

**THE FIRST STEP TOWARD GRACE:  
JOHN WESLEY'S USE OF THE SPIRITUAL HOMILIES OF  
MACARIUS THE GREAT**

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**Introduction**

Is humanity able to turn to God first without promptings of grace or must grace first prepare any action of human free will? This is the distinctive issue which separates Macarius the Great and John Wesley. John Wesley quotes Macarius' "Homily Seventeen" from *The Fifty Spiritual Homilies in The Scripture Way of Salvation* and he interprets and edits the Macarian homilies in his *Christian Library* to bring this subtle, yet major, theological distinction to light.

John Wesley is known to modify sources to make a point to his followers, or to defeat his theological opponents.<sup>1</sup> It has been noted that Macarian theology made an impact on John Wesley.<sup>2</sup> Albert Outler noted that Macarius' impact was developed while John was in Georgia (1736–1737).<sup>3</sup> Yet, no one has analyzed whether or not Wesley used the Macarian corpus accurately. His placement of the particular quotation in *The Scripture Way of Salvation* and

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<sup>1</sup>Ted Campbell, *John Wesley's Conceptions and Use of Christian Antiquity* (Ann Arbor, MI: University Microfilms International, 1984), 302–4.

<sup>2</sup>Macarius the Great, *Pseudo-Macarius: The Fifty Spiritual Homilies and the Great Letter in The Classics of Western Spirituality Series*, George A. Maloney, S.J., trans., ed. (New York: Paulist Press, 1992), p. xi.

Anthony Paul Clarkson, *Christ and the Christian Writings of Pseudo-Macarius: A Study of Early Christian Spirituality* (Roma: Typis Pontificiae Universitatis Gregorianae, 1977), p. viii. Here and after cited as "Clarkson, Roma, 111. This excerpt is given the title of the chapter from the larger work which is cited below."

Anthony Paul (Benedict) Clarkson, O.C.S.O., *Christ and the Christian in the Writings of Pseudo-Macarius: A Study of an Early Christian Spirituality*, dis. Pontificiae Universitatis Gregorianae, Roma (Kopua, Takapau, New Zealand: Order of the Cistercians of the Strict Order, Southern Star Abbey, 1977), p. viii. Here and after cited as, "Clarkson, New Zealand, 111." This is the larger dissertation which has not been published which I tracked down in New Zealand. Thanks go to the Abbot and Brother John Benedict of the Southeastern Star Abbey in Kopua for copying each page and mailing it so that it could be included in the collection at The Divinity School, Duke University, Durham, NC, USA.

<sup>3</sup>Albert Outler, ed., *John Wesley* (New York: Oxford, 1964), 9, n. 26. This is borne out by journal entries which can be accessed in:

John Wesley, *Journal and Diaries I*, W. Reginald Ward and Richard P. Heitzenrater, eds., in *The Works of John Wesley*, 35 vols. (Nashville: Abingdon, 1976–), 18:405.

his editorial omissions in *The Christian Library* show a clear theological prejudice on Wesley's part. This article will compare the theology of Macarius the Great and themes of the Macarian Homilies to John Wesley's placement of the quote from Macarian "Homily Seventeen" in *The Scripture Way of Salvation*, from *The Works of John Wesley*.<sup>4</sup> Then we will look at the editing by Wesley in *The Christian Library* and compare it to modern translations.<sup>5</sup> What Wesley leaves out of the sample homilies and where the quote from "Homily Seventeen" is placed will show how John Wesley agrees with Macarius in terms of the presence of sin and grace co-habiting in the soul. Even more, the evidence will show how Wesley disagrees with Macarius on the impetus of the first movement of the will toward grace.

### The Theology of Macarius the Great<sup>6</sup>

To make a proper analysis of whether or not John Wesley used the Macarian sources accurately we must first understand something of the lesser known Macarius the Great's theology. Unlike Wesley's *The Scripture Way of Salvation*, there is no one particular homily of Macarius that lays out a theological system. An analysis of the Macarian corpus reveals basic theological assumptions that can be placed together as themes running throughout Macarius' work. Chief among these themes is the notion that humanity was created in the image and likeness of God.<sup>7</sup> In particular, there are two parts of the one large image, a "celestial image" and a "natural image." Humanity understands it depends upon the communion and sustaining power of God in the celestial image. The celestial image is a direct reliance upon God in his presence in the Garden of Eden. The natural image is derived from the image of a God who freely created out of his will. The natural image is manifested in human free will given as a gift of grace from God. In the fall of humanity from the Garden of Eden, humanity lost the celestial image, that is, its reliance

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<sup>4</sup>John Wesley, *The Works of John Wesley*, Sermons II, Albert Outler, ed. (Nashville: Abingdon, 1976- ), 2:152-69.

