

# IN THE BEAUTY OF HOLINESS: WESLEYAN THEOLOGY, WORSHIP, AND THE AESTHETIC

by  
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Paul Tillich once commented, “I always learned more from pictures than from theological books.”<sup>[1]</sup> While Tillichian scholars might debate the accuracy of this remark, there can be no doubt concerning his aesthetic sensitivity and his love for the fine arts. To this day, Tillich remains twentieth-century Protestantism’s foremost spokesperson for theology and aesthetics.

The unfortunate problem for Wesleyans interested in theology and aesthetics is that John Wesley and his theological antecedents devoted few words to the aesthetic.<sup>[2]</sup> To announce that Wesley completely lacked aesthetic sensibilities would be premature and incorrect, however. Examples of his own aesthetic judgments and his thoughts on certain issues may be found scattered throughout his *Journal*, in certain poems, and in three short essays published in his later years.<sup>[3]</sup> Nevertheless, it is clear that beauty, the sublime, taste, and the senses were not a primary concern for Wesley; he was, after all, a man possessed by the tasks of evangelism and the organization of the Methodist societies. The matter of the relationship of Wesley’s aesthetic sensibilities to corporate or personal worship is further complicated by the fact that he never left the communion of Anglicanism. By formally remaining loyal to the Church of England and its traditions, Wesley never had to formulate a Methodist liturgy or consider related matters such as the aesthetics of worship.

It is fortunate for this study, however, that a Wesleyan discussion of theology, worship, and the aesthetic does not begin and end with Wesley and eighteenth-century Methodism. The aesthetic has always been a component of the Christian worship experience and, I believe, of theology as well. Reconsidering the aesthetic and its numerous benefits and diverse dimensions may be beneficial for a large number of Wesleyans, including liturgists, professors, ministers of the arts, theologians, church historians, and artists. Although this discussion is ultimately directed toward exploring how greater aesthetic sensitivity can transform Wesleyan theology and worship, it is necessary to first consider why the aesthetic merits our attention and can be of value to Wesleyans.

Problematic Issues and Features of Aesthetics

“The aesthetic” is an unwieldy name for a subject with multiple dimensions. How the term is defined directly affects how we are able to understand the nature of the aesthetic and how aesthetic thinking and doing may be applied to or further encouraged in Wesleyan theology and worship. This section will thus attempt to meet two objectives: (1) to respond to problematic issues related to aesthetics, Wesleyanism, and worship; and (2) to identify some of the features and dimensions of the aesthetic.

One objection to an aesthetic approach to theology and worship is raised by asking another question: Why not the arts? Critical aesthetics appears to be too narrow a category, too parochial a discipline. The arts, on the other hand, would seem to allow theorists and practitioners greater freedoms. Indeed, aesthetics has traditionally been understood as the philosophy of the fine arts. In truth, this improper identification of aesthetics has resulted in two centuries of diminished influence as the area has been treated as a subcategory of the arts instead of as an independent but related critical methodology and subject area. Contemporary *theological* aesthetics fares even worse. The term is still unfamiliar in many theological circles and lacks adequate exposure through prominent advocates, publication, and curricular development. This situation in part may be because in the past theological aesthetics generally has been a European and Roman Catholic concern.

The arts, however, have played a significant role in the history of the church, offer a more familiar and tangible approach to worship, and have been the subject of many Christian studies in the last two decades. The general availability of material concerning Christianity and the arts stands as a ready resource for those individuals interested in these matters. One of the most helpful discussions is Wilson Yates’ *The Arts in Theological Education* (1987), which examines the results of an extensive survey of theological school curricula. In his summaries Yates offers excellent theological and social rationales for the arts, information on institutional resources, and suggestions on how we may better utilize the arts in public and private worship. It is unfortunate but hardly surprising that no such study exists for aesthetics.

Closer examination reveals that aesthetics is *not* subservient to the arts. All art mediums, high and low, traditional and contemporary, are encompassed by the overarching philosophical category of the aesthetic proper. This distinction may be difficult to see, however, since “aesthetics” and “the aesthetic” often are nebulous terms. Part of the challenge facing aesthetics, both internally and externally, is the multivalence of these terms. Aesthetics and the aesthetic may encompass the following: types of objects, varieties of experience, certain topics, perceptive and organizational methods, and more. Aesthetics is, of course, a branch of *critical philosophy*. The aesthetic is also a category of objects—“aesthetica” — which

stimulate aesthetic encounters and reflection, as well as a *quality* of experience, whether interpreted according to traditional or postmodern categories (e.g., beauty, the grotesque, and the sublime; or destruction, void, and disjunction).<sup>[4]</sup> The aesthetic may also be discussed as a type of *perspective* or interpretive framework, a hermeneutic that “refers primarily to a mode of apprehending the real, or primarily to a mode of articulating the real.”<sup>[5]</sup>

At this point it would be helpful to consider the sublime, an aesthetic category that was extremely significant to eighteenth-century theorists, as a means for further expanding our concept of the aesthetic and for counterbalancing the twentieth-century aesthetic bias toward the fine arts. The sublime is also indispensable as a bridge from aesthetics to theology, in general, and to the doctrines of creation and revelation in particular. Like aesthetics, the sublime is a multivalent term or concept. It would therefore be helpful to consider at least four characteristics of the sublime. One aspect of the sublime is its communication through psychological effects, most notably awe, reverence, and a feeling of one’s cosmic significance.<sup>[6]</sup> The fundamental awe produced in an encounter with *otherness* compares favorably with the religious experience of the Other in the “feeling of absolute dependence”<sup>[7]</sup> or awareness of “*mysterium tremendum*.”<sup>[8]</sup> The natural world, which is frequently a catalyst of human feelings of sublimity, is another constituent element of the sublime. The natural sublime was popularized by Romantic art and literature of the nineteenth century, but the awe-inspiring power of nature has also been made known to us by countless Christian poets and mystics. Another dimension of the sublime is the mathematical sublime, whose existence is signified by words such as “absolute” and “infinite.” These terms are indicators of the mathematical sublime’s duality which defies full comprehension: it exists simultaneously in theory *and* in reality.<sup>[9]</sup>

A final aspect of the sublime, implicit in Kant’s discussion of the dynamically sublime, is the conceptual sublime.<sup>[10]</sup> This category of abstract ideas includes freedom, war, and love, as well as theological concepts like sin, grace, forgiveness, omnipresence, and omnipotence. Relationality is a significant and necessary addition to this list. Like their mathematical counterparts, the conceptual sublime is transcendental but nevertheless real. These a priori fundamentals and ideas are existential realities or human creations that also demonstrate a certain aesthetic nature or influence upon humans. According to Alex Garcia-Rivera, a contemporary proponent of theological aesthetics, such concepts and realities may be described as the “created invisible,” a middle ground that exists between our uncreated and invisible God and God’s visible and created partners, humanity and the world.<sup>[11]</sup> Although the language of the conceptually sublime might seem Platonic, this variety of the sublime is a collection of ideas, relationships, institutions, and emotions that exhibit both the appearance of transcendence and the ability to affect humans aesthetically.

