentor of the early Keswick Conventions. It was at Holy Trinity Church where Penn-Lewis learned of the “Spirit-filled life,”\footnote{1065} that promised “victory over sin.”\footnote{1066}

The plea for holiness, in anticipation of Christ’s imminent return, was a central theme of the premillennialism of the late 19th century.\footnote{1067} In like fashion, the early Keswick Divines offered power over sin in preparation for Christ’s final return. It is no surprise therefore that Penn-Lewis’s self-condemnation and longing for holiness was fueled by Hopkins’\footnote{1068} premillennial teaching that called the Church “to be more single-eyed to His glory.”\footnote{1069}

\footnote{1059} Ibid., p. 7.  
\footnote{1060} Ibid.  
\footnote{1061} Ibid.  
\footnote{1062} Ibid., p. 8.  
\footnote{1063} Ibid.  
\footnote{1064} Ibid.  
\footnote{1065} Ibid.  
\footnote{1066} Ibid.  
\footnote{1067} Bebbington, p. 152.  
\footnote{1068} J.C. Metcalfe, In the Mould of the Cross, p. 16.  
\footnote{1069} Gerrard, p. 9.
In pursuit of holiness Penn-Lewis propelled herself into a variety of ministries throughout Richmond. She led Bible classes and assumed leadership both at a Rescue Mission and also within the local YWCA. She also counseled young women who were “seeking spiritual help.” Though deeply engaged in ministry, Penn-Lewis remained dissatisfied with her own spiritual life. She perceived that Christ was leading “His child deeper, and even deeper, down into fellowship with Himself,” that there were “depths and heights” that she had yet to discover. Thus, she set her face as “flint to press on to the fullest blessing.”

A deeper spiritual experience came as Penn-Lewis had anticipated, without warning. As she was traveling “alone in a railway carriage,” she sensed her soul had penetrated the transcendental world. I will quote again an important passage from her diary:

Suddenly my spirit broke through into the spiritual world and I was caught up into the bosom of the Father! For days afterwards I felt that I was as a babe lying in the Father’s bosom with all the world below lying in darkness whilst I was in Light, clear as crystal and so pure that every speck of sin stood out in blackness. The people walking the streets looked to me as in another world... the Lord stood by me and I clasped his very feet ... the room seemed filled with glory.

As this portion of her diary illustrates, Penn-Lewis’s spiritual perceptions were awakened. Though this experience was so pure and pleasurable, yet an awareness of every “spec of sin” disturbed her. The awakening of her soul, though joyful, was accompanied by a painful awareness of her own inadequacies. She was acutely aware that her sinfulness disrupted the pleasures of a breaking in of the spiritual world. Thus she
oscillated between pleasure—for having entered the invisible world, she had a noxious awareness that her sins prevented permanent habitation. A complete transformation of her imperfections would be necessary if her soul was to enjoy, without interruption, the pleasures of the invisible world.  

For months afterwards Penn-Lewis enjoyed a continual “breaking through into the supernatural world,” which she experienced as a “melting into tears.” The awakened state, however, was transitory and there was a “gradual cessation of this heavenly experience.” She was shown by “the wisdom of God,” that the interior path was negotiated through an apophasis of the Cross, rather than via sensible consolation. She wrote:

I began to dread the loss of my experience, and to seek now the ‘experience’ that seemed to be slipping from me. At this point, I was shown, by the mercy of God, the path of the Cross, and the wisdom of God in withdrawing the gifts of God, for the soul to rest entirely in Him, and not in joy or ecstatic communion, which made me spiritually self-absorbed. I only wanted to be left alone to retire within the communion with my Beloved. The physical being was not in the least involved, and the ecstasy of delight was purely in the spirit, keeping me ... But when I saw that the loss of this spiritual delight and ecstasy meant fruit, through death and a life in God Himself above His gifts, I gladly chose the path of the Cross and consented to walk in the night of faith to that goal where God would be All in All.

Here we observe Penn-Lewis preferring the “night of faith”, to pleasures of spiritual ecstasy, in order to transcend self-absorption. Love of the Divine, above all spiritual pleasures, motivates the mystic to endure the apophasis of the Cross, through “night of

1077 Underhill, Mysticism, p. 193 & ff.  
1078 Gerrard, p. 28.  
1079 Ibid.  
1080 Ibid.  
1081 Ibid.  
1082 Ibid.
faith.” For a “mystic does not enter on his quest because he desires the happiness of the Beatific Vision, the ecstasy of union with the Absolute, or any other personal reward.”

As Penn-Lewis welcomed detachment, the loss of “spiritual delight and ecstasy” choosing instead the “night of faith” she embraced the Cross, that “God would be All in All.” While many of her peers within Keswick were seeking Pentecost experiences, and suggesting that faith initiates the highest mystical state apart from the Cross, Penn-Lewis embraced another path. She wrote:

And I saw that after all, the Baptism of the Spirit, which I had thought was the goal of the Christian life, was really meant by the Lord to be but the beginning of a path which should lead the believer into the fellowship of the Cross, and through the death of the Cross into union with the Ascended Lord in the bosom of the father.

Thus, she was implicitly engaged in a major criticism regarding the significance of the religious experiences of many of Keswick divines—a dangerous position to assume.

Having enjoyed entrance into the invisible world, Penn-Lewis’s awakened soul enters a state of purgation where she seeks to please the Divine Beloved. Her “brave and constant struggle for victory” over sin was motivated by the longing for her life to be “lost in His,” a “sweet sense of ‘nothing between’” her soul and God’s. The awakened soul desires the Beloved as much as it hates its own imperfections, and the soul thus seeks to purge itself “of all that stands between it and goodness.”

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1084 Gerrard, p. 28.
1085 Ibid.
1086 Ibid.
1087 Ibid., p. 29.
1089 Gerrard, p. 8.
1090 Ibid., p. 9.
1091 Ibid., p. 10.
therefore sought “the fellowship of the Cross,”¹⁰⁹³ that she might be an empty vessel to “be filled with the Heavenly Treasure.”¹⁰⁹⁴

While Penn-Lewis said, “I sought to conquer my besetting sins,”¹⁰⁹⁵ years later she realized that apart from God, she “initiated nothing, built up nothing, ‘pushed’ nothing.”¹⁰⁹⁶ Ultimately, it was through the cleansing of the Dark Night, by way of the “principle of death”¹⁰⁹⁷ the soul overcomes ego and dependence upon accolades. The real business of purgation, Underhill suggests, is to be rid of “those foolish interests in which the surface consciousness is steeped.”¹⁰⁹⁸ Purgation therefore can be understood as a “complete detachment of all finite things.”¹⁰⁹⁹ Through the purgative path Penn-Lewis recognized that spiritual depths are attained alone, without human consolation. She wrote:

I discovered that I had been longing for human companionship in the pressing on, and I saw that I must be content to be alone in soul if I would press on to the heights... I remembered that Jesus was lonely in soul, and I saw that if I would press on, I must be content to be lonely too.¹¹⁰⁰

Spiritual heights are reached not only through the loss of human relations, but also through a detachment from our ego and our false self. Perhaps the most important task of purgation is therefore the stripping of self.¹¹⁰¹ Likewise, Penn-Lewis perceived that she must become free from her own self-orientation that was manifest in many ways, but most painfully through a relentless self-consciousness.¹¹⁰² Penn-Lewis acknowledged that she was imprisoned by a self-orientation that immobilized not only her intimacy with

¹⁰⁹³ Gerrard, p. 29.
¹⁰⁹⁴ Ibid., p. 51.
¹⁰⁹⁵ Ibid., p. 7.
¹⁰⁹⁶ Ibid., p. 53.
¹⁰⁹⁷ Gerrard, p. 54.
¹⁰⁹⁸ Underhill, Mysticism. p. 204.
¹⁰⁹⁹ Ibid., p. 205.
¹¹⁰¹ Underhill, Mysticism. p. 204 & ff.
¹¹⁰² "Plotinus was, perhaps, the first to see that self-consciousness, self-awareness, can be a hindrance to the soul’s progress." Louth, p. 43.
Christ but her Christian work as well. She longed for freedom, particularly when speaking in public, which “no practice ever made speaking less difficult.” She said,

‘I give time every morning to read and pray: I have put everything right in my life as far as I know.’ But the Lord still said, ‘It is YOU.’ And then He began to break me, and there came to me a terrible revelation that every bit of this activity, this energy, this indomitable perseverance, was myself after all, though it was hidden under the name of consecration.

Penn-Lewis underwent purgation to find release not only from self-consciousness but also from the disharmony it provoked between her soul and the Divine. An awareness of her self-orientation and willfulness was “truly a horror,” like “a handful of filthy rags,” she admitted. Thus, in her abasement she saw that self must die on the Cross.

Her diary notes:

Then came the still small voice once more, and this time it was the one little word—‘Crucified.’ ‘Crucified!’ What did it mean? I had not asked to be crucified, but to be filled. But now Romans 6:6-11 became a power to me, and I knew the meaning of ‘our old man was crucified with Him...’ and what Paul meant in his words, ‘crucified with Christ’ (Gal. ii: 20).

Penn-Lewis endured purgation, as other mystics had, because the primitive self or the “‘old Adam’ of St. Paul—is wholly incapable of super-sensual adventure,” even while it craves “harmony with the Absolute.” Thus, the crucifixion of self was the
portal to unbroken communion with God and "the final prize of peace." Penn-Lewis concluded that the path to abundant life where "the human spirit [is] set free" from sin and self comes through a mystical death of self on the Cross. God, according to Penn-Lewis, never gives spiritual power to "the old creation, nor the uncrucified soul ... Satan will give power to the 'old Adam,' but God will not." Freedom from an inner prison of egotism came by way of the Cross. Through the purgations of the Cross, Penn-Lewis received the grace of illumination.

In the state of illumination the soul is now more God-oriented than self-oriented, though supreme union has not been achieved. Yet in the state of illumination the cleansing of purgation has enabled the soul to contemplate God more often than self, and this lends the soul a significant degree of power and spiritual freedom. As the soul emerges from the grips of self-centeredness, Jesus is manifest "in the human vessel," and Penn-Lewis found that her spirit was suddenly released from "every bond, and seemed to break through into the heavens as from some inward prison, finding its place in the heart of God." Illumination, or as Penn-Lewis seemed to call it, the resurrection experience, comes only as one is "crucified with Christ, which is the other half of the experience, 'risen with Him'—'twin parts of one fact.'

Visions frequently typify the illumination of the mystic, often with powerful noetic consequences. Penn-Lewis's diary documents several visions whose meaning she interpreted afterwards. Though she believed that God does not "force the brain to retain the revelations made to the heart," her visions often directed her choices. For example, in a state of illumination Penn-Lewis experienced a vision whose meaning was clear. Following a serious recurrence of tuberculosis, she found herself alone in a cottage, aware that she was facing death. She questioned whether she was prepared to "be

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111 Ibid., p. 397.
1113 Ibid., pp. 26-27.
1114 Ibid., p. 27.
1115 Underhill, Mysticism, p. 233 & ff.
1117 Ibid., 27.
1118 Ibid., p. 58.
1119 Underhill, Mysticism, p. 240 & ff.
1121 Ibid., p. 172.
suddenly taken to the heavenly home,\footnote{1122} or should she hasten back to her doctors. The vision offered her guidance and consolation. She wrote:

From this ‘Mount of Vision’ I could see you all in your battle on the plains. Was I never again to help strengthen your hands with the words of life, and share in your faith victories? For myself it was absolute peace, and readiness to ‘depart and be with Christ which is very far better,’ but so much the Lord had promised me I should finish before that time came, rose to my vision... I turned from the blessed prospect of relief from the conflict of these days, and looking into the face of the Lord, I told Him I must go back to the work if He would permit me. And He did. \footnote{1123}

This vision, noted in her diary, informed Penn-Lewis’s “surface consciousness and another intelligence which purports to be divine.”\footnote{1124}

Similarly, Penn-Lewis claimed to receive guidance and ability through God’s illuminating presence. For example, she said she wrote \textit{The Word of the Cross},\footnote{1125} \textit{The Magna Charta of Woman},\footnote{1126} \textit{The Song of Songs}\footnote{1127} and \textit{The Story of Job},\footnote{1128} guided by God’s illuminations, or what seemed “like the voice of God.”\footnote{1129} Always aware of her physical limitations, Penn-Lewis encountered extreme physical exhaustion while writing \textit{The Story of Job}. It was at this point she sensed God asking her to “drop her ‘body’ at the Cross as never before,”\footnote{1130} and afterwards she sensed the “Risen Life began to flow again.”\footnote{1131} The next day she sat at her desk and began to write, and “God began to pour His light through.”\footnote{1132} She wrote for hours, as “fast as He gave it to me.”\footnote{1133} God, Penn-
Lewis believed, had guided her hand as she wrote *The Story of Job*, one of her most mystical works. Similarly, when writing *The Word of the Cross*, Penn-Lewis claimed that God had given her this book in one day. "His hand was upon me, writing all He showed me." ¹¹³⁴

I waited before the Lord for the last chapter, and on my knees there came to me the vision of the Lamb in the midst of the Throne. The last chapter seemed to be let down from the glory—and so it was finished. ¹¹³⁵

Thus, in the state of illumination Penn-Lewis’s spirit embraced visions, she wrote under the direct guidance of God, and she enjoyed a continual breaking in of the invisible world. In each case, the state of illumination imparted clarity of insight, ¹¹³⁶ by which she was able to perceive and participate in God’s purposes for her life and work. Writing to her husband during her travels to Scandinavia, she told him:

I can truly say that all that would be fascinating to the flesh here is utterly naught to me. It does not appeal to one chord in me. Nothing but the yearning over souls and the intense vision of what they are to Him through Calvary could uphold. ¹¹³⁷

Just as "Calvary" was a central motif to Penn-Lewis’s mysticism, by reading and reflecting on her own mystical work, "Calvary" was often understood in terms of the Dark Night—the final path of purgation. Thus, the Dark Night is most clearly understood as a state of negation and pain, the apophatic path of interiority whereby the primitive self is finally transcended and ceases to "be its 'own centre and circumference.'" ¹¹³⁸ As the soul is thrust into a state of loss of both human and or divine consolations, the Dark Night therefore entails "bitter suffering: far worse than that endured in the Purgative Way." ¹¹³⁹

¹¹³⁴ Ibid., p. 151.
¹¹³⁵ Ibid., p. 153.
¹¹³⁷ Gerrard, p. 144.
¹¹³⁹ Ibid., p. 389.
Penn-Lewis's own life is clearly characterized by pain and loss. Her biographer suggested that that she suffered every bit as much as Job.

Mrs. Penn-Lewis proved herself not merely to have intellectually and intelligently comprehended the [book of Job], but to have entered spiritually and experimentally into its inmost thought, and to have in spirit passed through, in some degree, the sorrows of the patriarch.  

In depicting the Dark Night, Penn-Lewis implied that the soul must embrace the negations of the Cross before entering the life of resurrection. The "self must 'lose to find and die to live.'" Penn-Lewis described her own Dark Night as 'drinking of 'His cup,' a dying on the Cross with Christ. Her notion of the Dark Night engaged the "triumphant emergence into life," only so far as it has entered "into 'His death."

For Penn-Lewis, the Cross:

of Christ is the instrument God uses to deal with the 'flesh,' the old nature, the Adam life. God does not cleanse the flesh, He condemns it to death.

Most unnervingly, as though paralyzed on a Cross, the Dark Night is viewed as an unselving process in which the self "loses the power to Do; and learns to surrender its will to the operation of a larger Life." The self-naughting operation, intrinsic to the Dark Night, is an interior path that deprives the self of its

'perception, knowledge, will, work, self-seeking,' the I, the Me, the Mine,-

-loses itself, denies itself, unforms itself, drawing 'ever nearer' to the One,
Oswald Chambers, a popular Christian writer and contemporary of Penn-Lewis, congratulated Penn-Lewis on her book, *The Word of the Cross*. Chambers, in appreciation said that her book offered insight into the whole process of self-negation. He wrote:

Your ‘Cross of Calvary’ is pre-eminently of God. The splendid treasure of pain, your pain, has merged into the greatness of God’s power. Your book teaches clearly and grandly what the Spirit witnesses to in the Bible and in our hearts, viz: that ‘the Way of God’ flatly contradicts common sense, and by utmost despair the Holy Ghost leads to resurrection triumph. The breakdown of the natural virtues seems to be the point wherein most regenerated lives are cast into despair. Your book will help these to understand that this despair must end in death to natural goodness and self, and be raised by the power of God into inconceivable glorious power and peace and liberty. You are clearer and clearer each time you write, and each day you grow from those past days of mysterious crucifixion, which is an open secret to those of us who have the witness of the Spirit. 1149

Whereas Chambers understood her, many did not. For she challenged too much of what they had come to hold dear. They did not want to hear of the necessity of the pain of purgation, or the endurance demanded of the ‘Dark Night,’ let alone the ‘naughting’ of the soul this entailed. Thus, there were many in Keswick who opposed the purgation and self-stripping of Penn-Lewis’s mystical theology. For Keswick preferred the shorter path of the Quietist, rather than the arduous interior path of the mystic.

Undeterred, she continually made the sufferings of Calvary the central motive of her Cross Theology. For example, while addressing the Bridge of Allan Conference, Penn-

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1148 Ibid., p. 401.
1149 Gerrard, p. 220.
Lewis was asked to speak to the learned “Presbyterian Divines, Doctors of Divines, and Ministers of all denominations.” Necessarily, she spoke of the purgative ways of the Cross, and the following excerpt from her biography draws upon her recollections of that occasion.

As she walked up the aisle of the Tent ... with nothing but a deep, deep sense of her own emptiness and utter insufficiency for such an occasion, the thought came to her: Should she give an ordinary Bible Reading, as she so well could, on some beautiful pleasing theme from the Word? Or should she- dare she- be faithful to her ‘commission’ as a crucified messenger of the Crucified Lord, and tell out to that concourse of Ministers and white-haired Divines the oft times unwelcome message, that the Cross, in its personal application to the servant of God, means a deep experimental circumcision of the heart, a laying down of the ‘natural’ gifts of the soul, the ‘own’ eloquence, the ‘own’ power for service; that out of the depths of the spirit, where Christ dwells, may flow to others the life of the Risen Lord, unchecked and unhindered by the human channel. Then, as she mounted the platform, the Lord Himself poured through her lips the message He had for that gathering, in a faithful proclamation of Paul’s Gospel of the Cross.

The sufferings of the Dark Night are heightened by the misapprehensions of some who view the Dark Night not as a state of spiritual purification, but as a state of spiritual decline. As the soul undergoes stripping in the Dark Night, the soul feels impotent and weak. “Every vice is reawakened,” and the soul finds itself bereft of good deeds. Many, in fact, deem the soul to be in a state of spiritual decay. Penn-Lewis encountered a woman in such a state, though Penn-Lewis quickly discerned that she was “manifestly a surrendered soul” undergoing what appeared to be a Dark Night. All “winter she had

1150 Ibid., p. 195.
1151 Ibid., pp. 195-196.
1152 Underhill, Mysticism, p. 392.
1153 Gerrard, p. 155.
been passing through it, and others had said she was ‘backsliding.’” Even though she did not understand the experience, she “had the assurance herself that she was in the Hand of God.” Penn-Lewis comforted this woman who seemed unfamiliar with the interior path, the “conformity to the death of Jesus,” and through Penn-Lewis the woman discerned “what God was doing” in her own soul. This is just one example of how Penn-Lewis functioned as a spiritual director and the woman’s response, “You have come this time for me!” may well have been that of many others.

Through the strippings of the Dark Night, the self is purged not only of ego, but also of false dependence on human and divine consolation. Penn-Lewis often claimed that she was “the crucified messenger of the Crucified Lord,” and this was certainly the case towards the end of her life. One month following the death of her beloved husband, Penn-Lewis suffered the loss of her trusted secretary and biographer, Mary Gerrard. During these challenging circumstances Penn-Lewis maintained extraordinary calm and peaceful repose. In a private letter, Penn-Lewis acknowledged the stripping of the Cross, through the Dark Night. She wrote:

Now, I must be poured out for God as never before... Truly God was stripping His beloved child, so as to leave her ‘no shadow of anything to cling to, or rest upon, outside of Himself.’

Fortunately she also knew the experiences of union with God, beyond the pain. As a result of the transmuting process of the Dark Night, the soul had perfected a self-forgetting, the soul had transcended egotism, thus making possible a state of union with the Transcendent. Rightly characterized as spiritual marriage, in the unitive state the soul is now capable of “being to the Eternal Goodness what his own hand is to a man,” one in purpose. Spiritual union for Penn-Lewis was thus imaged as intimacy and oneness.

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1154 Ibid.
1155 Ibid.
1156 Ibid.
1157 Ibid.
1158 Ibid.
1159 Ibid., p. 195.
1160 Gerrard, p. 291.
1161 Underhill, The Mystics of the Church, p. 27.
of purpose and will. In a “‘face to face’ communion and fellowship,” the unified soul claimed to know, “with a deep inward consciousness, that of herself she could ‘do nothing’—but whatsoever she saw the Father doing.” The soul thus shared with Christ in the “‘mighty ordination of His pierced hands,’” and only through the sharing of Calvary does the human “spirit becomes truly ‘joined to the Lord’ as ‘one spirit.’”

In the fully matured mystic, “self, though intact, is wholly penetrated—as a sponge by the sea—by the Ocean of Life and Love to which he has attained. I live, yet not I but God in me.” In the same way, after receiving praise from her audience, Penn-Lewis said that “it was absolutely the work of God Himself... I had no part in it at all. All they said passed over me to Him, for ‘I am not.’”

The mystical path provides the soul with a profound degree of detachment that enabled it to accept human accolades as well as fiery trials with equanimity. For the unitive life, “though lived in the world, is never of it.” Whatever might befall the mystics, they remain at peace because they “live at transcendent levels of reality,” they breathe “an atmosphere whose true quality we cannot even conceive.” Penn-Lewis’s way of expressing the repose of union was to say that no human circumstance disrupts the soul who is “transfused by a spiritual glow.” She explains:

[The] Lord is truly our ‘casing,’ our covering, as we abide in Him, and the awful ocean-weight of the world’s atmosphere cannot get in as we hid in him, and keep the spirit open by prayer to the heavenly air by which alone we can breathe and live through these awful days.

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1162 Gerrard, p. 53.
1163 Ibid.
1164 Ibid., p. 66.
1165 Ibid., p. 237.
1166 Underhill, Mysticism, p. 417.
1167 Gerrard, p. 111.
1168 Underhill, Mysticism, p. 414.
1169 Ibid., p. 413.
1170 Ibid. See also Underhill, The Mystics of the Church, pp. 49-50.
1171 Underhill, The Mystics of the Church, p. 49.
1172 Gerrard, p. 258.
As far I know, Penn-Lewis was the first to see the implications of the unitive state for women. In addition to the peace and repose evidenced in her mystical consciousness, the unitive state is also one in which the soul is “conscious that [she] is now at length cleansed ... and has become in a mysterious manner, ‘that which [she] beholds.’” The primitive self has undergone transmutation through the Dark Night and now possesses the real and eternal qualities of the Beloved. The implication as Penn-Lewis argued, was that both flesh and gender have likewise been transformed such that women, in the unitive state, transcend the weakness associated with their gender. While speaking in Scandinavia, Penn-Lewis reminded women that throughout time, those who have pursued the path of purgation receive, as their reward, the fruit of union. She writes:

God’s army of women [are]... ‘foolish enough to depend upon God for their wisdom; ‘weak’ enough for the endynamiting with God’s strength; ‘base’ enough to have no ‘honour’ but God’s honour; ‘despised’ enough to be kept in the dust at His feet, and better than all, ‘Not’ –‘nothing’ enough for God to be everything!  

According to Evelyn Underhill, the self-stripping process of the Dark Night ushers the soul into the unitive state with its renewing power. In a similar fashion, the Apostle Paul experienced self-conquest “so vividly described in Romans” that resulted in the unitive experience in which Paul states; “I live, yet not I.” Paul’s experiences on the road to Damascus, and his subsequent visions and ecstasies, gave him a “vivid consciousness of [Christ’s] reality and presence.” This intense awareness of communion with God is again noted in the Apostle, who speaks of the Christian process as a death and rebirth in Jesus (i.e., Christian baptism). He is not, Underhill argued, “borrowing an image from the pagan mysteries, but describing something through which

\[^{1173}\] Underhill, Mysticism, pp. 417-418.  
\[^{1174}\] Ibid.  
\[^{1175}\] Gerrard, p. 74.  
\[^{1176}\] Underhill, The Mystics of the Church, p. 35  
\[^{1177}\] Ibid.  
\[^{1178}\] Ibid., p. 30.
he has passed."1179 Paul’s statement in Romans 6: 5-6 has been repeated in the lives of mystics throughout time, 1180 including Jessie Penn-Lewis's.

According to Underhill, Paul’s purgation in Arabia (Gal 1:17), is followed by an illuminative state complete with visions and ecstasies described in Acts 22:17, Galatians 2:2 and 2 Corinthians 12:2. 1181 The mystical path for Paul, with its self-abandonment, visions, revelations, communion with the Divine, imparted a newness of life. As a new creature, Paul is profoundly conscious that he is born of a free woman rather than the slave. 1182 As such, he can now do all things through Christ who strengthens him. He has reached the theopathic life, union is complete and Paul is “humbly yet deeply aware of the actual energy of God operative within each deed and decision of his own.” 1183 He is in a state of perfect peace and he enjoys complete self-abandonment, despite the difficult trials of his life. Paul wishes everyone to walk in this newness of life, which he knows is not an end in itself. Nor are the visions (2 Cor. 12) and ecstatic expressions (1 Cor. 14:18), which characterized his life, a goal in and of itself. He treats these events with a dispassion, Underhill observed. 1184 The mystical “communion of his soul with Christ must not be a matter of personal enjoyment.” 1185 The social meaning Paul ascribes to these mystical experiences supports rather than supplants 1186 his service as an apostle to the Church (1 Cor 14). The social impact of Paul’s life was therefore most keenly noted in that his experiences empowered his efforts on behalf others.

Like the Apostle Paul, Penn-Lewis’s unitive consciousness was also expressed in tireless service to others, noted most explicitly in her opposition to gender bias. Yet, Penn-Lewis also recognized that part of her purgation included a gender bias, for though a woman, her mission was to exhibit, and exhorts others to enter into the power she had attained through an experience with the Cross. While she recognized that there was no “denial of the Divine seal, there was no getting away from the evidence of the

1179 Ibid., p. 41.
1180 Romans 6:5-6: “For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly be united, with him in a resurrection like his. We know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be destroyed and we might no longer be enslaved to sin.”
1181 Underhill. The Mystics of the Church, p. 41 & ff.
1182 Ibid., p. 47.
1183 Ibid., p. 50.
1184 Ibid., p. 44.
1185 Ibid., pp. 44-45.
1186 Ibid., p. 45.
there were occasions she sought a male messenger, so that audiences might heed the fullest meaning of the Cross without gender prejudice. She eventually came to see that women who desire to preach are "likewise called to an understanding of the Word which will agree with that inward voice." Penn-Lewis devoted much of her life to advancing gender equality in Christian ministry, an equality she believed grew out of a mystical encounter with the Cross.

Women, Penn-Lewis suggested, are used by God to illustrate the power of the Cross. She herself was used in such a manner. For this reason, women who sense God leading them to preach the gospel must also offer a biblical defense for their public service and ministry. Penn-Lewis wrote:

I am strongly impressed that, for the strengthening of the position for the Lord's handmaidens' freedom for use by the Holy Spirit in proclaiming the wonderful works of God, I must now set forth in print the evidences that this is the purpose of God, as I have proved it in my own life. I no longer say to the Lord, 'Why has thou made me a woman?' ... For the 'Message of the Cross' is its motive and its end, showing how, for the members of the Body of Christ, the 'enmity' was 'slain' at Calvary not only as between Jew and Gentile, but between 'bond and free,' and 'male and female' (Ephes. ii.11-19, Gal. iii. 28)—both having died with Christ, that 'out of both' might be made anew creation, i.e., the spiritual Body of Christ, of which He is the Head.