<sup>5</sup>The numbering of the homilies will be from the critical edition of Dorres, Kroeger and Klostermann, *Die 50 Geistlichen Homilien Des Makarios* (Berlin: Walter De Gruyter and Co., 1964). This numbering is followed exactly by Maloney, whose translations into English I will use for "Homily Seventeen" and all other translations except "Homily Five." The translation for "Homily Five" is my own.

<sup>6</sup>Because of the scholarly debate which has not been settled as to Macarius' exact location in the Middle East (either Egypt or Syria), the title "the Great" will be used to avoid controversy. The important point here is what the Macarian homilies tell us. Also, I simply refuse to use the term "Pseudo" in front of the writings of one of the masters of Christian Spirituality just because the scholarly community is on a "quest for the historical Macarius." The identity of the author should not in any way deter us from learning from the theological content of his writings.

<sup>7</sup>*Pseudo-Macarius*, 11.

Georges Florovsky, "The Byzantine Ascetic and Spiritual Fathers," in *The Collected Works of Georges Florovsky*, 10 vols., Richard S. Haugh, ed. (Vaduz, Europa: B uchervertriebsanstalt, 1987), 10:154-55.

upon and communion with God.<sup>8</sup> Macarius, like many other Eastern Fathers, believes that humanity did not lose the “natural image” in the Fall. In fact, the natural image is portrayed as one in which the soul is blinded or smothered by evil. Sin itself is a foreign substance to the soul because the soul was created in the image and likeness of God.<sup>9</sup> After the Fall, the focus of salvation is the returning of the soul to the celestial image, and beyond the celestial image, to the image of the New Adam, Jesus Christ. This restoration in turn will restore the human’s perfect love of God and love of neighbor which s/he had in the Garden.<sup>10</sup> The restoration may go even further than the image and likeness that was given in the Garden, toward the image and likeness of the risen Christ.

The deification of humanity and the return of the human soul to the image and likeness of God is the goal of salvation for Macarius.<sup>11</sup> This goal is a return to “perfection.” Perfection is the restoration of paradise in the soul in this lifetime.<sup>12</sup> Similar to St. Basil, perfection is the removal of the corrupt allegiance to things of this world and to the self. Further, the perfection includes the restoration of the soul’s desire to love God only and to fulfill his commandments. Even more than this, it is the restored ability actually to fulfill all of the commandments.<sup>13</sup>

The restoration process is a co-operative venture of the natural image (the human will) and divine grace. Humans who take on the venture will be able, when reaching a state of perfection, to renounce the things of the world and even themselves in favor of God and his commandments.<sup>14</sup> Jesus Christ is central to the restoration process for Macarius. Anthony Paul (Benedict) Clarkson, in his unpublished dissertation, does a masterful job of tracing the various titles used for Christ and the Holy Spirit in the Macarian Homilies.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>8</sup>Florovsky, 160.

<sup>9</sup>“The Serpent kills you by digging itself deeply into the secret chambers of your soul, and there sets up its nest (for the soul is an abyss)—unless, I say, you put it to death and get rid of all the uncleanness that dirties you.” Macarius, “Homily Seventeen,” paragraph 15, from *Pseudo-Macarius*, 141.

<sup>10</sup>Florovsky, 157, 164.

<sup>11</sup>Florovsky, 164.

<sup>12</sup>Arthur Vööbus, *On the Historical Importance of the Legacy of Pseudo-Macarius: New Observations About its Syriac Provenance* (Stockholm: Estonian Theological Society in Exile, 1972), 13.

<sup>13</sup>J. Raasch, “The Monastic Conception of Purity of Heart and Its Sources,” *Studia Monastica* 12 (1970), 7–14.

<sup>14</sup>Jaeger, Werner, *Two Rediscovered Works of Ancient Christian Literature: Gregory of Nyssa and Macarius* (The Netherlands: E. J. Brill, 1954), 223.

<sup>15</sup>This is arguably the most exhaustive and complete analysis of Macarius in English. There are three copies: a 61 page excerpt from Western Michigan University, the complete dissertation at The Divinity School at Duke University and at Southern Star Abbey in Takapau, Hawke’s Bay, New Zealand. The brothers of the Abbey were gracious enough to sell a copy of the dissertation to the Divinity School at Duke for my research on this paper. Without it the main thesis would not have been as forthcoming.

