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GEORGE HERBERT: HIS METHOD—
SALESIAN OR PROTESTANT

BY

BRUCE AARDSMA

A thesis submitted
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
degree Master of Arts
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1982

George Herbert: His Method--

Salesian or Protestant

Introduction

This thesis is approved as a creditable and independent investigation by a candidate for the degree, Master of Arts, and is acceptable for meeting the thesis requirements for this degree. Acceptance of this thesis does not imply that the conclusions reached by the candidate are necessarily the conclusions of the major department.

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Table of Contents

Introduction	i
The Mystic Tradition	1
The Salesian Method and "The Temple"	14
The Protestant Method and "The Temple"	24
Poetic Application	41
Notes	64
Bibliography	68

Introduction:

In modern times literary criticism has seen a renewed interest in the poetry of the seventeenth century metaphysical poets, commonly referred to as "the poetry of meditation." Based on the Augustinian philosophy, the act of meditation became a devotional process through which a person could attain a union with the Godhead by following a prescribed method. This method included the stages of purgation, illumination, and unification, through which the meditator first becomes aware of his own sinful nature and hopeless condition and then discovers the way of salvation and commits himself to the service of God. The final stage of unification focuses on a direct communication with God, where the meditator, through a type of mystic revelation, comes to understand the mysteries of God, with the poetry as a written response.

In the seventeenth century the Roman church, in an attempt to bolster religious commitment and counteract the Reformation, simplified this meditative structure and methodology. This was accomplished principally through the work of St. Ignatius, and was further simplified by St. Francis de Sales.

With respect to the particular poetry written by the English metaphysical poets, literary criticism has concerned itself with the relationship between the meditative process

and the poetic response. While critics are agreed on the fact that the poetry is the result of meditation, they are not unified on the type of meditation practiced by the individual poets. The focus of this paper will be a discussion of the two principal types of meditation, Salesian and Protestant, with respect to their application to the poetry of George Herbert.

Louis Martz, a leading authority in this area, has laid the foundation for most of the critical analyses concerning the Salesian approach to the English metaphysicals. In the opinion of Martz and such scholars as Husain, Halewood and Summers, the three-fold structure of purgation, illumination, and union forms not only a model for the individual poems, but also establishes a pattern into which the total body of Herbert's works can be organized.

While these ideas merit examination, it is apparent that Martz, as well as the other scholars mentioned above, may have overlooked a number of important ideas. The Salesian approach to Herbert is based on the idea that because of the lack of other meditational formulas, Herbert was "forced" to use a form not entirely in agreement with his own beliefs. Since scholarship has proven the great availability of numerous Protestant manuals concerning meditation, this idea should be rejected. Given the choice between a Protestant form and the Salesian method, and taking into

consideration the religious situation of the time, it is unlikely that Herbert would have chosen the Catholic form over the Protestant; while it is true that an adherence to a particular form does not necessarily imply an adherence to a philosophic ideal, it seems unlikely that Herbert would choose a form which is essentially egocentric in its dependence on man to initiate the process. It would seem more logical to believe that Herbert was using a theocentric method of meditation, which focuses on the sovereignty of God and the depravity of man.

In the Protestant method of meditation we see a two-part structure consisting of an analysis and application format within the individual structure of the poetry, and a tracing of the faith commitment in the maturation process of the believer when the works are viewed in totality. These Protestant ideas are probably best supported by Barbara Lewalski, another prominent critic of the English metaphysicals.

To accomplish an accurate comparison of these two traditions this paper has been divided into four sections. The first section outlines a definition and description of mysticism and the mystic, as they have developed from Augustine to Ignatius, to establish a reference point from which the two contrasting meditational formulas can be seen as well as applied to the poetry of George Herbert.

The second division of this paper is dedicated to an explanation of the Salesian mode of meditation. The important aspect of this section is not the theological implication of the Catholic form, since Herbert's orthodoxy is never in question, but rather the process itself, as it applies to the poetry

The third section, in contrast to the mystical interpretation of Herbert's meditative process, describes the Protestant method of meditation. By redefining the method of meditation and discussing it in terms of its Reformed implications, we will see the development of a new form of meditation which ultimately leads to a distinctively Calvinistic foundation for Herbert's poetry.

In the fourth and final section six sonnets have been analyzed according to both the Salesian tradition and the Protestant tradition. Sonnets have been chosen to draw attention to the method of meditation and the poetic response rather than the different poetic structures.

The central issue of this presentation is to distinguish the two forms of meditation, and to show how each has been applied to the poetry of George Herbert.

If we hold to the perspective that Herbert's poetry is the result of the mystic tradition as applied in the Ignatian/Salesian form of meditation, the following will provide a framework and/or reference point for that application. It will also provide a starting point for a later comparison between this form and the Protestant method of meditation as they apply to Herbert's works.

Since much of the significant modern criticism dealing with the "metaphysical" poetry and/or the mysticism of the seventeenth century (primarily that which is based on the work of Louis Martz) is focused on a discussion of the form and function of the meditative act, as it has developed from the early church (first century), through the medieval period, and finally as it was revived and refined in the Renaissance tradition ; we too shall begin with a historic review of the mystic and mysticism in order to trace the development of the meditative process.

Traditionally, the mystic's all-important quest was revealed in his attempt to unite his human soul with the God-head. As Husain points out,

The two essential features of the "mystic-consciousness" which the study of the life of the great mystics reveal are the acute consciousness of God and the belief in the capacity of the human soul to realize the living presence of God within it. The mystic realizes that his

soul, unless it is purified, can never be granted the Vision of the Supreme Reality, God. He who tries to find the one behind the complexities of many believes that for him the real content of things is still hidden, that he lacks the true knowledge of "the self," and his faculty of perception is therefore incomplete, perhaps incorrect.

To have a clear vision and see "into the life of things" is one of the passions of the mystic, but this knowledge, for the true religious mystic, comes only through the knowledge of God and from no other source--such as pantheism, theosophy or philosophy. The recognition of the fact that there is a Reality higher than the one manifested here constitutes one of the fundamental beliefs of the mystic.¹

It is this attempt to transcend this apparent reality and to view the world in its ideal form, directed and sustained by God, which sets the mystic apart from the rest of humanity. For the mystic the ultimate goal is to become one-with-God; that is, to have "the Word made flesh" within his person.

Evelyn Underhill, in her extensive work on mysticism, has developed a five-point description or definition of the true mystic and mysticism in general.

1. True mysticism is active and practical, not passive and theoretical. It is an organic life-process, a something which the whole self does; not something as to which its intellect holds an opinion.

2. Its aims are wholly transcendental and spiritual. It is in no way concerned with adding to, exploring, re-arranging, or improving anything in the visible universe. The mystic brushed aside that universe, even in its super-normal manifestations. Though he does not, as his enemies declare, neglect his duty to the many, his heart is always set upon the changeless One.

3. This One is for the mystic, not merely the Reality of all that is, but also a living and personal Object of Love; never an object of exploration. It draws his whole being homeward, but always under the guidance of the heart.

4. Living union with this One--which is the term of his adventure--is a definite state or form of enhanced life. It is obtained neither from an intellectual realization of its delights, nor from the most acute emotional longings. Though these must be present, they are not enough. It is arrived at by an arduous psychological and spiritual process--the so-called Mystic Way--entailing the complete remaking of character and the liberation of a new, or rather latent, form of consciousness; which imposes on the self the condition which is sometimes inaccurately called "ecstasy," but is better named the Unitive State....

5. As a corollary to these four rules, it is perhaps well to reiterate the statement already made, that True Mysticism is never self-seeking. It is not, as many think, the pursuit of supernatural joys; the satisfaction of a high ambition. The mystic does not enter on his quest because he desires the happiness of the Beatific Vision, the ecstasy of union with the Absolute, or any other personal reward. That noblest of all passions, the passion for perfection for Love's sake, far outweighs the desire for transcendental satisfaction.²

Mysticism, therefore, is not merely an intellectual pursuit, but demands a personal, active dedication to the service of the "Absolute," not only in thought, but in word and deed as well. It is this active incarnation which leads the mystic to gain greater understanding and enlightenment in his service of that "Absolute." This process or "Mystic Way" is only the first stage in the "Christian" development of "the Word made flesh," since the mystic is then required to empty himself for the benefit of others.

Before the mystic can be of service of others, however, he must first undergo a period of "illumination" in which he becomes aware of his own essential nature, as well as the essential nature of the God he wished to serve. This process of "illumination" consists of a series of different states in which the mystic first becomes aware of the grace, mercy and justice of the Divine; and at the same time he (the mystic) recognizes his own sinful nature, ingratitude, imperfection, and undeserved favor of the Divine. It is only after the mystic has accepted the paradox of divine love freely given to corrupt and sinful man, that the mystic can develop to the higher stages of contemplation which will ultimately lead to the union of the Divine Spirit and the human soul. Miss Underhill explains the development of this process in the following five phases:

1. The awakening of the Self to consciousness of Divine Reality. This experience, usually abrupt and well-marked, is accompanied by intense feelings of joy and exaltation.

2. The Self, aware for the first time of Divine Beauty, realizes by contrast its own finiteness and imperfection, the manifold illusions in which it is immersed, the immense distance which separates it from the One. Its attempts to eliminate by discipline and mortification all that stands in the way of its progress towards union with God constitute Purgation: a state of pain and effort.

3. When by Purgation the Self has become detached from the "things of sense," and acquired those virtues which are the "ornaments of the spiritual marriage," its joyful consciousness of the Transcendent Order returns in an enhanced

form....Illumination is the "contemplative state" par excellence. It forms, with the two preceding states, the "first mystic life." Many mystics never go beyond it; and, on the other hand, many seers and artists not usually classed amongst them, have shared, to some extent, the experiences of the illuminated state. Illumination brings a certain apprehension of the Absolute, a sense of the Divine Presence: but not true union with it. It is a state of happiness.