Through the mystical path of the Cross, not only are the weakness associated with women crucified, transmuted and transcended, but the prejudice against women are also overcome. As Cross unites souls to God, as well as to each other, the Cross thus subdues the enmity between women and men. Penn-Lewis writes:

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1187 Gerrard, p. 266.
1188 Ibid., p. 268.
1189 Ibid., pp. 267-268.
In the home sphere she is woman, wife, mother, sister; but in the Church and in service for God, praying or ‘proclaiming godliness’ (1 Tim ii.10 lit) she is a ‘partaker the Divine nature,’ a messenger of the Lord of Hosts, a member of the heavenly Body the Church- in both spheres seeking, with a meek and quiet spirit, to do the will of her Head in heaven.\footnote{1190}

A man “with a strong prejudice against the ministry of women”\footnote{1191} was astonished at the skill and power manifest in Mrs. Penn-Lewis’s ministry. He admitted to her afterwards that he did not think it possible that “God would use a woman like that!”\footnote{1192} She took this occasion to suggest that: “God never does use a woman like that, or a man either! God only uses a new creation!”\footnote{1193} Gender is transcended at the Cross.

Therefore a soul that has attained union with God through a “stripping off of the I, the Me, the Mine;”\footnote{1194} is thus “made part of the mystical Body of God; and, humbly”\footnote{1195} takes its “place in the corporate life of Reality.”\footnote{1196} Mysticism, as it operated in the work of Penn-Lewis, was a unifying force not only between the soul and the Beloved, but also between souls that are united to Christ. In so far as each soul “experiences the in-working power of the Cross, whereby the... fallen life”\footnote{1197} dies, the soul may rise “above the death of nature which is ours in Adam.”\footnote{1198} Calvary is therefore a “place of unity between Jew and Gentile (Eph ii. 11-18), and that there can be no divisions in Christ, for Christ cannot be divided.”\footnote{1199} The power of Calvary releases the soul from bondage to prejudice and sin, ending “the spirit of the world, the spirit of division, the power of the devil, and the life of self-pleasing.”\footnote{1200} Penn-Lewis’s Cross Theology also had implications for the conflict that often exists between different denominations. Penn-Lewis wrote:

\begin{itemize}
\item \footnote{1190}{Ibid., pp. 268-269.}
\item \footnote{1191}{Ibid., p. 269.}
\item \footnote{1192}{Ibid.}
\item \footnote{1193}{Ibid.}
\item \footnote{1194}{Underhill, Mysticism, p. 425.}
\item \footnote{1195}{Ibid.}
\item \footnote{1196}{Ibid.}
\item \footnote{1197}{Gerrard, p. 284.}
\item \footnote{1198}{Ibid., p. 289.}
\item \footnote{1199}{Ibid., p. 225.}
\item \footnote{1200}{Ibid., pp. 225, 284.}
\end{itemize}
When the Proclamation of the Cross and its message had been considered ... see how rich and full had been the unveiling of the Atoning Cross of our Risen and Glorified Lord, and how marvelously it had been proved that Ministers of many denominations ... could meet together in one spirit, and without controversy over divergent points of view, on the basis of the Cross. Also it was plainly visible again and again as the days went by that in the full unveiling of the Cross, all manifestations and workings of the ‘flesh’ were eliminated, and the pure working of the Spirit of God made possible.\textsuperscript{1201}

Those who have conquered, or transcended their Adamic or flesh-life have access to new resources and capacities for unity. According to Underhill, as the soul attained union a “fresh life is imparted,”\textsuperscript{1202} and “new creative powers are conferred.”\textsuperscript{1203} As such the soul has “new responsibilities and is often called to effort and endurance on a mighty scale.”\textsuperscript{1204}

Despite her shy personality and chronic illness, Penn-Lewis’s life was one of extraordinary energy, noted throughout her international career.\textsuperscript{1205} While she engaged in a life-long battle with tuberculosis, even her doctors were amazed. One said that; “Mrs. Penn-Lewis is a law unto herself.”\textsuperscript{1206} Her strength and endurance often surpassed those who were young and healthy. While speaking in Sweden, Penn-Lewis seemed to go from strength to strength while her translators were steadily exhausted. Her diary reads:

\begin{quote}
I never quite realized how the Lord carries me, until I was side by side with my interpreters. As I give forth the ‘Word of Life,’ I seem to become more vigorous, while they seem to flag and grow weary. Even a strong man, interpreting, grew weary, though I was as free as when I began, and
\end{quote}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{1201} Ibid., p. 276.
\item \textsuperscript{1202} Underhill, \textit{Mysticism}, p. 428.
\item \textsuperscript{1203} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{1204} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{1205} Penn-Lewis’s diary suggests she had avoided refining her skills, such as public speaking, in order that out “of the depths of the spirit, where Christ dwells, may flow to others the life of the Risen Lord, unchecked and unhindered by the human channel.” See Gerrard, p. 195.
\item \textsuperscript{1206} Gerrard, p. 297.
\end{itemize}
resumed at my next meeting as if I had not spoken before! This is the difference between the 'power of His endless life' to quicken physically, and the natural resources.\footnote{1207}

Near the end of her life, her sponsors were surprised by the paradox of her gaunt and weak body, yet all the while her voice and message captivated audiences for long periods. Her biographer wrote:

That little frail body! We almost wondered sometimes how the flesh and bones hung together. And yet what a power she was. How she flamed for God! Has she flamed out? No, the flame was so mighty for God that He has delivered it from the weak vessel of clay that it might flame to its uttermost in His presence for ever... Her fruit remains, for it is living seed planted in the hearts and lives of God's children in every corner of the world—it is a host of living souls delivered from the power of the enemy, and brought into fellowship and union with God, by the testimony of the Holy Spirit through her lips and pen.\footnote{1208}

The vitality of her life was contagious. Such souls are like holy mothers who "bring forth souls by their labours."\footnote{1209} Penn-Lewis's offspring also radiate "new transcendental life,"\footnote{1210} and through them new mystical "energy is actually born into the world."\footnote{1211} Indebted to Penn-Lewis as his spiritual mother, one man wrote:

I am your son in this service. You have seen what I did not see, and believed for what I did not think possible, and have cheered and helped me when all was dark and blank. Someday, in the glory, we will talk over it all. One thing I entreat—do not cease to pray for me. Do you remember

\footnote{1207} Ibid., p. 166. 
\footnote{1208} Ibid., pp. 306-307. 
\footnote{1209} Underhill, The Mystics of the Church, p. 85. See also p. 82. 
\footnote{1210} Underhill, Mysticism, p. 431. 
\footnote{1211} Ibid., p. 432. 
your last prayer for in me in my room here? It was like the ‘mighty ordination of pierced hands.’ Please take me still as one of your burdens to the Master’s feet. ¹²¹²

Christians around the world were empowered by her teaching. One admiring individual said, following her sermon on the Cross: “It is difficult to explain the influence of your teaching on my mind, but somehow it is teaching that teaches, and I find that few do that now.”¹²¹³ Likewise, F.B. Meyer, an eminent Keswick writer, pastor and leader, also claimed that Penn-Lewis’s teaching imparted a “definite blessing”¹²¹⁴ and gave a “bedrock teaching of the soundest description.”¹²¹⁵ He went on to say that through her teaching:

We saw our deep need of the experimental fact of Calvary. Our death-union in Christ was the only way to our life-union in Him. I thank God for His dear child, and for her untiring witness to the blood-stained Cross of Calvary, in the fulness of its applied power. ¹²¹⁶

During the last week of her life, though frail and unable to walk, Penn-Lewis’s biographer suggested that she “seemed to be enjoying herself interiorly.”¹²¹⁷ When asked to “comment on the pace at which she was living life, she replied, ‘Oh, this is life to me!’”¹²¹⁸ Her last sermons were filled, audiences claimed, with “remarkable lucidity and power... but not referring to physical strength... but the kind of power which conveys the truth to the hearers.”¹²¹⁹ She reflected in her own person “tranquillity according to His essence, activity according to His Nature: absolute repose, absolute fecundity.”¹²²⁰ Like

¹²¹² Gerrard, pp. 196-197.
¹²¹³ Gerrard, p. 197.
¹²¹⁴ Ibid., p. 286.
¹²¹⁵ Ibid.
¹²¹⁶ Ibid.
¹²¹⁷ Gerrard, p. 299.
¹²¹⁸ Ibid., p. 300.
¹²¹⁹ Ibid.
¹²²⁰ Underhill, Mysticism, p. 434.
many mystics, Penn-Lewis was an invincible force who appeared to transcend many of the obstacles and limitations in her life.\textsuperscript{1221}

**Summary Remarks**

Penn-Lewis does not identify herself as a mystic, nor does she appear conscious that her spiritual path progresses through five stages of mysticism, as outlined by Underhill. Yet, this appears to be the case. Penn-Lewis's interior ascent resembled the five stages of mysticism: \textsuperscript{1222} Awakening, Purgation, Illumination, the Dark Night and Union. Through the purgative path and the apophasis of the Cross, Penn-Lewis follows the late medieval tradition which depicts the soul's ascent through introspective and experiential language. Moreover, like Bonaventure, Cross Theology engaged personal suffering within the context of the paschal narrative whereby the interior ascent is joined with personal experience. In this way, Cross Theology was the means of transcending the false selves, required by the Greeks and early Christian mystics, as well as the way in which the soul is transformed by Christ's passion and become more available to others.

The way of the Cross is not merely a symbol of the soul's interior ascent. The imitation of Christ was also the

inchoate and inexplicable interior darkness is ... a concrete manifestation of the paschal mystery. This ‘bodily’ mysticism, therefore, might be said to effect a crucial transposition: ultimate detachment is transposed from a metaphysical problematic into the salvation—historical terms of Jesus’ suffering and death. The significance of this lies precisely in its ability to transpose the fundamental key of late medieval mystical thought—from a personal and possibly self-preoccupied spiritual journey (in which

\textsuperscript{1221} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{1222} The psychological stages proposed by Underhill are viewed as contrivances by Jantzen (see Jantzen p. 317 & ff), when in fact these stages seem to describe the soul's ascent toward union with Divine within Penn-Lewis's personal life, as well as in her mystical literature. If the spiritual lives of individuals like Penn-Lewis follow a pattern of experiences, might this pose a defense for the Christian faith based on experience? See Appendix A.
attention is focuses on the states of the soul’s inner accomplishments), to a more communal mystical theology in which the contemplative journey is seen in terms of participation in the common, ecclesial, mystery of Christ.\textsuperscript{1223}

The more bodily the incarnation, the more available Christ was to humanity, and as we participate in the apophasis of the Cross, we too become available to others. McIntosh writes:

The knowledge that comes from sharing in the bodiliness of Jesus, from feeling the burden of his grief, the pain of his suffering, the scintillating joy of being given new life to forgive those who had betrayed him—this is not a case of being ‘trapped’ in a world of physical sensations, but rather these actual sensations are, Christians believe, the very structures of a new creation. They are the patterns of a new, emergent reality which is fully noetic and intelligible, but which cannot be ‘known’ apart from the practical bodily commitment of one’s whole being.\textsuperscript{1224}

This form of apophatic mysticism, noted first in the late medieval period, stressed the radical release of the limitations of ego, and the desire to

manipulate, possess and control persons and things for the ego’s own ends. Such an ecstatic freedom... means to discover the foundations of one’s true self; the higher the soul ascends into God, ‘the deeper it descends into itself; the union (of the soul and God) take place in the innermost sphere of the soul, in its deepest ground. So the journey into God is seen not ultimately as a loss of self but as a homecoming in the divinely beloved self, beyond the false selves.\textsuperscript{1225}

\textsuperscript{1223} McIntosh, pp. 81-82.
\textsuperscript{1224} Ibid., p. 82.
\textsuperscript{1225} Ibid., p. 206.
Penn-Lewis’s diary suggests she attained freedom from the prison of self-consciousness. In the unitive state, the primitive self was overcome and her soul evidences the Divine fruitfulness, so typical of the great mystics. Though she suffered from tuberculosis, Penn-Lewis’s assumed a demanding schedule and overcame significant prejudice not only because of her message, but also because of her gender. Through it all, she was more than resilient. She preached and taught internationally, and her message challenged gender bias by insisting that in union with Christ, divisions according to race, class and gender have likewise been transcended through the Cross.

While mysticism has been associated with ineffable, personal experiences, some believe that the mystic is thus marginalized, and left without a voice either for theological discourse or to address social issues.\textsuperscript{1226} It can be argued, however, that mystics have raised their voices and worked for social change, and this was seen as a characteristic of the mystical tradition from early on.\textsuperscript{1227} Scholars have noted that mystics are not focused solely on private experience. Mystics also give attention to the well being of others, which resulted both in articulate speech and in social action, and this may be considered a social consequences of the mystical path. While criticism of this point can be advanced,\textsuperscript{1228} there is evidence that mystics such as Catherine of Siena, Francis of Assisi, Teresa of Avila and Hildegard von Bingen offered great impetus to social and religious reform. Jessie Penn-Lewis is yet another example of a mystic who challenged the Church both by her mystical writings, and by her biblical literature that advanced women’s equal service alongside men. The power to resist social, political and religious domination was a product of the unitive life for Jessie Penn-Lewis, as we shall see in a later section. For the moment, however, we turn to Penn-Lewis’s mystical path transmitted through her published work. Those who could not hear her in person could certainly learn from what she wrote.

\textsuperscript{1226} McIntosh, p. 137
\textsuperscript{1227} Underhill, \textit{Mysticism}, p. 92.
\textsuperscript{1228} According to Jantzen, because Christian mysticism focused on personal experiences, women mystics were systematically excluded from political and ecclesiastical structures. Therefore, Jantzen argues, mysticism failed to achieve full social and structural justice for women. See Jantzen p. 326 & ff.
Chapter Six

The Mystical Literature of Jessie Penn-Lewis

“All spiritual truth radiates from the Cross.” 1229

I. Introduction

Here we will observe the classical mysticism operative in four primary works by Penn-Lewis: Thy Hidden Ones; Union with Christ as Taught by The Song of Songs, The Story of Job, Face to Face: Glimpses into the Inner Life of Moses, and The Message of the Cross. Penn-Lewis’s interior path, expressed through Cross Theology, was a message she not only advanced through her mystical literature, but one she also directed at Christian leaders who she felt relied too heavily upon rational expressions of faith, to the exclusion of more interior encounters with the Cross. In her opinion, the “theologizing” of her contemporaries failed to lead souls into a transformational encounter with the Cross. Penn-Lewis complained that the power available in the Cross was rarely preached “even in evangelical pulpits, and then only but a reference, or few words, as if it were only a ‘doctrine.’” 1230 When Christians fail to engage the Cross and omit an interior apophasis of Calvary, they are unable to accesses the richness of God. “It is easy to preach about the Cross, but to be taken into the heart of Calvary” 1231 is an experience many preachers have overlooked. To encounter the Cross is to touch upon a depth that is fathomless, and this is what many modern preachers have yet to experience. 1232 She wrote:

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1229 Penn-Lewis, as quoted by Gerrard, p. 169.
1230 Penn-Lewis, The Cross as the Touchstone of Faith, p. 23.
1232 Ibid. According to Louth, the mystical tradition proposes that “God is unknowable in Himself, He is not an object of knowledge. With our understanding we can grasp God’s manifestation of Himself in creation, but in the very act of understanding God’s manifestation of Himself we realize that the One thus manifested transcends His manifestation.” See Louth, p. 172.
The Holy Spirit of God is manifestly calling the messengers of the churches to more definite preaching, not alone of ‘Jesus Christ crucified,’ as the one only and sufficient sacrifice for the sins of the whole world, but also of the sinner’s death in the Substitute as the only basis of the fullest working of the Eternal Spirit, and the manifestation of the life of Jesus to a world that knows Him not.\textsuperscript{1233}

Only those who have journeyed through the apophasis of Calvary can preach the fullest message of the Cross, Penn-Lewis insisted. “Only those who live the ‘Cross’ can preach it effectively.”\textsuperscript{1234} Too often pride and ambition compel preachers to exalt self-centered manifestations of spiritual power. In contrast, those who have been crucified with Christ do not “think more of the ‘wisdom of words.’”\textsuperscript{1235} Freedom from a self-consciousness and a self-orientation is possible only as the Cross is preached by those who have experienced its severing and slaying power.\textsuperscript{1236} For the “crucified Lord must have crucified followers.”\textsuperscript{1237}

Those enamoured with worldly power, knowledge and social position find the Cross an offense, Penn-Lewis posits. Since the Cross renders null earthly ambition and human distinctions such as Jew, Greek, slave and free, male and female, any who claim superiority based on worldly categories and education have not experienced the liberating and self-transcending power of Calvary. To be enlightened by a mystical consciousness is to realize that “nothing availeth but a new creation.”\textsuperscript{1238}

Thus, Penn-Lewis suggests that the basis for intimacy with God is not dependent upon our understanding alone, but as souls participate in the interior path of the Cross they seem to transcend knowledge. In her mystical work, \textit{The Story of Job}, Penn-Lewis uses the story of Job to suggest that through his sufferings, Job is carried beyond defining the undefinable, in order to enjoy a revelation and a fellowship with God that far exceeded a life without suffering.

\textsuperscript{1233} Penn-Lewis, \textit{The Message of the Cross}, p. v.
\textsuperscript{1234} Gerrard, p. 274.
\textsuperscript{1235} Penn-Lewis, \textit{The Message of the Cross}, p. 59.
\textsuperscript{1236} Penn-Lewis, \textit{The Conquest of Canaan}, pp. 21-22.
\textsuperscript{1237} Penn-Lewis, \textit{The Message of the Cross}, p. 48.
\textsuperscript{1238} Ibid., p. 61.
Let the intellect be occupied with the ‘How’ and the soul will generally fail to know the fellowship with God in experience ... Why is it [the soul] being disturbed by those who want indefinable things defined? ... He little knew that this path of suffering was to end in a revelation of God, and a fellowship with Him richer and fuller than aught he had ever conceived of in his days of prosperity.  

Like mystics before her, Penn-Lewis articulated the unitive state, the final stage in the mystical path, through the language of love, eros and marriage. The Song of Songs therefore offered Penn-Lewis a perfect medium—a love story, through which she harnessed eros as an image for union with the Divine. In Penn-Lewis’s mystical theology, it is the Cross that unites the soul to God through a union more powerful than the force of eros. To illustrate the intimacy of the unitive state, Penn-Lewis suggested that whereas Eve was taken from Adam’s side, so also the Church is planted or joined to the second Adam—Christ. Moreover, through death on the Cross, each Christian is joined not only to God, but also to the other members of Christ’s Body. Note the personal as well as the corporate implications of union, for the bride is both singular as well as plural.  

The bride for the first Adam was taken out of his side during his sleep; made of his own nature and presented to him by her Creator—a marvelous foreshadowing of the mystery of Christ and His Church! All the redeemed ones, born of the first Adam and under the curse, planted into the God-Man, the Second Adam, hanging upon the Cross of Calvary ... Planted into Him, baptized into His death, there emerges a Bride, formed of many members, taken out of His side in the sleep of death, partaking of His divine nature, eventually to be presented unto Him to share His throne.  

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1240 Louth, p. 192.  
1241 Louth, pp. 199-200.  
1242 Penn-Lewis, Thy Hidden Ones: Union with Christ as Traced in the Song of Songs, pp. 35-36.
By participating in the mystical path of Christ, through the experiences of Calvary, the soul is separated from sin and weakness by sharing “in Him, Upon His Cross.” Hidden with God, planted into Christ’s side, dying with Christ on the Cross, were the metaphors Penn-Lewis used to describe the interior path towards where the soul not only shares in the Divine nature but also partakes of Divine power.

Penn-Lewis’s mystical literature compares the experiences of awakening to that of the unitive state. The five stages of mysticism, noted in the previous chapter, are illustrated not only Penn-Lewis’s spiritual journey, but also through the mystical literature she wrote. In the pages that follow, we will explore the five stages of mysticism outlined in the previous chapter as it appears in Penn-Lewis’s more prominent mystical literature.

II. Penn-Lewis’s Mystical Literature and the Soul’s Ascent

As we have already suggested, the awakened soul is characterized by a new orientation to the Divine. To be awakened to the mystical path, is to glance a compelling new landscape. It is to sample the spiritual world that leaves the soul hungry for more. Hence, the awakened soul “is moved to ask for the fullest knowledge of her God that is possible,” and through the heavenly vision, the soul is “drawn out of itself and away from the things of earth.” Again, writing of the soul that has been awakened, Penn-Lewis said:

The heavenly vision has come! Somehow, somewhere, by the grace of God, she has had the revelation of a life of union with Christ that stirs her heart to intense desire.

Though an intensely pleasurable experience, the state of awakening ends as the soul glimpses not only the Beloved, but also its own imperfections, and this is the cause of

1243 Ibid., p. 38.
1244 Ibid., p. 3. See also Louth, p. 6 & ff.
1245 Ibid., p. 4.
1246 Ibid.
great pain. There is then an oscillation between pain and pleasure so that while impassioned by the sight of the Holy, the soul longs for more of God and less of self. “‘Draw me, we will run after Thee.’ ‘That I may know Him,’ is the cry awakened by the Divine Spirit.” 1247 A state of awakening is a condition in which the soul hungers for the Heavenly King, and this marks “the earliest stage of the surrendered life.” 1248 When first aroused or awakened by a sighting of the Divine, the soul finds new strength to purge itself of “all that stands between it and goodness,” 1249 in the hopes of winning the affections of the Divine lover.

Having met the perfect Lover, the soul operates under a powerful motive and hastens to purify itself. The awakened soul is thus carried through the “unnatural acts of abnegation,” 1250 which strips, frees and enables the soul to place the Divine Beloved at the center of its life and affections. Purgation is thus the business of “getting rid, first of self-love; and secondly of all those foolish interests in which the surface-consciousness is steeped.” 1251

Penn-Lewis illustrates the purgative path through her mystical literature, for where the biblical examples were insufficient because there is little to parallel Moses or Paul, Penn-Lewis writes her own examples, notably the maid in Thy Hidden Ones. The maid suffered the awakened awareness that her sins were displeasing to her Lover. Penn-Lewis wrote:

Her detestation of sin, heightened by the knowledge of its exceeding sinfulness as revealed in the light of His Holiness, is so deep, that she could have borne any suffering, so long as she knew that her conscience was void of offense. The agony of having wounded her Well-Beloved is unspeakable. 1252

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1247 Ibid., p. 5.
1248 Ibid., p. 3.
1249 Underhill, Mysticism, p. 199.
1250 Ibid., p. 203.
1251 Ibid., p. 204.
1252 Penn-Lewis, Thy Hidden Ones: Union with Christ as Traced in the Song of Songs, p. 86.
Thus the awakened soul pursues the path of purgation and seeks to master "every known sin, refusing to let it reign." Purgation assumed two forms in the work of Penn-Lewis, that of detachment and mortification.

Through detachment the soul becomes freer from its dependence upon the visible world, so that loss of material or social status is no longer a source of pain or humiliation. Compelled to be pure, the awakened soul works to empty, strip, or detach itself from anything that might inspire an illusory dependence upon the material world. Penn-Lewis likened detachment of the soul to the weaning of a child where the soul learns, through "many tears," to loosen its dependence upon the things of the visible world and acquires the discipline required by "the heirs of God." Like a patient parent God waits for his babes until they are weaned, and able to bear the detaching from things necessary at first … In His time, and by His own tender dealing, the soul must be weaned and taught to walk alone, even though it means through many tears.

Just as a child is weaned, or detached, and learns to walk through many tears, or the Dark Night, so too the maid in Penn-Lewis’s *Thy Hidden Ones*, seeks her Divine Lover “with a broken spirit, desolate and crying in the darkness after Him.” Both the weaned child and the maid learn to pass through the pains of detachment. Detached from the visible world the soul seeks her invisible Lord, and by doing so, the soul stretches beyond “the rigid limits of” its previous existence. The search for the Beloved moves the soul beyond the familiar and sensible world so that it enjoys the expanse of the spiritual world. God, Penn-Lewis suggests, teaches souls as the Divine Lover taught the maid, as Christ instructed "the disciples on the lake, when in the storm, 'He would pass by them,' so as to

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1254 Penn-Lewis, *Face to Face, Glimpses into the Inner Life of Moses*, p. 16.
1255 Ibid.
1256 Ibid.
1257 Ibid., p. 43.
draw out their cry of need.”1259 As the soul submits to the painful process of detachment, the soul also discovers that “there is something deeper, fuller, higher, than being delivered from suffering, and that is being triumphant in it.”1260

How then, does Cross Theology engage the process of mortification? Mortification is, for Penn-Lewis, a continual process of submitting to the severing power of the Cross so that the base elements of the flesh and the soul are subdued and transcended. For the flesh and the self-life, Penn-Lewis said, can only be managed through the Cross, and thus our lives must be held under the painful blade of the Cross.

The flesh must be kept under the knife of the Cross for if there is any self indulgence or anything doubtful in your life ... the enemy will come back on you. And fastening on that uncrucified ‘ground’ in you will press against you with appalling power. You must have the knife of the Cross steadily, persistently and unbrokenly applied to the flesh.1261

If finding themselves in temptation, or in a temper, or assailed by the old life, Penn-Lewis advised her audiences to undergo mortification—to deny themselves of all that displeases God. Therefore mortification was the exertion of moral effort,1262 coupled with faith, to oppose that which offends the Divine Beloved. She gave precise and specific advice, informing her hearers and readers to “quietly and deliberately [take their] position with Christ at Calvary”1263 and there to say:

‘Lord Jesus, I have died to that temper, on the Cross with Thee, and I count upon the Holy Spirit to separate me from it, for I have died to it. I cannot manage it; it is beyond me, but I have died to it.’ In the center of

1259 Ibid., p. 43.
1260 Penn-Lewis, The Message of the Cross, p. 44.
your will take ‘an attitude’ of death, and say, ‘I have nothing to do with it; I refuse it, because I have died with Christ.’ \(^{1264}\)

What is central here is the sense of dependence on the cleansing power of God. Thus the maid in Penn-Lewis’s *Thy Hidden Ones* wondered how her feet became defiled after she had just labored to bathe them. Penn-Lewis suggested that cleanliness cannot be our doing. Only the Holy One can replace the primitive self with the Divine. She wrote: “Soul, thou art forgetting that in thyself thou art black; in thee dwelleth no good thing: thou art but a capacity for God; a ‘nothing’ that God may be All in all!” \(^{1265}\)

This was a lesson to be learned that though propelled to acts of purgation by a longing for the Divine, absolute purity cannot be accomplished by effort alone. Despite acts of detachment and mortification, the grip of selfhood is far too strong. God’s work alone has the power to sever, finally and completely, all self-adoration. Thus, the process of purification, begun in the state of purgation, must be completed by the hand of God alone, and the recollection of the delights of “illumination” will see the soul through what may be the distress of this experience.

As we have said, the state of illumination is characterized by joy. The illuminated heart is rapturous and provides a foretaste of the unitive state. Having sampled the God of all delights, the soul redoubles its pursuit of the Divine Lover, and desiring the pleasures of the Heavenly Lover, the self undergoes stripping through the Cross’s Dark Night, and only then on to union with God. Thus the soul

must always have a ‘heavenly vision’ to draw it out of itself, and away from the things of earth. The ‘eyes’ of the ‘heart’ must be ‘illuminated’ to know the hope of its calling. The clearer the vision, the more entire the abandonment to the Holy Spirit for its fulfilment, and the more intense the thirst after God—a ‘furnace of intense desire’ which must be created by the Eternal Spirit Himself, and which is the supreme condition for

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\(^{1264}\) Ibid.