Of particular interest to the matter at hand is the title of Physician to describe Christ. Clarkson points out that Macarius uses the title "Physician" for Christ in the sense that Christ brings the soul back to perfection as its state of health.<sup>16</sup> Yet, the restoration does not eliminate the "natural image" or free will of humanity. Even after baptism, free will necessitates a co-operation with grace.<sup>17</sup>

For Macarius, baptism is an "earnest deposit" of grace. It is the beginning promise of the growth to perfection.<sup>8</sup> There remains a need to progress away from the earthly passions. Prayer and watchfulness are the salve of grace which heal the human soul. Like medication which is used in differing amounts to address differing degrees of illness, grace only extends partially through the soul perfecting it in degrees toward restoration.<sup>19</sup> Through trials and much struggling the human will co-operates with the limited but increasing grace to reach further stages of perfection.<sup>20</sup> The medication of grace needs constant observation and administration.

The devil may still attack the person who has the "earnest deposit." His appeal is to the human free will. He awaits an invitation from the soul to work his wiles. J. Raasch points out that the devil's invitation is given with such frequency that there is a cohabitation of sin and grace within the soul.<sup>21</sup> Even after baptism, the free will entertains evil thoughts along with good thoughts. In the Macarian corpus this possibility of co-habitation of sin and grace leads Macarius to the logical conclusion that although people may reach a state of perfection on earth, they may still fall as a result of the constant possibility of the natural image (the human will) choosing to follow the evil way.<sup>22</sup> The whole Macarian "doctrine" of perfection is a combination of theological concepts in an ascetic lifestyle which deals with the dilemma of the co-habitation of sin and grace in the soul.<sup>23</sup>

When the natural image of God in the soul, namely free will, co-operates with grace the virtues are enhanced and the vices are eradicated.<sup>24</sup> Yet, Florovsky is quick to point out that the co-operation of the will is only a preparation for receiving grace upon grace.<sup>25</sup> God waits upon the turning of the natural image (free will) to receive grace before responding.<sup>26</sup> Therefore,

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<sup>16</sup>Clarkson, Roma, 29.

<sup>17</sup>Florovsky, 155.

<sup>18</sup>Clarkson, New Zealand, 141-2.

<sup>19</sup>Jaeger, 218.

<sup>20</sup>Clarkson, New Zealand, 184.

<sup>21</sup>Raasch, SM 12 (1970), 12.

<sup>22</sup>*Pseudo-Macarius*, 17.

<sup>23</sup>Raasch, SM 12 (1970), 16.

<sup>24</sup>*Pseudo-Macarius*, 16.

<sup>25</sup>Florovsky, 163.

<sup>26</sup>Jaeger, 223; Maloney, 14; Vladimir Lossky, *The Vision of God* (Crestwood, New York: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1983), 114; Florovsky, 161. Florovsky on Macarius: "... the power of perfection belongs to God alone, but grace works in free willed souls ... the synergism of free will and grace is revealed at all stages of the spiritual life. ... He always retains the freedom. ..."

the degree of perfection achieved by grace in the soul is in direct proportion to the amount of preparation by the natural image of free will in the soul.<sup>27</sup>

Grace is brought to the soul through the presence of the Holy Spirit. As the preparation increases, the presence of the Holy Spirit increases to dwell in the soul. Like an increase of medication, the Holy Spirit increases its dosage of grace in proportion to the preparation of the human soul by human free will. As the dosage of grace is increased, it shapes the soul to do the commandments. George Maloney, Jr., S.J., cites Macarius as one of the first witnesses of what moderns would call “fire baptism of the Holy Spirit,” that is, a gradual process of surrendering of the soul to the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.<sup>28</sup> This indwelling then dominates the soul and shapes the will to do the commandments fully.

This understanding of the “indwelling of the Holy Spirit” is key to understanding Macarian “theology.” In a Thomist-like way, Macarius believes that the human has the ability to recognize God exists even before grace acts in the soul. In addition, the human free will has the ability to resist and oppose sin even before grace aids it.<sup>29</sup> The effort of the free will (the natural image) is a preparation of the soul for grace. It is a first movement by the will. The “natural image” prepares the soul to receive grace, it does not *earn* grace. This is not to be confused with semi-pelagianism because Macarius believes firmly that the will is a gift of grace given in the creation of the heavens and the earth.<sup>30</sup> And free will is not able to achieve perfection on its own. Without grace working in the soul, there is no value to the effort, no pleasing God, and no triumph to perfection.<sup>31</sup> It is a “synergism” of grace and free will.