4. In the development of the great and strenuous seekers after God, this is followed--or sometimes intermittently accompanied--by the most terrible of all the experiences of the Mystic Way: the final and complete purification of the Self, which is called by some contemplatives the "mystic pain" or "mystic death," by others the Purification of the Spirit or Dark Night of the Soul. The consciousness which had, in Illumination, sunned itself in the sense of the Divine Presence, now suffers under an equally intense sense of the Divine Absence: learning to dissociate the personal satisfaction of mystical vision from the reality of mystical life....The human instinct for personal happiness must be killed. This is the "spiritual crucifixion" so often described by the mystics: the great desolation in which the soul seems abandoned by the Divine. The Self now surrenders itself, its individuality, and its will, completely. It desires nothing, asks nothing, is utterly passive, and is thus prepared for.

5. Union: the true goal of the mystic quest. In this state the Absolute Life is not merely perceived and enjoyed by the Self, as in Illumination: but is one with it. This is the end towards which all the previous oscillations of consciousness have tended. It is a state of equilibrium, of purely spiritual life; characterized by peaceful joy, by enhanced powers, by intense certitude.

Collins explains that "Christian" mysticism has its origins in the Bible in general and the Pauline epistles in particular.

St. Paul presented Christ as the Ideal and Model for Christian perfection even to mystical identity with Him. In what became the locus classicus as evidence for the mystic experience, St. Paul related how he "was caught up into paradise and heard secret words which it is not granted man to utter." The Pauline contemplation was not a mere intellectual process, but an emergent knowledge of God arrived at from the visible creation, which was conditioned by ascetic pains and vitalized by conscious imitation of Christ suffering. From such sharply defined New Testament patterns the mystics of the patristic age gradually wove the fabric of Christian spirituality.⁴

These mystics, which were affiliated with the Church of Rome, found these three biblical passages of special importance: Romans 1:20 "For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse;"⁵ II Corinthians 12:1-4

It is not expedient for me doubtless to glory. I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord. I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell; God knoweth;) such an one caught up to the third heaven. And I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) How that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter⁶

and Galatians 2:20 "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God."⁷

In these three passages we see a foundation being laid for the prescribed methodology of the Medieval and Renaissance mystics. In all three we are confronted with the dramatic unification of the "Absolute" with the soul, not only in the life to come, but already in this life as well. We are also made aware of the use of a special revelation in the form of a vision, which is the result of an intense contemplation of the created world.

It is St. Augustine who is credited with establishing the first definite system of contemplation, as he modeled his process after Plato's doctrines of: Purification, Contemplation and Ascent.

For Augustine, Paul was the pencil, stylus dei, through whom God had communicated truth to Augustine himself, and Paul's dualism of Spirit and Flesh is schematized in Augustine's structure of the two cities, earthly and heavenly, which 'have been formed by two loves: the earthly by the love of self, even to the contempt of God; the heavenly by the love of God even to the contempt of self.' The grace which in Paul works to liberate the Christian from Hebrew law appears in Augustine to liberate the soul from sin. In both, the result of grace is freedom, transformation, and forgiveness; and for both the obstacle to the spiritual life is located in human nature itself.

Augustine, recognizing the paradox created in the communication between sinful man and a "divine" God, developed what has come to be called the "purgative way." This "purgative way" suggests that before the truth "could be

realized the soul must become purified, and it must learn the virtues of humility, obedience and surrender to the Will of God and thus become humble in His sight."⁹

Augustine goes into great detail describing the purgative process by formulating the

faculties of the soul into seven grades; he holds that the soul is the basis of life, of sensation, of intelligence, or morality, and the other three stages correspond to the three familiar stages of the mystical life: purgation, illumination and union, which St. Augustine respectively calls "tranquillitas," the calming of passions; the "ingressio," the approach to contemplation, and the last is the contemplation itself.¹⁰

It is only after man has examined himself on all levels of mind and spirit that he can advance to the next stage of becoming one with God.

Just as the purgative examination of man was systematically developed to display man's sinful and wretched nature, so too, the contemplative stage of the Augustinian method was systematically developed to display the greatness of God (the Divine) as He appears in nature (His creation), and on a somewhat higher level, as He appears through a close examination of His divine attributes.

Stated briefly and substantially, St. Augustine employed the following method.

1. The consciousness of an intense, yet ill-defined longing for God.
2. A search for the changeless Truth, and immutable Light.

3. He contemplates the visible objects of nature, but they are only to assist him in his quest. He finds them without exception subject to change and decay. God is not there.

4. Turning then by introspection, he analyses the faculties of his own soul.

5. He finds God at last, both in and above his own soul.¹¹

The last stage, "union", is given little more explanation than its title "rapture" or ecstasy". It is in this stage when the mind of man becomes united with the mind of God. It is a time when

eyes do not see, nor are sounds heard, and it is a state midway between sleep and death. In its intellectual aspect, he describes the ecstatic union as a quick and transient vision of the brightness of the Lord brought through a special intellectual intuition, which is accomplished by the grace of God who takes hold of the soul, 'so that God speaks mouth to mouth (os ad os loquitur), not with the mouth of the body, but with the mouth of the mind.'¹²

Medieval mysticism's methodology remained essentially unchanged, and the Augustinian formula of Purgation, Contemplation and Union became the authoritative method for the great Christian mystics which followed. Although refinement did occur, the basic system remained intact, as seen in the seven step form used by St. Bonaventure toward the end of the medieval period.

The first two of the seven steps of the Iter are in the Christocentric type of contemplation, and give such directions as make up the Purgative way. The third step of the Iter consists of a speculative discussion concerning the manner in which meditation ceases, and contemplation begins. A number of authorities are quoted to the effect that a meditation on Christ is a prerequisite for the more abstract contemplation. The fourth step is accomplished by cultivating the virtues, especially charity, through which the soul is united to God. The fifth and sixth steps illustrate the Theocentric type of contemplation. Therein is traced the ascent of the soul through creatures, and through the higher spiritual creation, 'ad cuius aeternitatis plenam experientiam nos perducatur aeterna sapientia.' The journey ends with the Sabbath, or seventh step, wherein the gradual deification of the soul is accomplished after the manner of the ascending purification of the angelic choirs.¹³

Of prime importance to the study at hand, however, is how these meditative practices, as they were redefined and refined in the Renaissance by such scholars as St. Ignatius, have been applied to the poetry of George Herbert.

With the emphasis and prescription of classical learning brought on by the Renaissance, and through the domination of the Church in Rome as directed by the Council of Trent, the stage was set for The Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius.

While adhering to the basic form and structure of both St. Augustine and St. Bonaventure, Ignatian system of meditation was far more regimented and structurally precise. The Ignatian form was

designed to be performed during approximately a month set apart for extraordinary devotional intensity. He divided his materials into four "weeks." The first is purgative, being devoted to meditations on sin and hell; the second is given over to meditations (St. Ignatius calls them "contemplations") on the life of Christ from the Incarnation to Palm Sunday; the third deals with the events of Passion Week; and the fourth deals with events from the Resurrection to the Ascension. During this month these exercises were normally performed five times daily, for periods of about one hour apiece; a great part of the remainder of the day was given over to preparing for, and examining the results of, these devotions.

...The usually procedure was to set forth two sequences of seven meditations each: one, normally followed in the evening, was devoted chiefly to self-knowledge and the fear of God. [The following sequence was typical:] (1) the knowledge of ourselves and of our sins; (2) the miseries of this life; (3) the hour of death; (4) the Day of Judgement; (5) the pains of Hell; (6) the glory and felicity of the Kingdom of Heaven; (7) the benefits of God. Such a sequence obviously accorded very well with the nightly practice of examining the conscience.¹⁴

Through use, the prescribed form of meditation became simplified for the common people, as well as to include a "pre-meditative" stage, in which the imagination focused on the "three powers of the soul": the memory, the understanding and the will, each having its own separate and communal function. The Jesuit Puente explains,

1....with the memory to be mindefull of God our Lorde, with whom wee are to speake, and to negociate; and to be mindefull also, of the mysterie that is to bee meditated, passing through the memorie, with clearnesse, and distinction, that which is to be the matter of the meditation....

2....with the understanding to make severall discourses, and considerations about that mysterie, inquiring, and searching out the Verities comprehended therein, with all the causes, proprieties, effectes, and circumstances that it hath, pondering them very particularly. In such sort that the Understanding may forme a true, proper and entire concept of the thing that it meditath, and may remaine convinced, and persuaded to receive, and to embrace, those truthes that it hath meditated, to propound them to the Will, and to move it therby to exercize its Actions.

3....with the freedom of our will to draw forth sundry Affections, or vertuous Actes, conformable to that which the Understanding hath meditated... as are Hatred of our selves; Sorrowe for our Sinnes; Confusion of our owne misery; Love of God; trust in his mercye; prayses of God; thanksgiving for benefits received; desire to obtaine true vertues...resignation of our selves to the Will of God....¹⁵

Each of these three powers of the soul corresponds to one of the three persons of the Trinity. This correspondence between the three aspects of man's intellectual being and the triune God-head enables man to achieve a closer relationship with the God he is about to address in meditation.

It is from this tradition that the Salesian form of meditation derives its origin and mode. The development of the Salesian form takes on great importance, since it is this formula, established by St. Francois de Sales, which has traditionally been applied to the English "metaphysical poets."

Before going on to a discussion of the Salesian method and its application to Herbert's "The Temple," however, it

must be stated that the primary concern of this presentation is in the process of meditation and its structure, and not in the method's particular application as a Catholic religious practice.

Section 2: The Salesian Method and "The Temple"

As already stated, the connection between the Salesian method and its application in the English metaphysicals is quite strong. The implications for such a connection in George Herbert are strengthened by a 1618 letter written to his brother, Henry, living in Paris. In the letter Herbert says,

You live in a brave nation, where, except you wink, you cannot but see many brave examples. Bee covetous, then, of all good which you see in Frenchmen, whether it be in knowledge, or in fashion, or in words; for I would have you, even in speeches, to observe so much, as when you meet with a witty French speech, try to speak the like in English: so shall you play a good marchant, by transporting French commodities to your own country.

While Herbert may or may not be directly pointing to St. Francois and the Salesian method of meditation, it is inconceivable that Herbert was not well acquainted with its form and method. Herbert's theological training would have most certainly brought him into contact with the writings of St. Francois, as well as other French Jesuits.

At any rate, the Salesian process is somewhat different than that prescribed by other Jesuits. The Salesian perspective advocates a serene simplicity in its practice of coming into the presence of God. As already seen, the Jesuit process involves a rather violent, emotional method of

self-examination and analysis as part of the purgative and illuminative stages of meditation.