## The Significance of the Aesthetic to Wesleyans

Wesleyans may rightfully object that we lack a definite aesthetic tradition. This problem may be traced back to John Wesley himself, yet he did not lack aesthetic sensitivity. The love of poetry and the ability for writing it was Samuel Wesley, Sr.'s legacy to several of his children, including John. Whether in his informal *Journal* entries or in carefully constructed sermons, quotations from Bunyan, Pope, Prior, and other famed poets appear frequently. The essays on taste, genius, and musical theory all attest to Wesley's later interest in aesthetic issues, while observations of natural and designed landscape, architecture, fine art, and musical performances are regularly recorded in the *Journal* over a span of more than four decades.

The primary problem with Wesley's aesthetic observations is the lack of consistency. Although the *Journal* observations rarely indicate that Wesley had any reservations about making aesthetic judgments, the quality of his comments indicate that aesthetics was one field in which this cleric was a layperson. Observations of the natural landscape reveal the simple perspective of a boy who was raised in a rural setting. Positive assessments of gardens and special trips to England's most famous Picturesque landscape gardens reflect the opinions and social status of a mid-eighteenth-century gentleman, as does Wesley's surprising appreciation for the elegant decoration of residences belonging to royalty, nobility, and the gentry. When speaking of church architecture, Wesley's recognition of aesthetic planning and building technique demonstrates a level of education and sophistication that would be expected from one who lived amidst the surroundings of Christ Church, Oxford's largest and most aristocratic college. But Wesley's comments about a Rubens painting depict him as more uncultured. Such inconsistency hardly provides a solid foundation for Wesleyans interested in the relationship between Christian faith and high culture.

Another disturbing feature of Wesley's aesthetic observations is the personal conflict that appears in the *Journal* entries. His affirmations, eloquent words, and the occasional use of poetry as a means to express his feelings clearly indicate that Wesley enjoyed his aesthetic encounters. Yet as early as 1738 he felt compelled to qualify his positive remarks by reminding himself of his evangelistic calling and God's higher spiritual priorities:

But I seek another country, and therefore am content to be a wanderer upon earth....

It exceeds anything which I have seen in Great Britain. And yet the eye is not satisfied with seeing! It never can, till we see God....

But where will it be when the earth is burned up, and the elements melt with fervent heat? ...

And must all these be burned up? What will become of us, then, if we set our hearts upon them? ...

Nay, at present I must be about my Father's business: But I trust to meet them in a still lovelier place....

And must all these fine buildings be burned up? Yea "Earth and heaven destroyed, Nor left even one in the mighty void."<sup>[12]</sup>

The Journal entries give the appearance of rationalizations for and emotional expurgations of the aesthetic pleasure that Wesley obviously received from these experiences. The fact that he attempted to distance himself from this pleasure when recording his later reflections cannot negate the fact that Wesley's senses and emotions were stirred. If we listen closely to Wesley's words, we can hear a sigh of appreciation escape his lips as he doffs his artist's chapeau to pull on the weather-stained hat of an evangelist who must return to more "important" spiritual matters.

It is unfortunate that positive responses to aesthetic worship experiences do not appear in Wesley's writings.<sup>[13]</sup> In part because of this lack of clarity, the aesthetic traditions which do exist within the history of the Wesleyan/Holiness movement are as diverse as the many groups which have come to populate its schismatic history. Unfortunately, the same may also be said of the traditions regarding worship in general. Neither aesthetic traditions nor worship liturgy may be cited as the cohesive force that provides this movement with its unique identity. Only Wesleyan theology can fill this role.

A story might help to illustrate the diversity of Wesleyan worship. Imagine, if you will, that the proverbial Martian visited our planet and began to randomly ask members of Wesleyan-Holiness denominations to describe worship in their churches. The responses to its survey might highlight some of the following influences on Wesleyan worship identity, liturgy, and worship styles: Anglican order and the *Book of Common Prayer*; Wesley's open-air preaching and efficient small group structures; Finneyite and frontier revivalism; nineteenth-century schisms, the holiness revivals, and the "come-outer" movements; African-American gospel traditions and experience; the Salvation Army's public ministry and unique terminology; Azusa Street and early Pentecostalism; the charismatic revolution of recent decades; and seeker services directed at the upper social classes. Our alien would also have to account for those demographic factors affecting congregational worship: mean age, racial and social composition, economic power, and education. This extraterrestrial would also need to be sensitive to geographic influences: urban or rural settings; regional culture; and national culture. And what would this visitor think when it visits churches that offer parishioners multiple services in differing worship styles? After processing all of the data, the Martian probably would arrive at one of two possible conclusions: (1) the worship of

Wesleyan denominations is stylistically diverse but theologically unified; or (2) these people are severely confused, if not schizophrenic!

This whimsical story includes a moral for Wesleyans about their worship. Through illustration we rediscover that worship “in the Wesleyan tradition” ought to be about the former-being Wesleyan-than the latter-possessing a shared worship tradition. The actual practice of our collective faiths is marked by a diversity that is greater than the sum of our denominational parts. Yet, while Wesleyans lack a liturgical center, a unifying worship tradition, there is a *theological* center, a commitment to the basic doctrinal positions of John Wesley, that distinguishes his heirs and, admittedly, influences (or should) the theological content of worship as well.