In this synergism, the soul is encouraged to take upon itself a renunciation of the world and the poverty of the ascetic life. The Physician Christ heals the soul gradually through means of grace: Baptism, prayer, the Eucharist, and the Scriptures.<sup>32</sup> Additionally, God allows trials, struggles, and

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<sup>27</sup>*Pseudo-Macarius*, 4.

<sup>28</sup>*Pseudo-Macarius*, 19.

<sup>29</sup>Florovsky on Macarius: “Grace only arouses the will, it does not coerce, just as sin does not snuff out freedom—freedom of choice or arbitrariness. Even a fallen person has the power to fight and oppose sin, although he cannot triumph without God’s help.”

Florovsky, 155.

<sup>30</sup>Clarkson on Macarius: “Macarius is however in agreement with the more platonically-minded Fathers when they affirm that communion with God—the goal of the Christian existence—does not destroy the freedom of choice and that the gift of the Spirit is proportionate to man’s free effort to meet God’s grace. This should not be branded pelagianism.” and “It is because man, created by God and renewed in Christ, has a natural inclination to God and a capability of loving Him, that Macarius and the other Eastern Fathers do not lay emphasis on a prior movement of grace in the performance of good works and so leave themselves open to a charge of . . . semi-pelagianism. . . .”

Clarkson, *New Zealand*, 33 and 211.

<sup>31</sup>Raasch, 31; Clarkson, *New Zealand*, 174; Clarkson, *Roma*, 48.

<sup>32</sup>Clarkson, *Roma*, 28.

persecutions for “exercise and education” of the soul.<sup>33</sup> The human’s free will is tested by God so that the soul always must *choose* the road to perfection.<sup>34</sup> Although the divine power of grace aids Christians, they must always keep their eyes fixed on Christ in unceasing prayer,<sup>35</sup> and to those who persevere there will be given rest or “anapausis.” It is this rest in the love of God which then moves the Christian to have even more love for their neighbor.<sup>36</sup>

### Conclusion of Macarius’ Theology

By exercising the free will in co-operation with grace, the soul has, in a sense, control over its own destiny.<sup>37</sup> After the earnest deposit of grace at baptism, the Christian is further purified through ordeal.<sup>38</sup> Through the ordeal, grace strengthens the resolve of the free will of the soul to resist the temptation of sin which co-habitates in the soul. The free will prepares the soul to receive grace which works toward perfection proportionately. And most importantly, the will, or “natural image,” is able to turn toward God in preparation to receive its proportionate grace. In this way, though free will seems God-like, it is just a preparatory state. The Macarian state of preparation for the reception of grace is based on an Eastern understanding that the “natural image” of God still exists in humanity despite the Fall.<sup>39</sup> It is in this way that there is no need for a prior movement of the Holy Spirit for the soul to receive grace.

### John Wesley’s Fascination With and Use of the Macarian Corpus

Albert Outler, in his introduction to the book *John Wesley*, noted that John Wesley “drank deep” the spirituality of Macarius.<sup>40</sup> He notes that there are two elements which were key to the Christian life in Wesley’s reading of Macarius: devotion and perfection.<sup>41</sup> Devotion was the method and perfection was the ultimate goal. The idea that perfection was a process particularly attracted the Oxford don as he traveled to Georgia on the famed ill-fated missionary journey. It was the process that fused the Anglican “aspiring love” with the Eastern “disciplined love” that would allow the Christian to fulfill the whole law of God.<sup>42</sup> Wesley, by fusing these two not only developed his doctrine of perfection, but placed the perfection of humanity at the focus of

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<sup>33</sup>Clarkson, *New Zealand*, 115.

<sup>34</sup>Clarkson, *New Zealand*, 213.

<sup>35</sup>Clarkson, *Roma*, 20; Lossky, 115.

<sup>36</sup>Jaeger, 216; Florovsky, 163.

<sup>37</sup>Florovsky, 167; Jaeger, 221.

<sup>38</sup>Florovsky, 159.

<sup>39</sup>Clarkson, *New Zealand*, 33 and 211; Florovsky, 155.

<sup>40</sup>*John Wesley*, 9, n. 26.