\(^{1265}\) Penn-Lewis, *Thy Hidden Ones: Union with Christ as Traced in the Song of Songs*, p. 82.
knowing God ... We lose only 'dross' when we exchange the earthly for the heavenly. 1266

This longing for God thus carries the soul through the arduous and painful apophasis of the Dark Night, which otherwise would be unendurable. Strengthened by illumination, the soul disdains the visible world and all sensible consolations and suffers the painful path towards union with the Divine. According to Cross Theology, God has created a desire in us, through the illuminative state, that we might conform to the death of Christ and emerge in triumphant life. 1267

Looking away from the things seen to Him who is invisible, we too, shall endure. Dwelling within the veil with our glorified Lord, we shall see the Cross from God's standpoint, and glory in it. The joy set before us, the joy unspeakable and full of glory, shall even now break forth, as with unveiled face beholding the glory of the Lord, we are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, by the Spirit of the Lord. 1268

Likewise Moses, in Thy Hidden Ones, through a desire for God, learned to trust in the world that is invisible. God became to Moses a greater "reality than the 'things that are seen,' ... until the unseen grew more real and tangible to him than the visible." 1269

Similarly, the maid in Thy Hidden Ones longs for union, though she is conscious of separation between her and the Beloved. As the Divine Lover hides from the maid, his absence creates an intense longing as well as a painful awareness that self must be purified before union is possible. Through Illumination, the maid has experienced the "day-dawn," as the bright Morning Star woos within her heart and she desires her Divine Lover above all others. Penn-Lewis wrote:

1266 Ibid., p. 4.
1267 Gerrard, p. 289.
1269 Penn-Lewis, Face to Face, Glimpses into the Inner Life of Moses, p. 68.
The risen Lord now hides Himself to see what silence will do ... His silence and the hiding of His face arrests her in her self-absorption. She is evidently conscious that there is a cloud, and she seems to know now that she is not yet so fully in union with Him as she thought. She is still in the 'day-dawn' of the spiritual life, but yet the Bright and Morning Star has arisen in her heart to herald the coming day of her one life with Him—a day which will be 'as the light of the morning when the sun riseth, a morning without clouds.'

Longing for the day without clouds when union is complete, the soul is aware that the final stage of the mystical life has not been reached. Separation from the Divine, though painful, is overcome by desire and a willingness to face the final purgation—the Dark Night. Marriage or union is embraced as the ultimate goal, and thus the purpose of Illumination has been achieved, the soul presses on through the Dark Night—a condition most distressing indeed, as it embraces not only the loss of family and friends but also the absence of God's sensible consolation.

For Penn-Lewis, the way of the Cross was the Dark Night whereby the annihilation of the ego are undertaken. To transcend the shallow attachments of this life is a painful experience, and thus the soul attempts to resist its own crucifixion. Yet those who "have been illuminated by the Sun of His glorious Presence" recognize that the Dark Night offers release to the new and inner person from the constricting bonds of the carnal self. Penn-Lewis said that: "'pain has other and higher functions than penalty,' for 'the outer man must be sacrificed in the interests of the man within, and the world of man without, and unseen worlds beyond.'"

Enveloped within the Dark Night, the presence of God withdraws and the soul sinks into despair, a suffering that is made worse by the scorn of family and friends. Often physical pain or deterioration of health and mental abilities accompanies this transmuting

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process, as the soul learns to share in the tortures of Calvary. Thus Penn-Lewis, like Bonaventure, placed the paschal experience within the context of a personal apophasis. For both Bonaventure and Penn-Lewis, the mystical path “entails a participation in the bodily apophasis of the Cross,” and this serves as a vehicle “within which the believer passes over into the presence of the Father.”

And so it was with Job, who like Christ endured every torture afforded by the Dark Night. The “keenest pain of all” in Penn-Lewis’s *The Story of Job*, was not only the obliteration of family, but the loss of one’s closest friends. Can any state offer more desolation, asked Penn-Lewis, than to be denied one’s most intimate friends, whose counsel Job had shared, whom he “thought would cling to me and believe in me whatever come, even they whom I tenderly loved?”

Job’s sufferings are, Penn-Lewis believed, God’s method of eliminating the soul’s dependence upon the illusory world. She wrote:

> The outward man had been broken down on every side, and in the breaking all natural power of endurance and self-restraint had gone. The once dignified Job had not been able to hide his sufferings behind a barrier of reserve, nor had he been able to protect himself from the humiliation of pleading for pity from his misjudging friends … He knew that God was refining him as gold, and he understood that He was only performing for him the deep purposes of His heart for eternal blessing … Job does not know how the fire is doing its work in him. A soft, or melted heart, can only be obtained by fire … A soft heart has lost resistance to the Hand of God—not only in will, for the will may have been unresisting long before—but in an involuntary hardness that makes its capacity small and narrow.

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1275 McIntosh, p. 78.
1276 Ibid.
1277 Ibid.
1279 Ibid., p. 79.
1280 Ibid., pp. 97-98.
Through the Dark Night, family and friends spurned Job, as was the maid in *Thy Hidden Ones*. Seeking her Divine Lover she searched and called for him, and enlisted the help of her friends. Yet, those who discovered her abandonment mocked and exposed her shame. She found no solace among friends or family. Without human consolations, and in the absence of the Beloved, her life was "like the Man of Sorrows when on earth, and must be so increasingly." 1281 She was learning to endure the desolation of the Dark Night with patience, and in faith.

To be united to Christ on the Cross, is to share in the agony and disgrace of Calvary. Likewise, the betrothed maid in *Thy Hidden Ones* shared in the earthly humiliation and rejection of her Divine Lover, to be like Him in all things, including the Cross. Penn-Lewis wrote:

> Because she is joined to Him in His resurrection, the Well-Beloved reveals Himself to his betrothed as the Rejected one, that his bride may share His lot, and be identified with Him as He was, and is, in this world; He was rejected when on earth in human form; He is rejected still. His Sister-Bride must go with him, and be rejected also, in the world that hates her Lord, if she faithfully cleaves to her heavenly Bridegroom, and is truly conformed to His image, following his steps. 1282

Union with God, enjoyed both by Job and the maid, came at a price—a separation from family and friends. So too with Moses, who was separated initially from his family in Egypt, but was also distanced from the Israelites. While the mystical path will mean the loss of human companionship, it also promises union with the Divine Lover. Wearing a veil to mask his shining, illuminated face, Moses’ intimacy with God also implied separation from the Hebrew people. Thus, Penn-Lewis claimed that Moses was

1282 Ibid., pp. 75-76.
veiled to men but unveiled to God... What loneliness, what isolation this meant to him, for he could not have close fellowship with Jehovah without separation from others—unto Himself alone. This is what ‘face to face’ fellowship with God means... separated from the things of earth, as one ‘not living in the world’... as dying but behold we live; as chastened, and not killed... that the life also of Jesus may be manifested in our mortal body. For we have this treasure in earthen vessels that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us. 1283

A crucified Lord, said Penn-Lewis, must have crucified followers. 1284 As Christ was made perfect through suffering, so we by our own choosing freely follow Christ in “His path of rejection, and to be conformed to His likeness as the Lamb.” 1285 To participate in Christ’s death and humiliation we accept the Cross and consider ourselves fortunate to be “counted worthy to suffer.” 1286 Union with God is found only through the “‘Via Dolorosa,’ the way of the Cross.”1287 The Calvary experience, within the Dark Night, is the absence of God’s sensible presence, and represents the height of all suffering. In the case of Job, Penn-Lewis tells us that he cannot “perceive a trace of His Presence or His workings.” 1288 To be denied a sensible awareness—a conscious perception of the presence of God, is the climactic agony of the Dark Night, and hence the greatest tribulation that must be endured. Therefore Penn-Lewis stated: “This hiding of God gives the bitterest pain of all.” 1289

Intended to teach Christians to love and seek God for the Divine’s sake alone, apart from God’s presence and provision, the Dark Night is therefore the final schoolmaster in the mystical path. Penn-Lewis wrote:

1283 Penn-Lewis, Face to Face, Glimpses into the Inner Life of Moses, pp. 91-92.
1284 Penn-Lewis, Thy Hidden Ones: Union with Christ as Traced in the Song of Songs, p. 79.
1285 Ibid., p. 73.
1286 Ibid., p. 77.
1287 Ibid., p. 77.
1289 Ibid., p. 93.
Every advancing soul must come sooner or later to the place where it can trust God, the bare God ... It must learn to have its joy in Him alone, and to rejoice in Him when all else in Heaven and earth shall seem to fail. The only way in which this place can be reached, I believe, is by the soul being compelled to face in its own experience the loss of all things both inward and outward ... the soul must find itself, from either inward or outward causes, desolate, and bereft, and empty of all consolations. It must come to the end of everything that is not God and must have nothing else left to rest on within or without. It must wade through the slough, and fall off the precipice, and be swamped by the ocean, and at last find in the midst of them, and at the bottom of them, and behind them, the present, living, loving, and omnipotent God! 

"Oh the pain of walking through darkness with no illumination" 1291 complained Job, who learned to endure "as all suffer, when being led by the Spirit out of the path of illumination," 1292 being guided by "pure faith in the Faithful one." 1293 Job did not realize "how much he had relied upon the light of God, rather than God Himself." 1294

Why must the Dark Night be endured? It alone can "cure the soul of the innate tendency to seek and rest in spiritual joys; to confuse Reality with the joy given by the contemplation of Reality." 1295 In short, the soul must become free of a childish dependency on spiritual gluttony in order to "make its love absolutely disinterested, strong, and courageous." 1296 Thus, the maid in *Thy Hidden Ones*, though conscious of the joys of God’s presence, realizes that her faith must carry her through the Dark Night, and beyond the pleasures of God’s manifestations.

1290 Ibid., pp. 229-230.
1291 Ibid., p. 110.
1292 Ibid.
1293 Ibid.
1294 Ibid.
1296 Ibid.
Now she needs to be taught a trust in Himself alone, apart from His conscious revelations to her heart. Her faith must rest upon His character and His word, rather than upon His manifestations. She must care more for *Him* than for His vineyards. 1297

Likewise, Job had to mature beyond his need for Divine consolation in order to reach the heights of union with the Divine. For the “hiding of God gives the bitterest pain of all,” 1298 “the pain of walking through darkness with no illumination [with] no certainty of being led by His light through the darkness,” 1299 cried Job. As Penn-Lewis reflected:

Job was suffering, as all suffer, when being led by the Spirit out of the path of illumination into the walk of pure faith in the Faithful one. He did not know how much he had relied upon the *light* of God, rather than upon God Himself; how he had walked almost by sight when the path was so illuminated, and not by faith alone. 1300

Faith gives the soul the ability to endure such desolation:

Thou hast learnt to live in His faithfulness, when ‘for a little while’ thou wast ‘put to grief in manifold trials.’ (1 Pet. i. 6) The proof of thy faith, proved by fire, is more precious to Him than gold that perisheth, and will be found unto praise and honour at His appearing. (1 Pet. i. 7) 1301

Our temptation, claimed Penn-Lewis, is to grasp for the manifestations of illumination or the resurrection life, where all senses are heightened and the soul is intoxicated by the presence of God. Yet, the call of the Dark Night is the call of the Cross—to suffer and die with the crucified King. We are called not to expect “an increasing knowledge of the

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1297 Penn-Lewis, *Thy Hidden Ones: Union with Christ as Traced in the Song of Songs*, p. 29.
1299 Ibid., p. 110.
1300 Ibid.
Lord as the Risen and Glorified One" 1302 but to learn to fully identify experience “the death of our Substitute.” 1303 Thus our knowledge of God is directly proportional to our sharing in the fellowship of His sufferings, “becoming conformed unto His death.” 1304

Penn-Lewis articulated her mystical path through a Cross motif, and as such she beckoned others to encounter personally the Cross, and through the Cross to partake of “a spiritual region” 1305 unreachable any other way. 1306 Hence, the Cross functioned like a sharp knife severing the old creation “that we may know the power of the new.” 1307

Penn-Lewis’s vivid experience of the Cross drew her to the theology of P.T. Forsyth, who also had a capacity to articulate the atonement as a vivid reality. Forsyth, like Penn-Lewis, was a prophet of the Cross and he too exalted in a personal experience of the Cross. Forsyth identified something of fundamental importance when he wrote that

A faith that lives outside the atonement must lose humility, as so much Christian faith in a day like this has lost it, as so much worship has lost awe. It is very hard, unless we are really and inly broken with Christ on the Cross, to keep from making our self the centre and measure of all the world … This happens even in our well doing … This personal masterfulness of ours needs mastering. And it is mastered only by the Cross. 1308

Forsyth would not, perhaps, be so ready to use the erotic metaphors by which Penn-Lewis explored this state of humility, though as we know, he was far from indifferent to the works of poets and artists. Yet, for Penn-Lewis, the Cross was the locus of supreme surrender “and sacrifice to God,” 1309 through which the “spirit is freed to break through

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1302 Ibid., 76.
1303 Ibid.
1304 Ibid., p. 77.
1305 Ibid., p. 77.
1306 Underhill, The Essentials of Mysticism and Other Essays, pp. 51-52.
1307 Ibid.
1309 Penn-Lewis, The Story of Job, p. 82.
into a realm of light and knowledge of God never possible before." Following the desolation of the Dark Night, Job too “breaks out in a burst of triumphant faith ... he has the glorious assurance that he shall yet see God. Job’s spirit is set free, and breaks out into the light,” and enters union with the Divine.

Characterized as spiritual marriage, as an absolute surrender of self to God, union with the Divine enabled the soul to be one in purpose with God. Thus the maid, now a bride in *Thy Hidden Ones*, avoids anything that might be contrary to the desires of the Beloved. Through a condition of abandonment, a self-orientation is displaced by a more powerful life or consciousness so that the soul can say as Paul has said, “I have been crucified with Christ ... it is no longer I that live.” (Galatians 2:19) No external force can thus disrupt the harmony of those who exist in a state of perfect peace, experienced in the unitive state. As the maid in *Thy Hidden Ones*, achieved this state of perfect rest, she was able to fully cooperate with the Risen Lord. She was but a vine that abides in Him.

*He* brings forth the fruit. There is now no struggle or effort, she is, so to speak, ‘asleep’ as to her own separate activities, yet never was she more awake to Him, listening for the faintest indication of His will through the Spirit, for the cry of her whole being is—’That I may know Him.’

The soul united to God is quintessentially self-forgetting. She is wholly concerned with that which concerns the Beloved. A God-consciousness had replaced a self-consciousness. The “mine” of life has vanished, and the soul in union with God is centered on God alone. It is His desire she longs to fulfill, that “she may be all He wants her to be—this fills her mind and thoughts.”

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130 Ibid.
131 Ibid., p. 80.
136 Ibid., pp. 133-134.
In union with the Divine, the soul waits God's bidding, and remains apprehensive to act on her own impulse. Hence Penn-Lewis suggests that the soul united to God displays childlike trust and obedience, taking action only where she is called. This state of humility can read like a nearly gendered state of a female sent in subjection and dependence in relation to a 'male' God. But Penn-Lewis is alert to this possibility and she sees the many gifts and graces which this relation to God makes possible, particularly for women. Thus she claims that as the soul abides in God she receives discernment, she judges not after "the flesh and sight of eyes" but in the spirit, as God leads. She has learned, in stillness, to know her God, and the divine manifested in others. Those who embrace the mystical path become "thy hidden ones," for their souls find transcendence in God. Penn-Lewis wrote that one who has "passed through deep waters in fellowship with her Lord; and, in the consequent brokenness, her spirit has been freed from much that kept her from full knowledge of the life with Christ in God."

Thus, human volition works in concert with the will of God; the two have become inseparable. Penn-Lewis's maid, in *Thy Hidden Ones*, is likened to a beautiful garden (Song of Songs 4:12-14) who yields her fruit willingly. Those who are brought into complete union with God co-operate and fully participate in God's existence. The maid in *Thy Hidden Ones* has gladly sunk her separate identity in Him, for she wishes only to have nothing of her own, and to be 'found in Him.' (Phil. iii. 9.) She is called the Shulammite, the 'Daughter of Peace,' the feminine of Solomon, the Prince of Peace. She is identified with Him in the eyes of others, and shares His Name.

As self-orientation has been naughted through the Dark Night, and the personality is realigned so that the soul is one with Christ in God, "God is no longer distinct from the

\[\text{1317 Ibid., p. 126.}\]
\[\text{1318 Ibid., p. 126 & ff.}\]
\[\text{1319 Ibid., p. 101.}\]
\[\text{1320 Ibid., p. 110.}\]
soul; it is in God as in the atmosphere natural to it. \(^{1321}\) Living but in the Divine Lover, the soul discovers “itself clothed with the inclinations of Christ.”\(^{1322}\) The Shulammite has “no light but him.” \(^{1323}\) The soul united unto the Lord is therefore a perfect mirror of God, reflecting clearly the Beloved. Though the maid sees herself as unlit, lacking all luminosity, yet others tell her she imparts light. In fact, she is filled with light because “she is occupied with Him, Who is her Sun.” \(^{1324}\) She has progressed from light to light, becoming “more and more an illuminated vessel of clay.” \(^{1325}\) The soul manifests God with “every word, look, and action ... even in that which appears to be the least.” \(^{1326}\) So the maid reaches complete union as “every word, look, and action” \(^{1327}\) reflects her Beloved to the world. She and her Divine Lord are one. The maid now enjoys all the power and expanse possessed by the Divine. Her weakness and limited existence has been stripped through the Dark Night, from which she has emerged in union with Him. She has exchanged mortality for immortality, frailty for endless power, a finite existence for life without limits. This was the reward for those who complete the mystical path, through the deprivations of the Cross.

III. Quietism & Cross Theology

As we have noted, Quietism advanced a passivity in which the self was annihilated, absorbed and joined to “the Divine Essence,” \(^{1328}\) in union with the Divine. \(^{1329}\) While the classical mystical tradition embraced effort and purgation in the path towards union, the Quietists promoted a “half-hypnotic state of passivity” \(^{1330}\) as the portal to union. Souls were thus “exempt from the usual duties and limitations of human existence.” \(^{1331}\)

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\(^{1321}\) Penn-Lewis, Life Out of Death, p. 45.
\(^{1322}\) Ibid.
\(^{1323}\) Penn-Lewis, Thy Hidden Ones: Union with Christ as Traced in the Song of Songs, p. 114.
\(^{1324}\) Ibid.
\(^{1325}\) Ibid., p. 115.
\(^{1326}\) Ibid., p. 154.
\(^{1327}\) Ibid.
\(^{1330}\) Ibid., p. 322.
\(^{1331}\) Ibid.
Authentic mystics, according to Ruysbroeck, never attempt to enter a state of passivity, for they regard the repose of the mystical state as a "supernatural gift, beyond [their] control." By a misapplication of the Prayer of Simple Regard—a state of passivity made "what is special to high mystical states into a general rule for contemplation." Quietism was, therefore, the "doctrine of the one act; passivity," after which the soul needs only to rest "in the Divine Life, be its unresisting instrument."

Did Cross Theology embrace the Quietism noted among the early Keswick leaders such as Evan Hopkins? Was Penn-Lewis’s call to die on the Cross an act of passivity that circumvented effort, purgation, and other religious duty so that the soul was not surrendered but wholly absorbed by the Divine? Here we will assess Cross Theology comparing it to the salient qualities of Quietism in order to assess whether Penn-Lewis advanced, in part or in whole, the shorter path of the Quietist.

As we have suggested, Quietism asserts, firstly, that holiness or perfection can be attained in this life by a ‘shorter path,’ through a “continual act of contemplation.” Was Penn-Lewis’s “continual dying with Christ” the shorter path of perfection advanced by the Quietists? This is an important point to consider because Penn-Lewis frequently adjured her followers to assume a “death-position” not as an “attitude of yesterday, but of the present moment... It must be the first thing in the morning, and right on through the day.” Thus, Penn-Lewis called souls to

Retake your position, crucified and ‘buried with Christ’ in the Jordan death of His cross, and count upon the Holy Spirit still more deeply to make it a fact in your practical life and give you keener insight to discern and cast off in quick obedience all that belongs to the past.

132 Ruysbroeck, De Oranatu Spiritualium Nuptiarum, 1. ii caps. lxvi. (condensed), as quoted by Underhill in Mysticism, p. 322.
133 Pourrat, p. 139.
134 Underhill, Mysticism, p. 325.
135 Ibid.
136 Pourrat, p. 148.
137 Penn-Lewis, Conquest of Canaan, p. 85.
138 Ibid.
139 Ibid., pp. 18-19.
While Quietists claimed that the will is absorbed in passive contemplation, Cross Theology implored the soul to work in cooperation with the Divine Spirit in attaining union. Similar to Phoebe Palmer's Altar Theology, Cross Theology sustains free will, faith and effort whereby the soul participates with God in the path towards sanctification. The exertion of the soul is noted in the following passage as Penn-Lewis suggests that "new life in Christ" is "gained through conflict," and by overcoming "opposing powers." The soul encounters not only suffering, but also triumph in attaining new-life in Christ. Such victory is far from the passivity advanced by the Quietists. Penn-Lewis writes:

Look again at the way the Israelites crossed Jordan...The new life begins from the riverbed of death, just as the new nation— and then the new inheritance, gained through conflict—began for Israel; and the new life in Christ begins similarly for us, with its inheritance through war with opposing powers, its suffering and its triumphs. All that was new to them began there, symbolized by the taking of twelve stones from Jordan and carrying them into the new life of the new land... Through the cross, identified with Christ into death, you come into union with Christ in life— and into the sphere where it is a forward march to take the land and to dislodge the enemy from every point.\(^\text{1340}\)

Therefore, the "death-position" of Cross Theology is not a passive or effortless death but rather an active struggle in which the soul submits to the crucifying power of the Holy Spirit which purifies, rather than absorbs the sullied or fallen aspects of the soul. The soul allows God's Spirit to "take the knife and deal with whatever there may be of the 'flesh' dominating your life. He will bring about what Paul calls the 'circumcision of the heart; which is the true circumcision of God.'\(^\text{1341}\) Victory over sin, the ultimate goal of Cross Theology, is attained both by a refusal to allow the desires of the flesh to master the soul, as well as through

\(^\text{1341}\) Ibid., p. 21.
an active participation in the life of the Spirit. Therefore, separation from sin is a rejection of the

lusts of the flesh. You can declare death, not only to the world and all things of the flesh, but death also to the powers of darkness, giving them no right to you, as one who is in Jesus Christ—hidden in Him—refusing them any admittance or control, or right or power over you. This is your fighting position, and your footing for continual victory... Your footing for victory is not your experience of this but what Christ has already done, applied to you by the Holy Spirit.\(^{1342}\)

Death, through Cross Theology, was active rather than passive in its opposition to evil. Addressing the matter directly, Penn-Lewis opposed passivity as a dangerous posture in the spiritual life, particularly when confronting the forces of evil. She writes:

The danger when you have your footing on Romans 6 is that you could become passive, thinking that 'death' means passivity, i.e., that because you are in the attitude of death you are not to act, and not to go on and do anything! But passivity is a sphere where the spiritual enemy is active is fatal. Therefore, while you declare your position in Christ’s death, you must also take the offensive against the enemy, in the activity of the spiritual power of the life of God. When the enemy attacks you, and tries to drive you into yourself and cause you to say ‘I am only this and that, and the other,’ the best answer is, ‘I resist you [James 4:7]; in the name of Jesus Christ—depart.’\(^{1343}\)

\(^{1342}\) Ibid., pp. 81-82.
\(^{1343}\) Ibid., pp. 85-86.
Therefore, Cross Theology advanced a death in which the soul resisted self-indulgence, passivity and therefore Satan. All that is sinful or part of the Adamic, fallen order, must enter an active death, "every moment." If there is "any self indulgence or anything doubtful in your life," the evil one will "fastening on that uncrucified ‘ground’ in you will press against you with appalling power." Victory is found only as the Cross is "steadily, persistently, and unbrokenly applied."

Not only did Cross Theology oppose the passivity and absorption of the soul advanced by the Quietists, but it also engaged an active death that included mortification and purification. Therefore, Cross Theology included "acts of religion and of Christian virtue." Through a continual dying with Christ, the soul also worked in concert with the Holy Spirit, engaging in acts of holiness, charity, mortification, and other forms of spiritual discipline that the Quietists considered unnecessary. Cross Theology therefore resisted the one-act of passivity of the Quietists.

The mystical literature of Penn-Lewis likewise embraced suffering and purgation, and in this way she again avoided the one-act of passivity noted among the Quietists. For example, Penn-Lewis claimed that the awakened soul, aware of its sins, searches for the Divine Lover “in the solitary place with her broken spirit, desolate and crying in the darkness after Him. It is the darkness over her spirit, that is now so terrible.” For the crucified Lord, said Penn-Lewis, must have crucified followers. The passivity of the Quietism had no room for the suffering intrinsic to Cross Theology. Penn-Lewis’s mystical theology offered souls the sufferings of Christ because in their union,

the Well-Beloved reveals Himself to his betrothed as the Rejected one, that his bride may share His lot, and be identified with Him as He was, and is, in this world; He was rejected when on earth in human form; He is rejected still. His Sister-Bride must go with him, and be rejected also, in

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1345 Ibid.  
1346 Ibid.  
1347 Ibid.  
1348 Ibid.  
1349 Pourrat, p. 148.  
1350 Penn-Lewis, *Thy Hidden Ones: Union with Christ as Traced in the Song of Songs*, p. 87.  
1351 Ibid., p. 79.
the world that hates her Lord, if she faithfully cleaves to her heavenly Bridegroom, and is truly conformed to His image, following his steps. 1352

Note also, the painful transmutation of the soul within the Dark Night as it transcends all that is, moving towards union with God, as illustrated within the mystical literature of Penn-Lewis. She writes:

The soul must find itself, from either inward or outward causes, desolate, and bereft, and empty of all consolations. It must come to the end of everything that is not God and must have nothing else left to rest on within or without. It must wade through the slough, and fall off the precipice, and be swamped by the ocean, and at last find in the midst of them, and at the bottom of them, and behind them, the present, living, loving, and omnipotent God! 1353

Cross Theology not only welcomes the suffering typical of the purgative path. Penn-Lewis also turns away from sensible consolations or states of illumination in order that the soul may enter the desolations of the Dark Night. The maid pursued the classical mystical path with all of its loneliness and solitude. For her “faith must rest upon His character and His word, rather than upon His manifestations. She must care more for Him than for His vineyards.” 1354

Thou hast learnt to live in His faithfulness, when ‘for a little while’ thou wast ‘put to grief in manifold trials.’ (1 Pet. i. 6) The proof of thy faith, proved by fire, is more precious to Him than gold that perisheth, and will be found unto praise and honour at His appearing. (1 Pet. i. 7) 1355

1352 Ibid., pp. 75-76.
1353 Ibid., pp. 229-230.
1354 Ibid., p. 29.
1355 Ibid., pp. 93-94.
Both mortification and detachment comprise the purgative path within Cross Theology. Mortification, as we have noted, occurs as the soul actively receives the painful severing of the Cross that works to remove pride, ambition, and "all the elements which make up the fallen Adam." The Cross not only justifies, it also purifies the soul, as the old life—the Adamic life is eliminated, "the new life has room to grow." Christ, therefore, not only atoned for sins, the sinner is taken to the Cross with Christ.

God becomes a reality to you; and you, although in the world, instead of being conformed to it, become crucified to the world by the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ. This is the only true way to have victory over sin. It is not saying 'I will not get into a temper,' but it is quietly and deliberately taking your position with Christ at Calvary, and saying, 'Lord Jesus, I have died to that temper, on the cross with thee, and I count upon the Holy Spirit to separate me from it, for I have died to it. I cannot manage it; it is beyond me. But I have died to it. In the center of your will you take 'an attitude' of death, and say, 'I have nothing to do with it; I refuse it, because I have died with Christ.'