The Wesleyan-Holiness movement’s lack of a distinct aesthetic tradition and clearly defined relationships between aesthetics, theology, and worship does not mean that the movement is completely lacking traditions and roles for the aesthetic. What is missing are the theoretical and practical frameworks necessary for effectively situating the aesthetic within the whole of Wesleyan theology and implementing it in Wesleyan worship. The development of a distinctively *Wesleyan* aesthetic likely would be a positive advance,<sup>[14]</sup> but other solutions already exist or are being developed. Interest in the aesthetic is already increasing.<sup>[15]</sup> Wesleyan-Holiness universities and colleges do, of course, offer programs and courses in arts and aesthetics, and the publication houses continually offer new musical, dramatic, poetic, and other artistic materials. What still is needed is the presence of the arts and aesthetics in divinity school programs that demonstrates both a progressive acceptance of the need for aesthetic-theological dialogue and the direct application of theology and the arts to pastoral development and parish ministry equipping.<sup>[16]</sup> United Methodist schools have been leading the way for over a decade, and their examples hopefully will be emulated by other Wesleyan divinity schools in the near future.<sup>[17]</sup>

## **The Aesthetic and Theological Communication**

Another objection to an aesthetic method is the unavoidable question of whether the aesthetic is truly necessary for theological discourse. The following discussion of “God-language” will follow the two forms of theological communication: primary discourse, the language of worship that *is* directed specifically *toward* God; and secondary discourse, the language or forms of theology that we use to talk *about* God.

The language of worship traditionally includes prayer, song, poetry, and praise, through which God is worshipped

via verbal communication. Yet other “languages” communicate our worship, as well. Painting, sculpture, architecture, dance, instrumental music, and drama all create and articulate alternative symbolic languages which may powerfully express the thoughts and feelings of worshipping individuals and communities. Aesthetic forms of worship allow worshippers to represent and re-present God’s glory and sublime nature, the mystery of divine activity, and the wonders of salvation.

It might be helpful to consider two forms of worship and their degree of aesthetic engagement as test cases. Both mysticism and rationalism, which are approximate opposites, might appear to exist as antiaesthetic forms of worship. Mystical worship tends toward immediate and unilateral encounter, so it is difficult to speak of a communicative form or aesthetic mediation. On the other hand, the mystical perception of God’s real presence occurs through the aesthetic experience of *glory*, the *sine qua non* of theophany, angelic visitation, and spiritual transfiguration in biblical descriptions. [18] When appearing in time and space, God’s presence [*Shekinah*] is manifested through glory. Ecstatic encounters with God’s glory may be interpreted aesthetically through all of the senses: divine presence is seen, heard, or felt, and visitation may also be accompanied by fragrance and sweetness. Thus, whether as a form or for its sensual qualities, ecstatic encounter may be discussed in aesthetic categories. The aesthetic also contributes to the environment of mystical worship: physically, whether one is located on a mountaintop or in an austere room-, bodily, through an individual’s posture; olfactorally, through the use of incense; and aurally, through silence, instrumental music, or chants.

Rationalistic theological discourse and liturgical monotony cannot help but engage the aesthetic sensibilities as well. While these restrained forms of worship might discourage *emotional* responses, their solemnity does not impede the experiencing of the aesthetic. While the aesthetic is related to the emotions, it is *also* related to form and order. Thus the slow cadence of a sermon read without vocal inflection creates a certain aesthetic form, as does the weekly recitation of a memorized creed. Even if a congregation finds these events dull, that does not make the worship less aesthetic. [19]

The sensation of pleasure, another once-important theme that modern aesthetics frequently ignores, is an essential aspect of aesthetic worship. Yet, as a philosophical discipline, aesthetics is concerned with the question of pleasurable value — value which is not based on the True or the Good, but upon the Beautiful. Aesthetic gratification is one of the needs that compels Christians to worship, and certainly the desire for an experience of spiritual beauty causes affective forms and language to be used in worship. But it is not just the beautiful act of worship which gives pleasure, but the result. If the chief end of humanity is to glorify God, the completed act of worship will certainly have a *moral* value for the worshipper

because the act accomplishes what is proper. However, the act also provides the Christian with *aesthetic* value through a sensation of pleasure or beauty derived from the process of worship rather than from conforming to an external requirement such as a Christian's spiritual duty.

Aesthetic pleasure may be gained whenever a Christian is engaged in the act of creating anything good. A precedent is found in God's own act of speaking, evaluating, and pleasuring at Creation. This is the point at which, from a Christian theological perspective, aesthetic value is introduced into the world.<sup>[20]</sup> When viewed thus, those creations which are directed toward God, whether they take the form of worship, church architecture, sculpture, or the composition of a *Requiem*, assume the highest aesthetic values. It is important to remember, however, that this is a *spiritual* aesthetic value; the orientation of aesthetic creations toward God does not guarantee their quality.

Aesthetic pleasure may also be received when the human senses are fully employed in worship. Unfortunately, in numerous Wesleyan worship traditions the full scope of the affective domain is frequently ignored. The sense of hearing is relied on heavily, as is sight, albeit to a lesser degree, but the senses of taste and smell may only be used when the Eucharist is received. The use of dance, hand-raising, and other bodily movements may now be typical of only some African-American and charismatic Wesleyan-Holiness congregations, but the expression of worship with the body and through the sense of touch were common to many Wesleyan churches in the past. Those persons interested in discovering more creative and meaningful worship practices would do well to consider aesthetic worship experiences which engage more, if not all, of the five human senses.