<sup>41</sup>*John Wesley*, 9–10, n. 26.

<sup>42</sup>*John Wesley*, 10.

redemption. Macarius' writings were scripturally based, something which would not have been lost on the man who declared Scripture as "primary."<sup>43</sup> We can see from John Wesley's own comments in the introduction to his edited edition of the Macarian corpus in *The Christian Library* that devotion and perfection were attractive to him:

Macarius . . . whose life in the flesh was a constant death to this present evil world . . . is ever quickening and stirring up his audience, endeavouring to kindle in them a steady zeal, an earnest desire, and inflamed ambition, to recover that divine image we were made in; to be made conformable to Christ our head . . . and working by love, is ever fulfilling the whole law of God.<sup>44</sup>

We can see the impact of Macarius on Wesley in this: in his "most successful summary," of the Wesleyan *via salutis* in the entire sermon corpus<sup>45</sup> Wesley quotes Macarius to provide a foundation for his doctrine of perfection. In *The Scripture Way of Salvation*, Wesley sets for himself the task of outlining his "via salutis." In doing so, he deals with the same dilemma with which Macarius dealt: how to deal with the co-habitation of sin and grace in the soul.<sup>46</sup>

Both Macarius and Wesley believe sanctification and justification might begin in the same moment.<sup>47</sup> They also agree there remains the ability of humanity to resist grace and sin. For Wesley, the ideas and actions of the early church were one of the parts of what Outler would later formulate as a "Wesleyan Quadrilateral" of *Scripture* as the primary source of theological reflection, *Tradition* of the Church in the first four centuries (and of the Anglican Church), *Reason* within the Christian view of life, and *Experience* of the movement of the Holy Spirit in one's own life. Not judging the merits of such a construction, it nonetheless points to recognition by scholars that Wesley placed importance upon the teachings of the early church. It is therefore telling that Wesley would quote this section of Macarius' "Homily Seventeen" to support his position that sin and grace co-habitate the soul:

The unskillful, when grace operates, presently imagine they have no more sin. Whereas they that have the grace of God may be molested again. . . . For we have often had instances of some among the brethren who have experienced such grace as to affirm that they had no sin in them. And yet after all, when they thought themselves entirely freed from it, the corruption that lurked within was stirred up anew, and they were wellnigh burnt up.<sup>48</sup>

<sup>43</sup>Clarkson, New Zealand, 17.

<sup>44</sup>John Wesley, *The Christian Library* (Bristol, England: Printed by William Pine, 1751), 1:83.

<sup>45</sup>Albert Outler quoted in *Works*, 2:154–5.

<sup>46</sup>Outler says, "[In] 1765 Wesley decided to sum up the matter (faith of adherence v. faith of assurance) yet once more: to correlate the faith that saves with the faith that sanctifies. This was the task he set himself in *The Scripture Way of Salvation*."

*Works*, 2:154.

<sup>47</sup>John Wesley, "The Scripture Way of Salvation," in *Works*, 2:158.

<sup>48</sup>Wesley, "Scripture Way," in *Works*, 2:159.

The presence of sin and grace is foundational to Wesley's doctrine of perfection.<sup>49</sup> Yet, this speaks of the state of the soul *after* justification. What about prior to justification? Is grace or free will preparing the soul *prior* to justification?

For Wesley, the answer is clearly that it is grace preparing the soul for justification. What is telling is the use of the wording which Wesley uses in *The Scripture Way of Salvation* to set up the quote from Macarius' "Homily Seventeen." He writes,

They *now* feel two principles in themselves, plainly contrary to each other: 'the flesh lust-  
ing against spirit,' *nature opposing the grace of God* . . . .<sup>50</sup>

The word "now" indicates that prior to justification there was only one principle within the soul. Wesley's use of the word "nature" is the assumption that the nature of humanity prior to justification is disordered.<sup>51</sup> Disordered is in the sense that the reasoning abilities of humanity are so disordered that they cannot use their free will correctly. As we have discussed earlier, sin is not a natural element to the soul for Macarius. It is an infestation which blinds and suppresses the celestial image leaving the natural thing (free will) to work in co-operation with grace to be restored. For Wesley, the whole image and likeness of God has been disordered by sin so that the very nature of the soul is sinful. In a very Hooker-like way, Wesley believes that humanity cannot make even the first move toward grace without the Holy Spirit first preparing the soul, commonly referred to as *prevenient grace*.<sup>52</sup> Salvation contains the first

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<sup>49</sup>"The Great Privilege of Those Born of God," *Works*, 1:436, published in 1748 is the first instance of where John Wesley says explicitly that sin remains in believers. Prior to this time he struggled for ten years to deal with the Moravian notion that a believer does not sin (and if anyone does sin they are not a believer). It is interesting to note that John Wesley returns to Macarius and then publishes Macarius in the first volume of *The Christian Library*. Prior to this, in the 1740 version of "The Scripture Way of Salvation," Wesley said that we are "without sin."