Here we find another important nuance that differentiates Cross Theology from Quietism. While the Quietists insisted upon full identification with God, Cross Theology suggests that the soul dies with, or in Christ who mediates God to us. As prophet of the Cross, Penn-Lewis was commissioned as a crucified messenger of the Crucified Lord, and tell out to that concourse of Ministers and white-haired Divines the oftentimes unwelcome message, that the Cross, in its personal application to the servant of God, means a deep experimental circumcision of the heart, a laying down of the 'natural' gifts of the soul, the 'own' eloquence, the 'own' power for

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1356 Penn-Lewis, *Conquest of Canaan*, p. 23
1358 Ibid., p. 32.
service; that out of the depths of the spirit, where Christ dwells, may flow to others the life of the Risen Lord, unchecked and unhindered by the human channel.  \(^{1359}\)

By participating in the mystical path of the Cross, through the mortifying experiences of Calvary, the soul is separated from sin and weakness by sharing “in Him, Upon His Cross.” \(^{1360}\) While death preceded the unitive state, the fruits of union are acquired through discipline and “tears,” rather than via the holy indifference of the Quietist. As the soul learns to detach from dependence upon material support, it learns to pass from death to life. Yet, the soul must first acquire the discipline necessary to become heirs of the highest mystical state. Thus, God

waits for his babes until they are weaned, and able to bear the detaching from things necessary at first... In His time, and by His own tender dealing, the soul must be weaned and taught to walk alone, even though it means many tears. At last, like a sobbing infant, it sinks to rest in the will of God, and says, ‘Surely I have stilled and quieted my soul; like a weaned child with his mother; my soul is with me like a weaned child.’ (Ps. Cxxxi 2, R.V.). \(^{1361}\)

Throughout Penn-Lewis’s mystical writings we observe a “rest” or passivity which, at times, resembles the rest and passivity of the Quietist, yet with an important difference. While the rest of the Quietist may mimic the supernatural repose of the authentic mystic, there remained one significant difference. The passivity of the Quietist usually implies an absorption of the will and personality by the Divine, whereas the repose of the mystic connotes surrender of the will which leads to spiritual renewal. Thus, the passivity or the rest of the Quietist was viewed as idleness and thus contrary to the authentic repose one

\(^{1359}\) Gerrard, pp. 195-196.
\(^{1360}\) Penn-Lewis, *Thy Hidden Ones: Union with Christ as Traced in the Song of Songs*, p. 38.
\(^{1361}\) Penn-Lewis, *Face to Face, Glimpses into the Inner Life of Moses*, p. 16.
finds in classical mysticism.\textsuperscript{1362} The "holy indifference" of the Quietist was not the rest of the mystic—which, for scholars such as Ruysbroeck, was a gift beyond one’s control.

The active repose within the unitive state is likewise noted within Penn-Lewis’s mystical literature. While the soul hidden or joined to the Divine may sleep, it is actually quite awake, as the quote below suggests. Moreover, in union with the Divine, the soul is planted rather than absorbed into the Divine life. As the fallen-self is severed from the soul, the Divine life is fully manifest in works of holiness. Penn-Lewis wrote:

The hidden one suggests to us her spiritual experience at this point in the words, ‘I sleep, but my heart waketh.’ Her whole being is so possessed by her Beloved, and dominated by the Holy Ghost, that she can only liken it to sleep. She knows now that she is hidden in the Cleft of the Rock—the wounded side of the Substitute on Calvary’s Cross. Consequently the ‘I’ life is so displaced to her consciousness, that she can only say in the language of Paul, ‘I have been crucified with Christ... it is no longer I that live.’ (Gal ii. 20.m.) She is so indwelt and environed by the Lord Himself, that she is kept in an indescribable calm. Nothing breaks her rest; she is in perfect peace, stayed upon Him. The fruit of the Spirit—‘love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, self-control’ (Gal v. 22.m.) is so manifested that she is visibly like a ‘watered garden, and like a spring of water whose waters fail not.’ (Isa. lviii. 11.) The living waters flow spontaneously, and she has heavenly abundance for all the weary hearts who seek her out, drawn to her by the Divine Spirit.\textsuperscript{1363}

While Cross Theology seemed to endorse a repose in which the soul remained passive, yet the following passage shows how the soul exerts its will and cooperates with the Risen Lord, and by doing so, the soul may appear asleep, yet "never was she more awake."\textsuperscript{1364} Her entire focus is oriented towards the Divine-Lover, including her will.

\textsuperscript{1362} Ruysbroeck, “De Oranatu Spiritualium Nuptiarum,” 1. ii caps. lxvi. (condensed), as quoted by Underhill in Mysticism, p. 322.
\textsuperscript{1363} Penn-Lewis, Thy Hidden Ones: Union with Christ as Traced in the Song of Songs, pp. 73-74.
\textsuperscript{1364} Ibid., p. 74.
This is not absorption but submission, and it yields not indifference but a desire to actively please the Divine Lover, ready to attain holiness or perfection, and ever ready to admit that sinlessness has not been attained, so the soul presses on.

Her co-operation with the Risen Lord is but that of the Vine-branch—she abides in Him, and He brings forth the fruit. There is now no struggle or effort, she is, so to speak, ‘asleep,’ as to her own separate activities, yet never was she more awake to Him, listening for the faintest indication of His will through the Spirit, for the cry of her whole being is:- “That I may know him... if by any means I may attain unto the resurrection from the dead. Not that I have already obtained, or am already made perfect; but... I press on toward the goal unto the prize of the high-calling. (Phil. iii. 10.14) 1365

Cross Theology does not render the soul God’s unresisting instrument, for God will not act on the soul’s behalf. God respects human volition.

God will not change even the tone of your voice for you, as if you were a machine. He will put His laws into your mind and write them on your heart, but you are the person to act upon them ... It is for you to choose the way you will speak, think, and act, and as you choose, the Holy Spirit will enable you to carry out God’s laws. 1366

Finally, did Cross Theology teach, as the Quietists did, that the highest mystical states are attainable to all that share Christ’s death on the Cross? In other words, did Penn-Lewis impose her Cross Theology on the spiritually mature as well as the spiritually immature? As part of the mystical tradition, Penn-Lewis advances Cross Theology on any who are willing to share in the mortifications of Christ, for the crucified Savior must have crucified followers. The path towards union is

1365 Ibid.
one that develops spiritual maturity, though not every soul submits to the purgative and mortifying process that culminates in union with the Divine. Therefore, not every soul endures the self-negation of the Dark Night. Taking her own life as an example, repeatedly Penn-Lewis submits to the purgative path, filled with loneliness and sorrow, as it made its way toward union with the Divine. She wrote:

Now, I must be poured out for God as never before... Truly God was stripping His beloved child, so as to leave her 'no shadow of anything to cling to, or rest upon, outside of Himself.'

Comparing her life to that of Job, Penn-Lewis's biographer suggested that she knew the sufferings of Job both spiritually as well as intellectually. For her spirit followed the path of Job.

From first to last, the terrible experiences of the sufferer, and the restoration and the joy at last, are shown to be the dealings of the only wise God our Saviour with His child, whom in love and faithfulness He afflicted and exalted.

Summary Remarks

We have explored the mystical stages of Awakening, Purgation, Illumination, the Dark Night and Union operative within the mystical writings of Jessie Penn-Lewis. It has been clear from this analysis that Penn-Lewis employs the Cross as a primary mystical motif whereby the soul undergoes the path of purgation. Through the path of the Cross the primitive self is purified by the Holy Spirit, and the soul is thus prepared for union with the Beloved.

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1367 Gerrard, p. 291.
1368 Ibid., p. 190.
We have shown that Cross Theology avoided the shallow mysticism of the Quietists. Through effort and acts of purification, Penn-Lewis’s mystical path resisted the one-act of passivity that the Quietists implied led to the highest mystical states. While Penn-Lewis’s death with Christ resembled the repose of the Quietist, it was in fact a state in which the will actively submitted to the Divine Lover, and by doing so Cross Theology resembled the classical mystical tradition that extended effort in the path towards union. Lastly, Penn-Lewis’s mysticism, while available to all, was a call to suffer on the Cross with Christ where the soul was first purified, then united to God. Within Cross Theology the will actively cooperated with the Divine, and by doing so resisted the absorption of the Quietists. Moreover, within Penn-Lewis’s mystical path, the soul encounters significant suffering and sacrifice rather than indifference and passivity, and in this way Cross Theology opposed the shorter path of the Quietists.

How was it that Penn-Lewis’s spiritual experiences as well as her mystical literature reflects so clearly Underhill’s five-fold path of mysticism, even while Penn-Lewis does not quote Underhill? Where did she learn to use, as she does, the term illumination to illustrate the very meaning Underhill had in mind? It is hard to say, and this fact may in fact lend support to an epistemic pattern of faith. In any case, like Underhill, Penn-Lewis was keenly interested in the inner experiences of God’s activity within the soul.

Incorporating the affective tradition of Bernard coupled with the apophatic tradition of Bonaventure, Penn-Lewis placed the soul’s ascent within the context of the apophasis of the Cross, and thus she combines an interior ascent with personal experience, as part of Cross Theology.

The fruit of mysticism is a unified soul that has been freed from the world of illusions, the grip of selfhood, and the need for human or divine consolations. The matured mystic lives in extraordinary repose. In the unitive state, the soul shares in the riches of life with the Beloved and therefore she possesses all that belongs to her Beloved—power, peace and holiness. But, the treasures of union are not for her alone. She has been called to a heroic task, for there are social consequences to mysticism. And it is to these we now turn.
Chapter Seven

Overcoming Eve: The Social Consequences of Cross Theology

“From the point of Eternity, in whose light they lived,

they attacked the sins of their generation.”

I. Introduction

Having undergone the apophasis of the Cross through the Dark Night, the soul now enjoys the unitive state with its “filial participation in Eternal Life.” Released for “new purposes,” the derivative life has been “invaded and enhanced by the Absolute Life.” In union with Christ, the soul is a “triumphing force over which circumstances have no power.” Wed to the Divine, the soul receives the strength and authority of the Beloved “which results in a complete sense of freedom, an invulnerable serenity, and usually urges the self to some form of heroic effort or creative activity.”

Completed mystics evidence a spiritual and social fecundity through which they address the spiritual and social ills of their time with astonishing tenacity and force. United to the purposes of the Beloved, the mystics address “the sins of their generation” with what seems like an endless reserve, giving us a sense of the “super-normal vitality of which they partake.”

The transmuting process now complete and mystical union established in her own life, like many mystics, Penn-Lewis’s life was filled with heroic efforts whereby she

1370 Ibid., p. 416.
1371 Ibid.
1372 Ibid., p. 429.
1373 Ibid.
1374 Ibid., p. 416.
1375 Ibid., p. 459.
1376 Ibid., p. 414.
addressed several spiritual and social issues. First on her agenda was to redress the sexism that limited women’s scope of service within the Church. Second, Penn-Lewis confronted the shallow mysticism and quietism intrinsic to the Keswick Conventions. For as we have shown, her Cross Theology advanced the stages of purgation that the shorter path of the Quietist circumvents. Like P.T. Forsyth, she advanced a crucicentrism even while many of her contemporaries disdained the doctrine of the atonement and ‘penal substitution’ so characteristic of some Protestants.

This chapter will assess the spiritual and social consequences of Penn-Lewis’s Cross Theology. Primarily, we will assess the biblical defense for women’s equality in spiritual service alongside men. We will observe how Cross Theology provided a confidence that the failings of Eve, along with all “Adamic life,” are transcended through the apophesis of the Cross. As souls participate in the purgative process of the Cross, they also enjoy newness of life as they transcend or detach from the visible world through the purifying process the Cross. In this sense Cross Theology was egalitarian as it opened the highest mystical states to any soul that undergoes the privations of the Cross. Penn-Lewis determined to demonstrate the victories of Calvary—that women as well as men overcome their inherent failings—not only through her own personal experiences of the Cross, but also through a mystical as well as an egalitarian interpretation of the Bible.

II. Joel’s Prophesy Fulfilled

Cross Theology therefore had significant social as well as spiritual meaning for women who had been denied equal access to public ministry based on the words of the Apostle Paul. It was Paul after all, whom Penn-Lewis regarded as a model of the mystical experience. Moreover, Penn-Lewis understood from her own experiences and that of other women in her own day, as well as those in the past, that mystical union with God was as much a part of women’s lives as it was of men’s. She therefore believed that profound consequences must follow those who attain the highest mystical states. Part of Penn-Lewis’s work therefore was to reinterpret the texts that had been used to keep women silent in the Church. Evaluating gender relations through her own experiences with the Cross, Penn-Lewis challenged what we would now call the structural
suppression of women, through her biblical theology, by example, and in beckoning others to experience the power of the Cross to release women for Christian service alongside men.

Through an egalitarian reading of the biblical texts, Penn-Lewis suggests that a primary consequence of Cross Theology was to usher in a new order, to create a harmony where the distinctions of gender had been transcended. Those who had died with Christ on Calvary were grafted in to a new life, into the body of Christ in which there is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female. In the new millennium, the fruit of Cross Theology was characterized by a unity among all believers.

Harmony between Christians of every denomination, and from every continent, gained momentum during the Holiness revival which itself was an interdenominational Movement. Unity between Christians was therefore viewed as a sign of their cleansing from sin. Penn-Lewis wrote:

Christ upon the Cross of Calvary broke down the middle wall of partition between man and man, as well as between man and God. He died that in Him there might be a new creation, one new man, 'perfected into one.' All divisions caused by sin cease in Him.

Calvary for Penn-Lewis, was a place of blessing, a point of reconciliation, thus distinctions of race, class, and gender as part of the old creation cease as souls die with Christ on the Cross. Calvary, as a place of unity, released each member of Christ's body to participate equally in service to God, and this was part of the newness of life Christ imparts to the Church. Penn-Lewis insisted:

1377 Bebbington, p. 159.
1378 Dayton, The Theological Roots of Pentecostalism, p. 89.
1379 Penn-Lewis, Thy Hidden Ones: Union with Christ as Traced in the Song of Songs, p. 30.
1380 Ibid.
1381 Ibid.
1383 Ibid.
The ‘old creation,’ in its form of ‘Jew and Gentile,’ must die to make way for a new creation ‘after the image of Him’ that created him; where there can be neither Jew nor Greek, there can be neither bond nor free, there can be no male and female; for ye are one in Christ Jesus. In the face of these words we cannot wonder that the Cross is a stumbling-block, and its message likened to a sword or knife, for it cuts deep into the very core of the pride of the old creation. God’s cure... is not a superficial one...

Nothing but the Cross will bring about the unity He desires.  

Other supporters of women’s spiritual emancipation made their appeal somewhat differently. Male clerics like William B. Godbey (1833 - 1920) and Adoniram Gordon (1836 - 1895), who wrote respectively; Woman Preacher and The Ministry of Women, appealed to Pentecost and Joel’s prophecy as the basis for women’s equality in ministry. These men believed that millennial glory included the partnership of women. Support for women in ministry was also shared across denominational borders. The founders of the Church of the Nazarene; the Mennonite Brethren; the Salvation Army; the Quakers; the Methodists; the Methodist Episcopal Church; the Presbyterians; and the members of the Pentecostal Church either extended women ministerial privileges, or published a defense of women’s public ministry.

Equality as now interpreted in verses such as Galatians 3:28, became the standard for the Church rebuilt by Holiness’s vision of Pentecost. Martin Wells Knapp (1853 - 1901) along with Seth Cook Rees (1854 – 1933) were cofounders of the Apostolic Holiness Union and Prayer League, and together these men envisioned the Pentecostal Church as one that included women as equal to men in Christian ministry. Both Cook Rees and Wells Knapp were married to women preachers. They insisted that nothing but

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1386 A. Gordon, The Ministry of Women. (Beltsville, Maryland: NCR Corp. for the ATLA Board of Microtext, 1978).
1387 Dieter, The Holiness Revival of the Nineteenth Century, pp. 41-44.
1388 Dayton, Theological Roots of Pentecostalism, p. 88.
jealousy, prejudice, bigotry, and a stingy love for bossing in men have prevented woman’s public recognition by the church. No church that is acquainted with the Holy Ghost will object to the public ministry of women. 1389

The Keswick Movement was not only interdenominational it was also “seen as a landmark in the emancipation of women, at least in the religious sphere.” 1390 1391 Revival meetings guided by principles of Holiness teaching often resulted in some form of equalizing between women and men. Therefore, it was not uncommon to observe, during the Keswick and Holiness revivals,

a young girl of eighteen speak under the evident control of the Holy Ghost, whilst in the big pew sat ministers and elders, oft-times with tears coursing down their faces. The servants and handmaidens were prophesying as foretold by Joel. 1392

Jessie Penn-Lewis, as I have noted, did not make a straightforward appeal to the Spirit as the basis for women’s equal service beside men. Once, however, the relation of the Spirit to the Cross was established, she could endorse this long-standing appeal to Joel and Pentecost. Joel’s prophecy, realized at Pentecost, was the fruit of Cross Theology, claimed Penn-Lewis. Calvary consequently initiated a new order, a new race, “under the headship of the Second Adam.” 1393 Distinctions such as male and female, “Jew and Gentile must be crucified and die, and thus He would ‘create’ in Himself the twain one new man.” 1394 The old race, the old Adam, with the subsequent categories of nationality, race, class, and gender belonged to the old order. 1395 Those who cling to the old order,

1389 S. Cook Rees, The Ideal Pentecostal Church. (Cincinnati, Ohio: Revivalist Office, 1897), p. 41, as quoted by Dieter, The Holiness Revival of the Nineteenth Century. pp. 43-44.
1393 Ibid.
1394 Ibid.
1395 Penn-Lewis, All things New, p. 41.
like the "Judaizers." 1396 will find themselves excluded from life in the Spirit, life recreated by the Cross. 1397 The old creation failed to achieve Christian unity because it upheld the subjection of one class to another, one race to another and men over women. 1398 Yet God's plan is "unmistakably expressed in the prophecy of Joel foretelling the out-pouring of the Spirit at Pentecost ... And so it has been all down the centuries ever since." 1399

The domination of sin prevailed in the old order, and thus women were subjugated to men. The Cross, however, abolished the old order and conquered the final vestiges of sin. Through the Cross the long arm of Eve's failings is severed and no longer limits the ministry of women, argued Penn-Lewis. 1400 Cross Theology therefore initiated women into the body of Christ, where there is perfect unity and equality. 1401

Those who bid "a redeemed woman always to enter His presence with a reminder of Eve's fall upon her head" 1402 dishonored the work of Christ, Penn-Lewis warned. Women should be viewed as equal partners with men, a partnership initiated by the "Cross of Calvary where the old creation life was slain." 1403 She therefore compelled Christian men and women to live in union with the second Adam, and therefore as members of Christ's mystical body, where they experience equality and mutuality. Women therefore should stand

in God's presence under her Federal Head- The Last Adam, the Lord from heaven. And stand also towards her fellow members of Christ's Body in the carrying out of the will of the Head in testimony and service for God. 1404

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1396 "Judaizer" was a term used by Penn-Lewis, which, may not be entirely free of anti-Semitic prejudice, yet a "Judaizer" was, for her, someone working within the Church, who wished to deny women's full spiritual authority and equality.
1397 Penn-Lewis, All things New, p. 62.
1398 Ibid., The Magna Charta of Woman, p. 97. See also pp. 10-11.
1400 Ibid., p. 100.
1401 Ibid., pp. 98-99.
1402 Ibid., p. 99.
1403 Ibid.
1404 Ibid., pp. 99-100.
Women’s freedom to serve as equals alongside men through the Cross is a message that Satan has suppressed throughout history, suggested Penn-Lewis. The forces of evil not only conceal the message of the Cross, but they also work to misinterpret the words of Paul as they relate to the new order and the emancipation of women. Cross Theology offered an antidote not only to faulty exegesis, but it also unmasked the demonic efforts to conceal the power within the Cross as it empowers women’s service.

### III. Demonic Forces

Penn-Lewis dealt extensively with the subject of evil and the spiritual conflict between the agents of God and the demonic world. She believed God had given her the task of exposing Satan’s attack on revival and the instruments of revival such as women. In collaboration with Evan Roberts, Penn-Lewis organized her interpretation of spiritual conflict into a classic work entitled, *Warfare on the Saints*. First printed in 1897, *Warfare on the Saints* remains in print today.

Subsequent to the Enlightenment, the Church has been reluctant to acknowledge the reality of evil and the activity of demons. Holiness preachers like Penn-Lewis and Evan Roberts had no difficulty incriminating the forces of evil which they believed opposed the message of the Cross. Revival was for Penn Lewis

> the hour and power of God, and of the devil, for the descent of the Divine power brings the accompanying onslaught of evil supernatural powers. It means movement in the spiritual realm.

As revival accelerated, Penn-Lewis believed that the forces of evil offered a counter offensive by opposing, accusing and oppressing revival workers. What was the nature and form of this demonic opposition? Penn-Lewis identified various techniques used by Satan, however, the two most prominent ways evil has opposed women’s emancipation

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includes first an ignorance of theology and Scripture, and second, a shallow exegesis that leads to deception.

Keeping women theologically ignorant was a plan promoted by evil through the centuries, argued Penn-Lewis.

She was thoroughly deceived once, whispered the serpent, who, alas, has since extended his operations, and thoroughly deceived the whole inhabited earth (Rev 12:9). 'See how the woman leads in all kinds of heretical movements today,' cry some. 'Is it not a proof that she is open to deception as much as she was in Eden?' ... But is it not probable that women are being swept into the wiles of the devil today because the truths of God which they should have learned have been kept from them? ... Centuries of ignorance of the things of God have left their marks upon her; but women may learn at last, and men, too, will learn by the stern logic of experience that it has been a perilous policy for the Christian church. 

An inadequate method of biblical interpretation was yet another impediment to women's public ministry. She suggested that 1 Corinthians 14:34 and similar passages that appear to restrict women's public service "should have been interpreted by translators and expositors in the light of Acts 2 and not Genesis 3:16." Penn-Lewis implored her audiences to read the Bible consistently. She wrote:

For we dare not attribute satanic power, without danger of sinning against the Holy Ghost or quenching the Spirit in those whom God has moved to proclaim the Gospel, to ... differentiate and say that only the men were inspired by the Holy Spirit and all the women at the same time, in the same place, were inspired by Satan.

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1408 Ibid., pp. 101-102.
1409 Ibid., p. 102.
Penn-Lewis interpreted those biblical passages that were used to limit women’s ministry through the mystical path of the Cross as it extended to women like Penn-Lewis’s all the privilege and power of the Beloved. Any woman who dies and rises with Christ may only serve not only on the platform alongside their brothers, they are also equipped to withstand the forces of evil that oppose their equal service to Christ. Moreover, Cross Theology transformed the misperceived notion that women are more closely aligned with the failings of Eve rather than with the victories of their Beloved. In this sense Cross Theology redressed the noetic effects of the fall. That is to say, the outcome of Cross Theology meant not only extraordinary power in service, but also extraordinary intellectual or spiritual perception as it assisted the Church to interpret more consistently the Scriptures in revealing not the fallen nature of women, but women’s renewal through the Cross.

Transformed by an experience with the Cross, Penn-Lewis believed that her call to public ministry was likewise confirmed by the Bible. Through the power of the Cross, women discover that their inclination to serve on platforms around the world was also confirmed through the full support of the Scriptures. An experience of the Cross is not understood solely as a experience of power in service, but it also imparted the ability to reinterpret or reframe the biblical texts themselves. Therefore, one of the social consequences of the Cross was the capacity to offer an egalitarian interpretation of the Bible, giving women a biblical confirmation for their inner desire to preach and teach alongside men.

IV. Reframing the Texts

In defense of women’s public ministry, Penn-Lewis wrote The Magna Charta of Woman, a book she believed was God-inspired. Convinced that God had given her a “specific commission to proclaim the message of the Cross,” 1410 Penn-Lewis saw that while doors opened to her message, there was often one objection, that she was a woman. She wrote:

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1410 Gerrard, p. 266.
There was no quarrel with the message, there was no denial of the Divine seal, there was no getting away from the evidence of the results. But none of these did away with the fact that I was a woman ... whilst God opened doors for me in some quarters, others were fast closed to the message I bore purely and only because I was a woman ... I knew only too well what the letter of the Scripture said, in just three passages of the Apostle Paul’s writings, but I was certain ... if we only knew the exact original meaning of those passages, they were bound to be in harmony with the working of the Holy Spirit in the 19th century. 1411

Penn-Lewis’s The Magna Charta of Woman was a summary of Katharine Bushnell’s extensive and systematic approach to the biblical material on women. Bushnell’s God’s Word to Women, was a series of one-hundred Bible studies on “woman’s place in the divine economy.” 1412 While simplifying Bushnell’s work, Penn-Lewis raised several of her own concerns. Chief among these was her desire to reconcile the Pauline passages with her own experiences with the Cross, and her subsequent call to lead others to a mystical encounter with Calvary. 1413 It was Penn-Lewis’s conviction that Paul’s writings were misunderstood, that evil is behind the confusion, and that it is incumbent upon women to provide an accurate biblical exegesis defending their right to preach.

Anticipating concerns posited by a modern world, Penn-Lewis suggested that while the world continues to liberate women, the Church at the same time continues to restrict them. Ultimately, women will be pressed to question the Church’s relevancy, the importance of Scripture, and the justice of God. How can it be, asked Penn-Lewis that the women of today are to be liberated for full share in the work of the world and at the same time have restrictions placed upon them in the work of God ... In this matter the Bible itself is challenged ... It has consequently

1411 Ibid., pp. 266-267.
1412 Katharine Bushnell, God’s Word to Women. (Piedmont, California: Published via reprint, ed. Ray Munson, Box 52, North Collins, New York, 1976), first published in 1926 in the United States. Bushnell, working in the original languages, compiled nearly 400 pages of careful biblical scholarship in support of women’s equality in the Church and the home.
1413 Gerrard, p. 267.
become imperative that Christian women themselves should now search into the question and ‘explain themselves’ and their true status from these Scriptures, so that it may be seen that the Bible is not an antiquated Book, out of harmony with the present times.\textsuperscript{1414}

The day has come, asserted Penn-Lewis, for women to do their own exegetical work\textsuperscript{1415} in order to restore women’s confidence both in Scripture, and the God reflected in the Bible. Women need to know the truth that Paul did not relegate women to “perpetual subordination on account of Eve’s deception.”\textsuperscript{1416} Such a notion has clouded women’s “sense of the justice of God and their apprehension of the fullness of the gospel message.”\textsuperscript{1417}

Paramount to The Magna Charta of Woman was the determination to reconcile Scripture with a woman’s inward call to public ministry.\textsuperscript{1418} Because women can learn the ancient languages, as well as methods of biblical interpretation, they should understand for themselves the disparity between the alleged biblical prohibition of women’s preaching with what they have experienced as the true call of their Lord. Penn-Lewis wrote:

In days past it was impossible for women to grasp the means of solving these problems that face Christian women—why the Holy Spirit should seem to move in one direction, and the Bible point the other way, but that day has passed. Our colleges and universities are open to women. They can study Greek and Hebrew, and with essential help, as well as men. And now, they should surmount these mental and spiritual perplexities.\textsuperscript{1419}

\textsuperscript{1414} Penn-Lewis, The Magna Charta of Woman, p. 11.
\textsuperscript{1415} Ibid., p. 16.
\textsuperscript{1416} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{1417} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{1418} Ibid., pp. 9-10.
\textsuperscript{1419} Katherine Bushnell, God’s Word to Women, as quoted by Jessie Penn-Lewis, The Magna Charta of Woman, p. 10.
The emancipation of women in secular work had begun in the late 19th century, and this served as an example to Christian women who searched the Bible for their own liberation in the spiritual realm. Is there a Scriptural basis for the equality of women in ministry, asked Penn-Lewis? Is the Bible able to address the challenges of each generation? While women are liberated to pursue non-religious work, there are “restrictions placed upon them in the work of God.” It was therefore women’s secular emancipation, insisted Penn-Lewis, which challenged the lack of freedom women had within the sacred sphere.