Louis Martz explains that the Salesian ideal is

devoted to the "art of quieting the turmoil of the spirit," the art of promoting a "tranquility" of mind in which the spiritual combat is carried on, incessantly and vigorously, but "with a certain mildness and effortless ease." Self-examination consists in a "mild, peaceful, constant attention to the feelings of the heart"; "the principal effort of our lives should be the quieting of our hearts, and the prudent guidance of those hearts lest they go astray.... Avoid "impulsiveness or clamor," avoid "using force or violence on our hearts." Do not "dwell too long in sifting the various circumstances of your faults." "Anxiety and dejection of mind do no good, but only disturb and depress the spirit." "Instead in languishing in sorrow and dejection, the soul should bloom forth into acts of thanksgiving, establishing itself in peace and submission to the appointments of heaven."²

This "art of quieting the turmoil of the spirit" relieves much of the terror, horror and anxiety experienced during the primary stages of the meditative procedure, and at the same time eases the way to the presence of God.

While maintaining the simplified form of memory, understanding and will in the pre-meditative activities, St. Francois, in his Introduction, develops four ways of placing oneself in the presence of God. Martz interprets,

His first way is an abstract one, consisting "in a livelie and feeling apprehension of the omnipresence of God." The second moves toward a greater intimacy and concreteness, for it consists in thinking "that God is not only in the

place where thou art: but that he is by a most particular and peculiar manner in thy hart, and in the verie bottom of they spirit, which he quickeneth and animateth with his divine presence, being there as the hart of thy hart, and the spirit of thy spirit." In the third, the imagination is brought vividly into action, as we "consider and behold our blessed Saviour, who in his sacred humanitie, beholdeth from heaven all persons in the world, but especially all Christians, who are his children, and most particularlie, such as be in prayer: whose actions and be-haviour, he marketh most lovingly." And this, St. Francois adds, "is not a simple imagination of our phantasie, but an anfaillable veritie: for although we see not him, yet he from thence above considereth and looketh upon us." The fourth "manner of presence"--the most intimate and dramatic method of all--"consisteth in helping our selves with a simple imagination, by representing to our thoughts, our Saviour in his sacred humanitie, as if he were hard by us, according as we are accustomed to represent our friends to our fancie, and to say, me thinks I see such a one doing this or that, it seemes unto me that I behold him thus or thus attired, and such like."³

The third and fourth "ways" are of particular importance to Herbert. The imaginative process of prayer places the individual in a personal relationship with the God-head; a basis where all attitudes, ideas and feelings can be discussed in a serene and simple manner.

St. Francois, according to Martz, goes on to say that

Such a "livelie" apprehension of this presence--...pervades not only the set periods of meditation and coppoquy, but, ideally, penetrates every waking moment of one's life, through the constant cultivation of an extraordinary variety of devotional practices. Foremost among these is the practice of concluding each formal exercise of meditation with a⁴"nosegay of devotion"--"a spirituall posy".

In this statement St. Francois advocates a poetic record to be kept of one's meditational experiences, in order to have a physical reminder of God's dealings with the meditant. Herbert's "Temple" appears to be such a record.

As a corollary to the Introduction of St. Francois de Sales, and having an influence on Herbert as documented in The Ferrar Papers, is Savonarola's treatise De Simplicitate Christianae Vitae. In this particular work Savonarola develops the idea of a "simplicity of heart" through prayer and contemplation. Savonarola explains that this "Christian simplicity" can be achieved only

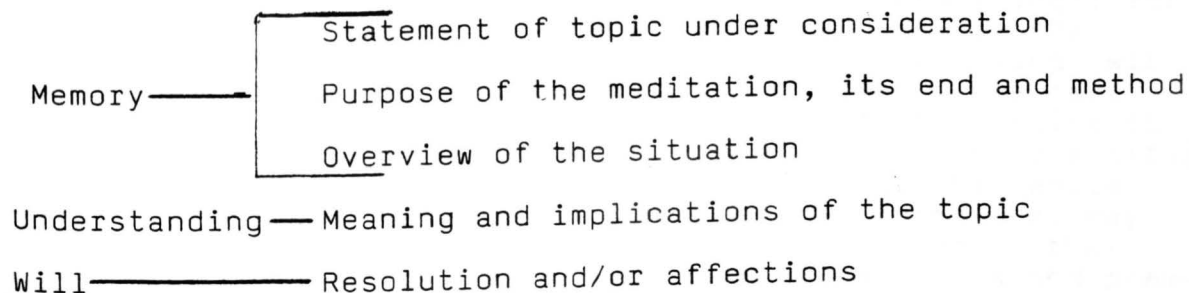
if all things which his intellect knows or contemplates are God, or related to God. If all things which the will loves and desires are God himself, or are loved and desired because of God: and likewise those things held in hate which are deserving of hate. If he holds always in his memory God and his benefits. If his imagination holds always before his eyes Christ Crucified and those things which pertain to him.... Thus the whole Christian life strives toward this end, that it may be purified from all earthly infection, both in the intellect and the will, and in the senses and the whole body: that the whole man, made clean, may become the sanctified temple of God....⁵

According to Martz, Savonarola goes on to say,

Simplicity of heart requires purgation from earthly affections, in order that the whole spirit and the whole soul may be directed toward God, and may become like unto God, that the whole man may be made simple in the likeness of God.... For the contemplation of Divine things requires

the greatest tranquility of heart; and therefore he who wishes to enjoy Divine illuminations must remove himself as far as possible from the clamor of this world....Thus the holy Fathers, desiring the contemplative life, left behind all things, and retired to solitude, content with little, in order to have greater freedom for contemplation. Therefore, the more each man shall strive to achieve simplicity in his proper degree, the greater the consolations he shall receive from Christ.

In both St. Francois and Savonarola we see the pre-meditative structure of memory, understanding and will; and according to Martz, Hussain and Summers, is exactly the pattern which appears consistently in the poetry of George Herbert. Put simply and in general terms, Herbert's poetic structure consists of these three stages, broken into approximately five steps:



While this pre-meditative pattern of memory, understanding and will appears in the individual poems, the larger meditative divisions of purgation, illumination and union also have a strong influence on "The Church". Since the meditative structure of Augustine was developed from the Pauline epistles, it is natural that lyrical books of the Bible were the models from which poets could find examples for their own

collections of poems. Of particular importance to this idea is the Augustinian division of the Psalms into three sections, representing the distinct stages of the spiritual life.

Augustine states,

For it seems to me not without significance that the fiftieth is of penitence, the hundredth of mercy and judgment, the hundred and fiftieth of the praise of God in His saints. For thus do we advance to an everlasting life of happiness, first by condemning our own sins, then by living aright, that...we may attain to everlasting life.⁷

This model is significant with respect to Herbert's "The Church," since in Martz's opinion

The first four poems of the "Church," then, form an inseparable sequence: "Altar," "Sacrifice," "Thanksgiving," and "Reprisall"--originally entitled, "The Second Thanks-giving:: for it solves the dilemma of gratitude for the Passion with which the first Thanksgiving, with a witty inconclusion, ends. Now in the next eleven poems the unity of the Temple begins to display its diversity, while maintaining a ritual, liturgical focus so strongly that this whole opening group of fifteen poems forms what may be called a sacramental introduction to the work: setting forth the basic problems and premises of the Christian life, before launching forth into the spiritual combat.⁸

This section, then, centers on the process of self-awakening and analysis, which is the necessary beginning for the contemplative life.

The second section of "The Church," that section relating to the illumination of man's soul, is the largest,

since it deals most directly with the relationship between God and man. In this portion, Herbert deals with a wide range of topics, including definitions of sin and prayer, the different aspects of the sacraments and man's grumblings, as well as his faithful acceptance of God's divine plan.

All of this

represents the two fundamental and complementary aspects of the meditative life: self-examination leading toward the love of God....In the same way the soul by meditation learns the art of "sounding heav'n and earth," and uses the weapon of mental communion which makes the sacraments flow from Christ's side.⁹

The final part of "The Church," described by Martz as "the sacramental plateau," includes approximately the last thirty poems of "The Church," beginning with "The Flower."

"The Flower" is a poem of summation, of spiritual achievement. From here on, in the remaining twenty-eight poems of the "Church," griefs melt away: they are remembered, as traces and twinges of a serious illness, but with a tone of achieved calm and assurance, accepting the limitations of grief, exulting quietly in the assurance of love.¹⁰

As implied in Martz's description of this final section as a "plateau" the union of the soul with the mind of God is not visibly represented. We are, however, aware of a change of tone. Herbert's

"soul's joy" is supremely present here, and in this mood of confidence he realizes that the

sense of absence which he has sometimes felt has been illusory: "Because thou dost abide with me, and I depend on Thee."¹¹

This absence of the final unitive stage is also discussed by Husain. He explains,

Though Herbert perhaps never lived at the higher levels of mystical life associated with the Unitive stage, the development of his religious consciousness in the years of the crisis no doubt belongs to the period of Purgation; while in the early years, the Awakening of his self is closely akin to that of the mystics. Whether he ever experienced Illumination cannot be definitely known, but that his description of God's wooing his soul and his own experience of God's Love is mystical in its essence cannot be denied. The acute sense of alienation that the soul feels in "the dark night" of its separation from God also finds expression in his later poems.¹²

Quite possibly Herbert never expressed this higher level of understanding in "The Church" poems, but by viewing "The Temple" as one unit, "The Church Militant" could be seen as an active representation of being united with God. When Herbert divides "The Temple" into its three parts: "The Church-porch," "The Church" and "The Church Militant," a correlation can be seen in the writings of "an unknown Franciscan" as he follows a form prescribed by St. Bonaventure.

To begin with, one is exercised in prayer, sacred studies, service and conversation, occupied, as it were, in correcting one's faults and acquiring virtue. Then the soul rests in contemplation, seeking solitude and trying with all its might to please God alone. Thirdly, when it has been penetrated and illuminated by the aforesaid two exercises, by virtues and true wisdom, it gives itself up to the salvation of its neighbour.¹³

In Martz's interpretation, Herbert's "The Church-porch" corresponds to the first part of the "active life" in which the soul is requested to purify itself and to lead a virtuous life. Next, the soul must be examined, trained and instructed so as to lead to a unification with God. These ideas are thought to be relevant to "The Church." The final division of Herbert's "little book", "The Church Militant," is the active result of the preceding two exercises of the soul, leading the meditant to a true concern for the "salvation of his neighbor."

