



Holy Trinity: Holy People: The Theology of Christian Perfecting (Didsbury Lecture)

By T. A. Noble

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Teaching on the sanctification of Christians using the difficult word perfection has been part of Christian spirituality through the centuries. The Fathers spoke of it and Augustine particularly contributed his penetrating analysis of human motivation in terms of love. Medieval theologians such as Bernard and Thomas Aquinas developed the tradition and wrote of levels or "degrees" of "perfection" in love. However, the doctrine has not fared so well among Protestants. John Wesley was the one major Protestant leader who tried to blend this ancient tradition of Christian "perfection" with the Reformation proclamation of justification by grace through faith.

This book seeks to develop Wesley's synthesis of patristic and Reformation theology in order to consider how Christian "perfection" can be expressed in a more nuanced way in today's culture. Noble examines what basis may be found for Wesley's understanding of sanctification in the central doctrines of the church, particularly the atonement, the doctrine of Christ, and the most comprehensive of all Christian doctrines, the doctrine of the Holy Trinity. What he sets out is a fully trinitarian theology of holiness.

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Editorial Review

Review

"*Holy Trinity: Holy People* is a wise and winsome trinitarian account of Christian perfection. Noble conceives of holiness not in individualist terms of isolation from the world, but as a communion of love, [as] participation in God's trinitarian love, which is essentially redemptive in character rather than judgmental. Anyone interested in what a trinitarian account of holiness could be need look no further than Noble's profound and compelling work."

--Elmer M. Colyer, Professor of Systematic Theology and Professor of Wesley Studies, University of Dubuque Theological Seminary

"Carefully contextualizing the vital doctrine of Christian perfection in terms of Scripture and church tradition, both Eastern and Western, Noble offers the reader a remarkably balanced assessment of John Wesley's articulation of entire sanctification that is sophisticated, informed by a number of theological streams, and wonderfully trinitarian. Due to its many fresh insights, this engaging book will, no doubt, foster a lively conversation and considerable reflection among all who love holiness."

--Kenneth J. Collins, Professor of Wesley Studies and Historical Theology, Asbury Theological Seminary

"This book is a landmark in treatments of Wesley's doctrine of Christian perfection. Be assured: this is no parochial performance. Noble's work does not just revisit the Wesleys of old; he integrates his critical assessment of their insights into a penetrating vision of the Triune God. Marked by a singular beauty of expression and structure, this work will become a benchmark in the field of Wesleyan and Methodist theology."

--William J. Abraham, Professor of Wesley Studies, Perkins School of Theology, Southern Methodist University --Wipf and Stock Publishers

About the Author

T. A. Noble is Professor of Theology at Nazarene Theological Seminary in Kansas City, Missouri, and also Senior Research Fellow in Theology at Nazarene Theological College, Manchester, UK. He was recently president of the Wesleyan Theological Society.

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