Western Christianity's theological words *about* God, or theology proper, are dominated by reason, often at the expense of the aesthetic. Yet this was not always the case. Pseudo-Dionysius' understanding of theology as "dissimilar similitudes" accentuated the binary nature of all theological discourse: God is familiar, but is also Other. Over time his emphases on methodological unity and simultaneity were lost and theological language eventually assumed one of two forms, positive or negative statements about God:

*Kataphasis* or affirmation is a matter of attributing to God all that is unrestrictedly good in human experience. We can thus speak intelligibly about God by predicating of him truth, justice, fidelity, and so forth, drawing on scriptural analogues, but also on human observation. This manner of speaking enables us to convey something of the reality of God, but it needs the qualification of *apophasis* or negation to in order

that the unconditionality of the divine being might be safeguarded. Apophatic theology refuses to predicate of God any quality which implies that he is limited or contingent. It delights in describing the divinity through words beginning with an alpha deprivative [-not] ... and with terms elevated above human experience by the addition of the prefix *hyper-*. From this angle God is viewed as the utterly Other; he is outside space and time, without beginning or end, not subject to passion nor limited by any of the constraints that characterize human life. [21]

Both positive and negative statements are necessary if theology is to offer a balanced description of God. Western thinkers have neglected the possibilities that exist in the theological language which begins with the mysterious, intuitive, and aesthetic. [22] Integration of aesthetic experience and insight is necessary if our theological method and vision are to be balanced. [23]

To the historical and methodological foundations of the claim that aesthetics is necessary for theology we add the witness of contemporary theology's self-understanding. Theo-logos is the creation of imaginative language for and about God:

Theology, in its attempt to analyze, criticize, and reconstruct the image/concept of God, is an expression of the continuing activity of the human imagination seeking to create a frame work of interpretation which can provide overall orientation for human life; *theology is, thus, essentially an activity of imaginative construction.* [24]

Many contemporary theologians, both biblical and systematic, approach theology and describe their work as metaphorical, [25] narrative, [26] imaginative, [27] and aesthetic [28] creations. [29] Since theological discourse is currently conceived of as creative writing or a work of art, theologians must therefore be aware of the philosophical implications and applications of aesthetic themes, concerns, and methods within theology. [30] One incidental benefit of approaching theology aesthetically is that it offers a productive response to postmodernism. The deconstruction of intellectual hierarchies has leveled the "playing field" between the sources of theology; the aesthetic is thus validated as one of the more meaningful forms of human experience and, in turn, for theological reflection. [31]

The aesthetic is indispensable to theology. The aesthetic provides a means for addressing transcendent doctrines, reaffirming divine mystery, and validating the sense of awe that God inspires in the faithful. Logic cannot transport beyond

the limits of reason to faith-acceptance, but the aesthetic accepts, ponders, and even revels in the incomprehensible Trinity, the revelation of our *deus absconditus*, and the nature and being of Christ, who stands at the center of theological paradox and mystery. [32] And while the aesthetic cannot replace reason's crucial services to the discipline of theology, if the apophatic and kataphatic are to be in balance our theological words must be both rational and aesthetic. Like reason, the aesthetic performs a valuable service for theology:

The aesthetic illustrates human theological interpretation of divine revelation. The aesthetic modality is a basic fact of experience. Aesthetics can describe religion, revelation, faith, and thinking-about-faith with a faith and clarity equal to the categorical style.... Theologians should examine the potentiality of an aesthetic description. For some time, the accepted foundation of theology has been logic and reason and concepts and words which reveal ultimate structures of meaning. The aesthetic intuition of ineffable presence in reality, of subjectivity surrounding the object and penetrating to its depth, does not presume that theology or life is mainly word, syllogism, myth, or symbol. Theology can flow from an encounter with and a grasp of revealing mystery in a manner analogous to the production and appreciation of art. The human personality not only in religious expression but also in thoughtful reflection on belief in a revealing God perceives mystery in an aesthetic way, where insight and emotion strive for immediacy. [33]

The use of aesthetics allows us to lessen the "jarring" effects of revelatory paradoxes and logical inconsistencies by addressing them by means of a new "language" in which creative and experiential responses are justifiable. [34]

## **The Aesthetic Dimensions of the Divine**

When an aesthetic perspective informs theology, it both *informs* by adding new insight and *informs* by giving theology a new structure. This section will therefore examine how the composition and shape of some areas of theology can be transformed by aesthetic method and content.

Christian theology attempts to make visible the invisible by providing us with meaningful metaphors and images of God. Throughout the history of the church, a significant number of aesthetic names and models have been used to describe the "Persons" of the Trinity. These have including the following: Beauty, Perfection, Glory, Light, Wind, Image, Representation, Revealer/Revelation, Mirror, Artist, Architect, Builder, Poet, Composer, Potter, and the Creator-Image-Inspiration model for the Trinity. [35] With each of these names the aesthetic vocabulary is able to communicate something

of God's mysterious yet familiar nature. But the aesthetic is also one of the fundamental essences of God, Who continually creates and inspires (i.e., both "animates" and "enlightens") creation and its living creatures.

Attention to the aesthetic reinforces the Christian doctrines of creation and the *imago dei*. The sublime and beautiful in nature affirm the goodness of divine creative activity.<sup>[36]</sup> God continually pronounces creation's goodness, and nature reciprocates this moral and aesthetic judgment by delighting in God's glory: seas resound with praise, trees clap their hands, mountains sing in joy, and all of creation awaits its release to glorious freedom (Psalm 98:7-8; Romans 8:19-21). The human reflection of God is found in the capacity to act as co-creators, whether biologically, ecologically, or imaginatively, and through this capacity humans are able-and morally obligated-to establish and maintain new relations on behalf of the created and the Creator. From revelation, the arts, and the sublime we learn of the value of natural and human creations, but it is only through experience and theological reflection that Christians are truly able to appreciate aesthetic goodness and the artistic dimension of human co-creativity.

The aesthetic may shape or provide an occasion for worship. This may occur at a cathedral, humble chapel, or an exposed mountaintop; before an altar, sculpture, or stained glass window; and while listening to a sermon, musical composition, or a drama. The power by which the aesthetic accomplishes this is its ability to create, to bring into existence that which was formerly unseen and unheard. The aesthetic gives substance to idea, extends reality to image, finds life in rhythm and tone. In a word, the aesthetic is incarnational: Word is made *flesh* (John 1:14), the invisible is born as *divine image* (Colossians 1:15), and glory is transformed to exact *representation* (Hebrews 1:3). In aesthetic making-into-being there is a new means for communicating and appreciating the wonder of the Incarnation, whose metaphysical mystery transcends aesthetic enigma just as the aesthetic transcends rational conceptuality.

Although divine self-disclosure has reached its highest form of completeness through the incarnate Word, a final state of revelatory absoluteness in which God has exhausted all that can be communicated to creation has not yet been reached. As long as the worlds stand in relation to a Creator who lovingly speaks them into being and calls them toward reconciliation, God's revelation will continue. The dynamic power and radical freedom of divine revelation creates the possibility that many mediums may be used by God in addition to verbal communication. Indeed, God's self-disclosure occurs through the actions of individual persons or institutions, in the ministries of the church and other religious bodies, in the beauty and sublimity of the natural world, and through all varieties of aesthetic creativity. When the aesthetic becomes more than a thing of beauty or a simple symbol and begins to actually mediate or embody divine presence and grace, it is

precisely in this moment, the point where the aesthetic is “grasped” by God, transformed through grace, and made transparent to divine Being, that we may speak of the revelatory power of the aesthetic.

