Editor's Note: In 1987 Asbury Theological Seminary received a generous grant from the Pew Charitable Trust to undertake a major Wesleyan-Holiness Study Project. Dr. Mel Dieter became the Director of this project which from 1987-1990 regularly brought together a group of scholars from a variety of traditions to present and discuss a series of papers on subjects which would ultimately demonstrate the widespread impact of the Wesleyan-holiness movement on American religious life and culture. In November, 1988 while the scholars associated with this project were meeting at Asbury, the Society for Pentecostal Studies was invited to hold its annual meeting on the campus of the Seminary. This was a momentous event for it marked the first time a major group of Pentecostals had been hosted by an institution so closely identified with the Wesleyan-holiness tradition. Mel Dieter presented the following article as a plenary address to a joint session of the SPS membership, the scholars associated with the Wesleyan-Holiness Study Project, and interested persons from the Asbury community. It is printed below as it was given, November 11, 1988.

The Wesleyan/Holiness and Pentecostal Movements: Commonalities, Confrontation, and Dialogue

Melvin E. Dieter*

First, a word of personal privilege!

In venturing into our discussions, I was again reminded of the "inwardness" of any such effort. I have tried, in my academic studies to be true to those standards which seek to promote some kind of objectivity in my writings. But as Henry F. May points out in a 1979 essay on intellectual and religious history, most of us long ago gave up the hope of finding scientific truth in our historical study and research. With him. we conclude that it is much more realistic only to expect to gain somewhere along the line "a usable insight or two." We turn to this alternative. May says:

... because the data do not tell us what they are for; the answers don't generate the questions. Each historian has to decide what he is trying to do, and why and how to go about it according to every thing he has learned, not just in graduate school but in life. Thus we will have as many visions as we have historians. Gradually most historians may come to agree on some things, but whatever consensus is reached will continue to be fleeting and unstable.¹

*Dr. Melvin E. Dieter, an ordained minister of the Wesleyan Church, retires from the faculty and administration of Asbury Theological Seminary, September 1, 1990, where he has served as Provost, and as Professor of Church History and Historical Theology. He will make his home in Lyndhurst, Virginia.

So, with that caveat supported by the venerable Henry May, I would like to review with you some of the issues which rise from my vision of the relationships and responses of the Pentecostal and holiness movements to one another since the Pentecostal revival began to surface at the beginning of the twentieth century. In that process, some "useful insight" may surface which can be helpful to all of us in the ongoing studies of our two movements.

For the sake of convenience, I will draw on my current research and writing projects to assist us with whatever analysis we may do in so restricted an effort. In our current Wesleyan-Holiness Study Project, supported by a grant from the Pew Charitable trusts, we are bringing the Wesleyan holiness/higher-life revival movement under the most extensive and intensive study it has yet experienced. One of the major results of this project will certainly be to treat more adequately the questions generated out of these more than eighty years of relationships between the Holiness and Pentecostal Movements. Because of the extensive scholarly networks linked to the scholar-research group working at the heart of the project, we have established a new circle of interaction which we believe will produce exceptional benefits in the future for both the academic and religious worlds. We invite all of you to learn more about the project while you are here and to become active in it in some way.

I must also try to tell you what a deep sense of satisfaction I have in meeting with the Society for Pentecostal Studies here on Asbury Seminary's campus. Asbury is an institution rooted deeply in the Methodist-holiness tradition. It is an interdenominational school which serves as a unique "bridge of communication" between the United Methodist Church and the holiness churches and agencies. In this function it has, with some success, kept a flow of mutually revitalizing relationships moving back and forth between two religious communities which, at times, seem to be separated by a chasm of divergent viewpoints too wide to be spanned. Thus far, there has been sufficient mutual commitment to a common set of Wesleyan values on both sides to allow the relationship to be fruitful in spite of real and perceptual differences at many other points.

But I say all of that only to raise my banner of hope for the present moment. In my view, the basic theological and experiential commitments of both the Pentecostal and the holiness movements are rooted historically in the holiness/higher-life revival milieu of the nineteenth century. I have reminded Donald Dayton that when he uses the categories he does for defining the roots of Pentecostal theology as he does in his latest book,2 he could just as well have made the title, The Development of Nineteenth Century Holiness Theology. The same mother

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