

A STRANGE, SAD STORY

This commentary is occasioned by the conflict at the Wesleyan Theological Society between some of our own faculty. WTS is a collection of Wesleyan scholars from across the nation, who come together to discuss theological issues. Dr. Lyon presented a paper on baptism language in Acts. The following day, another of our faculty, Dr. Turner, presented a paper on baptism language in the 19th century. However, before his presentation he asked Lyon about the nature of the sin problem dealt with in entire sanctification. In the discussion that followed on Turner's paper, Lyon was asked to respond to Turner's original question. Lyon, feeling unprepared to dialogue on such a question in light of the assignment given by

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Student comment . . .

the society, declined to respond. Then Dr. Arnett, feeling Lyon's response to be inadequate, aggressively stated, "Come on, Bob, you owe it to us."

Now, it was clear to everyone present that they were witnessing in-house bickering of Asbury Theological Seminary faculty members.

Surely, this latest incident is regrettable. Unfortunately, this confrontation is typical of theological interaction among our faculty. Often over the past thirty years, when disagreements have arisen, some have chosen to indulge in personality conflicts rather than open discussion of the issues. This is due to a desire to control conflict rather than deal creatively with these issues.

Some of our faculty perceive themselves as preserving the Morrison style of holiness revivalism; whereas, others of our faculty are more open to serious dialogue with contemporary thought. These viewpoints should not be seen as mutually exclusive, but as valid perspectives within the Wesleyan tradition. Therefore, these two elements need to be in open, free, and creative dialogue with one another.

As students, we desire to see open,

free, and creative dialogue between members of the faculty and administration who have varying viewpoints. Many students perceive the division among the faculty and are concerned about the apparent contradiction between the theological affirmation of perfection in love, and the actual practice of it here at Asbury Theological Seminary. For when holiness is practiced, there is an ethic of respect for other persons and their right to differing opinions. We are not calling for unity of opinions, but unity of purpose. This purpose is to clarify, communicate, and to live out the gospel of love.

—George Plasterer
—Jay E. Clark

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