If the aesthetic can become revelatory, it may perform any of revelation’s other functions, as well. The aesthetic, for example, can extend divine grace. The natural world reveals God, sustains life, and provides pleasure and comfort; through these actions and as God’s gift to us, we may therefore speak of creation as a means of grace. Creation is technically not a Sacrament; nevertheless, nature is *sacramental* because of its origin in God, its contingent dependence upon God, and its ability to communicate divine realities. God also speaks words of grace through human aesthetic creations when they are transformed by divine Presence. As revelation, the aesthetic also speaks prophetically. Paintings, sculpture, literary forms, and dramas can powerfully communicate divine judgments by exposing social evils, denouncing sins, warning against hypocrisy and abuses in the church, and reminding Christians of their moral obligations. As embodied judgment, these constructed criticisms are more concrete and confrontational than unaesthetic verbal communication.

### **The Aesthetic Dimension and Holiness**

The connection between beauty and holiness, the aesthetic and moral ideals of art and religion, has been studied at length by James A. Martin, Jr. Unfortunately, the answers that he finds have little to do with the holiness that is a part of the Wesleyan theological vocabulary. In fact, few theologians other than Jonathan Edwards have given serious attention to divine or human holiness from an aesthetic perspective. This should be viewed as potential as much as a problem, however, since current Wesleyan understandings of holiness offer many possibilities for the integration and application of the aesthetic.

The Greek word ὁλοζ, the root of “holiness,” the English translation of ἁγιασμοζ and ἁγιωσυνη, has a basic meaning of wholeness, completeness, or totality. While ὁλοζ may not adequately address the moral nature of biblical holiness and sanctification, it does introduce an aesthetic dimension to “holiness” that deserves greater attention. The harmony and balance of an aesthetic holiness has unique implications for the Wesleyan conception of personal holiness. The aesthetic nature of holiness may be observed in the description of holiness as a balanced Godself-world nexus<sup>[37]</sup> in Wesley’s definition of Christian perfection as “the loving of God with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength,”<sup>[38]</sup> and in the identification of the sources of Wesley’s theology as a “quadrilateral” of Scripture, tradition, experience, and reason. Harmony and balance refer to *order*, one of the most important aesthetic categories. The thematic arrangement of

theological ideas into a whole or “system” may be explained as a response to aesthetic needs as well as to the requirements of reason or scientific method.<sup>[39]</sup>

Inclusion of the aesthetic within a definition of personal holiness may begin with the modern psychological understanding of human beings as multilevel or multidimensional personalities. The aesthetic is one of the basic dimensions of human experience, as is demonstrated by the universal cultural expression of aesthetic sensitivity through music, art, and decoration (e.g., clothing, jewelry, and body art as well as architecture). Aesthetic experience must therefore be represented in Wesleyan explanations of personal holiness. One of the more helpful ways that this can be expressed is by describing holiness as the transformation of and balance between all personal dimensions. Thus in multidimensional human beings the aesthetic may be listed alongside the physical, mental, emotional, and social aspects of our existence.

The aesthetic should become holy in the Wesleyan theological imagination. This must occur on two levels. First, the sacramental value of nature and aesthetic creations should be recognized. Our holy God can grasp and transform any creation in order to communicate divine holiness or grace. Descriptions of holy living should next be expanded to include aesthetic experience. That is to say, we need to clearly communicate that part of what it means to be holy is that we must become aesthetically aware and appreciative of the goodness of God’s and humanity’s creations. Restoration in the image of God includes learning to delight in creation and to pronounce it “very good.”

The relational nature of Wesleyan theology allows consideration of the place of aesthetics within the various dimensions of the God-selfworld nexus. When holiness is described as the harmony or balance of these relationships, the biblical concept of *shalom* offers a striking parallel. Christian aesthetician Nicholas Wolterstorff feels that *shalom* best characterizes the relational ideal, which Wesleyans may identify as holiness. Unfortunately, “peace” is a theme that is frequently overlooked in contemporary theology:

The corrective needed is the introduction of another theme concerning man in creation, a theme as prominent in the biblical writers as the theme of man the responsible agent, yet a theme scarcely noticed in the Christian tradition. It is the theme of *shalom*, *eirene*, peace — of man dwelling at peace in all his relationships: with God, with himself, with his fellows, with nature. Shalom is a peace which is not merely the absence of hostility, though certainly it is that, but a peace which at its highest is *enjoyment*. To dwell in shalom is to *enjoy* living before God, to *enjoy* living in nature, to *enjoy living* with one’s fellows, to *enjoy* life with

oneself.<sup>[40]</sup>

Here, indeed, is a picture of what it means to be holy from an aesthetic perspective: to pleasure in or enjoy peace and balance in all relational and psychological dimensions. One implication of this aesthetic understanding of holiness is that humans who live harmoniously in shalom before God, in nature, with others, and with oneself must also accept responsibility for maintaining the beauty and peace of an idyllic existence. Those who are holy must act as God's co-creators: we are called to create, name, and value our world in the same manner as our Creator.

### **New Directions for Wesleyan Worship and Aesthetics**

The challenge facing those persons responsible for planning and leading worship is how to ensure that aesthetic experiences are a part of the worship encounter. The goal of the preparation for and active engagement in aesthetic worship is to "worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness" (Psalm 29:2, KJV). But how is this accomplished?

At the heart of the problem lies the nature of the aesthetic itself. While nurturing our parishioners' aesthetic sensitivity and providing an aesthetic worship setting are two excellent ways to encourage worship that is characterized by the beauty of holiness, aesthetic experience cannot simply be *produced*. While aesthetic experience can be encouraged, one cannot will or force it to occur. The aesthetic is not a quantifiable thing, but a quality of relational interaction. The aesthetic connects heart and soul with the senses, but it has, so to speak, a life of its own. The aesthetic breaks forth independently and ecstatically; like God's Spirit, the aesthetic blows where it will.