Women liberated in secular work are not bound to concern themselves with the teachings of the Bible. Christian women, however, “born of the Spirit … seek to conform their lives to the Word of God.” Until women discover that their emancipation is rooted and in “harmony with that Word of God… they will hold back from fulfilling the purpose of God for them in these closing days of the Age.” Christian women therefore, require a Scriptural basis in order to serve with conviction in public ministry.

Penn-Lewis relied heavily upon the scholarship of Katharine Bushnell, a physician, missionary, and a close colleague of Josephine Butler (1828 – 1906). Bushnell had promised the dying Butler she would use her formidable grasp of the biblical languages to educate other women “on God’s teaching about women in the Scriptures.” Dr. Bushnell, in keeping her promise to Butler, conducted a series of Bible courses for women “under the title of God’s Word to Women.” From Genesis to Revelation, Bushnell’s detailed exegesis of the Hebrew and Greek texts provided a consistent biblical and egalitarian theology. Moreover, she offered historical and biblical background to the alleged subordination of women in Scriptures. An able teacher and writer, Penn-Lewis believed Bushnell’s work was a

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1421 Ibid., pp. 11-12.
1422 Ibid., p. 15.
1423 Ibid., pp. 15-16.
1424 Ibid., p. 13.
1425 Ibid.
1426 Ibid.
1427 Ibid.
revelation direct from God to those who have sought to be faithfully obedient to the Spirit of God in His leadings to public service, convinced that in His own season God would bring to light the true meaning of the words of St. Paul which appeared to be opposed to the known mind of the Holy Spirit in their personal experience.  

Following her thorough examination of the ancient texts, Dr. Bushnell blamed faulty Bible translators and expositors, sin, as well as Satan for the centuries of oppression of women within the Church. As women like Bushnell engaged in biblical scholarship, they exposed the “veil of misunderstanding,” and freed themselves for Christian service alongside men, with the support of Scripture.

1 Corinthians 11: 11-12 & 14: 34-35

Leaning upon the erudite Bushnell, Penn-Lewis began her book by suggesting that Bushnell was a careful scholar who viewed Scripture as “the infallible Word of God.” Penn-Lewis then summarized Bushnell’s interpretations of the apostle Paul and women. Paul’s command that women keep silent in 1 Corinthians 14:34-35 appeared to conflict with his earlier command in 1 Corinthians 11:5. How could Paul ask women to keep silent in chapter 14, when three chapters earlier he instructs women how they should dress when speaking? According to Bushnell, Paul was quoting “what the ‘Judaizers’ in the Corinthian church were saying.” “Judaizers” were individuals who attempted to impose Jewish law and culture on the Christian Church. According to Bushnell, Paul challenged their insistence upon the silence of women in 1 Corinthians 14:36. In an effort to restore Jewish Law among Christian converts living in Corinth, the “Judaizers” attempted to pressure the Corinthian Church by appealing to the oral Law that forbids


\[\text{Ibid.}, \text{p. 15.}\]

\[\text{Ibid.}, \text{p. 14.}\]

\[\text{Ibid.}, \text{pp. 22-23.}\]
women to speak in the presence of men. By appealing to the oral Law in Corinthians 14:35, Paul exposed their attempt to undermine women's freedom in Christ (indicated in 1 Corinthians 11:2ff). In 2 Corinthians 10:12 and in Galatians 2:4, we find further evidence that the Church in Corinth was disturbed by “Judaizers” or intruders, who sought to limit the liberty that converts, particularly Jewish converts, enjoyed. Penn-Lewis wrote:

> Therefore the words ‘it is not permitted’ and ‘as also saith the law’ must refer to some ‘rule’ outside of Scripture ... Paul never appealed to the ‘law’ for the guidance of the Church of Christ, but, on the contrary, declared that believers were ‘dead to the law by the body of Christ’ (Rom. 7:4), that they might serve in newness of spirit and not the oldness of the letter (v.6).

Penn-Lewis attempts to show that Paul was “always consistent in word and practice.” Searching for a reason the Apostle Paul would suggest that a woman’s veil was a sign of her authority, Bushnell explored head coverings and hair length in the ancient world. From the ‘tallith’ Jewish men wore on their heads as a “condemnation for sin,” to women’s hair customs, Bushnell concluded that Paul was opposing a Jewish inference that to cover one’s head was to acknowledge one’s “guilt or condemnation.” Hence, Paul forbids Christian “men to veil (since there is now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus).” However, since it was improper for women to been seen in public unveiled, Paul affirmed women’s spiritual authority when veiled. Unwilling to view the veiling of women “as a command,” Paul stated that “contrary to the teaching of the Jews, there is nothing for a woman to be ashamed of in showing her hair, for it is a

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1435 Ibid.
1436 Ibid., p. 35.
1437 Ibid., p. 36.
1439 Ibid., p. 45.
1440 Ibid.
‘glory’ to her.” ᵃ¹⁴⁴¹ A woman’s hair is her veil and she “need not be ashamed of uncovering it, whatever the Judaizers might say.” ᵃ¹⁴⁴² Thus, Paul is not requiring that women cover their heads, though he does show that women have authority even when veiled.

Moreover, because the early Christians had been widely persecuted, the Jews endeavored to distinguish themselves from Christians, particularly with regard to their cultic practices. “At no point was the contrast greater at this time than in the Christian treatment of women,” ᵃ¹⁴⁴³ because women were prominent not only as martyrs, but also as students of Scripture, as preachers, teachers and missionaries. Domestic life may have thus been viewed as a distraction to women who placed their Christian duties ahead of their role of wives and mothers, and this, Bushnell posits, offended Roman authorities. ᵃ¹⁴⁴⁴ As the Jews in Corinth bitterly opposed “the teaching of women,” and because of their anger, Paul feared they might “complain to the authorities and bring grave danger upon the whole body of believers.” ᵃ¹⁴⁴⁵ Therefore, in fear of further persecution, Paul advised Timothy to silence women (in 1 Timothy 2:11) because “the times were indeed perilous for Christian women.” ᵃ¹⁴⁴⁶ At the same time this passage offered women an extraordinary gift.

1 Timothy 2:11-15

Penn-Lewis reframed 1 Timothy 2:11-15 as a text that liberated women from subordination to man—one of the consequences of the fall. Far from silencing women or excluding them from positions of service alongside men, Paul remembered God’s promise to Eve, in Genesis 3:15, that through her seed the Savior will be born. For this reason, Penn-Lewis referred to 1 Timothy 2:11-15 as the Magna Charta of woman. Women’s Magna Charta is an exhortation “from God to women,” ᵃ¹⁴⁴⁷ though “hidden

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¹⁴⁴¹ Ibid.
¹⁴⁴² Ibid., p. 46.
¹⁴⁴³ Ibid., p. 49.
¹⁴⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 50.
¹⁴⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 54.
¹⁴⁴⁶ Ibid.
¹⁴⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 56.
from them for centuries, under mountains high of the misinterpretations of expositors. 

Mary’s son was foretold in Genesis 3, which was the most significant “event of the world having its culmination at Calvary. The promise is clear.” Through woman, evil would be crushed. Though the serpent deceived Eve, whereas Adam was “a deliberate sinner,” the female gender will not remain for all time, “under the shadow of Eve’s ‘deception.’” Let women learn that their power over sin will come through the birth, death and resurrection of Christ. Therefore, the second chapter of Timothy foretells women’s final release through the Cross.

Because Paul recounts God’s promise to women in Genesis, that Mary’s son would conquer sin on Calvary, Penn-Lewis exhorts women to learn that they are not enslaved to sin and subordinate to men through the failings of Eve. Rather, they are the “progenitor of a Saviour who would eventually destroy the serpent’s power.” Through Calvary, women are elevated to a position equal to men. According to both Bushnell and Penn-Lewis, Paul’s Magna Charta for woman was intended to raise women “until she stands on [man’s] level.” Her role in bringing forth the Messiah is “women’s evangel” and the Savior will overcome “all the effects of the Fall in Eden.” Thus, the promise of Christ suggested by 1 Timothy 2:11-15, redresses the consequences of the fall and the subordination of women, cited in Genesis 3:15.

Paul opposed the long-standing tradition of excluding women from biblical scholarship. He therefore exhorts Timothy to “let the woman learn” …and learn of her redemption from the Fall in the birth of the Saviour.” In opposition to Jewish culture, Paul instructed the Church at Ephesus to allow women to become students of Scripture. Had the Church heeded Paul’s instruction to Timothy, by allowing women to learn, the

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1448 Ibid.
1449 Ibid., p. 57.
1450 Ibid.
1451 Ibid.
1452 Ibid.
1453 Ibid.
1454 Ibid., p. 59.
1455 Ibid.
1456 Ibid.
1457 Ibid., p. 57.
Church might have avoided “all kinds of heretical movements.”\textsuperscript{1458} According to Penn-Lewis, Satan has opposed the scholarship of women since Eden in order to advance evil through their ignorance. She wrote:

Ah, here we have the key to Satan’s endeavor to fasten upon all women down the ages the results of his work in Eden. ‘The woman must not learn,’ said the Jews in Paul’s time, and ‘the woman must not learn,’ said many of the theologians of the Christian Church, influenced by Judaism. ‘She was thoroughly deceived once’ whispered the serpent, who, alas, has since extended his operations and thoroughly deceived the whole inhabited earth (Rev. 12:9)... Had the woman been encouraged to ‘learn’ as the Apostle advised Timothy, might not her greater spiritual capacity have resulted in an accession of spiritual force to the church?\textsuperscript{1459}

Rather than elevating women through education, that they might learn of their full inheritance in Christ, the Church has instead advanced women’s ignorance and suppression. Women are too easily deceived, said the “theologians of the Christian Church.”\textsuperscript{1460} Yet, if women had become Bible scholars as Paul had advised, their learning would have made them far less vulnerable to deception by evil, observed Penn-Lewis. With sadness she notes that “the truths of God which they should have learned have been kept from them.”\textsuperscript{1461} Therefore, \textit{The Magna Charta of Woman} implored women to become Bible scholars as a means of discerning and redressing their oppression through sexist interpretations of the Bible.

\begin{quote}
\textbf{Genesis 3:13-19}
\end{quote}

In redressing sexist interpretations to Genesis, Penn-Lewis opposed the notion that Genesis prescribed the subordination of women because Eve was the first to eat of the

\textsuperscript{1458} Ibid., p. 58.
\textsuperscript{1459} Ibid., pp. 57-58.
\textsuperscript{1460} Ibid., p. 58
\textsuperscript{1461} Ibid.
forbidden fruit. Citing Bushnell, Penn-Lewis suggested that women were not cursed as a punishment for Eve’s sin. Rather, according to Bushnell, Genesis teaches that the only creature cursed was the serpent. 1462 Quoting Bushnell, Penn-Lewis wrote:

The teaching that God punished Christian women for the sin of Eve, is a wicked and cruel superstition, and unworthy the intelligence of Christians,... it has laid a blighting hand upon woman’s self-respect, self-confidence and spiritual activity, from which causes the entire church of Jesus Christ suffers moral and spiritual loss.1463

According to The Magna Charta of Woman, Eve was not cursed “but forgiven and restored,” 1464 and counted as a worthy opponent to Satan. Hence, God placed enmity or separation between women and Satan. For this reason, Eve becomes the prototypical Christian, one who is set apart from evil, the “first type and representative of all the separated ones who constitute the church of God.” 1465 Though the result of sin for Adam was death, Eve in contrast is called the mother of all that lives or all that are spiritually alive. Hence, woman is not the origin of sin, but the mother of all believers, because through the “seed of the woman” 1466 the world receives the Savior.

Ephesians 5:21-24

In another significant text, Ephesians 5:21, Paul states that Christians should “subject yourselves one to another.” His intended meaning was the subjection of all Christians, a mutual submission—the “Christian grace of yielding one’s preferences ... rather than asserting one’s rights.”1467 The mutual submission of Christians was a Pauline social and moral principle, argued Penn-Lewis. She compared the term “subjection” as used by Paul in Ephesians 5:21, to passages where the same term is also used (such as 1 Pet. 5:5, 1

1462 Ibid., p. 71.
1463 Bushnell, as quoted by Jessie Penn-Lewis, The Magna Charta of Woman, p. 72.
1465 Ibid., p. 68.
1466 Ibid., p. 70.
1467 Bushnell, as quoted by Jessie Penn-Lewis, The Magna Charta of Woman, p. 77.
Cor. 16:16, 1 Col. 3:18, Titus 2:5). She concludes that the Apostle is requiring all Christians to exhibit mutual submission or cooperation, which Penn-Lewis understands as a Pauline principle. Sadly however, not only did the “Judaizers” fail to notice Paul’s call for mutual submission, but they also rendered the term “submission,” which connotes a voluntary act, to mean obey, to rule over, or to have domination over. This misinterpretation of Paul has done violence to his original intent that Christians be mutually submitted to one another. To be subject to one another is a New Testament principle for members of Christ’s church. Penn-Lewis wrote:

In Ephesians 5:21, R.V., we read ‘subjecting yourselves one to another in the fear of Christ.’ Here we have an admonition written to all Christians irrespective of sex. Again in 1 Peter 5:5 A.V., ‘all of you be subject one to another…’; and in 1 Cor 16:16 the Apostle urges the Roman Christians to be in ‘subjection’ unto everyone that ‘helpeth in the work’ (some of these being women as shown by Rom 16:23 and 12) … In Col 3:18 and Titus 2:5 we have again ‘subjection’ enjoined upon wives, as is ‘fitting in the Lord’—in each case the Greek word being the same as rendered ‘subjection one to another.’ Again this shows that the meaning of New Testament ‘subjection’ is not the ‘rule’ of Gen. 3:16, which Eve fell under because of her own turning to Adam and not by the preordination of God.1469

Scripture does not require men to rule over women, observed Penn-Lewis. Rather, the Bible teaches mutual submission, which is a “grace of the Spirit.”1470 It is a courtesy and a way of life between the “sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty, who always say the one to the other, ‘You first—I gladly go ‘next after.’”1471

If men no longer rule over women, what does it mean for a husband to be the head of his wife? In considering the relationship of Christ as head of the Church, Penn-Lewis

1468 Ibid.
1469 Ibid., pp. 77-78.
1470 Ibid., p. 78.
1471 Ibid., pp. 78-79.
insisted that Paul, in Ephesians 2:6, suggested that Christ extended co-regency to the Church. Hence, Christ shares His rule of all things with the Church. Is this not a picture of mutuality, asked Penn-Lewis? Headship therefore implies shared authority. Penn-Lewis wrote:

True ‘headship’ is won by self-sacrificing love, even as Christ won His Church—not by rule or domination but by laying down His life for her. Reverence is gained by love; it can never be demanded as right, nor created in the one who is to give it in any other way than by being ‘ahead’ in manifesting the character of Christ.

V. Gender Bias and Bible Translation

Diakonos: A Gender Inclusive Term?

Attending to yet another misunderstood passage, Penn-Lewis believed that, blinded by a prejudice against women, translators throughout the history of the Church have rendered the word “diakonos,” (a term that appears thirty times in the New Testament) “minister” in most cases, when the term refers to a male. However when used in connection with Phoebe in Romans 16:1, she is referred to as a “servant.” Yet, the term “diakonos” implied an ecclesiastical office and thus the translators are inconsistent or biased when they single out Phoebe as a “servant.” Paul writes: “I commend unto you Phoebe, our sister, who is diakonos of the church which is at Cenchrea.” Thus for Paul the term “diakonos” is a gender inclusive term, suggesting the mutual service of women along with men as co-workers, as deacons and ministers of the gospel.

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1472 Ibid., p. 82.
1473 Ibid.
1474 Ibid., p. 83.
1475 Ibid.
1476 Ibid.
Deborah, Huldah and Miriam

And, of course, there were eminent examples from an earlier era, of women leaders such Deborah, Huldah and Miriam. Though the biblical record provides ample evidence of the leadership of such women, yet translators have been reluctant to render “the original [languages] faithfully when it ran across their prejudices connected with the position of women.” Suspicious of Jewish translators, Bushnell blamed the Septuagint, the text mostly likely read by the Church in Corinth, for omitting entire phrases such as Exodus 38:8 and 1 Samuel 2:22. Citing Bushnell, Penn-Lewis wrote:

For the translators [of the Septuagint], who were Jews, rendered the Hebrew word as ‘fasting women’ in Ex. 38:8 and omitted the entire phrase containing the words in 1 Samuel 2:22 [the women who served at the entrance to the tent of the meeting] … ‘It is evident that by the time when the Septuagint translation was made, the idea of women ministering at the Tabernacle had become so odious that it was wilfully mistranslated.’

Phoebe, Priscilla, Phillip’s Daughters and Junia

Returning to the New Testament, Bushnell’s grasp of New Testament Greek enabled her to observe the leadership of women leaders throughout the New Testament, a leadership Bible translators had obscured, complained Penn-Lewis. For example, Bushnell realized that Phoebe was called a proestasis, a word Paul used to connote “champion, leader, chief protector, patron! The verb form of proestasis means to rule, as noted in 1 Timothy 3:4, 5, 12, and 5:17.” As a proestasis, Phoebe held the same relationship “to the Church at Cenchrea that Paul says, ‘church officials’ should hold to their children and household.”

1477 Ibid., p. 87.
1478 Ibid., Penn-Lewis quotes Professor Margoliouth of Oxford.
1479 Ibid., p. 89.
1480 Ibid.
Like Phoebe, Priscilla was also a leader in the early Church. A capable teacher, Priscilla instructed the learned Apollos, "a man 'mighty in the Scriptures.'" Paul honored Priscilla's leadership in a number of ways. First, Paul called Priscilla his fellow-laborer, or *syngersos*, a term he reserved for "Evangelists and Teachers." Second, Paul mentioned Priscilla before her husband in four of the six references to the couple, indicating that she was the more prominent of the two. Penn-Lewis rehearses the bold way Paul speaks of the leadership of women who instruct men, and this during a time when Paul had allegedly relegated women to a position of silence in the presence of men. Penn-Lewis reprimands the Church for overlooking the historical prominence of Priscilla and emphasizing the silence of women instead.

Concluding her survey of women leaders in the New Testament, Penn-Lewis touches upon key biblical, historical and archaeological evidence that point to women as leaders in the early Church. She recalls Philip's four prophesying daughters mentioned in Acts 2:9, as well as the female apostle—Junia mentioned in Romans 16:7. She also cites the works of Eusebius, Chrysostom, Theophylact, Irenaeus, Jerome and Tertullian—all of whom were known to refer to women who had preached, taught, prophesied and held "Apostolic orders" along with men in the early Church. Lastly, Penn-Lewis points to the Catacomb artwork that likewise highlights women "presiding at the Lord's Supper." Once this evidence is given serious consideration, Penn-Lewis determines that women evangelists and missionaries may indeed work alongside men, as they did in the early Church, taking the Christian faith to destinations around the world—just as she had. As the prophet Joel foretold, God's spirit is poured out without regard to gender.

In her view, women's leadership, though sanctioned by Paul, was challenged by the Jewish legalists after his death. Sadly, the teachings of the Jewish Rabbis shaped Bible translation and as a result "the status of Christian women in the church changed." 

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1481 Ibid., p. 90.
1483 Ibid., p. 91.
1484 Ibid., p. 92.
1485 Ibid., pp. 90-93.
1486 Ibid., p. 93.
1487 Ibid., p. 94.
While alive, Paul successfully combated the “Judaizers” along with their efforts to deny Christians their freedom in Christ. In the end, however, “Judaizers” did insist upon restricting women’s service in the church, and in this way they “fasten circumcision”
up on Christians, in a manner of speaking, and the result was a “robbing the church of the active ministry of women.”
Penn-Lewis concludes her survey of history by engaging the metaphor of “circumcision,” which was certainly a rite for the males alone, and a powerful image to make her point that the Jewish legalists insisted upon the exclusion of women from public ministry within the church.

VI. The Church as the Body of Christ

Penn-Lewis is primarily concerned for the mission of the Church. To limit women’s service renders the Church incapable of fulfilling its purpose on earth. If a member of Christ’s body “cannot fulfil its office, how can the Body reach full growth, and ‘make increase with the increase of God?’” Gender bias therefore injures every member of the Church, she insisted. For, “if a member of the Body, in which Paul says there cannot be ‘male or female,’ fails to carry out the will of the ‘Head,’ it checks the life of the entire Body and the manifestation of the Spirit through all its members.”

Penn-Lewis’s mystical theology enabled her to distinguish between the Church as a formal institution, with rules and laws of governance, and the Church as a living organism, comprised of individuals who are mystically joined to Christ and therefore joined to one another as “the mystical Body of Christ.” It is the function of the Holy Spirit to govern the latter according to the desires of Christ—the Head of the Church, while human laws dating back to the “Judaizers” govern the former. Women need to understand that when they preach they are submitting to the leadership of the Holy Spirit as well as to Christ—the Head of the body. Such women are asserting their authority
from a "spiritual position in the Body of Christ, as a new creations in Him." 1495 By doing so, these women exhibit their spiritual authority, that is "what footing they stand as they speak." 1496 The highest law is the law of the Spirit "which governs members of the Body according to the will of the Head." 1497 The body of Christ reaches full maturity only as each member is "free to obey the Spirit" 1498 and only in that freedom, is "the Body of Christ" 1499 able to "increase with the increase of God." 1500

It is through a mystical death on the Cross that women attain spiritual authority and their position as equal members of Christ’s body, insisted Penn-Lewis. The Cross alone renders null the enmity between Jew and Greek, slave and free, male and female. By annihilating sin and thus the ordinances and enmity between races, classes and between men and women, the Cross creates a new race comprised of diverse, though fully equal members. Thus she claimed that:

On the Cross, where the old Adam was slain, the Jew and the Gentile—as Jew and Gentile—died, the one with his ordinances and the other without, so that out of both might be created a new creation, neither Jew nor Gentile, but Christ. For only through the Cross and the slaying of the old Adam is the ‘New Man’- the Body of Christ- created; and there is no way into the membership of the Body but by way of the Cross.1501

By dying mystically with Christ, the failings of the “old Adam” are overcome, and the soul is united to the “New Man—” the mystical body of Christ where there are no divisions based on ethnicity or gender. For Penn-Lewis, the Cross worked to eliminate the wall of partition that the Jews set up in the Temple, which divided men from women, as well as Jews from Gentiles. Who can now approach God within the Holy of Holies? Anyone covered by the blood, claimed Penn-Lewis. Thus, women identified with Christ

1495 Ibid., p. 98.
1496 Ibid.
1497 Ibid., p. 97.
1498 Ibid.
1499 Ibid.
1500 Ibid.
1501 Ibid., pp. 98-99.
on Calvary stand with equal dignity and status, and serve with equal authority alongside men. She wrote:

Has man or woman any right within the veil except on the ground of the atoning blood? Is it honoring the blood of Christ to believe that God bids a redeemed woman always enter His presence with a reminder of Eve’s ‘fall’ upon her head, or is she to point to the atoning blood and to the Cross of Calvary where the old creation life was slain and stand in God’s presence under her new Federal Head—the Last Adam, the Lord from heaven? And stand also towards her fellow members of Christ’s Body in the carrying out of the will of the Head in testimony and service for God.\(^{1502}\)

Through the Cross women are equal members of Christ’s body and thus partakers “of Christ’s divine nature,”\(^ {1503}\) cooperating with the will of Christ, their Head. It is not, nor was it ever, God’s intention to silence women, for each member of Christ’s body is a “channel of the Spirit,”\(^ {1504}\) argued Penn-Lewis. Similarly, the apostle Paul affirmed the spiritual equality of women, though his words have been mistranslated and badly misinterpreted—an issue addressed in Bushnell’s extensive research. As a result of Bushnell’s work, women may now have confidence that the Bible is in harmony with their inward call to preach.\(^ {1505}\) The movement of God’s Spirit throughout Church history has always involved women prophesying, as on the day of Pentecost. Joel’s prophecy has been fulfilled through an army of women who have been obedient in using their gifts in service to Christ.

Language like “let your women keep silent” was simply Paul quoting, in order to correct, the “Judaizers,” reasoned The Magna Charta of Woman. How does one know? Because, Paul would not tell women to be silent in one part of Corinthians (1Corinthians

\(^{1502}\) Ibid., pp. 99-100.  
\(^{1503}\) Ibid., p. 100.  
\(^{1504}\) Ibid.  
\(^{1505}\) Ibid., p. 101.
14:34), while telling them earlier (1 Corinthians 11:5) how to dress when prophesying. She wrote:

For it is obvious that the Apostle would not speak at one moment of the 'spiritual' status of the 'Body', and each member as a channel of the Spirit and in the next moment lapse to the dealing with one section of it on the status of the Fall! 1506

To silence women whom God had gifted and given opportunity to preach is to silence the Holy Spirit. Any group, sect, race or sex that “attempts a monopoly of the Spirit’s voice and power, will find that the Holy Spirit will flee far from it.” 1507 God is emancipating women, and it will be “woe to the world” 1508 and a great loss to the Church if women are not likewise emancipated by their fellow believers. Should women learn of their power through Christ, “their triumphant Head,” 1509 and likewise discover Satan’s “utter defeat at Calvary” 1510 what assurance of faith, what maturity for the Church, and what momentum in revival work that would mean, suggested Penn-Lewis.

Bushnell’s scholarship converged with Penn-Lewis’s Cross Theology to advance a biblical and mystical basis for women’s equality within Christian service. Moreover, The Magna Charta of Woman also insists that faulty exegesis and biased Bible translation, which work to subordinate women and thwart the gospel, are rooted in evil. As women are united to Christ on the Cross, they receive the power needed to unmask and overcome the root of their oppression—Satan. Cross Theology not only exposed Satan’s deceit but also called upon women to expose Satan and to participate as full members of Christ’s body, through an intimate experience with the Cross whereby women become full-participants in that new millennium in which there is no gender bias. Penn-Lewis stated:

1506 Ibid., p. 100.
1507 Ibid., p. 102.
1508 Ibid.
1509 Ibid., p. 103.
1510 Ibid.
We are in the throes of the most crucial changes in the world, when ‘our God is marching on’ into the fulfillment of His purpose for the Church and for the world. ‘All things,’ said Paul, ‘are for your sakes.’ God’s time has come for the emancipation of women, but it will be woe to the world and terrible loss to the Church if they are not won for Christ and for His service. For it is certain that if Christ does not get hold of women of today, the devil will. And on the other hand, in the light of Gen. 3:15 prophecy and evangel, it will be woe to the ‘serpent’ and to his kingdom if those whom he has so oppressed and persecuted lay hold of the fact of his utter defeat at Calvary and in the power of their triumphant Head turn upon their foe in assurance of victory. 1511

The “great mystics can never keep their discoveries to themselves.”1512 Likewise, The Magna Charta of Woman celebrates the triumphs of Cross—that sin and the devil are defeated; that perfect harmony and equity greet those who are joined to Christ’s mystical body.

The Magna Charta of Woman concludes with an exhortation to see Scripture working in concert with the Spirit’s leading in the lives of Christian women. In the revivals of the late 19th century, as with the early Church, the Spirit of God is no respecter of persons. She wrote:

God’s purpose for redeemed women, as well as redeemed men, was unmistakably expressed in the prophecy of Joel foretelling the outpouring of the Spirit at Pentecost ... And so it has been all down the centuries ever since. The Spirit of God has never been poured forth in any company, in any part of the world, in any nation, without the ‘handmaids’ prophesying, and this as the spontaneous and unvarying result of the Spirit of God moving upon women as well as men, as at Pentecost. 1513

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1511 Ibid., pp. 102-103.
1512 Underhill, The Mystics of the Church, p. 11.
In conclusion, Penn-Lewis suggests that if Pentecost is the paradigm of revival, then the Church that restricts women’s service will also be found to restrict the power of the Holy Ghost. If women are to fully participate in revival work, they will need to confront ignorance, deception, and faulty or insufficient biblical exegesis. But, as Penn-Lewis recalled, our battle is not against flesh and blood alone, but also against the unseen powers that operate in and through human institutions, including the Church.