If, then, the Salesian method of meditation is in fact the model used by George Herbert, as well as the other English metaphysical poets of the seventeenth century; and their poetry is in fact the result of that particular form of meditation, we should, as Martz has explained, see poetry developed around the meditative formula. Once again, however, it must be stated that the primary purpose of this discussion is not an examination of the meditative process as it applies to the Catholic form of religion, but rather it is an examination of the process as it applies to the poetry of meditation. While it is true that adherence to a form does not imply a dedication to a belief, it is also true that a form, due to its method, does imply certain inherent philosophic characteristics. Therefore it is inconceivable to believe that the meditant does not become infected with the character inherent to that particular mode.

The ideal central to the Ignatian/Salesian form of meditation appears to be its egocentric nature; that is, man through his own power, intellect and personal experiences, is able to attain a higher level of consciousness and understanding. In this system, then, man is the central force, not God, and this egocentrism becomes the fundamental characteristic of this particular process of meditation.

Before making any applications to the poetry, however, the Protestant and/or Calvinistic mode of meditation must first be established, and its implications discussed in contrast to the ideas already formulated.

Section 3: The Protestant Method and "The Temple"

In contrast to the belief promoted by Martz, Summers and Halewood, that the principle seventeenth century meditative forms were based on the Augustinian tradition, due to the lack of any distinctively Protestant work in this area, Barbara Lewalski gives evidence which displays the production and distribution of a great many manuals dedicated to the explanation and procedure necessary for a distinctively Protestant meditative form. Lewalski states,

In stressing the Calvinist theological milieu I do not of course deny the importance or the divisiveness of the major theological disputes which raged throughout the century--predestination versus Arminianism; total versus less-than-total depravity; the sole authority of scripture versus some appeal to reason and tradition; unconditioned free grace versus human cooperation with or preparation for grace. Nor do I suggest that the somewhat different stances on these and other issues taken by various Protestant poets--those here studied and others such as Herrick, Marvell, and Milton--are without significant impact upon their poetics. My point here is simply that Calvinism provided a detailed chart of the spiritual life for Elizabethan and seventeenth-century English Protestants, and that this map also afforded fundamental direction to the major religious lyric poets.

If, then, Calvinism does provide a "detailed chart of the spiritual life" for English Protestantism of this time period, we would do well to examine its theological implication before moving on to the meditative types and structure commonly practiced by the Calvinistic Protestants of this era.

It is interesting to note at the onset of this discussion that both the Salesian and the Protestant traditions have their origins in the Pauline epistles. The basic difference appears to be in the differing views concerning man's essential nature after the Fall.

In the Protestant tradition, "The Pauline terms--election, calling, justification, adoption, sanctification, glorification--mark the important stages (some of them concomitant rather than sequential) in the spiritual life of any Protestant Christian, who was urged by dozens of manuals to seek constantly for the evidence of those stages in his own life."²

In the Protestant framework for meditation, the salvation process and the development of the "spiritual life" of the Christian are of utmost importance. The development begins with

...God's Election from all eternity of certain persons to salvation and eternal life. Reformation theology gave rise to various views as to whether God's predestinating decrees of election and reprobation are in any way conditional, and as to whether God laid down those decrees before or after the Fall; some took exception to the so-called "double predestination," denying that the decree of reprobation can be wholly unconditional, and a matter of God's first intention....

The Calling of the elect Christian involves God's awakening in him at whatever time God has appointed and by whatever means...such a sense of his desperate sinfulness but also of the gospel promises that he is prepared to receive the accompanying gifts of effective repentance and saving faith. This process is wholly of God's causation; the Christian will be aware of the

effects within himself, and some theologians assign him duties in preparing his heart to receive the call, but neither the preparation of the heart nor the effectual calling is achieved by his own efforts.

Justification, which alone makes possible the sinner's salvation, is also God's gift; for the Protestant it involves forgiveness of his sins by Christ's salvation for them, and the imputing of Christ's righteousness to him as a cloak or covering to hide his true filthiness and wickedness....The Reformers were adamant in their insistence that this justification is only imputed to the sinner, not infused into him as the Roman Catholics held, so as actually to restore God's image in him; however, the imputed righteousness is really his because he is joined to Christ as body to head. Accordingly, the Protestant apprehended his spiritual condition in terms of a radical paradox, whereby he is perfectly holy in Christ in heaven even while he remains radically sinful in his earthly state....

Because the Christian remains radically sinful in himself, this justification and imputed righteousness alone can give him peace of mind, assurance of forgiveness and salvation, and finally an awareness of his Adoption as a son of God and heir of heaven with Christ....

Reformation Protestants also held that at the time of justification the process of Sanctification is also begun, for God's graces come not singly but together. Sanctification involves the actual but gradual repairing of the defaced image of God in the soul, whereby it enjoys a "new life."...Calvin, defining the restored image in terms of Ephesians 4:24 as "righteousness and true holiness," held that the elect cooperate in the gradual development of these qualities by keeping the commandments and practicing the Christian virtues, but the process itself must nevertheless be seen as wholly God's work:...Moreover, because the godly are still sinners, and their good works are always incomplete and redolent of the vices of the flesh, there can be absolutely no question of human merit attaching to any good works which they do; performance of the works of righteousness (the Commandments) are evidences of election, and the natural fruits of conversion and faith, but are not in any degree meritorious

for salvation. The final stage, Glorification, or the perfect restoration of the image of God in man and the enjoyment of eternal blessedness, may begin in this₃ life, but is fully attained only after death.

The two outstanding characteristics of Calvinism are readily seen in this pattern of salvation: man's essentially evil nature before sanctification, and God's almighty, sovereign love and power.

In a practical, rather than theoretic, sense these stages of the "spiritual life" manifest themselves in three distinct steps: conversion, repentance, and sanctification; or sin, salvation, and service. (Incidentally, these three steps or stages are also the major divisions of the prominent Protestant doctrinal standards being produced at this time, i.e. The Heidelberg Catechism, The French Confession, The Belgic Confession, and The Canons of Dort.)

The first step, conversion, is the Christian's response to God's calling. It is a crisis or turning point, in the life of a Christian, where he realizes his own helplessness to achieve salvation within himself. As Lewalski states, the conversion experience is "an essentially passive instrument acted upon by God's grace, he experiences a purging, or mollifying, or breaking of the heart which readies it for the gifts of repentance and saving faith."⁴

William Perkins, in "A Golden Chaine," describes this process by saying,

The heart...must be bruised in peeces, that it may be fit to receive Gods saving grace offered unto it. Ezech. 11:19. I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within their bowels: and I will take the stonie heart out of their bodies, and I will give them an heart of flesh.

There are for the bruising of this stony heart, foure principall hammers. The first, is the knowledge of the Law of God. The second, is the knowledge of sinne, both original and actuall, and what punishment is due unto them. The third, is compunction, or pricking of the heart, namely, a sense and feeling of the wrath of God for the same sinnes. The fourth, is an holy desperation of a mans own power, in the obtaining of eternall life.

While not explicitly stated, the motivating force behind man's conversion experience is the inner working of the Spirit of God convincing man of sin. The power of this act rests on God alone.

The second aspect of the "spiritual life," repentance, functions in relationship to this first stage of conversion. Once again Perkins quite accurately describes the condition:

When the spirit hath made a man see his sinnes, he seeth further the curse of the Law, and so he findes himselfe to be in bondage under Satan, hell, death, and damnation: at which most terrible sight his heart is smitten with feare and trembling, through the consideration of his hellish and damnable estate.

This sorrow if it continue and increase to some great measure, hath certen symptomes in the body, as burning heat, rouling of the intralls, a pinning and fainting of the solide parts.

Repentance is a worke of grace, arising of a godly sorrow, whereby a man turnes from all his sins unto God, and bringeth forth fruites worthie amendment of life.⁶

These first two stages, then, are the result of God's gift of saving faith. These principles are derived from David's Psalms, and Perkins summarizes the process in the following manner:

In the next place it is to be considered how the Lord causeth faith to spring and to breed in the humbled heart....First, when a man is seriously humbled under the burden of this sinne, the Lord by his spirit makes him lift up himselfe to consider and to ponder most diligently the great mercie of God offered unto him in Christ Jesus. ...He comes in the second place to see, feele, and from his heart to acknowledge himselfe to stand in neede of Christ, and...of every droppe of his most percious blood. Thirdly, the Lord stirreth up in his heart a vehement desire and longing after Christ and his merits: this desire is compared to a thirst....Lastly, after this desire he begins to pray, not for any wordly benefit, but onely for the forgiveness of his sinnes....Now this prayer, it is made, not for one day onely, but continually from day to day: not with lips, but with greater sighes and groanes of the heart then that they can be expressed with the tongue....After this, Christ Jesus will temper him a plaister of his owne heart blood; which beeing applied, he shall find himselfe revived, and shall come to a lively⁷ assurance of the forgiveness of all his sinnes.

In his last statement Perkins has already alluded to the last stage of the "spiritual life," sanctification. In sanctification, the Christian turns from his old way of life, with its self-gratification, to a life dedicated to the service

of God. This new dedication will result in the gradual restoration of man to the original created image of God found in Adam before the Fall.

This restoration, because it is a gradual process and because it will find fulfillment only in the final stage of "glorification," causes man to fluctuate between his old evil nature and his new redeemed nature. The transition to glorification is not smooth, but rather a constant struggle to put down sin and temptation, and to live a life of praise to God. These fluctuations are well-documented in the Psalms of King David, that great defender of the faith, where at times he doubts his own salvation and/or complains about a particular sin; King David at times characterizes himself as the most wretched man alive, as he humbly seeks forgiveness.

Before going on to a discussion of the Protestant form of meditation and the appropriate poetic response to that meditation, it would be well to review the basic theological differences between the Protestant and Roman traditions concerning salvation. In the Protestant framework salvation is the free gift of God's electing love, since man's totally depraved nature prevents him from any good work that could merit salvation. The salvation process is derived solely from the authority of the scriptures as a means of God's unconditional grace.