In many ways, the aesthetic and worship are similar. Both types of experience exist only within a relationship between humans and a transcendental reality-God or the Beautiful. Yet worship and the aesthetic both emerge out of definite forms. These forms, whether liturgies or aesthetic objects and events, are not transcendental but incarnate. Both experiences also require open and active participation. Neither worship nor aesthetic experience will occur unilaterally, caught like some object that falls from the heavens. It is also true that these types of encounter are not perceived in the same manner by all participants. Some persons will receive more enlightenment and others less. The interpreted intellectual content of the encounter will vary, as will its emotional impact. Some events or objects will encourage encounter, but others will not.

Since the aesthetic appears to lie beyond human control, we may well wonder if it is even possible to speak of aesthetic “new directions” for Wesleyan worship. The matter is further complicated by the diversity of Wesleyan worship styles and practices. Could these new directions be applicable in all worship situations? Perhaps not, but it is important to identify a starting point other than raising the aesthetic awareness of Wesleyan-Holiness congregations. One such point might be the language of worship.

As Protestants, Wesleyans are speakers, hearers, and doers of the Word <sup>[41]</sup> It is in response to the divine Word that the words of worship are spoken, and it is through the expressiveness of human language that we can begin to transform our worship and rediscover how we may aesthetically sense God. Our words can make worship a flower fragrant to God. In songs, confessions, prayers, readings, and sermons, faith’s eternal and invisible object is given Christ’s flesh and Spirit’s breath before our very eyes. If what our ears hear are beautiful words and sounds, then our hearts are more likely to feel and our minds know God’s beauty. Soon our other senses will engage God’s presence, as well.

When we name God, we engage in aesthetics. As we have seen, the use of metaphorical language allows us to image and give form to the One who is neither seen nor heard. Wesleyans may invoke the power of the aesthetic by creatively naming God. With every name and positive description of who God is and does there is, of course, an underlying negation to our statements. God defies verbal translation, and even the *definitive* Word of God, Jesus Christ, is shrouded in the mystery of the Incarnation. Yet many Wesleyan-Holiness churches do not even attempt to speak God’s aesthetic names. The gravest situations exist in those congregations where the masculine pronouns “He” and “Him” are used constantly. The primary problem is not that such usage offends those who are sensitive to feminist issues, which it certainly does, but that it makes God seem too familiar. When the least imaginative names — mere pronouns — for our transcendent Creator are lazily used as the most common divine names, significant losses of meaning and reverence occur. The same situation exists with the Jesus of the old gospel hymns. This Jesus is a chum, a neighbor, a friend like no other. While Wesleyans rightly emphasize God’s personal nature, Christ’s love, and the Spirit’s presence, the language used for all Persons of the Trinity should be spoken in awe and attempt to recover the missing sense of God’s holiness and otherness. Both the lazy use of pronouns and excessive devotionism impede the aesthetic naming of God.

God’s aesthetic names may either be creative or sublime in nature. Creative metaphorical names like Architect, Mirror, Light, and Potter have been mentioned previously. Sublime names are also descriptive, but may seem more vague or philosophical: the Holy One, Creator, Lord of the Universe, the Transcendent or Ultimate One, Knower, and the Absolute.

Every category of God's names, whether biblical, devotional, creative, or sublime, can be helpful for worship because all of them attempt to provide different visions of a God who can never be fully imagined or described by humans. Yet the unfortunate situation is that God's aesthetic names are overlooked most frequently despite their profound and unique ability to describe our Creator.

For those who speak the language of worship, the greatest challenge is not only to paint God's portrait with words, but to paint it well. How does one create a work of art whose beauty shines for all to see? How does one produce a new and alternate image which challenges us? An answer may be found in aesthetically creative preaching. Creative preaching is certainly not restricted to narrative preaching, but narrative is currently the homiletic method that most effectively represents biblical stories and exhibits them in the contemporary imagination. Good narrative preaching is art, and while talent helps, any minister may take painting lessons. Many homiletic tools are available to help individuals preach creatively, and mentoring is a great resource that has yet to be fully explored. However, what is most important is not *what* steps are taken toward learning new and more expressive means of communicating, but *that* the steps are taken. The imaginative naming of God must be attempted, and the aesthetic offers many suggestions.

## **Speaking in Other Tongues**

Divine revelation occurs continually in our world and assumes many forms. God still speaks through the Spirit, Scripture, and the actions and worship of the church, but there are other languages in the divine vocabulary. God speaks to us in love through the beauty of nature. God also speaks to us through the arts, lifting human spirits and demonstrating that we, too, are co-creators whose work may be pronounced "very good." Wherever and however it occurs, God speaks to us from the beauty of holiness.

Wesleyans must learn to speak the aesthetic languages of nature and the arts effectively and hear them affectively. While some Wesleyans may speak them with greater frequency than others, all must learn to use them well so we can speak meaningfully to another dimension of human experience. The Divine Other speaks in tongues, and some of them are aesthetic. If we listen closely, we will hear sighs of appreciation escaping the lips of God, ourselves, and each other.