**Summary Remarks**

As a “pioneer of humanity” and a “great active” among the saints,” the mystic is also a “painfully practical person.” In a similar fashion, Penn-Lewis pioneered new territory for women’s service through very practical means—by popularizing Bushnell’s extensive biblical scholarship. By rendering Bushnell’s academic work accessible to uneducated women, Penn-Lewis offered the broadest spectrum of the Church a biblical premise for the equality of men and women in ministry. While *The Magna Charta of Woman* explored the Pauline passages on women, like all of her work, Penn-Lewis advanced a Cross-centered mysticism, which, she believed, established unity between men and women through a union with Christ. Union with Christ was also the portal to spiritual power whereby the demonic forces that have oppressed women throughout history are at last overcome.

As a crucicentrist, Penn-Lewis perceived all spiritual truth as arising from the Cross. Only the Cross can supplant weakness and sin and unite souls into the mystical body of Christ where there is perfect mutuality. Thus, the egalitarian truth emanating from the Cross was to identify women with the victories of Christ, rather than the failures of Eve. Cross Theology therefore offered a corrective to the biased notion, perpetuated by the Church, that identified women through Eve’s sin (Genesis 3:16), rather than through

\[\text{\small 1514 Ibid.} \]
\[\text{\small 1515 Underhill, *Mysticism*, p. 414.} \]
\[\text{\small 1516 Ibid.} \]
\[\text{\small 1517 Ibid.} \]
\[\text{\small 1518 Gerrard, p. 169.} \]
the power of the Cross. Penn-Lewis sought to prove women's equality both as a biblical reality, as evidenced through Bushnell's scholarship, as well as the mystical reality, as noted in women's intimate union with Christ. Thus, Penn-Lewis insisted that biblical exposition must also be accompanied by a personal experience of the Cross.

Penn-Lewis confronts the Church for its suppression of women through faulty biblical exposition, and biased Bible translation. For centuries the Church has undermined the mission of the Cross by subordinating women, and by denying them their rightful place as equals within Church, on the mission field, and in the new millennium. Penn-Lewis claimed that if the Church will not embrace the new order—that of equality among men and women, women will question the validity and integrity of the Christian faith. Therefore, Penn-Lewis was compelled to ask; if sin has been overcome, what does this mean for women, perhaps women like me? One cannot overlook the personal reasons Penn-Lewis had for writing *The Magna Charta of Woman*, a book she vowed to write in defense of her own inward experiences, as well as her international ministry.

The mysticism of Cross Theology consistently challenged male hegemony within the Church by offering women an egalitarian hermeneutic, whereby they not only reinterpret the Pauline passages that appear to silence women. She also recognized the need to offer women an intimate identification with Christ (rather than Eve). She also summoned women to pursue their inward call to ministry with the awareness that all intellectual and spiritual opposition to their service has been conquered at Calvary.

Finally, *The Magna Charta of Woman* challenged women to engage in biblical scholarship. By doing so, women will discover for themselves that the biblical record is not preferential to men, nor does it oppose women's inward call to serve alongside men, as women have done so faithfully, throughout the history of the Church. Rather, the biblical record is in harmony with their experiences of emancipation on the Cross.

In the next and final section, I will assess what this thesis has achieved, and how it has been achieved.
Chapter Eight

The Achievements of Jessie Penn-Lewis and Cross Theology

What is paramount are the central doctrinal truths of Christianity: that there has been a true incarnation in the true humanity of the true God, and that the church can only live as the true body of this incarnate Word by living ever more truthfully into Christ’s dying and rising—thus to participate in that self-giving love which is truly the life of the triune God. ‘All the history of Christian dogma unfolds itself about this mystical centre.’ 1519

I. Introduction

In this concluding section, I will summarize my research as it expands our understanding of Jessie Penn-Lewis’s theological contributions. In order to appraise her theology, I have considered her letters, diary, published works, as well as the biographical material on her life, all of which provide ample material for theological research. The reader will find an exhaustive bibliography of Penn-Lewis and early Keswick luminaries in Appendix C. To assist the reader, I have also outlined a chronology of Jessie Penn-Lewis’s life through a Time Line, in Appendix A. Appendix B includes electronic copies of her letters, diary and lecture notes, as well as news articles exploring her ministry. These materials suggest the significant role she played in the early Keswick movement.

Because the scholarly community has not apprehended the importance of Penn-Lewis’s life—as it challenged the Quietism and male hegemony of the Keswick Convention, this thesis has endeavored to recover the legacy of Jessie Penn-Lewis—theologian, mystic, egalitarian and leader. Let us summarize, in greater detail, what was accomplished by this thesis.

1519 McIntosh, p. 40.
II. The Contributions of the Keswick Convention & Cross Theology

To study the early Keswick Movement is to encounter an extraordinary group of leaders. Creative and industrious, the early Keswick luminaries were founders of world-renowned mission organizations; they were prolific poets and authors of devotional literature and hymns that the world continues to enjoy. That we continue to sing the hymns of Frances Ridley Havergal and read the books of F.B. Meyer, Andrew Murray, Jessie Penn-Lewis and many others, is a testimony to the enduring qualities of Keswick’s vision and energy. Mission and student organizations that began during the early Keswick Conventions continue to impact the world today. For example, the China Inland Missions (now called the Overseas Missionary Fellowship) as well as InterVarsity Christian Fellowship grew out of the Keswick Convention more than one hundred years ago. That both organizations have expanded over the years is a testimony to the abilities and vision of their founders.

What was it about the Keswick Conventions that proved so indomitable and enduring? How did Keswick cast vision for future generations? Holiness teachers proffered victory over sin, not by doing but by dying, not by resisting but by resting. Whereas the old way of doing religion a century earlier relied upon effort, Keswick’s method of faith came through effortless victory. Pentecost therefore became the model, with its immediate infusion of power—void of struggle or exertion. Joel’s prophecy fulfilled at Pentecost included not only an infusion of spiritual power, but also evinced unity among diverse Christians. Unity among believers was the social expression of Keswick’s inner experience, and perhaps in this way Keswick served as a guiding force to subsequent generations. Keswick also made a plea for unity among Christians long before a

\[1520\] China Inland Missions began under the leadership of Hudson Taylor and was recently restructured under Overseas Missionary Fellowship (OMF), while InterVarsity Christian Fellowship began in 1893 with two students, Donald Fraser from Scotland, and Robert Wilder from the United States. Together they established the Keswick Student Movement. InterVarsity Christian Fellowship now largely headquartered in the United States, continues its work on college campuses, through conferences and missionary work around the world.
Protestant ecumenical movement. Yet, in spite of this vision, Keswick leaders were reluctant to embrace gender equality. It was Jessie Penn-Lewis who insisted that unity among believers, said to be the consequence of a life influenced by the Keswick message, must include gender equality.

Penn-Lewis’s egalitarian conviction was a source of tension between her and the Keswick leadership. According to Penn-Lewis, spiritual encounters with the Cross will not only evidence gender equality as the fruit of Divine union, but effort and mortification will be necessary as the soul co-operates with the transforming work of the Holy Spirit. While some within the Keswick Movement stressed the passivity of the Quietists, Penn-Lewis suggested that to abandon volition in spiritual experiences was the road to folly, disarray, hysteria, and for some, demonic possession. Penn-Lewis thus stressed human agency in spiritual experiences. According to Penn-Lewis, the soul must co-operate with the Holy Spirit in conquering and transcending the false self, or “Adamic life.” For Penn-Lewis, the Cross offered power over sin not through rest, but through a classical mysticism that carried the soul through stages of detachment and mortification, culminating in union with Christ. The fruit of union gives rise to unity among believers and offers new opportunities for women in Christian service.

We will now enlarge upon the accomplishments of Cross Theology.

i. Crucicentrism

Penn-Lewis lamented that throughout history the Church had failed to apprehend the fullest benefit of the Cross. While some turn to the Cross solely for salvation, Penn-Lewis believed it was her mission to proclaim the ultimate power of the Cross. According to Penn-Lewis, only the Cross can unite souls mystically to Christ’s death and resurrection, wherein lies the only path to a victorious life.

Ultimately, the power of Calvary extended beyond justification. We are not only identified with Christ as our substitute, whereby sins are forgiven, but also when united in solidarity with Christ’s death we die to, and are separated from the power of sin. Beyond that, in mystical union with Christ, we follow Christ who was the first of many to
overcome sin. Therefore, an experience of the Cross imparts not only solidarity with Christ’s righteousness, but also solidarity to Christ’s holiness—his power over sin. She wrote:

The Cross and the Fall exactly and perfectly correspond—the one as the remedy for the other. First, by the death of the Saviour on the Cross ... sin had to be put away, and the way made possible for the Holy God to pardon the sinner, and (2) then the sinner must be given a way of escape from the bondage.

In other words, Christ’s work on Calvary not only justifies, but it also sanctifies. While the Church has often failed to understand the organic union of the soul with Christ’s power over sin, Cross Theology, in its fullness, was the call to embrace union with Christ whereby deliverance from the power of cancelled sin is realized. Penn-Lewis wrote:

It is one thing to have your sins blotted out, it is another thing to be delivered from their power so that you are not under their mastery. You may get rid of the guilt of sin, the burden of sin, without understanding how to get the victory over the power of sin... So also the way of victory over and freedom from sin is not only to believe that the Lord Jesus Christ bore our sins on the Cross, and that God will, on that account, forgive them ...[but] you must also understand that you yourself died with Jesus Christ on the Cross... It is just as if you yourself were on Calvary’s Cross, looking at your old life with a gulf of death between you and it.

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1521 Bebbington, p. 173.
1522 Penn-Lewis, All Things New, p. 44.
1523 Penn-Lewis, Soul and Spirit, p. 10.
The Cross was the central motif for Penn-Lewis, and for this reason she is considered among the noted crucicentrists\(^{1526}\) of the late 19\(^{th}\) century. This thesis has shown that Penn-Lewis shared her commitment to the Cross, as the center of Christian experience, with the eminent theologian P.T. Forsyth. For Penn-Lewis and Forsyth, it was Calvary and Calvary alone that initiates union with Christ, and solidarity with Christ's holiness. For crucicentrists like Penn-Lewis and Forsyth, any expression of faith void of the Cross was impotent and therefore dangerous. All power and truth emanates from the Cross, and without the Cross souls remain powerless against sin, the demonic, and the grip of selfishness. As prophets of the Cross, Penn-Lewis and Forsyth sought to restore the centrality of the Cross to Christian faith and experience. Crucicentrists of the late 19\(^{th}\) Century not only opposed a rationalistic expression of faith, but they also rejected a religious subjectivism that omitted the Cross. Penn-Lewis's work was aimed at articulating the Cross as the ultimate portal of spiritual power, and as the bridge to solidarity with Christ. A union of solidarity with Christ through the Cross is the origin of holiness, and the means whereby God creates a new race that are coheirs not only with Christ, but also with one another.

**ii. Keswick's Quietism Challenged by Cross Theology**

The theological roots of the late 19\(^{th}\) century Holiness Movement were nourished by the Romantic mood of the day, where crisis overcame process, and mood and milieu overwhelmed debate and dialectic. As a branch from the Higher Life tree, the Keswick Convention did not concern theology or doctrine but was centered on an experience of power, advanced through a prolific industry of music, poetry, and devotional literature.\(^{1527}\) Keswick's method was to lead souls first to a dissatisfaction with moral and spiritual weakness, and second to a decision of rest whereby, they insisted, extraordinary spiritual power was imparted as souls entered union—the highest mystical state.

The Higher Life message centered on power through a passive faith. By way of rest—through an abandonment of effort and volition—Keswick promised instantaneous power.

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\(^{1526}\) Bebbington, pp. 14-16.

\(^{1527}\) Underhill, *The Essentials of Mysticism and Other Essays*, p. 47.
over sin. The Keswick Convention wooed souls with their music, literature, personal testimonies, the beautiful surroundings, as well as through an absence of erudition and emotional fervor. They had one goal, to advance a spiritual passivity, suggesting that "rest" or "faith" extended souls the power of Pentecost, the ability to conquer sin and the capacity for extraordinary power in Christian service. Keswick therefore advanced a mystical quietism—that through the one-act of passivity the soul reached the highest mystical state—union. By omitting effort and purgation, the Quietists of Keswick therefore offered a 'shorter path' to union with God through passivity.

The scholarly community has failed to make a distinction between the classical mysticism of Jessie Penn-Lewis and the Quietism of the early Keswick Conventions. To suggest, as Keswick did, that faith rather than effort both initiates and sustains the fruits of union is not simply Romanticism, as scholars have proposed. Rather, it is clear that Keswick drew upon the tradition of the Quietists who advanced passivity and a continuous act of faith as the portal to the highest mystical states, as I have shown. While scholars admit that Keswick's path to holiness was one of crisis rather than process, what they have not observed is the way in which Keswick, like many Quietists, engaged the Prayer of Simple Regard. By promoting a continuous state of "rest," Keswick engaged the Quietist's Prayer of Simple Regard, and they therefore confuse simplicity with passivity, and in doing so they circumvent the arduous path of purgation noted within the classical mystical tradition.

I have traced Keswick's theological antecedents to Jeanne Guyon and Thomas Upham, both of whom were widely read by the early Keswick luminaries. I have established that both Guyon and Upham demonstrate the four characteristics of Quietism, as outlined by Pourrat. We have also observed how Penn-Lewis's Cross Theology takes a

1528 Pourrat, p. 186 & ff.
1530 Bebbington, p. 172.
1531 Pourrat, p. 186 & ff.
1532 Bebbington suggests that the Quietism noted with the early Keswick Conventions was due to the influence of Quaker spirituality, as it was introduced to the early Keswick leadership by Hannah Whitall Smith (Bebbington: 170). Bebbington has not observed that Quietism, as a deviation of the mystical tradition, confused passivity with simplicity through a misappropriation of the Prayer of Simple Regard, as I have noted in the work of Thomas Upham. Upham was very influential within Keswick circles. Or again, Bebbington cites Keswick's "moment-by-moment faith or trust in Christ" (Bebbington: 170) without attributing this to a Quietist formulation, as I have shown.
turn toward classical mysticism as Penn-Lewis rejected passivity and Divine absorption, preferring instead mortification and effort, working in cooperation with the Divine. Moreover, Penn-Lewis’s personal life and writings manifest the more classical stages of mysticism as outlined by Underhill: Awakening, Purgation, Illumination, the Dark Night and Union. Unlike the Quietists, who shunned effort and suffering in the path toward union, Penn-Lewis’s Cross Theology exalted the stages of Purgation and the Dark Night, whereby the primitive self was stripped, in its ascent toward union with the Divine. The apophasis of the Cross, advanced by Penn-Lewis, called for mortification and suffering which she herself had experienced, and because of this, Penn-Lewis’s longer path brought her into conflict with the leaders of Keswick.\(^{133}\)

Another important distinction between Keswick’s method of sanctification and that of Penn-Lewis, which has also been overlooked by the scholarly community, concerns the primacy of human agency or volition. Whereas the Quietists embraced passivity and a Divine-absorption of volition, Cross Theology, as I have shown, asserts the primacy of volition, as the will is active and cooperates with the Divine in the purgative path. In this way Penn-Lewis avoided the passivity and full identification with the Divine noted among the Quietists. While there are instances in which Cross Theology does indeed resemble the passivity of the Quietist, Penn-Lewis makes it clear that the death she advances is one in which the will is actively submitted to, rather than absorbed by, the Divine Lover. Therefore, Penn-Lewis promoted not the annihilation of human volition, but rather human agency and responsibility, and because of this, Penn-Lewis avoided the charge of antinomianism.

Free will was also important to Penn-Lewis because she believed volitional passivity led to demonic possession. The pursuit of spiritual experiences through passivity rendered souls vulnerable to the demonic, she insisted. Penn-Lewis also suggested that the cause of hysteria and spiritism noted within the revivals of her day, particularly the Welsh Revival of 1903,\(^{134}\) was the result of spiritual passivity, void of the Cross. Though Penn-Lewis was known to quote Guyon and Upham,\(^{135}\) both of whom stress volitional

\(^{133}\) Price & Randall, p. 156. See also Jones, *The Trials and Triumphs of Mrs. Jessie Penn-Lewis*, p. 62.

\(^{134}\) Gerrard, p. 271.

passivity in attaining holiness, by the time of the Welsh revival, Penn-Lewis expressed concern for the priority given to the abandonment of the volition in spiritual experiences. Why the change? Demonic torment, many conjectured, was the cause of the emotionalism noted during Welsh revivals’ meetings, which ultimately led to Evan Roberts’ nervous breakdown and his lengthy convalescence with Mr. and Mrs. Penn-Lewis. Therefore, she argued that to relinquish volition through a call to “rest” was the means through which demons gained access to the human will. Penn-Lewis devoted considerable time to an analysis of demonic possession—a situation she believed was the result of a religion based on passivity.

iii. Feminism

I have also shown that Cross Theology inspired an egalitarian interpretation of the Bible. The mysticism of Penn-Lewis asserts that as women die mystically, they transcend the old order and are thus united in mystical solidarity with Christ. Here most fully Cross Theology redressed a spiritual inequity that associated women with the failings of Eve rather than the victories of Christ. In union with Christ, women are co-heirs not only with Christ, but they co-heirs with men, bearing equally the fruits of the theopathic life.

Penn-Lewis, an ever practical mystic, popularized one of the most systematic, egalitarian treatises of her day—God’s Word to Women, by Katharine Bushnell. Juxtaposing the mysticism of Cross Theology with the biblical scholarship of Katharine Bushnell, the Magna Charta of Woman suggests that through the Cross, women are emancipated for service beside men, as the Scriptures have long suggested. Penn-Lewis also exposed the gender bias evident in many translations of the Bible, as well as in the ways in which the Bible has been interpreted, all of which obscure women’s spiritual unity with Christ, as well as with men in Christian service. Penn-Lewis encouraged women to engage in their own biblical scholarship, so that they might learn, independent of Church authorities and biased Bible translators, that the Cross confers on women a

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1536 Gerrard, pp. 205-206.
1537 Penn-Lewis & Roberts, War on the Saints. (Kent, England: Diasozo Trust. 1987). War on the Saints was an extensive analysis of the demonic.
spiritual equality with men, in the Church, on the mission field, and in the new Millennium.

The *Magna Charta of Woman* likewise suggests that the historical suppression of women is an agenda advanced by the forces of evil, an agenda Penn-Lewis calls the Church to oppose. Cautioning her readers, Penn-Lewis warned that unless the Church embraces the new order—that of gender equality, women may ultimately reject a faith rooted in gender bias.

Through an egalitarian hermeneutic, Penn-Lewis reinterprets the Pauline passages that appear to silence women. She also sought to advance women’s equality as a biblical and spiritual reality. In doing so, Penn-Lewis suggests that biblical exposition must also be accompanied by a personal experience of the Cross. She summoned women to pursue their inner call to ministry with the awareness that the intellectual and spiritual opposition to their service has been overcome through the power of the Cross.

Penn-Lewis’s mysticism extended spiritual authority to women that they might reframe the biblical texts to fundamentally ascribe women’s value, dignity and service through their organic union to Christ’s holiness and power, rather than to Eve’s sin and weakness. As souls attain union with Christ, they also participate in the “mystical Body of God,” and enjoy “the corporate life of Reality.” The fecundity of a life transformed on the Cross participated in “the real activity which is called humility, service, love of our neighbour.”

**iv. Authority**

By virtue of their intimacy with God, mystics are individuals who possess extraordinary authority. Jantzen describes the mystic’s influence and power as follows:

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1539 Ibid.
1540 McIntosh, p. 99.
The connection of questions of power to questions of mysticism is obvious as soon as one stops to think of it: a person who was acknowledged to have direct access to God would be in a position to challenge any form of authority, whether doctrinal or political, which she saw as incompatible with the divine will. It is obvious, too, that if defining mysticism is a way of defining power, whether institutional or individual, then the question of who counts as a mystic is of immediate importance. 

It therefore became critical that those who claimed intimacy with God “should be contained within the structures of the church, since the power of the church would be severely threatened if it should be acknowledged that access to divine authority was possible outside its confines.” An experience of power, on offer at the Keswick Conventions, initiated not only spiritual authority but also independence from denominational and ecclesial control. Though relatively unconstrained by denominational authority, the Keswick Convention did establish its own authority structure, via a board of directors, yet all of these individuals were male. As the women of Keswick claimed to possess intimacy with the Divine, they too spoke authoritatively, and they eventually posed a threat to the established male hegemony within Keswick. Jessie Penn-Lewis was perhaps the most prominent example. Her leadership, preaching and devotional literature won enormous popularity both within Keswick circles and beyond. She ultimately challenged the directives of Keswick leadership, not only because her Cross Theology resisted Keswick’s Quietism, but also because she questioned her exclusion from mixed audiences, and this of course led to her withdrawal from the Keswick Convention.

Penn-Lewis not only resisted authority structures as they worked to limit the fullest expression of Cross Theology, but she also endeavored to liberate others, particularly women, from a faulty exegesis that rendered them susceptible to oppression and spiritual ineffectiveness. Through a mystical reading of the Scriptures, as well as through her own mystical journey, Penn-Lewis imparted a spiritual authority to women by disassociating

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1542 Ibid.
1543 Ibid., p. 2.
1544 See Appendix A, B and C.
them from sin, particularly Eve’s sin. Perhaps unlike any other mystic, Penn-Lewis identified the ultimate authority mysticism held for women—that through the unitive state, women are identified with the power of the Holy, over and above the perceived weaknesses of the female gender.

Was this the fundamental reason why the leaders of Keswick excluded Mrs. Penn-Lewis from the main platform? Were the leaders of Keswick uncomfortable with the authority that mystical union imparts to women? Penn-Lewis acknowledged her authority each time she accepted an invitation to preach to mixed audiences; an authority evident in the international demand for her service, an authority that fueled her independence of Keswick, and her leadership around the globe.

Intrinsic to Cross Theology was a spiritual authority rooted in an intimacy with the Christ’s passion and resurrection, through which Penn-Lewis participated in the theopathic life, and she was therefore, an individual that was difficult to control. In and through her theological and social endeavors, Penn-Lewis proved to be a woman of indomitable energy. Despite her physical frailty and the social limitations of women, Penn-Lewis displayed a “super-normal vitality” that is noted among the mystics. She was, as her physician stated, “a law unto herself.”

v. Justice

As we have noted, Penn-Lewis’s Cross Theology challenged the assertion that the mystical element of religion had little interest in justice, that mysticism does not address the “structural or political injustice or the ways in which spirituality or mysticism might have a bearing upon it.” Far from providing a “private religious way of coping with life, whatever the external circumstances,” Cross Theology, as it operated within the life of Jessie Penn-Lewis, offered the spiritual authority and a theological basis to challenge the patriarchy of Keswick. In this way Penn-Lewis offered a mysticism that

1545 Underhill, Mysticism, p. 414.
1546 Gerrard, p. 297.
1547 Jantzen, pp. 18 & ff.
1548 Ibid., p. 20.
equipped the weak and disenfranchised in their journey towards spiritual empowerment and equity.

While Grace Jantzen claims that the mystical life was a sedative to oppressed individuals such as women, it does little, Jantzen argues, to provoke them to think critically "about the social causes of [their] stress, let alone about the ways in which the structures" 1549 might be overcome. Penn-Lewis, I would suggest, is an example of a female whose mystical theology not only imparted enormous physical and spiritual stamina in addressing gender-bias, but it also equipped her with a biblical defense for women’s emancipation. She was far from lulled by her mystical journey. Rather, Penn-Lewis’s mysticism supplied a reasoned, biblical challenge to the male hegemony of the Keswick Conventions, and in the Church at large. Through Cross Theology, she viewed her authority in concert with God’s.

Jantzen suggested that the pursuit of the mystical meaning of Scripture was "profoundly entrenched [in] the authority of the church, and that left little place for women." 1550 Penn-Lewis provides an example to the contrary, for she was a woman whose mystical reading of the Scriptures harnessed the authority of Scripture to oppose a patriarchy that excludes, oppresses, or diminishes the dignity and ministry of women. Because the Cross purifies and unites men and women to God’s purposes for the world, to exclude women as full gospel-partners limits the Church’s capacity to fulfill its mission in the world. For if women, as members of Christ’s body, “cannot fulfil [their] office, how can the Body reach full growth, and ‘make increase with the increase of God?’” 1551 Thus, Cross Theology viewed mystical union as personal as well as corporate. For, “if a member of the Body, in which Paul says there cannot be ‘male or female,’ fails to carry out the will of the ‘Head,’ it checks the life of the entire Body and the manifestation of the Spirit through all its members.” 1552 To suppress any member of Christ’s mystical body is constraint to the “life of the entire Body.” 1553

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1549 Ibid.
1550 Ibid., p. 83.
1551 Bushnell, as quoted by The Magna Charta of Woman, p. 96.
1552 Ibid., p. 97.
1553 Ibid.
Moreover, it is the purpose of mystical union, proffered by the Cross, to eradicate the enmity between those who are united to Christ. Through the Cross, there is neither "Jew nor Gentile, but Christ. For only through the Cross and the slaying of the old Adam is the 'New Man' - the Body of Christ- created; and there is no way into the membership of the Body but by way of the Cross." Therefore, Cross Theology recognized that the implications of mystical union included equity among diverse members of Christ's mystical body, and in this way mystical knowledge "cannot be separated from efforts for justice." Though Cross Theology concerned a "private religious" experience, it was through a personal encounter with the Cross that souls receive the power to manifest the concerns of the Head of the Body—Christ, where distinctions based on ethnicity, class or gender are overcome. Penn-Lewis's Cross-centered mysticism advanced a non-hierarchical unity between men and women.

vi. Beyond Ineffability

Unlike some within the modern mystical tradition, Penn-Lewis does not identify mystical states with ineffability. On the contrary, Cross Theology concerned not an absence of language, but a skillful use of words noted in her mystical writings and in her egalitarian hermeneutic. While Jantzen notes the correlation between mystical experiences with ineffability, as a way of silencing women "in the public arena of the secular world: women may be mystics, but mysticism is a private intense experience not communicable in everyday language and not of political relevance." In contrast, Penn-Lewis devoted her life to compelling women to encounter the Cross that they might attain both power and a voice. Penn-Lewis was rarely silent, and she did not remain within the confines of her home. Rather, she had an international career that advanced the mystical path of the Cross, as well as women's public ministry.

Jantzen is correct to object to "an understanding of mysticism which allows that women may be mystics, but which makes mysticism a private and ineffable
psychological occurrence and which detaches it from considerations of social justice."

Yet, as we have shown, Penn-Lewis believed it was through a Cross-centered apophasis that she received the power to challenge patriarchal structures. Penn-Lewis restrained neither voice nor pen, and her opposition to the leaders of Keswick was such that they worked to exclude her voice and limit her influence.

Penn-Lewis remains a poignant example of a mystic whose "life of prayer informs the life of action." In Penn-Lewis, as with other mystics, we find abundant evidence that "the mystical and moral always go together, action and contemplation interact with each other." Mystics are not limited by private, ineffable experiences, but they can find power within their mystical encounters whereby to advance justice, and this we observe in the mystical theology, life and work of Jessie Penn-Lewis.

Summary Remarks

As I have stated, in researching the theological perspective of Jessie Penn-Lewis, I acquired as much of her autobiographical and published material as possible. I interviewed individuals who published on her life, or who had known those with whom she had worked. I also visited institutional archives throughout the United Kingdom and the United States where Keswick materials are housed. Here I photocopied reams of material, and within a couple of years, I amassed a significant collection of her work.

The next challenge was to unravel Penn-Lewis’s Cross motif, clearly central to her system of sanctification. She described encounters with the Cross as they imparted not only intense suffering, but also enormous spiritual effectiveness, and new venues of service. Yet, sanctification for Penn-Lewis did not correspond to the tradition of the Reformed or Wesleyan Protestants. Rather, her Cross Theology resembled the classical mystical tradition, as outlined by Underhill. Like the other mystics cited in

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1558 Ibid.
1560 King, p. 49.
1561 See Chapter One of thesis.
Underhill’s, Mysticism, Penn-Lewis’s mystical life progressed through the five stages of the mystical path, and this more closely paralleled Penn-Lewis’s system of sanctification.