The Roman tradition, in contrast, because of its belief that man is not totally depraved, develops an Armenian ideal which is guided by tradition and reason. Here the salvation process is conditional; man's importance in the procedure is expanded and a human cooperation diminishes the sovereignty of God. The basic difference seems to lie in the egocentric method of the other. From the Protestant perspective the emphasis is first placed on the sovereignty of God, and, next on man's totally depraved nature; in contrast to the Roman mode where God's sovereignty is limited by man's cooperation in the salvation process. These same differences are also present in the meditative form and poetic application.

While the Catholic and Protestant forms of meditation are similar in their concern for the inner life and their emphasis on the conversion experience, the Protestant meditative structure focuses on the Bible, the Word, as the interpretive guide to the subject, and as a guide for the application of these new insights gained through the procedure. This point of application further separates the Salesian meditative mode from the Protestant, since

in these continental kinds, the meditator typically seeks to apply himself to the subject, so that he participates in it; he imagines a scene vividly as if it were taking place in his presence, analyzes the subject, and stirs up emotions appropriate to the scene or event or

personal spiritual condition. The typical Protestant procedure is very nearly the reverse: instead of the application of the self to the subject, it calls for the application of the subject to the self...

Lewalski goes on to say,

Application of what is involved in this Protestant manner of application forces a modification of Kaufmann's view that Calvinist emphasis upon doctrine (Logos) in meditation was a force making for abstraction and against poetic imagination. To be sure, Protestant meditation did not stimulate the senses to recreate and imagine biblical scenes in vivid detail; it would not therefore give rise to poetry based upon visual imagery and sensuous immediacy. But Protestant meditation did engage the mind in an effort to penetrate deeply into the motives and motions of the psyche, and also to understand the self as the very embodiment of the subject meditated upon. The Word was still to be made flesh, though now in the self of the meditator (or of the preacher and his audience). This emphasis contributed to the creation of poetry with a new depth and sophistication of psychological insight, and a new focus upon the symbolic significance of the individual.

Therefore, unlike the Salesian process of meditation, which prescribed a poetic record of the mystical experience, the Protestant form sees it rather as a means of applying the insights gained in meditation to the individual Christian life.

For the Protestant, meditation meant nothing more than the concentrated operation of the mind on a spiritual topic, so as to develop new insights applicable to the meditator's spiritual understanding. This new type of meditation

was of two types: extemporal or occasional, which focuses on subjects of this world, such as nature and creatures; and deliberate, which concerns itself with spiritual, doctrinal issues. The structure of these types contained two parts,

the exposition and analysis of a text or doctrine in order to instruct the understanding, and the forceful application of these matters to the self in order to stimulate the affections and the heart. Given this identity of elements and purposes, the terms sermon and meditation become well-nigh interchangeable in Protestant theory. The sermon was frequently described as the fruit of the preacher's meditation shared with the congregation.¹⁰

Joseph Hall, as interpreted by Lewalski, explains these two parts of analysis and application in the following manner:

Hall replaces [the] rather complex directions for the analytic stage with a simple method of considering the topic according to some of the places of logic (causes, effects, qualities, contraries, similitudes, titles and names, testimonies from scripture); moreover, he permits great flexibility in the analytic stage, asking only for a "deep and firme Consideration of the thing propounded." Indeed, he declares any manner of analysis acceptable which can achieve the primary end of meditation--as also of the Protestant sermon--the stirring of the heart: "That...is the verie soule of Meditation, whereto all that is past (of analysis) serveth but as an instrument." Hall's means for stirring the affections involve such devotional and literary postures as: relish of what we have thought on, complaints of and wishes for what we lack, humble confessions, earnest petitions, cheerful confidence of obtaining our desires.¹¹

Essentially the Protestant mode of meditation, in both of its forms, is basically concerned with the relationship between a biblical text or point of doctrine and the individual Christian's personal experience. This relationship should be so close that the "one is seen as a reflection or manifestation of the other."¹²

In occasional meditation the starting point is some occasion or event or observation in the meditator's personal experience, and his purpose is to interpret that in terms of God's providential plan and Word; in deliberate meditation the starting point is usually a biblical text or event or theological doctrine, and here the emphasis is upon "application to the self." The Christian's experience is to comment upon the biblical text, and the text upon his experience.¹³

In the Protestant tradition the third and final stage of the Jesuit mode, "union," has been eliminated. While it is true that the Protestant meditator, through the sanctifying work of God, does attain a closer relationship and understanding of the God-head, a unification in the Ignatian and Salesian sense is impossible due to the radical change in man's nature because of the Fall. As Calvin has observed, our understanding of God's revelation has been so distorted that now we are only able to comprehend a small portion of God's magnitude.

Before going on to see how this particular form is applicable to Herbert, a review of the principle differences between these two methods may prove beneficial. In the Salesian tradition the function of meditation is to become united with

the Godhead by following the purgation - illumination - union process; while in the Protestant tradition the purpose of meditation is to gain further understanding of the Godhead's relationship with man, focusing on the Bible as an interpretive and applicatory guide for these new spiritual insights.

In the Salesian method the poetic response is a means of recording the events of the meditation and/or a means of developing the meditation to a higher level of understanding, whereas in the Protestant method the poetic response functions as an application of what has been revealed through the concentrated thought on a spiritual topic.

Finally, the Salesian tradition focuses primarily on certain events concerning the life of Christ; in contrast, Protestant meditation concerns itself with the Bible and church doctrine as they apply to the process of salvation.

With these ideas clearly before us, we can now proceed to a discussion of the Protestant method of meditation as it applies to Herbert.

With the Protestant emphasis on the Bible and church doctrine as they pertain to the salvation process, the ideas of regeneration and sanctification gain great significance with respect to Herbert. By once again dividing "The Temple" into three parts, the process of regeneration and sanctification in the individual Christian's life is quite apparent.

In the first section of "The Temple," "The Church-Porch," Herbert is seen dealing with the externals of the Christian life, i.e. Christian conduct, moral virtues, the avoidance of particular sins, orderliness. As Lewalski states, "The Church-porch" can best be described "simply in terms of the natural and moral reformation to be undertaken prior to spiritual growth."¹⁴ It is these same virtues which are outlined in "The Church-porch," that are also emphasized in Herbert's The Country Parson.

"The Church," the second section, is the longest and most important, since it traces the spiritual life of the speaker through the regeneration process. This particular interpretation of "The Church" corresponds to Herbert's own description of his work as "a picture of the many spiritual Conflicts that have past betwixt God and my soul, before I could subject mine to the will of Jesus my Master."¹⁵

If "The Church" is a record of "spiritual conflicts," then Perkin's distinction of the three principle temptations and trials of the Christian life is quite appropriate.

(1) A constant "fight and battell betwixt the flesh and the spirit," the course of which he illustrates out of Paul's Epistles. (2) A disquieted and troubled heart and mind because of a distant relationship with Christ, or because Christ seems to be departed for a time, or because he himself seems to forego the relation by seeking the vanities of the world (illustrated out of Canticles). (3) Heavy and bitter outward

afflictions, driving him sometimes to impatience or a fear of God's wrath and displeasure, but at length to a settled consciousness of peace and righteousness.¹⁴

Within "The Church" we find these divisions at work. Lewalski explains,

the first group of poems, beginning with "The Altar" and culminating with the two adjacent poems "Repentance" and "Faith," explores the speaker's conversion in terms of his struggle to understand, accept, and make the appropriate response (repentance and faith) to the fundamental ground of salvation, justification through Christ's sacrifice. The second and much the largest group of poems, from "Prayer (I)" to (perhaps) "The Crosse," presents the alternating afflictions and comforts, temptations and joys, judgments and graces, victories and backslidings, and the emotional states attendant upon these vacillations, which characterize the long, slow process of sanctification in the Protestant paradigm. The final group of poems, from "The Flower" to "Love (III)," presents the mature Christian's attainment of a plateau of joy, confidence, assurance, and anticipation of heaven; in these poems the major conflicts, including his anxieties about his¹⁵ poetic praises, are eased for Herbert's speaker.

While there are correlations between the progression of the poems in "The Church" and the Old Testament books of Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Solomon, a much greater connection can be seen with the book of Psalms. In the Psalms we find the three major types of biblical lyric: psalms, hymns, and spiritual song.

Psalms were defined as sonnet-like, argumentative, meditative, or prayer-like poems on diverse subjects--a description which encompasses the largest category of Herbert's poems. Hymns were by definition joyful praises of God or thanksgivings to him: in Herbert this category covers the broad range from the elegant simplicity of the hymn portion of "Easter" to the lofty eloquence of "Providence." Spiritual songs were taken to be artful lyric pieces specifically intended for singing: in Herbert there are several song-like poems which were given contemporary musical settings, for instance, "Christmas, "Antiphon II", "The Starre Virtue", "The Dawning."¹⁶

It is also possible to divide the Psalms into three categories which also correspond to the major divisions of "The Temple." George Wither believed that while these three divisions are often thought to resemble the general stages of the mystic life, it was more generally accepted that they portrayed the stages of the spiritual progress of the Christian.

Some there be, who say, that in those three fifties, are expressed the three degrees of blessednesse: the first discovering the estate of penitence, the second of progression, and the third of perfection. Or thus: the first fiftie are of repentance and correction, the second or righteousness and mercy, the last of praises & thanksgivings, which shall be the employment of the righteous, in the perfection of their blessednesse.¹⁷

Lewalski believes the correlation between "The Temple" and the book of Psalms to be so great that she states

Herbert in the lyrics of "The Church" modeled himself most directly upon David the Psalmist, manifesting in himself David's spiritual agonies and states of soul, and echoing and reworking Davidic themes, images, and entire psalms in his

own verses. But his poetry constitutes an impressive new achievement in this kind, in that it moves beyond an imitative and derivative to a genuinely creative conception and use of biblical poetics. Herbert undertakes nothing less than the task of becoming a Christian psalmist, transposing (as he indicates in "Easter") the elements of biblical art upon a Christian lute resounding in harmony with Christ's cross. The undertaking results in the creation of religious lyrics of surpassing beauty, biblically-derived yet original, simple yet of great variety and complexity, "plain" yet exhibiting "Utmost art."¹⁸

The final division of "The Temple," "The Church Militant," expands the inner structure of "The Church," which focuses on the salvation process as it moves from conversion to faithful assurance and heavenly anticipation, to include the relationship between the redeemed Christian and his world. "The Church Militant" may be seen as Herbert's

...own all-encompassing account of the providential course laid down for the visible Church throughout history. That generic association, together with the speaker's joyful embracing of this providential course (circular and distressing as it is shown to be within the bounds of earthly history) makes this work a fitting completion for the three-part structure which is Herbert's "Temple."¹⁹

In this Protestant framework, "The Temple" is the poetic account of the process of regeneration from its beginnings, shown in the moral instruction given in "The Church-porch" as the visible signs of salvation; moving on to the internal struggles of conversion, repentance, and faith displayed in "The Church"; and finally reaching fulfillment in

the Christian's active participation in the visible church in the world, as represented in "The Church Militant." In each of these three selections the theology is in close agreement with the basic Calvinistic doctrines professed by the Protestant church.