## **Endnotes:**

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- [1] Paul Tillich, *On Art and Architecture*, ed. John Dillenberger and Jane Dillenberger (New York: Crossroad, 1987), 151.
- [2] To date, the issue has yet to be explored in publication, although I have attempted a preliminary introduction to the topic in my presentation to the Wesleyan Theological Society (November, 1996) and in an unpublished paper for a doctoral seminar at the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, CA.
- [3] These essays, “Thoughts on the Power of Music” (1779), “Thoughts Upon Taste” (1780), and “Thoughts on Genius” (1787), may all be found in the Jackson edition of *The Works of John Wesley*, vol. 13, but the annotated Bicentennial edition (Abingdon Press) is still forthcoming.
- [4] For an intriguing introduction to postmodern religious aesthetics and discussion of the latter group of aesthetic qualities, see Mark C. Taylor’s *Disfiguring: Art, Architecture, Religion* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992).
- [5] James A. Martin, Jr., *Beauty and Holiness: The Dialogue Between Religion and Aesthetics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), 29.
- [6] See, for example, Edmund Burke, *A Philosophical Inquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful* (1757; reprint, New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), Part II, Sec. 1-3; and Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Judgment*, trans. Werner S. Pluhar (1790; reprint, Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 1987), Sec. 23-26. Kant carefully defines the sublime not as an observed act and its accompanying emotional response, but as the mind’s agitated play with aesthetic ideas that escape conceptual-rational-explanation. The sublime is technically a created mental schema through which an object or phenomenon is judged to be “sublime” (Sec. 23: 245).
- [7] Friedrich Schleiermacher asserts that “to be conscious of oneself as part of the world is the same thing as to find one’s place in a universal nature-system. In every actual self-consciousness there is either an awareness of a relation of our being to some object opposed to it or the comprehension at one and the same time of a being and a having. That which is set in opposition to us must naturally decrease as our self-consciousness widens” (*The Christian Faith* [Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1989], 138). Here Schleiermacher clearly relies on Kant’s understanding of the moral implications of the “dynamically sublime. The dynamically sublime begins with the apprehension of awe-inspiring natural phenomena, including vast oceans, high waterfalls, thunderstorms, and natural disasters, but in the act of reflection the individual is able to realize that physical impotence is surpassed by human independence and the superiority of reason. Because the “sublime” is produced in the imagination’s free play, “the mind can come to feel its own sublimity, which lies in its vocation and elevates it even above nature” (Kant, Sec. 28: 262).
- [8] Rudolph Otto, *The Idea of the Holy* (London: Oxford Press, 1958), chap. IV.
- [9] Kant, Sec. 25. Barth’s description of the gulf separating humans from God is one example of a theological adaptation of the mathematical sublime in natural guise. Another example might be Jesus’ words about the unfathomable scope of divine forgiveness, whether on a scale of one thousand talents or seventy times seven transgressions.
- [10] *Ibid.*, Sec. 28: 263. By definition, however, in Kant’s thought an aesthetic idea cannot be termed “conceptual” since this would mean that it could be *fully* grasped by reason rather than existing within the interplay of the two cognitive faculties, the imagination and understanding.

[11]

Alex Garcia-Rivera, "Creator of the Visible and the Invisible: Liberation Theology, Postmodernism, and the Spiritual," *Journal of Hispanic/Latino Theology* 3, no. 4 (1996): 37.

[12]

Journal, entries of July 4, 1759; July 29, 1765; July 19, 1766; August 25, 1769; May 22, 1775; and March 3, 1790. The third, fourth, and final entries are paraphrases of the apocalyptic description of the Day of the Lord from 2 Peter 3:10. Wesley first referred to the verse in this manner on July 28, 1738.

[13]

There is, for example, a distinct difference between the emotional tone of the announcement, "Nothing in the post-diluvian earth can be more pleasant" (*Journal*, July 21, 1759), Wesley's judgment of a pastoral setting in South Yorkshire, and the reserved recollection of how his heart was "strangely warmed" in his Aldersgate experience. A study of the relationship between Wesley's emotions and spirituality would be most helpful at this point.

[14]

I allow that one might identify or construct "Wesleyan" aesthetics for theology and worship and likely have positive results. A recent attempt to identify a Calvinist aesthetic (Daniel T. Jenkins, "A Protestant Aesthetic? A Conversation with Donald Davie," *Literature & Theology* 2, no. 2 [Sept., 1988]: 153-62) might serve as a case study for a discussion of Wesley's aesthetics. In this essay Jenkins explores the aesthetic applications of the themes "simplicity, sobriety, and measure," first suggested in Donald Davie's *The Gathered Church* (1978). Jenkins' own contribution to the worship aesthetic is the principle of "antithesis," which is reminiscent of the "Protestant principle," a crucial element in Paul Tillich's theological aesthetics.

[15]

The current article and the presentation to the Wesleyan Theological Society on which it is based are examples in themselves.

[16]

Holiness groups in general have not embraced the arts, which have been identified with the liturgical "high" churches of mainline Christianity in America, higher socio-economic and educational levels, secularity, and — at worst — carnality. To my knowledge, no attempt to prove actual data from original documents in support of this generalization has been attempted, although the need for such a study has been highlighted by Mark Noll's controversial yet prophetic book, *The Scandal of the Evangelical Mind* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994).

[17]

All twelve Methodist divinity schools participating in Yates' study offered courses featuring significant use of art mediums, and seven listed more than ten such classes. Yates gives special attention to Candler School of Theology at Emory University for its combination of curriculum and community involvement in the arts, and to Wesley Theological Seminary for the addition of the Center for Religion and the Arts to an expanding program in the arts. Claremont School of Theology has also recently added an aesthetic focus to a program that has traditionally been strong in music (Wilson Yates, *The Arts in Theological Education* [Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1987], 48). Examples of new interest in the aesthetic would include Nazarene Theological Seminary in Kansas City, which plans to offer its first course on aesthetics in the fall of 1997.

[18]

Hans Urs von Balthasar, in particular, recognizes the centrality of glory (*doxa*, *kabod*) as the biblical foundation for discussions about God's essential nature and theological aesthetics. For Balthasar the glory of the Lord is the central theme in Christian theology, perceived through the forms which reveal and give shape to our experience of God: "The mystery of God proclaimed by the Church is his *doxa* become visible [in Christ], and a beam of it, to be sure, falls on the ecclesial authority and proclamation, authenticating them. But the divine mystery, being the very glory of God, at the same time is majestically exalted above the serving office which mediates it: 'We do not proclaim ourselves, but Christ Jesus as the Kyrios.' . . . For the God who has said: 'Let the light shine forth out of the darkness'-he it is that has shone in our hearts . . . in order (through us) to make shine forth the *gnosis* of God's *doxa*, which lies on the face of Christ' (*The Glory of the*

*Lord: A Theological Aesthetics*, vol. 1, *Seeing the Form*, trans. Erasmo Leiva-Merikakis [San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1982], 141).

[19]

Quaker or Calvinist aesthetics might be cited as appropriate examples. See note 14 above.

[20]

Garcia-Rivera offers this suggestion, stating that *'Aesthetic value is an intrinsic reality of the cosmic order*. In other words, the contingency of Creation introduces value into the cosmos. This insight ... follows from the nature of the contingency between Creator and creature: 'And God saw it was good.' Contingency in the context of an ultimate reality amounts to a cosmic aesthetics, a *cosmos* of values" (49-50).