I then considered how the Romantic mood of the late 19th century brought forth a renewed interest in mysticism, which David Bebbington has noted. Protestants of the late 19th century rejected Enlightenment methods of sanctification that relied upon effort. Reaching for a religion of rest, through an experience of power, over and against the slow grinding process of Enlightenment rationalism, the Protestants of Penn-Lewis’s era came under the sway of the Romantic mood with its reliance upon feelings and experience.

For this reason, the Holiness Conventions were held in some of the most beautiful and serene locations in Great Britain and Europe. Most significantly, Holiness leaders rejected effort in the path toward sanctification, preferring insisted rest and spiritual abandonment. Readily assimilating Quietists like Upham and Guyon, the Holiness Movement pursued an effortless perfection, by way of a shorter path, and this provided a refreshing spirituality to those overwhelmed by the Modern world. The result was a revival of Quietism, with its one-act of passivity, as the means of sanctification.

Yet, Mrs. Penn-Lewis was not convinced. She was dissatisfied with a faith that relied upon passivity and abandonment. While her own spiritual journey was one of breaking through to the spiritual world, by way of the Cross, she said she was taken into the passion of Christ, which necessarily entailed great suffering. As her spiritual life unfolds, her diary, letters and publications suggest that she encountered a spiritual awakening, followed by experiences of purgation, illumination, and the Dark Night, entering finally into union with the Divine. Thus Penn-Lewis evinces the five stages of mysticism, as outlined by Underhill, whereby one is left questioning whether this very fact might well pose an epistemic pattern of faith. How was it that Penn-Lewis’s spiritual experiences, noted within her diary and mystical literature, reflect so clearly Underhill’s five-fold path of mysticism, even while Penn-Lewis does not quote Underhill? Where did she learn to use, as she does, the term illumination to illustrate a notion that resembled the very meaning Underhill had in mind? While Penn-Lewis never described her spiritual journey as classical mysticism, yet the mystical path advanced in her writings seemed, in

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1562 Bebbington, p. 171.
1563 S. Ahlstrom, A Religious History of the American People, p. 585. See also Bebbington, pp. 151 & ff.
an unusual way, to conform to Underhill’s five stages. Does this fact authenticate certain spiritual experiences as intrinsic to Christian belief? Despite Jantzen’s protestation, that these stages were contrivances by Underhill, yet they describe the soul’s ascent toward union with the Divine, as noted within the body of Penn-Lewis literature.

Like Underhill, Penn-Lewis was keenly interested in God’s activity within the soul as manifest through spiritual experiences. In this way, she incorporated the affective tradition of Bernard, with its interest in inner spiritual experiences. Additionally, Penn-Lewis takes on the apophatic tradition of Bonaventure that placed the soul’s ascent within the context of the negations of the Cross. Cross Theology, then, was a path of transcendence through illumination, purgation and union. Yet, the Cross, for Penn-Lewis was more than a symbol for the soul’s ascent. The path of Calvary moved beyond the introspection of late medieval mysticism, with its focus on an inner self, as well as early mystical tradition, with its intellectual and moral perfection. For Cross Theology was a call to participate bodily, psychologically as well as spiritually in the suffering of Christ so that souls share in the common, communal and ecclesial work of Christ—Church.  

To die with Christ, is to be inextricably united with the Savior, and Christ’s work in the world. For Penn-Lewis, a sharing in the work of Christ of Calvary was inextricably bound to an empowerment of women. Her mysticism had a spiritual and social consequence that included not only a rejection of the inadequacies of Quietism, but it also cast vision for gender equality.

For the higher we ascend, “‘the deeper it descends into itself; the union (of the soul and God) takes place in the innermost sphere of the soul, in its deepest ground. So the journey into God is seen not ultimately as a loss of self but as a homecoming in the divinely beloved self, beyond the false selves.’”  

Through the path of the Cross, Penn-Lewis ultimately found release from a paralyzing self-consciousness, and as she descended into the deepest sufferings of the Cross, she emerged freed to serve others, far from the prison of her ego. Beyond the confines of “Adamian life,” she cooperated with the purposes of the Beloved, and through this intimacy she redefined women’s identity and potential for service. United to Christ,

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1564 McIntosh, pp. 81-82.
1565 Ibid., p. 206.
through the path of the Cross, women were no longer viewed as inferior, sinful and weak. Penn-Lewis gave women a new reality—that of union with Christ, heirs of God’s power and full partners with all the members of Christ’s body.
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<th>Location</th>
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# Appendix A: Time Line

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Jessie Penn-Lewis, 1861-1927</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>World Events</th>
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<tr>
<td>Jessie Jones was born on February 28th, in Neath, South Wales. She is the second daughter of a Civil Engineer. Her grandfather was the Reverend Samuel Jones, a Calvinist, Methodist Minister. Her mother was active in the Temperance Movement. Attends a boarding school in Swansea because of poor health. She was diagnosed with Tuberculosis. Through her mother's encouragement, Jessie is initiated into the Temperance Movement. She becomes the Chief Presiding Officer of the Juveniles. Jessie joins a Quaker school.</td>
<td>1861</td>
<td>Abraham Lincoln voted President of the US. The American Civil War begins.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>1871</td>
<td>Darwin writes <em>The Descent of Man</em>.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>1874</td>
<td>Disraeli becomes Prime Minister. Holiness Conventions are held at Broadlands, Oxford, and Brighton. The first Keswick Convention is convened one year later.</td>
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<td>1877</td>
<td>Victoria made Empress of India.</td>
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<td>1880</td>
<td>The United States limits Chinese immigration.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>1882</td>
<td>The Triple Alliance is established.</td>
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<td>1883</td>
<td>Nietzsche writes <em>Thus Speaks Zarathustra</em>.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>1884</td>
<td>First underground railroad built in London. Mark Twain writes <em>Huckleberry Finn</em>.</td>
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<td>1886</td>
<td>Nietzsche writes <em>Beyond Good and Evil</em>.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>1889</td>
<td>T.H. Huxley writes <em>Agnosticism</em></td>
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<td>1890</td>
<td>First movie produced in New York. Suffragist groups unite in the United States.</td>
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<td>1892</td>
<td>Ellis Island established to process immigrants to US</td>
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<td>1894</td>
<td>Great Depression incites rail strike and Coxey Army.</td>
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1895

Essie and her husband relocate to Leicester when William becomes City Treasurer. She addresses the first Scandinavian, YWCA conference in Stockholm, Sweden. Her lecture was based on Psalm 68, “An Army of Women Proclaim the Glad Tidings.” Russian royalty attend her forum in Stockholm.

Completes *Conflict in the Heavenlies*, based upon her 1887 lecture at the China Inland Mission. This lecture is expanded into *The Warfare with Satan and the Way of Victory*, which becomes the basis for *War on the Saints*, a book that remains in print today. She lectures widely in Sweden, Finland, Russia (St. Petersburg), Switzerland, Berlin and Copenhagen. In Copenhagen, she introduces her work, *Pathway to Life*. Penn-Lewis lectures on spiritual warfare at the C.I.M. Hall, in London. The *Pathway* leaflets and *The Glorious Secret* are translated into Russian. Participates in Rothesay and Langland Bay (South Wales) and Coventry Conventions, as well as meetings in Norwich, Derby, Manchester, London, Glasgow, Dunfermline, Birmingham, Doncaster, Brighton, Richmond, Ipswich, Leicester, Swansea, and Belfast. Sends her booklets to the Australian Conventions. Finnish and Swedish translation of booklets completed (titles are not specified). Begins her *Pathway* leaflets.

1896

Ethiopia wins Independence from Italy. Great Britain captures Ghana.

The Rev. Enoch Sontonga composes melody for national anthem (God bless Africa), used by Tanzania and Zambia to oppose apartheid.

 completes *Hidden Ones and Abandonment to the Spirit*. Addresses the Ladies’ Meeting at Keswick. Penn-Lewis meets Professor W. R. well, Assistant-Superintendent of the Moody Bible Institute, Chicago.

1898

The Fashoda Incident. Britain claims the Nile Basin.

Poulsen of Denmark records sound magnetically.

1899

The English defeat the Boers in South Africa. Boxer revolt in China. Max Planck develops Quantum Theory. The first Zeppelin is built.

1900
340

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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Time Period</th>
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<tr>
<td>1901</td>
<td>Queen Victoria dies. The Socialist Party is founded in Russia.</td>
<td>1901</td>
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<td>1902</td>
<td>Women gain voting rights in Australia</td>
<td>1902</td>
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<td>1903</td>
<td>The Wright brothers construct their first airplane flight. The British control Northern Nigeria. Construction of the Panama Canal begins. First message sent over cable across the Pacific, from San Francisco to the Philippines.</td>
<td>1903</td>
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<td>1904</td>
<td>Freud publishes Interpretation of Dreams. The Welsh revival begins.</td>
<td>1904</td>
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<td>1905</td>
<td>Einstein develops theory of special relativity. Welsh Revival continues.</td>
<td>1905</td>
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<tr>
<td>1906</td>
<td>Albert Schweitzer writes The Quest for the Historical Jesus. Women gain the vote in Finland.</td>
<td>1906</td>
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<tr>
<td>1908</td>
<td>Oil discovered in Persia. First skyscraper is built in New York. Henry Ford begins mass production of the first “Model A” automobile.</td>
<td>1908</td>
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<td>1909</td>
<td>Lois Blériot flies across the English Channel. Paris airs first newsreel.</td>
<td>1909</td>
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<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>New York fire kills 146 young women workers.</td>
<td>1911</td>
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<tr>
<td>1912</td>
<td>The Titanic sinks.</td>
<td>1912</td>
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<td>1913</td>
<td>Niels Bohr conceives structure of the atom. Suffragists march on Washington.</td>
<td>1913</td>
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<tr>
<td>1914</td>
<td>WWI Begins. Women gain vote in</td>
<td>1914</td>
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I have viewed these documents at The Donald Gee Study Center, Mattersey Hall, Doncaster, England.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1914</td>
<td>Norway. Gandhi returns to India. The Panama Canal opens.</td>
<td>1915</td>
<td>Without warning, the Germans sink the first British steamship.</td>
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<td>1916</td>
<td>The United States sends first troops to Europe as conflict escalates.</td>
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<td>1917</td>
<td>Russian Revolution begins. US declares war, ending the conflict one year later.</td>
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<td>1920</td>
<td>Ireland granted home rule. H.G. Wells writes Outline of History. Women gain vote in US.</td>
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<td>1921</td>
<td>Lenin introduces economic reforms in Russia</td>
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<td>1922</td>
<td>James Joyce writes Ulysses.</td>
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<td>1923</td>
<td>Nonstop flight crosses the United States. The Ku Klux Klan is exposed. Earthquake kills 200,000 in Tokyo.</td>
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<td>1924</td>
<td>Vladimir Lenin dies. Trotsky and Stalin battle for dominance over the Soviet state</td>
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<td>1925</td>
<td>Kafka writes the Trial. Tennessee outlaws teaching of evolution in public schools</td>
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<td>1926</td>
<td>British coal miner’s strike leads to martial law.</td>
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<td>1927</td>
<td>Lindbergh crosses Atlantic. Television is introduced. Radio and Telephone becomes Transatlantic</td>
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The Overcomer journal was edited by Penn-Lewis in the years: 1909, 1910, 1911, 1913, 1914, 1920, 1921, 1922, 1923, 1924, 1925, 1926, 1927.
Appendix B: Historical Material

Jessie Penn-Lewis’s Cross Theology had international appeal, for she not only traveled and lectured widely, but her lectures and booklets were also translated into many foreign languages. As a mystic of the classical tradition, Penn-Lewis resisted the Quietism of early Holiness and Keswick conventions. In addition, a particular concern of Cross Theology was to advance women’s equality in Christian ministry. Therefore, the purpose of this section is to provide historical examples of Penn-Lewis’s international work, along with excerpts of Cross Theology’s as it opposed the Quietism of Keswick while advancing women’s equal serve alongside men in Christian work. The historical material herein represents a sample of Penn-Lewis’s international appeal, her rejection of passivity in experiencing the Cross, as well as her egalitarian impulse, as noted in her lecture and diary notes, letters, lecture leaflets and notices, and other items gathered throughout North American, Wales and England.\footnote{The historical material within Appendix C represents digital copies of original documents collected throughout Wales, England and the United States.}

This original announcement features Penn-Lewis’s New York City lecture, October 16-19, 1900. According to the *Herald of Light*, the location of these lectures was No. 21 East Twenty-Sixth Street, which was the home of Mrs. Cortland de Peyster Field. We know Penn-Lewis also addressed audiences at A. B. Simpson’s Gospel Tabernacle, 8th Ave and 44th Street in New York, in 1900.\footnote{Announcement provided by Brynmor Pierce Jones of Wales.}
The following is a copy of the original advertisement of Penn-Lewis’ three-lecture series at the China Inland Mission, in Harlem, New York, September 2 - 4, 1900.  

BIBLE READINGS
FOR CHRISTIANS
Will (D.V.) be conducted by
MRS. PENN-LEWIS
(of Leicester, England, one of the speakers at Keswick),
at the
Young Women's Christian Association
18 Elm Street
ON
Sunday, September 2nd,
at 2 p.m.
At the CHINA INLAND MISSION,
507 Church Street,
Monday Afternoon, Sept. 3rd, at 3 o'clock,
and on
Monday and Tuesday Evenings at 8 o'clock.
also
At the residence of MRS. DUNCAN-CLARK,
111 St. George St. on Tuesday, Sept. 4th.
at 11 a.m.
Christians of all denominations will be cordially welcomed

(PLEASE KEEP THIS FOR REFERENCE.)

1569 Brynmor Pierce Jones, of Wales, provided Penn-Lewis’s YWCA lecture notice.
Penn-Lewis addressed the Harlem YWCA, in New York City, October 11-12, 1900.

**QUIET DAYS**

**IN PREPARATION FOR THE WINTER'S WORK**

**AT THE**

**Harlem Young Women's Christian Association**

74 West 124th Street

**Mrs. Penn-Lewis**

**Of England**

: known as a speaker at the noted Keswick Conferences, and as the author of many devotional books

WILL CONDUCT MEETINGS

**Thursday, October 11th, Friday, October 12th**

3 AND 6 P.M.

The Meetings will be open for both men and women

Christian Workers are specially invited to attend

Penn-Lewis's Moody Bible Institute lectures were held in Chicago, Illinois, September 28 - October 1, 1900.

**Special Meetings for Christians**

**TO BE ADDRESSED BY**

**Mrs. Penn-Lewis**

of Leicester, England.

**In The**

Moody Bible Institute Lecture Hall

Friday, Sept. 28 to Monday, Oct. 1

Friday 10:30 a.m.

Saturday 10:30 a.m.

Sunday 10:00 a.m.

Monday 10:30 a.m.

Welcome. Especially those seeking

The primary qualifications for admission are a consecrated heart, a special fitness for, and a distinct call to, direct work for Christ and souls.

The most thoughtful and loving attention is given to each student individually by those in charge, and earnest spiritual counsel continually offered. Opportunity is provided each day for private devotion, that each one may have the privilege, for a certain length of time, of being alone with God. Devotional exercises for morning and evening.

The tuition, as usual will be free. The moderate charge of $4.00 per week will be made for board, including room, heat and light.

For further information, regular manual, and application blanks, address:

A. E. Funk, Secretary,

Nyack, New York

*1570* Brynmor Pierce Jones, of Wales, provided Penn-Lewis's Quiet Day Lecture notice.

*1571* Brynmor Pierce Jones, of Wales, also provided Penn-Lewis's Moody Bible Institute lecture announcement.
Mrs. Penn-Lewis assumed oversight of the 1914 Matlock Conference, as the welcome below suggests. 1572 As a prelude to the conference, the welcome begins by celebrating the abundant life. It continues by contrasting between two types of people, those who live on a lower plane and those who reach for the heights. There are those with struggles who are, writer suggests, ever “stretching out to new planes of spiritual aspirations and experiences.” Notice the active metaphor. It is by stretching, we are told, that one reaches the heights, “where the snow is pure and the sunrise glorious.” We are then asked to distinguish between passivity and grace. Those who are passive know nothing of the struggles that enable some to reach higher altitudes. Reaching the higher planes, where peace is attained, is distinguished from passivity. The speaker warns not to “mistake passivity for grace: do not mistake passivity for confidence and security.” For the cause of “passivity is unconsciousness,” while the cause of peace is that the life forces have been arrested, presumably through union with Christ.

Penn-Lewis spoke at the Matlock Conference in 1912, 1913 and 1914.

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1572 Copy of the 1914 Matlock Convention Welcome was provided by the Donald Gee Center, Doncaster, England.
Penn-Lewis’s Leicester Convention lecture reveals her concern that revival is God’s work, rather than a human invention. Distinguishing between the abuses of revival with understanding genuine revival, Penn-Lewis suggested that authentic revival is initiated as the Holy Spirit enables the church to confront sin, particularly personal sin. She writes: “It is a mockery to pray God to put others right, if we refuse to let him put us right! Revival means war against sin and Satan. Enthusiasm will die out. We do not want enthusiasm: But the working of the Spirit of God...”

Revival, or God’s renewing presence through the Holy Spirit, must function in cooperation with humans, rather than through human initiative alone. Thus, the Holy Spirit, is “the presiding presence in the church,” and as such must initiate and lead revival work. Christians must rely upon the Holy Spirit and for this reason there was an empty chair placed on or near the platform, to suggest that the real chairman of the Convention was the presiding Holy Spirit, rather than a person. Penn-Lewis writes:

[The Holy Spirit] can manifest His Presence in such flood-tide power that no human channel, however God-filled, can preside but must stand back in awe, as at Pentecost. To this end a “leader” is acting in co-operation with the Spirit of God moving among the people... Penn-Lewis addressed the Leicester Convention in 1897 and 1908.

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1573 Penn-Lewis’s Leicester Convention thirteen-page lecture was copied with permission from the Donald Gee Center, Doncaster.
1574 Ibid.
1575 Ibid.
was actually speaking in the church. It is
believed that the man so representing
him was not brought out before them in
the house of God, and that he was never
in connection with Peter, but as far as
detailed in Acts 10:40, where an
assembly was gathered before the Lord
by the Holy Ghost, no mention in the
text indicates that I was called Peter in
the language of the assembly or of
Romans. The text reads, "For God
heaven to us... (Acts 10:46).
and the assembled council at Jerusalem
that they said, "For God... (Acts 10:47).
only.
In the Greek, the voice of the
people is that he was recognized as
recognized by the voice of the
people as "the voice of God."
The Spirit that he is able, as he walketh, to discern the mind of the Spirit in the meeting. And the clause he is, or in the same, when necessary, on earth, quench all when they get foolish, 9 point out the folly of the doctrine, or instruction, or the house of God. But what about that? The same, as 3, 4, or, and, we are not in a leader, a channel. For the unprofitable, 12, 13, and, and, we are in a leader. He is able, as he walketh, to discern the mind of the Spirit in the meeting. And the clause he is, or in the same, when necessary, on earth, quench all when they get foolish, 9 point out the folly of the doctrine, or instruction, or the house of God.
Diagram of The Life-Side of the Cross. 1576

The Life-Side of the Cross diagram was copied with permission from the Donald Gee Center, Doncaster. Penn-Lewis is believed to be the author.
Photographs of Jessie Penn-Lewis

Jessie and William Penn-Lewis  
Penn-Lewis at her desk  
Penn-Lewis in India.

Penn-Lewis with her Bible.  
Penn-Lewis in Russia.

1577 Gerrard, p. 256.
1578 Picture provided by the Donald Gee Center, Doncaster.
1579 Gerrard, p. 208.
1580 Ibid., p. vi.
1581 Ibid., p. 88.
The Herald of Light published a summary of Mrs. Penn-Lewis’s American lectures. The author disapproved of Penn-Lewis’s disdain for crosses worn as jewelry, which for Penn-Lewis represented a morbid delight in the “suffering, shame, agony, for the One we profess to love!”

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**College Girls and Christian Work**

In the family of the martyrs who have recently given their lives for Christ in China, we find the name of Miss Mary H. Trappence, a graduate of Moody House Seminary. Mary Lewis, a graduate, is not without a sorrow, and the loss of a student was felt deeply in the ranks of many other women’s colleges. Mount Holyoke supplied teachers to the South China (Main). Church Church, has Bible and mission classes, and sends several hundred dollars yearly for the spread of the gospel in distant lands. Besides this, Mount Holyoke girls help in the religious work at the poor farm, and look after several girls who live in Holyoke. Miss Edith C. Torrey, daughter of the last, H. A. Torrey, of Chicago, is a student there, and in an interview with the editor of the elegant and elegant, the other day: “Our college is fine educationally and spiritually. There are 821 students here, and of these 473 are members of the S. W. C. A. The students here are not apt to be skeptics or irreligious, for the influence of God and the idea is just for that... I would think that any girl who is not a Christian would feel uncomfortable here. The superintendent made that a college education and a marriage is, I think, false. I do not see why she has to be ignorant in order to marry. The time before marriage may be longer, but it will not be hindered ultimately. During the past year there has been considerable interest in wedding invitations from former students.

* * * The Bible says, “All have sinned and come short of the glory of God,” and this is how we read it. All have sinned and come short of the glory.
of God—but me. I detest the fashion of wearing crosses and using them as emblems of our faith. The cross means suffering, shame, agony for me. I detest it.

I detest a morbid delight that we take in it? Imposing them as emblems of our faith. The fashion of wearing crosses and using them as emblems of our faith. The cross stands for our salvation, while the death of friends only stands for their physical suffering and ours. The cross precedes resurrection, and the glory life, and the very reason why we believe that the cross is really worn by thousands because they love Christ in truth, and by others who do not care a mite for Him. There is a vast difference between the love we bear our Saviour and that we bear earthly friends. The cross stands for our salvation, while the death of friends only stands for their physical suffering and ours. The cross precedes resurrection, and the glory life, and the very reason why we believe that the cross is really worn by thousands because they love Christ in truth, and by others who do not care a mite for Him. There is a vast difference between the love we bear our Saviour and that we bear earthly friends. The cross stands for our salvation, while the death of friends only stands for their physical suffering and ours. The cross precedes resurrection, and the glory life, and the very reason why we believe that the cross is really worn by thousands because they love Christ in truth, and by others who do not care a mite for Him. There is a vast difference between the love we bear our Saviour and that we bear earthly friends. The cross stands for our salvation, while the death of friends only stands for their physical suffering and ours. The cross precedes resurrection, and the glory life, and the very reason why we believe that the cross is really worn by thousands because they love Christ in truth, and by others who do not care a mite for Him. There is a vast difference between the love we bear our Saviour and that we bear earthly friends. The cross stands for our salvation, while the death of friends only stands for their physical suffering and ours. The cross precedes resurrection, and the glory life, and the very reason why we believe that the cross is really worn by thousands because they love Christ in truth, and by others who do not care a mite for Him. There is a vast difference between the love we bear our Saviour and that we bear earthly friends. The cross stands for our salvation, while the death of friends only stands for their physical suffering and ours. The cross precedes resurrection, and the glory life, and the very reason why we believe that the cross is really worn by thousands because they love Christ in truth, and by others who do not care a mite for Him. There is a vast difference between the love we bear our Saviour and that we bear earthly friends.

In these quotations we have attempted to give Mrs. Penn Lewis' thoughts, not to quote her exact words, and if we are allowed a word of comment here, we would say: "We believe that the cross is really worn by thousands because they love Christ in truth, and by others who do not care a mite for Him. There is a vast difference between the love we bear our Saviour and that we bear earthly friends. The cross stands for our salvation, while the death of friends only stands for their physical suffering and ours. The cross precedes resurrection, and the glory life, and the very reason why we believe that the cross is really worn by thousands because they love Christ in truth, and by others who do not care a mite for Him. There is a vast difference between the love we bear our Saviour and that we bear earthly friends. The cross stands for our salvation, while the death of friends only stands for their physical suffering and ours. The cross precedes resurrection, and the glory life, and the very reason why we believe that the cross is really worn by thousands because they love Christ in truth, and by others who do not care a mite for Him. There is a vast difference between the love we bear our Saviour and that we bear earthly friends. The cross stands for our salvation, while the death of friends only stands for their physical suffering and ours. The cross precedes resurrection, and the glory life, and the very reason why we believe that the cross is really worn by thousands because they love Christ in truth, and by others who do not care a mite for Him. There is a vast difference between the love we bear our Saviour and that we bear earthly friends. The cross stands for our salvation, while the death of friends only stands for their physical suffering and ours. The cross precedes resurrection, and the glory life, and the very reason why we believe that the cross is really worn by thousands because they love Christ in truth, and by others who do not care a mite for Him. There is a vast difference between the love we bear our Saviour and that we bear earthly friends. The cross stands for our salvation, while the death of friends only stands for their physical suffering and ours. The cross precedes resurrection, and the glory life, and the very reason why we believe that the cross is really worn by thousands because they love Christ in truth, and by others who do not care a mite for Him. There is a vast difference between the love we bear our Saviour and that we bear earthly friends.

Mr. Penn Lewis has said many grand things and is a truly taught teacher, but on a question like this we all have a right to an opinion. Many will agree with her, some with us. Let us thank God that we are all members of His Body.
Keswick’s popular hymnist—Frances R. Havergal, wrote the popular hymn, “Like a River Glorious.” Havergal’s hymn reflects Keswick’s emphasis on rest with its subsequent mastery over life’s temptations and challenges.


Our Summer Outing.

He loveth a day he have ever had, was the encomium verdict of the Richmond Institute Members and Friends, on July 4th, for their “Summer Outing.” Mr. and Mrs. Albert Head had most kindly invited to Corie Lodge, Wimbledon, with their guests, the Rev. and Mrs. Murray, were with them, and we had with expectancies that we started the page 354

Our Summer Outing.

In front of the presence of the Lord to pray ere we left the Institute, and then enjoyed a drive through Richmond Park to Wimbledon Common, where Mrs. Head met us, and led us to a very lovely spot among the trees above Queen’s Mere, for “A Wimbledon Tea.” The time was too short in this lovely spot, and then we wound our way to Corie Lodge where, at 6 p.m., we gazed on the lovely scene.

The weather had been lovely, but a heavy shower came just in time to send us into the Dining-room for the closing word from Mr. Murray. The room was quite crowded, our party numbering about six.

Mr. Head led the Meeting, and after Mrs. Murray had told us of T.W.C.A. work in Cape Town, and pleaded for inter-denominational prayer of behalf of the boys and girls of young women in South Africa, Rev. Andrew Murray rose to speak to us. We truly felt the presence of God, as he talked quite simply of the "Heavenly Treasure in the earthen vessel;” somewhat as follows.

1 Cor. 4. 7. First, the Treasure. In Heaven there is a Treasure that fills the borders, and here are, just a common little jar, that may be full as on our table, but the beauty of the Treasure God has only one Treasure—His beloved Son. He calls Him “My Treasure;” and God has put all His riches and all His treasures into Jesus. In Him are hidden all the treasures (Col. 2: 3). God delighteth in His Son, and as God delighteth in Him so may we. You may have a share, and become unaccountably rich in Jesus, as He will poor Himself into you.

* * * * *

"God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined into our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ;" 2 Cor. 4. 6.

The Light of God.

The glory of God, the face of Jesus Christ, all these are heavenly things.

The face of Jesus is the Treasure. Many believe do not know that they have such a Treasure. Some years ago a field in South Africa containing 60,000 diamonds might have been bought for £3,000, all because they did not know the value of the diamonds. If we do not know we have this Heavenly Treasure, we are very poor. Do not say, I am so rich! I have such a Treasure! I am rich beyond all thought—as rich we give away!