Section 4: Poetic Application

If the poetry found in Herbert's "The Temple" is the result of a meditative process, either Salesian or Protestant, then the poetry should, to some degree, reflect the elements of that particular form. Therefore, if Herbert used the Salesian method of meditation, we should expect to find the threefold division of purgation, illumination, and union as the outer structure of "The Church;" and the memory, understanding, and will format being used in the individual poems. On the other hand, if the Protestant method of meditation was practiced, the outer structure of "The Church" should represent the stages of conversion, repentance, and faith; while the inner structure of the individual poems should correspond to the analysis and application structure commonly practiced by the Protestants.

To some there is only a small difference between the three-fold Salesian structure and the analysis and application structure of the Protestants. On the surface the essential difference between these two methods appears to be the combination of the memory and understanding stages of the Salesian form into the single analysis stage of the Protestant mode. As already seen, however, the definition and implication of these two methods differ widely.

In the Salesian tradition, man is attempting to gain a unification with the Godhead through a series of very

pointed meditations following the pattern of purgation, illumination, and finally union. This method, as already stated, is egocentric in nature with its dependence on man to initiate the process, making the meditation an intellectual pursuit, rather than an act of dedication.

The Protestant tradition, on the other hand, does not focus on an intellectualism, but rather a strengthening of the faith commitment necessary for the Christ-centered life. The Protestant method is not so much concerned with certain events surrounding Christ's earthly ministry; but rather considers the Bible and Church doctrine, as they apply to the salvation process, to be the primary focus of the meditation formula.

The whole idea of meditation differs in these two forms. The Protestant mode is not impressed by the almost ritualistic progression of the Salesian method, but considers meditation to be a concentrated searching of the Bible and the meditant's mind, as he attempts to comprehend, if only partially, the magnitude of the Trinity. These distinctions in intent and practice widen the implication of what appears to be only small structural differences.

Since it is not the intention of this presentation to lay down a set of hard and fast rules by which to evaluate all of Herbert's poetry, but only to suggest an alterna-

tive to the strictly Salesian approach to Herbert, six representative sonnets have been taken from "The Church"; sonnets were chosen to eliminate any lengthy discussion concerning the poetic structure of the individual poems. With respect to "The Church," two sonnets were chosen from each of the three major divisions associated with the purgation, illumination, and union stages of the Salesian interpretation, and the corresponding conversion, repentance, and faith divisions of the Protestant. Put more directly, "Sinn 1" and "The Sinner" correspond to the purgation or conversion stage, "The H. Scriptures" and "The Holdfast" deal with the illumination or repentance stage, and "The Answer" and "The Sonne" are applied to the union or faith stage of the meditative structure.

The first segment of "The Church," which corresponds to the purgation and conversion stage of meditation, contains the sonnets "Sinn 1" and "The Sinner." "Sinn 1" concentrates on the "care" which God has taken to surround the elect, as a demonstration of His love for His creation.

Sinne (1).

Lord, with what care hast thou begirt us round!
 Parents first season us: then schoolmasters
 Deliver us to laws; they send us bound
 To rules of reason, holy messengers,
 Pulpits and Sundayes, sorrow dogging sinne,
 Afflictions sorted, anguish of all sizes,
 Fine nets and stratagems to catch us in,

Bibles laid open, millions of surprises,
 Blessings beforehand, eyes of gratefulnesse,
 The sound of glorie ringing in our eares:
 Without, our shame, within, our consciences;
 Angels and grace, eternall hopes and fears.
 Yet all these fences and their whole aray
 One cunning bosome-sinne blows quite away.

The speaker of "Sinn 1" catalogues the safeguards which his Savior has placed around man to keep him ever closer to the Godhead. These safeguards include parents, teachers, rules of logic, sermons, immediate payment for sins through pain and problems which function as deterrents to pride and the arrogant belief that man is self-sufficient, as well as God's personal revelation as it appears in the Bible. With all of these safeguards, however, man is still troubled by sin, since these blessings do nothing to erase the guilt of sins committed. With the transition created by the word "yet" the speaker understands that even though through God's grace he is protected from sin, he is still not confident of his salvation, because with "One cunning bosome-sinne blows quite away" the protection which God has provided.

The theological implications of this sonnet appear to be two-fold. While God, through His mercy, has provided for man's comfort in a physical and mental way, the spiritual comfort is only possible through a personal and active faith commitment to the salvation process, accomplished through Christ's sacrifice on the cross. And secondly, since this salvation process is a lifelong procedure, man will constantly

be troubled by his sinful and corrupt nature when seen in contrast to God's love.

"Sinn 1" is definitely a sonnet which focuses on man's need for salvation as well as God's salvation plan. By placing this sonnet in the purgation, or conversion, segment of "The Church," Herbert is drawing the reader's attention to the beginning stages of awareness which accompany the Christian's movement to the worship of the Creator rather than the creature.

If this sonnet is a representation of the Salesian form of meditation, we should expect to find the three-fold divisions of memory, understanding, and will, prescribed by Puento and expanded by St. Francois de Sales. In this particular sonnet these divisions appear to be quite arbitrary. After introducing the topic in the first line, the speaker goes on to recall the blessings of God. There is no clear division, however, between the memory and the understanding stages. Lines 2-12 are one sentence, so that the reader is unable to differentiate between these two stages. The final couplet is not a demonstration of a union with God, or even a representation of a surrender to God's will. If the ultimate goal of the purgation stage in this form of meditation is self-analysis, or self-examination, we find little that points to an understanding of man's essential nature.

If, however, this sonnet is viewed as the beginning stages of man's understanding of the Godhead within the salvation process, the sonnet becomes a psalm of praise to God for His mercy and love. With God's blessings to man as the focus of the sonnet, the reader/speaker becomes aware of man's spiritual awakening in response to God's salvation plan.

As already suggested, the inner structure of the sonnet lends itself to a two-stage format rather than the three stages promoted by the Salesian method. With the first thirteen lines serving as an introduction and analysis of the topic, the application suggested in the final couplet points to the first stages of man's growing awareness of his inability to gain salvation through himself, and the need for a mature understanding and commitment to the Father as the author of salvation. It is the constant badgering of man by sin which draws him into a close relationship to God, and not the human intellect or personal desire for union with God. These are the same thoughts presented in "The Sinner."

The Sinner.

Lord, how I am all ague, when I seek
 What I have treasur'd in my memorie!
 Since, if my soul make even with the week,
 Each seventh note by right is due to thee.
 I finde there quarries of pil'd vanities,
 But shreds of holinesse, that dare not venture
 To shew their face, since crosse to thy decrees:
 There the circumference earth is, heav'n the centre.
 In so much dregs the quintessence is small:

The spirit and good extract of my heart
 Comes to about the many hundred part.
 Yet Lord restore thine image, heare my call:
 And though my hard heart scarce to thee can grone,
 Remember that thou once didst write in stone.²

"The Sinner" is a sonnet of confession. In this confession the speaker realizes that while he is unworthy of God's love and care, his only hope for salvation is based precisely on the restoration which only God can provide. The fear (ague) that the speaker is experiencing is the natural response of the penitent sinner as he approaches God in prayer or celebration. While a sinner desires to be reconciled to God, the resolution (seventh note) of the conflict can be found nowhere else than at God's mercy seat. While the "seventh note" in its musical connotation has reference to a demanded resolution, it also refers to the seventh day of the week, or Sunday, a day reserved for the worship of God, which is accomplished principally through the church.

The speaker is aware that because of the weakness of his soul he has "piled" "quarries" of "vanities" and self-conceit.³ The speaker also understands that even his acts of "holinesse" are infinitesimal when compared to the glory and position of God's "decrees." The speaker knows that just as God's dominion is the center of the universe, so too God's image is preserved in man, although covered by the "dregs" of sin.

Once again the last three lines are a plea to God to "restore" His image and to "heare" man's call for mercy. The speaker recalls the heart-of-stone image which is to common to Herbert's poetry. This image focuses the reader's attention not only to the giving of the Ten Commandments written with the finger of God, but also to the New Testament promises of Christ's salvation, sacrifice, and the comforts of the Holy Spirit (II Corinthians 3:3--not on tablets of stone but in fleshy tablets of the heart.^{4'})

This confession is the result of a growing faith. While the speaker is aware that he is undeserving of God's mercy, he is also aware that it is only through that mercy that he is able to be absolved from the "dregs" of sin.

It is possible to interpret this sonnet according to the Salesian format of purgation and self-analysis by dividing the sonnet into three sections. Lines 1-8 comprise the act of recalling the speaker's essentially corrupt nature and contrasting that nature to his knowledge of God's love. Lines 9-12 function as the understanding aspect of the Salesian form. Here the speaker acknowledges that the spiritual aspect of his nature is very small indeed. The final three lines point to the resignation of man's self to the will of God. It is a plea for mercy and strength. It is interesting to note, however, that this plea is totally dependent on God, since man is not capable of providing for his own salvation.

While this interpretation merits notation, the Protestant form seems more appropriate. By making the first eleven lines an analysis of the cause of the speaker's "ague" whereby the speaker recognizes his helplessness and his inability to do that which is right, the sonnet once again becomes representative of the first stages of the salvation process. The last three lines then become the appropriate application, in that the sinner realizes restoration is possible only through the divine power of God.