[21]

Michael Casey, "Emotionally Hollow, Aesthetically Meaningless, and Spiritually Empty': An inquiry into Theological Discourse," *Colloquium* 14, no. 1 (October 1981): 56.

[22]

See Balthasar's "Introduction" to *Seeing the Form* (1:17-127) for a discussion of the history of aesthetic themes (e.g., glory, revelation, and beauty) in Christian theology.

[23]

Aesthetics shapes theological language in three areas of integration: theological aesthetics, aesthetic theology, and theology and aesthetics. The first term refers to the perception and organization of theology methodologically; the second area considers aesthetic themes within God-language; the third domain witnesses the application of theological principles in aesthetic creativity and the historical relationship between Christianity and the arts/aesthetics.

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Gordon D. Kaufman, "Theology as Imaginative Construction," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 50, no. 1 (March 1982): 77. Emphasis mine.

[25]

See, for example, Sallie McFague, *Speaking in Parables: A Study in Metaphor and Theology* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1975) and *Metaphorical Theology: Models of God in Religious Language* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1982); and Janet Martin Soskice, *Metaphor and Religious Language* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985).

[26]

See, for example, Michael Goldberg, *Theology and Narrative: A Critical Introduction* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1982); Stanley Hauerwas and L. Gregory Jones, *Why Narrative? Readings in Narrative Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989); and George W. Stroup, *The Promise of Narrative Theology* (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1981).

[27]

See, for example, John Coulson, *Religion and Imagination* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981); Julian Hartt, *Theological Method and Imagination* (New York: Seabury, 1977); James Mackey, ed., *Religious Imagination* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh Univ. Press, 1986); Leland Ryken, ed., *The Christian Imagination: Essays on Literature and the Arts* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1981), and *The Liberated Imagination* (Wheaton: Harold Shaw Pub., 1989); and David Tracy, *The Analogical Imagination* (New York: Crossroad, 1981).

[28]

See, for example, Balthasar; Martin; Frank Burch Brown, *Religious Aesthetics: A Theological Study of Making and Meaning* (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1989); and Patrick Sherry, *Spirit and Beauty: An Introduction to Theological Aesthetics* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992).

[29]

Cf. Kevin J. VanHoozer, "A Lamp in the Labyrinth: The Hermeneutics of 'Aesthetic' Theology," *Trinity Journal*

[30]

VanHoozer offers an interesting interpretation of the contemporary situation: "I would like to suggest that the history of modern theology may fruitfully be construed as a 'progressive reading' of Kant's three *Critiques*: theology has passed through a speculative (eighteenth century) and a moral (nineteenth century) phase, and we are now in the midst of an 'aesthetic' stage which corresponds to Kant's third *Critique*, the critique of aesthetic judgment" (25).

[31]

Postmodernism accepts "the affective no less than the cognitive, the conative no less than the intellectual, the cultural and artifactual no less than the natural. Indeed, postmodernism asserts that the realities of feeling, deception, and illusion are every bit as much a piece [of] our experience as are the realities of rational communication and order and sensible intrusions from the environment upon our experience." (John Deeley, *New Beginnings: Early Modern Philosophy and Postmodern Thought* [Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994], quoted in Garcia-Rivera, 40). A combination of the apophatic and the kataphatic within a dialectic structure would not be acceptable to a postmodernist: proper theology is *neither* the rational (left-brained) *nor* the creative (right-brained), but something "other." In *Disfiguring*, Mark Taylor suggests that the use of a "neither/nor" approach to meaning can avoid some of the problems associated with the "either/or of classical logic and the both/and of dialectical logic" (278).

[32]

Balthasar's aesthetics revolves around Christ, "the centre of the form of revelation" and the ultimate theological enigma: "God's Incarnation perfects the whole ontology and aesthetics of created Being. Incarnation uses created Being at a new depth as a language and a means of expression for the divine Being and essence.... This incomparable paradox stands as the fountainhead of the Christian aesthetic, and therefore of all aesthetics!" (1:29).

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Thomas Franklin O'Meara, "The Aesthetic Dimension in Theology," chap. in Diane Apostolos-Cappadona, ed., *Art, Creativity, and the Sacred* (New York: Crossroad Press, 1980), 205.

[34]

T. R. Martland, "*Question: When Is Religion Art? Answer: When It Is a Jar*," chap. in *Ibid.*, 250-61.

[35]

See, for example, Sherry, 1-19; Martin, chaps. 1, 3; and Pseudo-Dionysius, *The Divine Names*, in *The Complete Works*, The Classics of Western Spirituality (New York: Paulist Press, 1987), 47-131.

[36]

Aesthetic creation as *actual* creation is emphasized in opposition to Benedetto Croce, this century's most influential aesthetician, whose focus on the presentation of aesthetic *ideas* devalues the actual production of works of art. Croce's aesthetic idealism can be traced back through Schopenhauer and Hegel to Kant. With regard to the value of aesthetic creations, we might say that value is inherent, but it is perhaps more accurate, at least from a Christian perspective, to say that it is *imbued*. Creations are good because as *creatio* their source may ultimately be found in God.

[37]

H. Ray Dunning, *Grace, Faith, and Holiness* (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press, 1988), 485-98.

[38]

John Wesley, *A Plain Account of Christian Perfection*, in *The Works of John Wesley*, ed. Thomas Jackson, vol. 11 (1872; reprint. Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press, 1986), 394.

[39]

The introduction of scientific method/model as the basis for "systematic" theology cannot precede the Enlightenment. See Amos Funkenstein's discussion of theology, science, and scientific method in his *Theology and the Scientific Imagination* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986), especially his Introduction.

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Nicholas Wolterstorff, *Art in Action: Toward a Christian Aesthetic* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980), 79.

[41]

I am indebted to Michael Lodahl, my former professor, for suggesting that discussion begin with the Word and human words. However, it is ironic to identify Wesleyanism's Protestant heritage as the starting point for a discussion about improving aesthetic expressiveness. Many early Reformers were very aware of the power of the aesthetic, and the interiors of many churches were radically changed as decorated walls were whitewashed, statues were tom down, and high altars were dismantled. These iconoclastic responses were driven by the recognition of Scripture as the only true spiritual authority. Protestantism has yet to recover, aesthetically from the subversion of music, architecture, drama, and visual arts to the written Word.

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