But have you ever given this Treasure to another? Not as we give, perhaps a thing to a younger, and be said, 

As my way, and we see no more of him. But not so God. This is a Loving like the unlovable cannot be preserved and taken away. 

We cannot take any more riches than he has given us—it must be got from the one remnant by remembrance. So this Heavenly Treasure keeps me weaving upon me all the day, that it may shine into me.

The Heavenly Treasure is love. The nearest love needs souls is dead. It is just the love of Jesus shining out and lighting them in darkness. Sometimes cannot keep itself to itself. It is the mystic sense of this Heavenly Treasure that quickly draws us to remember it as a necessity. We cannot have admiration and keep it to ourselves.

See the sun shining on that tree. If the tree could say, "You don’t visit us, can it be hidden before the darkness comes on?" While the sun is out, it must be seen. We are earthy vessels made to hold the Heavenly Treasure, and nothing else; made to love, and live, and riches, and treasures of Jesus shine out.

Now let us look at the earth vessel. On a table one day, I saw a flower long with wish to it, and a little leaves earthy with crown in it. But nobody noticed the crown because it was an earthy jar. We like the flowers jars, but God loves us in His precious treasures in the earthen vessel. This is a very important house. Christian think as much of their workmen—"I am so simple, so weak, so foolish, somebody else is gifted, and she can do better,"—we forget what God wants the earthen jars.

In South Africa there was an infidel, and no one could deal with him, and one day the minister sent the older of the church, a clever and place man, to see him. He agreed with him, but he could not be converted: it was an age of time. But, there was an old farmer who prayed for years for that infidel (who was a blacksmith). Early one morning he took his horse and rode to see this man, who greeted him with, "Well, what brings you here at this hour?" The old farmer answered simply, and when he was greatly liked as this he could not get a word out. The infidel laughed. This made worse. At last the old man went into tears, and expressed it, and, "I am so sorry about your soul," and he went away. This led to the enmity of the infidel. Ah! see the Heavenly Treasure in the earthen vessel.

This makes us strong, but holy, I have something in myself. "He that beareth a precious stone shall be exalted!" he that confesses that he is but an earthen vessel, shall be filled with the Heavenly Treasure. Oh, the cross of ridicule and mirth. We want God to give us something that we may be something, but God wants us "marking! A Heavenly Treasure in an earthen vessel. Paul had been in danger of forgetting this. He had feared with the demonstration of the spirit and power. He had been caught up, to the third heaven, and heard things impossible to say. That God showed "a precious stone" to humble John. Paul prayed about it three times, but Jesus said, "No, Paul. I have taken you into the third heaven, and you have been in danger of thinking you are a precious stone. I have want to humble you, and my strength is made perfect in weakness." So Paul said, "Praise God, and I shall rejoice now in all the triumphs that are mine.

Then Paul says afterwards, "though I have knowledge more than all, I am nothing. I never knew that I am doing it. I am not a white behind the dapple of its, yet it is not me."

Now, after talking of the Heavenly Treasure and the earthen vessel—

What about the application? Who among you desires to be an earthen vessel filled with the Treasure? Ah, the need of you! How many in London who never go to a place of worship! How many in a Christian land. How few we get to call it a beaten lad? And among the oven which do to how many, and what a small number know Jesus and the Heavenly Treasure. If every one here gave up his life to God to be a vessel filled with the Treasure it would not be many, sure, if we were a thousand here it would not be too many.

Now, go back to our illustration. Before the cream was put in that earthen jug, I am sure it must have been clean. So God wants clean pride and settlements from the earthen vessels.

Then this jar must not only have been clean but empty: no vanity, or wise, or self, left in to mix with the cream. So many of the earthen vessels are not full of sin, but full of other things—but holy, good things. Yes, the god must go out as well as the sin—so that nobody can say we are wicked—or else there is no room for the Heavenly Treasure. The love of father, mother, sister, brother, must be laid down for God to fill with the love of Christ.

Then the vessel must be very holy. The heaven down the entrance to fill. Some vessels may be clean and empty, but not few enough. They do not hide themselves in the earth, therefore God cannot fill them. Oh, let us pray, "lower down, lower down, lower down, Lord, teaching, teaching, nothing, that God may be exalted!"

This address was listened to with rapt attention, and the time that followed was very precious as one another led in prayer, seeking to be earthen vessels—clean, empty, and low—low for the Heavenly Treasure to be manifested in them. Quietly we then broke up, and made our way to the boathouse which awaited us, Mr. Murray giving a little word to the few who were there. To one or two "You are very rich, richer than Mr. Cellan Rhymer." After going our lunch hand in our kind best and honest, with God and giving thanks we sat down on our midnight stroll to Richmond, the sun being over and gone. The masses of hymns, "Oh the peace our Father gives," etc., that occasionally broke out on the still night air from the cookshops of the different villages, told of the gladness filling many hearts, as they rejoiced over the Heavenly Treasure which they had waited for the earthen vessel that had brought them the message thus night. —And they glorified God in them."—1 Cor. 1. 17.

"Oh he be best employer, kinder, more, nominated, and unknown, And to God a vessel honor—"

Madame Chang and Christ alone." —

JAMES PENN-LEWIS,
Hon, Sec. Richmond Institute.

Branch News.

BERNIE HALE.—On Wednesday, July 24th, by the kind invitation of the Mission Band, the Members of this Branch enjoyed their annual Summer Entertainment in the grounds of Hildreth. About 30 went down to a strawberry tea at 3 o’clock, after which the Secretary, Miss Beadle, briefly addressed the members. Miss Director, of London, followed with a very severe and helpful address. Gentle visitors were then entered into with great spirit, and an enjoyable evening was brought to a close about 9 o’clock.

1585 The copy of Our Onward Way, August 1895, pp. 89-90 was provided by the Donald Gee Center, Doncaster. Our Onward Way was a publication of the YCWA Institute, Richmond, where Penn-Lewis served as Honorary Secretary, in 1890.
Penn-Lewis’s article, “The Leading of the Lord,” was a spiritual autobiography, published in *The Christian*, December 24, 1903.1586

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1586 A copy of *The Christian*, December 24, 1903, pp. 17-18, was provided by the Donald Gee Center, Doncaster. The article is a summary of Penn-Lewis’s early years, also documented by Gerrard, *Mrs. Jessie Penn-Lewis: A Memoir*. (London: The Overcomer Book Room, 1930).
Two years had I laboured in my own strength without the anointing of the Spirit, and four happy years afterwards was I permitted to watch what I could do, when I consented to be crucified, and to give Him right of way through us to souls. My "five months" had been prolonged into six years by the wondrous grace of God.

Then came the wider service which God had purposed for me, and which I had not dreamed of, when I sought the grace of the Spirit. From physical, it seemed impossible ever could be mine. But by this time the knowledge of my resources in God had grown, and I was able to cast myself in utter subjection upon Him, and find all-sufficiency for all my need, at all times and in all circumstances.

In 1890, we removed to Leicester, and at once came a call to Sweden. Another crisis in my life was thus presented. The Lord was about to move upon the large audience in His strength, and to close of the afternoon, it seemed impossible, as our financial requirements were very great, to take such a step. But I had come to the conclusion that we must go. I felt that I must be up to the service, or more pray it might so lead out in the plea of the preciousness of the Cross, and in the glorious power, in order to reach the hearts of the people. We had not a penny in the bank, and the change and the sacrifice were great. But we were ready to go, to cast ourselves upon the grace of God, and to trust, as before, that He would meet our every need. The Lord was with us, and He had promised to give us a heritage more glorious and precious than any are of this world. We went, and God has provided for us, and our every need has been supplied in a wonderful manner, and we have been able to lead souls to Christ, and to see the power of God upon us making many break out into prayer at the same time when I sought the Master's seal, and when He had come. Raised from the grave, He manifested His life in the midst of the darkness of the Middle Ages, and was crying: "Who look on the face of God to-day, at home and abroad, the supreme need of proclaiming the 'Evangel'—the Gospel of the shining light of the Son of God—and clothes each one with the Holy Ghost, and preach the Cross in all its aspects, as Paul the Apostle preached it; and then will come the revival we look for, as the Lord returns for His own.

Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh inwardly in us, unto the glory of Christ Jesus unto the . . . of the ages, Amen.

"Want of Thought."

"The labourer is worthy of his hire" (Luke 10:7). What is it worth? The Lord of the harvest saith to us: some of his followers think it is worth nothing. I think otherwise. An evangelist who is a real local worker, who has a correspondence, and is at home with the people of his circuit, and gives to the converts saved among them, a pure testimony to the Gospel of Christ, in his own household, is a useful and a mighty man. He tells the story of the death and resurrection of Jesus, I found richer and fuller outgoings of the knowledge of the Son of God—-and clothe each one with the power of the Holy Ghost to preach the Cross in all its aspects, to the world, to the world !—"death wrought in me, and life in you." Glazier and Glover grew the wondrous plan. Crucified with Christ, the eyes of the Lord take the same route, to show us the way of the Lord, and to lead us on to deeper and deeper fellowship with Him. The Lord gave me a clear idea of the depths of the meaning of the "and the world knew that the Father had given me power over life and death." The words of Paul became more and more precious to me. They were in my heart, and in my way. In 1890, I went forth as a second though to Finland for a great Conference held at Helsinki, where about eighty delegates gathered together, and the devotional meetings held in the Freemason's beautiful hall were thrown open to the public. It was my first experience of speaking through an interpreter, and on the last day, when I was crucified with Christ, I was moved upon the large audience in a remarkable way; at home and abroad, the supreme need of proclaiming the 'Evangel'—the Gospel of the shining light of the Son of God—and clothes each one with the Holy Ghost, and preach the Cross in all its aspects, as Paul the Apostle preached it; and then will come the revival we look for, as the Lord returns for His own.

Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh inwardly in us, unto the glory of Christ Jesus unto . . . the ages, Amen.
Examples of Penn-Lewis’s booklets, translated into German, include the following:

According to Penn-Lewis’s 1896 journal, she decided to lecture on “God’s Army of Women who Publish the Tidings,” before realizing that the delegates had endured gender prejudice and were eager to know “the mind of God in the matter.”

1587 Penn-Lewis’s booklets, translated into German, are entitled: (from top to bottom, and from left to right) New Life, Don’t Look, and Hints for Workers, Take it Patiently, Hints for Guidance, Far Above All, (and on the far left) Time or Eternity, and Do not Fret. The Donald Gee Center, Doncaster, provided copies of these booklets.

1588 The Donald Gee Center, Doncaster, provided copies of Penn-Lewis lecture diary.
The following eight pages from Penn-Lewis's diary is an account of the gender prejudice she encountered in Sweden during the 1896 YWCA Convention. 1589

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1589 The Donald Gee Center, Doncaster, provided copies of Penn-Lewis’s travel diary. Much of her diary is included in M. Gerrard’s, Mrs. Jessie Penn-Lewis: A Memoir. (London: The Overcomer Book Room, 1930)
Friday of 18th I went to the Gereym House for Prayer to speak to the clergymen with them. The Pastor interpreted that he had a paper full with a few lines and asked me - Are you friend? - A long deal.

Sold Stafford House - The seller, Peter Stafford, was well disposed - the house was sold to Daniel "... and he said that he had sold it to the Lord..." Mrs. Stafford, a great woman, gave me the house, the house to the Lord..." Mrs. Stafford, a great woman, gave me the house, the house to the Lord..."

English - I had to talk to them by Mr. Squares at the right of God...

French - a long deal...
Keswick.

In the letter below, Penn-Lewis objects to her exclusion from addressing mixed gatherings at

[Letter content]

Dear [Recipient],

As for recording the personal limitations of the female attendees, I am aware of various constraints, and I fully understand your concerns. However, I believe that the situation is not as dire as you portray it. The fact is, we have witnessed a remarkable shift in attitudes and behaviors over the years. The prohibitions and restrictions that once held sway are gradually being lifted, thanks to the tireless efforts of those who fought for equality.

In the reminiscences of earlier days, we may find it hard to reconcile with the notion of women being denied access to certain events. But times have changed significantly. The modern world is far more inclusive and diverse. It is my hope that this progress will continue unabated, and that the barriers we once faced will eventually become a distant memory.

Yours sincerely,

[Signature]
(3) The meetings in the Pavilion the succeeding year (1906) were
arranged, I believe, by the Trustees, and a Chairman appointed, so
that after Mr. Paynter's year these open meetings in the Pavilion
were officially sanctioned by the Keswick Authorities.

Now after these arrangements in the past if the Pavilion open meetings
for me are to cease I fear it will appear that "Keswick" has taken a
step of retrogression. If they had continued as arranged only by Mr.
Paynter, and if no official sanction had been given by the appointing
of a Chairman, and the announcement in the Programme, their cessation
now could the more easily be explained, and I could have reverted to
the open meetings arranged by others, with the Keswick Authorities free
of any reflection.

It will also be of very grave importance to the whole Church of
Christ, if "Keswick" officially sets its face against Women speaking to
mixed audiences, when at this time God is using Women in a very marked
way, and the whole current of life moving throughout the (spiritual)
Church is toward clear and open ground for Women in the work of God.

Then as regards my own position, it makes it very difficult. In my
contact with the Convention attenders at Keswick I have always checked,
and combatted every word of criticism over any action of the Trustees,
and invariably endeavoured to present the right light on the difficulti-
ties of those in authority, so that any who have spoken to me have
left me with a contented spirit. I say this simply to emphasise that
any course of action on my part, which appears in the least degree to
be contrary to the attitude of my colleagues, is very painful to me; y
yet I have to face the fact that after all these years of open meetings
on the Sundays at Keswick, I am bound to enter any opening presented
to me, where I can give those who cannot attend the Ladies' Meetings,
the message laid upon me.

As regards the forthcoming Convention I have been asked to take the
services in one of the Chapels, and I have had no alternative but to
accept the invitation, but I can also see that very much difficulty
would be avoided if the Pavilion open meetings were continued, for then
there would be no unrest, and no comment. The people have now accepted
them as meeting their wishes, and the large number of brethren, from
other lands, whom I personally know, would fall in to the arrangements
without questioning the attitude of the Authorities.
I do not know whether you have weighed the matter from all these points of view, but I feel I ought to frankly put them before you. I can honestly say that it is the welfare of Keswick, I have at heart, with a real desire that we should present to the world an united attitude. How much I have been urged from many quarters to courses of action that would have broken this public attitude of unity, I cannot tell you, but if it is possible to keep in line, without the sacrifice of principle and disobedience to God. I desire at any personal cost to maintain unity.

I have said nothing of the seal of God upon these open meetings, for you will understand that it is difficult for me to do so, and yet I see that under special circumstances the Apostle Paul was compelled to speak of the way that God had sealed his message. I therefore will tell you that recently I was speaking at a Workers' Conference, with a Visor presiding whom I had never met before, and it was with great astonishment that I heard him tell the audience in his introductory words, that, as a C.M.S. Deputation, he had moved about considerably in Great Britain, and he had found large numbers of Church of England clergy acknowledge to him great blessing through the messages God had given to Keswick.

Again one of our Keswick Speakers recently told me that he had been amused to find at last a "Keswick" what large numbers of people had gone up to Keswick especially to get the message which God had given me! I am perfectly aware it is the message — and not the messenger — which is sought after, but those two simple statements, out of many others, show that the great importance of the decision concerning the continuance of these open meetings in the Pavilion, is not personal, but is of very widespread importance both to Keswick, and to the Church of God, for the reasons I have already mentioned.

The easy path for me would be not to write this letter, but just to go forward agreeing to any other arrangements proposed to me for the Sundays, but loyalty to my Keswick colleagues in foreseeing the comment and restlessness which any alterations in the past arrangements will occasion among the people, makes it clear that it is my duty to put before you some points of view which may not have occurred to you.

Yours faithfully,

Hopkins' reply ignores her reasoned objections to gender-bias. He simply asks her to overlook the accolades from others (albeit praise from men who were grateful for her ministry). He suggests that the Keswick schedule will continue as planned. She may speak where invited, though clearly she was not invited to speak in the main Pavilion. 1390

1390 Mr. Brynmor Pierce Jones, of Wales, provided copies of this correspondence between Penn-Lewis and Hopkins.
 Twelve New Centres Alight in India.

BY MRS. PENN-LEWIS.

A CABLE from India sends the glad news "Great victories, twelve stations since Sunday, inform us. In London, history is against; the historians and literary critics are to see how adventure into new fields of God's work to preach, without authority, and simply retail the gospel, to Dr. Orr? what they follow the wisdom of the wise. Utterly will the critics have nothing to say about God? Is Christ a natural development from crude superstition and idolatry, or is He the natural origin? The so-called critical sages say that there is no true, but a natural process of evolution."

Having settled this fundamental theory, record must be rearranged accordingly, whatever the critics may say. "The thing that to a historian is incomprehensible, and to the Levitical priesthood an invention of God, the scribes and Pharisees naturally suggest that it would be more like to have theory be governed by the same laws as to the body, in which He has its own laws. If the Levitical functions of the Word, the Church, and the Levitical ordinances are dealt with at length, then the religious duties and religious books are taken, and the case the inquiry substantially consists in how archeology and ecclesiastical records are used to show the connection."

The "men who were very teaching, really stirred and humble. One of them said, 'Forgive our lack of wisdom and of comprehension,' and he prayed in that strain."

In Keswick they kept repeating that the believers must be awakened before any results can be expected. Perhaps it is the secret here, and you must not lose time about it, for 'the days are evil indeed.'"

From Bombay also comes the news that all over India in the branches of the Y.W.C.A. the month of August is to be devoted (evening meetings, Bible-readings, day to prayer) to the same subject, for Revival.

"Here is a lovely thing. Three missionaries returned from the Calcutta Ceme- teries Conference with such shining faces that a young woman who saw them in a meeting went home and shut herself up in her room, seeking the secret of what she had beheld."

"Here, again, is what Miss Abrams wrote to a graduate girl, one teacher, and a mother from the A. High School, all fine young women who know English, and who are seeking blessing (this is the fulfill- ment of Isa. ii, 2)."
THE LIFE OF FAITH.

August 23rd.

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Appendix C: Penn-Lewis & Early Keswick Publications

Appendix C is a near-exhaustive compilation of books, articles, journals, pamphlets, and leaflets edited or written by Jessie Penn-Lewis. This Appendix also includes biographical works on Mrs. Penn-Lewis, as well as publications by prominent Keswick authors. Titles marked by an asterisk indicate that though the title was cited in the Keswick literature, I have thus far not been able to locate the piece. The authors associated with the early Keswick and affiliate conventions have also been included in this appendix.

Articles, Books, Pamphlets and Leaflets

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Penn-Lewis, J.  

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"Assurance of Answered Prayer," The Inner Life series, no. 15, Leicester: The Overcomer Book Room, [1900?]

Penn-Lewis, J.  
"The Atoning Work of Christ." Leicester: The Overcomer Book Room, [1900?] Via Crucis series, no. 4

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"Be of the Same Mind: An Address to Workers." London: Marshall Brothers, 1900?, Words to Workers, no. 6*

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"Bend us O Lord (Plyg Ni)," London: Marshall Brothers, 1900? Re-printed from the Life of Faith*

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Penn-Lewis, J.  I Can, I Can’t. Wheaton: Wheaton College Archives, Steven Barabas Collection, no publisher, no date


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Penn-Lewis, J. *The Cross and the Natural Man.* Bournemouth: The Overcomer Book Room, no date


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Penn-Lewis, J. "Delivered Unto Death for Jesus' Sake: An Address to Workers." London: Marshall Brothers, 1900?, *Words to Workers,* no. 7 *

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Penn-Lewis, J. *Dying to Live.* Fort Washington: Christian Literature Crusade, no date

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*Face to Face: Glimpses into the Inner Life of Moses.* London: Marshall Brothers, 1900, Leicester: The Overcomer Book Room, 192-?

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“Far Above All.” London: Marshall Brothers, 1900?, The New Life series, no. 3 *

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“Fret not Thyself” London: Marshall Brothers, 1900?, The New Life series, no. 5 *

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*The Gate to Life: the Cross and the Sinner, the Cross and the Christian, the Life-side of the Cross.* Leicester: The Overcomer Book Room, 1900?

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*Thy Hidden Ones: Union with Christ as Traced in the Song of Songs.* London: Marshall Brothers, 1899

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“Hill-Top Prayer!: The Rod of Victory.” London: Marshall Brothers, 1900?, *Words to Workers*, no. 4 *

Penn-Lewis, J.  

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“How to Bind the Strong Man.” Leicester: The Overcomer Book Room, 1900?, The Inner Life series, no. 7 *

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Penn-Lewis, J. “Human Depravity in Relation to the Body of Christ.” London: The Overcomer Book Room, no date, The Inner Life series, no. 9


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Penn-Lewis, J.  “Overcoming the Accuser.” The Inner Life series, No. 16 Dorset: The Overcomer Literature Trust, 1900?, “Words to Workers”, no. 11


Penn-Lewis, J.  “The Peril of the Spiritual Church.” Warfare series, no. 7. Leicester: The Excelsior Press, no date

Penn-Lewis, J.  “Persistency in Prayer.” London: Marshall Brothers, 1900?, The Pathway series, no. 8 *


Penn-Lewis, J. *Power to Witness.* Bournemouth: The Overcomer Book Room, no date

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Penn-Lewis, J. "The Prize of the Throne." London: Marshall Bros., 1900?, The Inner Life series, no. 3 *


Penn-Lewis, J. *Sanctuary Life in the Psalms.* Northants: Stanley L. Hunt Printers Ltd., no date


Penn-Lewis, J. *The Secret of Victory in Missionary Prayer.* Chicago: Board of Foreign Missions of the Baptist General Conference of America, 19??


Penn-Lewis, J.  *Stand Unshaken...: Épes. Vi., 11-1.* Leicester: The Overcomer Book Room, 1900?, The Overcomer reprints, no. 2 *


Penn-Lewis, J.  *Take it Patiently.* London: Marshall Brothers, 1900?, The “New Life” series, no. 6 *

Penn-Lewis, J.  "They Came to Marah": or, *How God Proves Us!* Richmond: Y.W.C.A. Institute, 1900?


Penn-Lewis, J.  "The Throne Life and Victory." Wimbledon: South Africa General Mission, 1900?, *South Africa General Mission Booklet* series, no. 30 *

Penn-Lewis, J. *Two Aspects of the Cross.* Bournemouth: The Overcomer Book Room, no date


Penn-Lewis, J. *What is Your Prayer Life?* Leicester: The Overcomer Office, 1900? *

Penn-Lewis, J. *Where Also Their Lord was Crucified.* "Warfare" series, no. 6. London: The Overcomer Book Room, no date

Penn-Lewis, J. "Why the Tree?" London: Marshall Brothers, 1900?, *The Via Crucis* series, no. 2 *

Penn-Lewis, J. *The Word of the Cross.* Leicester: The Overcomer Book Room?, 1900?


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| Penn-Lewis, J. | “A Freed Prayer Circle!” *The Life of Faith*, December 5, 1906, 1117-1119 |
| Penn-Lewis, J. | “Our Summer Outing.” *Our Onward Way*, August 1895, 89-90 |
Foreign Language Books and Booklets

The Donald Gee Center in Doncaster holds the largest collection of Penn-Lewis books in foreign translation. While we know her work was translated in to many other languages, the Donald Gee Center offers the following titles, in 7 different foreign languages, as listed below.

**German**

*Awakening in Wales*
*Abandonment*
*Deliverance*
*Face to Face*
*Glorious Secret*
*Much Fruit*
*New Life Series*
*Pathway*

**Swedish**

*Conflict in the Heavenlies*
*Glorious Secret*
*Loneliness*
*The Message of the Cross***
*Power in Prayer*
*Pathway*
*Self-Life*

**Danish**

*Deliverance*

**Dutch**

*Deliverance*

**Russian**

*Glorious Secret*
*Self-Life*

**French**

*The Cross of Calvary*
*Soul and Spirit*

**Welsh**

*Communion*
*Glorious Secret*
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<tr>
<td>Jewett, P.</td>
<td><em>The Victorious Life Movement is it Scriptural.</em></td>
<td>Swengel: The Bible Truth Depot</td>
<td>no date</td>
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<td>Macgregor, G.H.C.</td>
<td><em>A Holy Life and How to Live it.</em></td>
<td>New York: Revell</td>
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<td>Macgregor, G.H.C.</td>
<td><em>Praying in the Holy Ghost.</em></td>
<td>New York: Revell</td>
<td>1897</td>
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<td>Metcalfe, J.C.</td>
<td><em>The Angry Prophet.</em></td>
<td>Fort Washington: The Christian Literature Crusade</td>
<td>no date</td>
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<td>Metcalfe, J.C.</td>
<td><em>Be Filled.</em></td>
<td>Dorset: The Overcomer Literature Trust</td>
<td>no date</td>
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<td>Metcalfe, J.C.</td>
<td><em>The Bible &amp; Counselling.</em></td>
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<td>Metcalfe, J.C.</td>
<td><em>The Bible and the Human Mind.</em></td>
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<td>Metcalfe, J.C.</td>
<td><em>The Bible and the Spirit-Filled Life.</em></td>
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<td>Metcalfe, J.C.</td>
<td><em>Christ our Life.</em></td>
<td>Dorset: The Overcomer Literature Trust</td>
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<td>Metcalfe, J.C.</td>
<td><em>“Christian” Paganism.</em></td>
<td>Dorset: The Overcomer Literature Trust</td>
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<td>Metcalfe, J.C.</td>
<td><em>The Christian Warfare.</em></td>
<td>Dorset: Overcomer Publications</td>
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<td>Metcalfe, J.C.</td>
<td><em>The Cross and The Christian: Three Conference Addresses.</em></td>
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Metcalfe, J.C. From the Cross into Glory. Dorset: The Overcomer Literature Trust, no date

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**Journals**

Published quarterly, *The Overcomer* journal was edited by Penn-Lewis served and printed during the years: 1909, 1910, 1911, 1913, 1914, 1920, 1921, 1922, 1923, 1924, 1925, 1926, 1927. Penn-Lewis suspended publication of *The Overcomer* between 1915-1919, due to World War One. *The Overcomer* journal is available through The Overcomer Literature Trust, at http://www.freedomsing.com/overcomer/

Penn-Lewis also contributed to other journals such as, *Christian Press, The Christian,* and *Our Onward Way.*
Keswick and Holiness Journals

A full account of the Keswick Convention sessions was initially published in 1882, by *The Keswick Convention*, which was renamed *The Keswick Convention Week*, and eventually became *The Keswick Week*.

In 1874, a monthly account of Robert Pearsall Smith and Hannah Whitall Smith's ministry was published under the title: *The Christian Pathway of Power*. Robert Pearsall Smith edited the journal. In 1879 *The Christian Pathway of Power* was renamed *The Life of Faith* and was published weekly. *The Life of Faith* was the main publication of the Keswick Convention, and remained in print for over one century. Penn-Lewis regularly contributed to *Life of Faith*, particularly during the years of the Welsh revival (1904-1908).

The American, Methodist Martin Wells Knapp established *The Revivalist*, an American Holiness publication, in 1899. Wells Knapp served as editor, though the publication was renamed God's Revivalist in 1901. Founder of the International Holiness Union and Prayer League, Wells Knapp used the proceeds from *The Revivalist* to build God's Bible School and Missionary Training Home in Cincinnati, Ohio, in 1900.

The Keswick Convention lectures are available through the British Library and are listed below as they appear in the online catalog.


Cumming, J.E.


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The Keswick Convention in Print, 1944. The Keswick Message for to-day, given by accredited speakers, according to the programme drawn up for the proposed “Keswick in London,” Convention ... prepared in collaboration with the trustees of Keswick Convention. Reprinted from the Life of Faith. London: Marshall, Morgan & Scott, 1946, 8o.

The Keswick Convention in London, 1945. Full report of the addresses given at the Convention ... held in Westminster Chapel ... July 16-20, 1945, etc. London: Marshall, Morgan & Scott, 1945, 8o.