At this point in "The Temple," the reader/speaker has not been presented with any doctrinal standards by which to guide his spiritual growth. The immature Christian is simply made aware of his essential nature and the love of God, and it is this awareness which leads him to further study and maturity. These ideas are consistent with the conversion process, but while self-analysis is a large part of that process, it is not the only aspect.

At the onset of spiritual growth and maturity the sinner develops to a higher level of spiritual awareness which leads from repentance to dedication. This higher level of awareness corresponds to the illuminative or repentance stage of the meditative structures. As might be expected, the second level of spiritual development expands and delineates the process of conversion by placing it in a biblical and/or doctrinal context. This development of biblical

knowledge is given special consideration in the sonnet, "The H. Scriptures."

The H. Scriptures. 1

Oh Book! infinite sweetness! let my heart
 Suck ev'ry letter, and a hony gain,
 Precious for any grief in any part
 To cleare the breast, to mollifie all pain,
 Thou art all health, health thriving till it make
 A full eternitie: thou art a masse
 Of strange delights, where we may wish & take.
 Ladies, look here; this is the thankful glasse,
 That mends the lookers eyes: this is the well
 That washes what it shows. Who can indeare
 Thy praise too much? thou art heav'ns Lidger here.
 Working against the states of death and hell.
 Thou art joyes handsell: heav'n lies flat in thee,
 Subject to ev'ry mounters bended knee. 5

In contrast to the awakening spiritual desires characterized by fears and uncertainty, "The H. Scriptures" displays a joy which is possible only through the study and a spiritual growth. This joy is proclaimed already in the introductory "Oh Book! infinite sweetnesse!", followed by the plea "let my heart Suck ev'ry letter." Here the word "suck" implies a desire for information, with the Bible as his primary source of spiritual nourishment.⁶ The speaker goes on in lines 3-7 to list the benefits that the Bible gives to believers: it is "precious for any grief;" it is a "health" that will thrive "till it make a full eternitie," and in summary, it is "a masse of strange delights, where we may wish and take."

The full implication of these delights is expanded in lines 8-12, where the Bible is described as "the thankful glasse that mends the lookers eyes" and "the well that washes what it shows." Both of these illusions, of glass and well, imply deeper meanings. "Glass" can be used to mean a mirror in which we truly see ourselves or which gives the true reflection of the Godhead. It also carries with it the implication of time, an hour glass, pointing to the comfort the believer has at the end of time. "Glass" also carries a connotation of magnification, through which hidden details and intricacies are more clearly defined.⁷

In lines 11-12 the speaker introduces another image, that of "Lidger," or a resident ambassador to a foreign land. The Bible, as a record of God's relationship with man, as well as a record of Christ's ministry, is seen as God's envoy on earth, working to save mankind from certain destruction in "death and heall." "Lidger" also implies a balance sheet on which a record of man's sins are kept; but as already seen, man has been justified and his debt has been paid through the redemptive, cleansing work of Christ.

All of these ideas are summed up in the final couplet, where the Bible is described as "joyes handsell," or as the first installment of innumerable joys to follow. It is the very representation of Heaven, and as such demands our full allegiance and adoration.

Structurally, a three-fold division can be applied on this sonnet. The first seven lines can be viewed as an introductory segment, including an overview of the topic under consideration. The next five lines could be seen as focusing on the implication and meaning of the Bible as "glass," "well" and "Lidger." The final couplet can represent a resolution accompanied by the joys which are ours through an understanding of the promises given in God's written revelation to man.

Once again, however, the Protestant mode offers a structure which is more consistent with the theological implications presented in the sonnet. The speaker's analysis of "The H. Scriptures" is based on his understanding of the four dominant images of nourishment, "suck"; the reflection of the Godhead, "glass"; God's justice, "well"; and God's representative on earth, "Lidger." The application of these images appears in the final couplet, where the speaker realizes that his understanding of the Bible is really very small and the glories that are to follow in Heaven will outshine all expectations revealed in the written Word. The speaker knows that his only response can be one of awe and adoration as he awaits that final revelation.

This spiritual development of the convert is not limited to the Bible, however. In his search for a deeper knowledge and understanding of the spiritual mysteries, the convert

is encouraged to be guided by a set of doctrinal standards, through which these biblical ideals may be more fully comprehended. One sonnet which focuses on the difficult doctrinal issue of total depravity and election is "The Holdfast."

The Holdfast.

I Threatned to observe the strict decree
 Of my deare God with all my power & might.
 But I was told by one, it could not be;
 Yet I might trust in God to be my light.
 Then will I trust, said I, in him alone.
 Nay, ev'n to trust in him, was also his:
 We must confesse that nothing is our own.
 Then I confesse that he my succour is:
 But to have nought is ours, not to confesse,
 That we have nought. I stood amaz'd at this,
 Much troubled, till I heard a friend expresse,
 That all things were more ours by being his.
 What Adam had, and forfeited for all,
 Christ keepeth now, who cannot fail or fall.⁸

Like "The H. Scriptures," "The Holdfast" appears in the section of "The Church" designated to represent the illumination, or repentance, stage of the meditative formulas. As a pre-requisite to salvation, man must come to the knowledge that Christ's sacrifice was a free gift from God, and that man was totally uninvolved in that aspect of the salvation process.

In this particular sonnet, Herbert employs the use of a dialogue between the speaker and an unknown second party, his "friend," who is quite probably a personification of Christ.⁹ In this conversation the speaker comes to realize, through the guidance of "his friend," that all his attempts

"to observe the decree/ of my deare God with all my power & might," and "to trust in Him alone," and to "confess that he my succour is" do not spring from man himself, since "we have nought" to merit salvation, and are naturally prone to evil rather than good.

Typically in the repentance stage, man is not left in a state of hopeless despair. In the last three lines of this sonnet, his "friend" assures the speaker "that all things were more ours by being his./ What Adam had, and forfeited for all,/ Christ keepeth now, who cannot fail or fall."

Through this conversation the speaker comes to the realization that his salvation is not dependent on his own good works or intentions, but is the result of God's love, and is a gift to all believers. Put negatively, this means that man is incapable of working out his own salvation because of his sinful nature (total depravity), and that this gift is given only to the elect (those chosen before the world was formed.)

Structurally the Salesian mode is not applicable to this sonnet. There is no reference to the memory or the understanding stages of the meditative form, in which the speaker first recalls the past, and then applies that past to his understanding of the salvation principle. In fact, the resolution is not focused on the speaker but on the "friend." It is the "friend" that comforts the speaker and assures him of the salvation which God offers.

Again it seems that the Protestant form of meditation more accurately describes the action of this sonnet. In the Protestant mode the first eleven lines serve as an analysis of the speaker's understanding of God's sovereign love and man's essential nature. After being told that he is incapable of serving God in a manner appropriate to the Godhead, the speaker is in a state of despair until the "friend" explains that his comfort should be even greater than before, since Christ, who is not subject to change or flattery, is now completely in charge of man's salvation. Man's debt has been paid through Christ's sacrifice on the cross. The last three lines, then, function as the applicatory segment of the sonnet, in which man's comfort, also a gift from God, is returned.

Through this spiritual growth, which has developed through the repentance and conversion, man has come to recognize his own unworthiness and sin. While his misery is very great, man's joy has also been expanded; instead of being rejected by God the elect have been incorporated into His heavenly race. It is with this joy and commitment that the Christian moves on in his spiritual development. Through further maturity and understanding the Christian now begins to take an active role in "The Church." He has been called to live a life of faith and dedication. This development of the active Christian life, as explained in the next two sonnets, corresponds to the higher level of understanding

characteristic of the union or faith stages of the meditative form.

As the Christian develops in his understanding and knowledge of biblical and/or doctrinal concepts, he is often faced with ideas which are difficult for the human mind to comprehend (i.e. the Trinity, the Virgin birth, justification by faith, and the human and divine natures of Christ). These concepts demand a faith commitment rather than an intellectual discernment. In "The Sonne" Herbert's speaker attempts to explain the dual nature of Christ through a word-play on the son/sun pun.

The Sonne.

Let forrain nations of their language boast,
 What fine varietie each tongue affords:
 I like our language, as our men and coast:
 Who cannot dresse it well, want wit, not words.
 How neatly doe we give one onely name
 To parents issue and the sunnes bright starre!
 A sonne is light and fruit; a fruitful flame
 Chasing the fathers dimnesse, carri'd farre
 From the first man in th' East, to fresh and new
 Western discov'ries of posteritie.
 So in one word our Lords humilitie
 We turn upon him in a sense most true:
 For what Christ once in humblenesse began
 We him in glorie call, The Sonne of Man.¹⁰

In "The Sonne" Herbert begins his meditation with a defense of the English language. While English as a language had come under some criticism for being too informal and uncultured, the speaker here praises the form for its ability to communicate a variety of different meanings through

a single word or phrase. The final line of the opening quatrain insists that the inability to understand or comprehend lies in the user, and not the language.¹¹

In the second quatrain, Herbert proves this point by illustrating "how neatly" one word can be used to imply different meanings. By using the son/sun pun Herbert's speaker points to God's salvation plan through Christ, His Son, who is also referred to as the "light of the world." It is through this son/sun that God has given man the source of his existence, by "chasing" away the darkness of sin.

This idea of salvation is expanded in the next series of lines, which focus not only on Christ's human nature, but also on the process which the Father used to fulfill his promised covenant to the "first man in th' East," Adam. The process, however, does not conclude with the crucified Christ; the final lines express the external relationship with Christ, the risen Lord, and the believer in "glorie." The consistent pun of son/sun thus serves to intensify the relationship between Christ's human and divine natures. It is the constant comparison between the son as "parents issue" and the sun as a "bright starre" which heightens the Reformational understanding of Christ's humble birth and His divine title as "The Sonne of Man."

While it is apparent that this sonnet can be divided into three sections, they do not correspond to the Salesian

divisions of memory, understanding and will. Once again there is no reference to the past or to a new understanding of a previously hidden truth; and since there is no real mention of a transcendent union, either intellectual or mystical, with the Godhead, we are compelled to interpret this sonnet in terms of the Protestant mode.

