

Holiness in the 21st Century

(a working title)

Before us is a new door in the Church requiring a compelling, guiding vision that is theologically rooted and outwardly directed on transformation that is not sectarian, not isolationist, not enclavish, not dogmatic, but integrative, transformational, apostolic, and missional. These are characteristics of the message of scriptural Holiness which, when articulated well, can help churches and leaders to greater understanding, motivation, and unity. It requires new terms, new constructs, new voices, new alliances, but old, very old principles. This is a discussion and a call regarding the identity and mission of the Church for the next generation and beyond. This is a time for those with the Wesleyan-Holiness tradition to generously give their heritage, and confidently rise to clear articulation in perfect harmony with the call of God upon the Church for the coming decades.

The future of the Church will be much more defined by missional and theological streams of thought rather than institutional and structural lines. Organizations will morph into networks. Contracts will become partnerships. Negotiated statements will become relationships. In this dynamic and messy environment the clear voice of God's call to Holiness can serve in unprecedented ways for unity and direction.

To that end, the Wesleyan Holiness Study Project (WHSP) was begun in Spring of 2004 after nearly two years of work bringing the initial groups together in commitment to the project. Academic exploration by the group is to the end of serving the mission of the Church. Hence the commitment of denominations has secured the partnership of those churches with academicians in achieving the outcomes. Commitments have been made by:

- Board of General Superintendents – Church of the Nazarene
- Board of Bishops – Free Methodist Church
- National Commander – Salvation Army
- Executive Director – Church of God Ministries, Anderson, IN
- Bishop – Shield of Faith
- Council of Bishops – Church of God in Christ
- Moderator – Brethren in Christ
- Bishop – International Pentecostal Holiness Church
- President – International Church of the Foursquare Gospel
- President – Christian and Missionary Alliance, Canada

Many other groups are looking for clear understanding of the Holiness message. This includes mainline protestant, as well as newer groups like Vineyard and Calvary Chapel. Further, those in the Reformed stream of the Church express interest in dialogue and deeper comprehension regarding this significant movement and message that has affected the shape of the Church around the world. Those in the Wesleyan Holiness tradition have a leadership responsibility to provide better articulation of this message, its influence on the history of the Church and, more importantly, its impact on shaping the future of the Church's global mission.

The proposed book will provide a source of re elevating the importance of the Holiness message for a new century of mission in the Church. It is intended to be a

theologically sound cooperative description of the timeless message carried in particular by the churches represented in the project.

Pastors, students, and informed lay leaders will profit greatly from this thoughtful call to Holiness on the part of a diverse group of authors from many denominational backgrounds. In that fact there is also a clear message of unity in mission that is conveyed surrounding the common heritage and commitment to Holiness of life.

It is my hope that you will see this opportunity to assist church leaders with helpful material that meets an increasing felt need in churches from all traditions. Thank you for your consideration.

Serving Him,
Kevin W. Mannoia

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