By beginning this sonnet with the reference to "language," the speaker is already preparing the reader for the apparent contrast between heaven and earth. This contrast is heightened through the son (earth) and sun (heaven) pun which permeates the poem. Since these two natures are inseparable and yet distinct, the speaker combines the ideas to form the God/man deity. While a complete analysis of Christ's essential nature is humanly impossible, the paradox of Christ's divinity and his equality with man is at the same time a source of mystery as well as praise.

While this apparent contradiction is incomprehensible to the human intellect, man's only response is one of loyalty and faith. In the final couplet the speaker develops the contrast between the humble, human birth of Christ, and His heavenly position as God's Son. By concluding this sonnet with the reference to Christ as "The Sonne of Man," Herbert recalls the biblical name for Christ found in the gospels, as it is used to imply the fulfillment, as well as the beginning of a new and divine empire.

As this active faith grows and develops the Christian continues to increase in his knowledge and understanding of the Bible and church doctrine. At times, however, even the strongest Christian encounters periods in which he is caught off guard, and his faith and commitment are called into question. These moments of weakness can be brought on by the memory of past sins, an unpleasant or unexpected experience, or even a new insight into some biblical precept previously unnoticed. In "The Answer" we find such an account.

The Answer.

My comforts drop and melt away like snow:
 I shake my head, and all the thoughts and ends,
 Which my fierce youth did bandie, fall and flow
 Like leaves about me: or like summer friends,
 Flyes of estates and sunne-shine. But to all,
 Who think me eager, hot, and undertaking,
 But in my prosecutions slack and small;
 As a young exhalation, newly waking,
 Scorns his first bed of dirt, and means the sky;
 But cooling by the way, grows pursie and slow,
 And settling to a cloud, doth live and die
 In that dark state of tears: to all, that so
 Show me, and set me, I have one reply,
 Which they that know the rest, know more then I.¹²

In "The Answer" the speaker is troubled, because his "comforts" are apparently beginning to "drop and melt away like snow." Through the two similes of leaves and summer friends the speaker wonders if his commitment to God is only appropriate in times of ease and plenty, and of no benefit during times of need and want. He begins to consider the

possibility that he may in fact be as others have evaluated him; he may be "eager, hot and undertaking, / But in my prosecutions slack and small."

In lines 8-12 the speaker develops his growing anguish through a cloud analogy. His lost "comfort" is very much like the morning fog, which slowly evaporates and collects in the sky to form clouds. When enough moisture has gathered in these clouds, however, the moisture is once again released and falls to earth. This cyclic action of the clouds is very much like the recurrent tensions caused by a lack of faith, or moment of uncertainty.

This analogy also has implication for the Christian who at times begins to take God's heavenly promises for granted. In these times an individual becomes proud and self-sufficient, rather than trusting in God for all his needs. The end result, however, is ultimately tragic, ending in "that dark state of tears."

While this sonnet appears to be a lament, the last two lines are quite hopeful. Line 13 implies that no matter what others think of the speaker, or what he thinks of himself, there is an unshakable confidence in God to provide an answer for persistent doubts. "I have one reply," a reply already recorded in "The Quip" ("But thou shalt answer, Lord, for me.")

While it appears that the sonnet should end with the ideas presented in line 13, the speaker adds what seems to be the anti-climactic "Which they that know the rest, know more then I." In this last line our attention is drawn to the three-fold meaning of "rest." If the implication for "rest" is a place of peace, then this poem is indeed despairing; but if "rest" here means, as it would appear, a complete or total knowledge of what is to come, or a reference to the final "rest" which comes in death, the poet then is displaying a great deal of faith. The sure knowledge that Christ is present, not only in time of trouble, but also before the great judgement seat of God, gives the poet much comfort as he faces the trials and temptations of the world. While it is true that the comforts of this world do "drop and melt away like snow" the speaker is well aware that a lasting comfort is possible only through a personal, faithful relationship with God.

Once again it seems inappropriate to divide this sonnet into the three-fold structure prescribed in the Salesian tradition. While it is true that there is a reference to a recollection of "my fierce youth," the implication is not to the memory, but to an analagous situation created in the impending similes. This analysis is expanded, in what would then be called the understanding stage, by the speaker's explanation and reference to the progression of fog as it moves

to a cloud state, and finally returns to earth as rain.

In the final couplet the speaker is seeking a union with the Godhead but is unable to attain this relationship in human terms. The union is possible only through an act of faith, rather than reason or human desire. The speaker realizes that a total union with the Godhead is possible only after death, when he will be transformed into that glorious communion with the Father. The sanctifying work here begun on earth can only reach fulfillment in the life to come.

Through these six sonnets, even though they are only a small representation of the whole body of "The Church," it is possible to make some observations. While it has never been my intention to reject the Ignatian or the Salesian traditions as an appropriate means of interpreting Herbert, the Protestant tradition appears to offer some insights previously disregarded.

In these sonnets we have observed that the Salesian method of meditation has not been totally accurate. The three-fold division of the individual sonnets into memory, understanding, and will either does not apply to the fourteen line structure of the sonnet form or seems imposed rather than a natural progression of ideas. At the same time the outer Salesian structure of "The Church" with its purgation, illumination, union format, is **not** strictly followed. While there are evidences of the purgation and illumination stages

of the process, the final unification aspect is noticeably absent.

The Protestant format, on the other hand, as it follows the salvation process from repentance to conversion and faith, appears to be consistent throughout. The pattern of the sanctification process and the development of the Christian's faith commitment to God remains the cornerstone in understanding the individual poems.

When considering the individual sonnets, what appears at first to be a semantic difference between these two methods, becomes in reality a difference in perspective, as well as form. The application of this pattern to the individual sonnets develops a standard form from which the reader can trace the progression of the speaker's spiritual development through the sanctification process. While this paper is far from being an all-inclusive presentation of either the Salesian method or the Protestant mode of meditation, the evidence points to this second method of evaluating the works of George Herbert.

NotesSection 1

¹Itrat Husain, The Mystic Element in the Metaphysical Poets of the Seventeenth Century (New York: Biblio and Tannen, 1966), p. 27.

²Evelyn Underhill, Mysticism: A Study in the Nature and Development of Man's Spiritual Consciousness (Strand: Methuen, 1962) pp. 81-92.

³Ibid., pp. 169-170.

⁴Joseph B. Collins, Christian Mysticism in the Elizabethan Age: With its Background in Mystic Methodology (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1940), p. 21.

⁵The Holy Bible: King James Version (New York: The World Publishing Company) All Biblical references throughout this paper are taken from this source.

⁶Ibid.

⁷Ibid.

⁸William Halewood, The Poetry of Grace: Reformational Themes and Structures in the English Seventeenth Century Poetry (London: Yale University Press, 1970), pp. 37-38.

⁹Husain, The Mystic Elements, p. 27.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 28.

¹¹Collins, Christian Mysticism, pp.26-27.

¹²Ibid., p. 33.

¹³Ibid., pp. 60-61.

¹⁴Louis L. Martz, The Poetry of Meditation: A Study in English Religious Poetry of the Seventeenth Century (London: Yale University Press, 1965), p. 26.

¹⁵Ibid., pp. 34-35.

Section 2

¹E. E. Hutchinson, The Works of George Herbert (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1964), p. 336.

²Martz, The Poetry of Meditation, p. 148.

³Ibid., pp. 250-251.

⁴Ibid., p. 251.

⁵Girolamo Savonarola, De Simplicitate Christianae Vitae (Strassburg: 1915), Liber 2, Conclusio 7, in Louis Martz, The Poetry of Meditation, p. 285.

⁶Savonarola, De Simplicitate Christianae Vitae, Lib. 5, Concl. 16, in Louis Martz, The Poetry of Meditation, p. 285.

⁷Barbara Lewalski, Protestant Poetics and the Seventeenth Century Religious Lyric (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979), pp. 49-50.

⁸Martz, The Poetry of Meditation, p. 292.

⁹Ibid., p. 299.

¹⁰Ibid., pp. 312-313.

¹¹Ibid., p. 316.

¹²Husain, The Mystic Element, p. 158

¹³Martz, The Poetry of Meditation, p. 289.

Section 3

- ¹Lewalski, Protestant Poetics, p. 14.
- ²Ibid., p. 16.
- ³Ibid., pp. 16-18.
- ⁴Ibid., p. 21.
- ⁵Ibid., p. 21.
- ⁶Ibid., pp. 21-22.
- ⁷Ibid., p. 22.
- ⁸Ibid., p. 149.
- ⁹Ibid., p. 150.
- ¹⁰Ibid., p. 152.
- ¹¹Joseph Hall, Arte of Divine Meditation (London, 1607), pp. 88, 89-94, 150; in Lewalski, Protestant Poetics, p. 153.
- ¹²Lewalski, Protestant Poetics, p. 154.
- ¹³Ibid., p. 155.
- ¹⁴Ibid., p. 24.
- ¹⁵Ibid., pp. 286-287.
- ¹⁶Ibid., p. 300.
- ¹⁷Ibid., p. 50.
- ¹⁸Ibid., p. 316.
- ¹⁹Ibid., p. 305.

Section 4

¹E.E. Hutchinson, The Works of George Herbert (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1964), pp. 45-46.

²Ibid., p. 38.

³Oxford English Dictionary, "quarry", #6

⁴For further explanation see: Martz, Poetry of Meditation, p. 294; Lewalski, Protestant Poetics, p. 204; Rosemond Tuve, A Reading of George Herbert (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966), pp. 182-203.

⁵Hutchinson, The Works, p. 58.

⁶Oxford English Dictionary, "suck," #3 and #4.

⁷Oxford English Dictionary, "glass," #2 and #3.

⁸Hutchinson, The Works, p. 107.

⁹For further explanation see: Lewalski, Protestant Poetics, p. 286, 294; Virginia Mollenkott, "Experimental Freedom in Herbert's Sonnets," Genre, 5 (1972), pp. 131-137.

¹⁰Hutchinson, The Works, p. 167.

¹¹For further explanation see: Lewalski, Protestant Poetics, p. 228; Mary Ellen Rickey, Utmost Art: Complexity in the Verse of George Herbert, (University of Kentucky Press, 1966), pp. 59-60, 164; Frederick Von Ende, "George Herbert's 'The Sonne': In Defence of the English Language," Studies in English Literature, 12, pp. 173-182.

¹²Hutchinson, The Works, p. 169.

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