<sup>50</sup>Wesley, "Scripture Way," in *Works*, 2:157 (My emphasis).

<sup>51</sup>According to Albert Outler in the preface to the sermon "On Original Sin," *Works*, 2:171, Wesley was first alerted to the nature of humanity in original sin in 1740, just about the time he was wrestling with the Moravians. Finally, in 1757 he answered with the aforementioned sermon. Here is what he says about the condition of humanity in a state of original sin: "But was there not good mingled with the evil? Was there not light intermixed with the darkness? No, none at all: 'God saw that the whole imagination of the heart' of man 'was *only* (sic) evil.' It cannot indeed be but many of them, perhaps all, had good motions put into their hearts. For the spirit of God did then also 'strive with man,' if haply he might repent; more especially during that gracious reprieve, the hundred and twenty years while the ark was preparing. But still 'in his flesh dwelt no good thing:' all his nature was purely evil. It was wholly consistent with itself, and unmixed with anything of the opposite nature. . . . Were there no lucid intervals, wherein something good might be found in the heart of man? . . . [Man] never deviated into good." (Sect. I, paras. 4, 5).

<sup>52</sup>"On Original Sin," *Works*, 2:157.

"First, God worketh in you; therefore you can work—otherwise it would be impossible. If he did not work it would be impossible for you to work out your own salvation."

John Wesley, "On Working Out Your Own Salvation," in *Works*, 3:206.

impulses of the Holy Spirit without which humanity could not respond to grace.<sup>53</sup>

This is where John Wesley and Macarius disagree. As we have stated earlier, Macarius believes that the soul has a “natural image” which was not fully corrupted by the Fall and can respond to grace without the soul being awakened first by a movement of grace. Yet, Wesley uses the quote from “Homily Seventeen” to prove that the tradition of the church has been that grace and sin cohabit in the soul after baptism without establishing the Eastern notion that the soul can respond to grace without grace first enabling the soul to do so.

We can see further in a comparison of “Homily Five” from the Macarian corpus, called Homily Four in *The Christian Library*, that Wesley works this assumption of the complete distortion of the soul by original sin into his translation. John Wesley translates the Greek word κρυπτός to mean “inward state” in this passage:<sup>54</sup>

2. For the word that was spoken to Cain by his Maker, *Thou shalt go mourning and trembling, and be tossed about upon the earth*, is a type and image of all sinners, as to their inward state.<sup>55</sup>

The translation leaves the impression that Macarius is stating that humanity’s inward state is disordered through and through. Yet, upon examining the Greek text it reads,

(25) For the word *and decree* were spoken to Cain by the Creator *so that it would be clear*, that “there will be moaning and trembling and shaking upon the earth.”<sup>56</sup> *The pattern and likeness of all sinners happens secretly*. For in this way the generation of Adam fell away from the commandment, after establishing sin, they had acquired that image secretly.<sup>57</sup>

The word κρυπτός means “hidden secret.”<sup>58</sup> Thus, the translation should read “the pattern and likeness of all sinners happens *secretly*.” Whether or not Macarius meant this to mean that it was an entire distortion of the soul cannot be gleaned from this context. Further, paragraph three of this Fifth Homily of Macarius states that “everyone of the sinful generation of Adam has brought upon himself or herself that condemnation *secretly*.” Wesley omits this section from *The Christian Library*. It would seem that at the least Macarius is proposing that it is a mystery how we are all sinful through evil, but he is definitely not proposing that sin has disordered the entire image of God in humanity. Where John Wesley assumes that κρυπτός is a state of humanity, a condition, Macarius here points to it being a choice, a movement of the will.

<sup>53</sup>“Scripture Way,” in *Works*, 2:157.

<sup>54</sup>Dorres, Klostermann, Kroeger, 48.

<sup>55</sup>*Christian Library*, Homily 4, paragraph 2 (Wesley’s emphasis).

<sup>56</sup>Gen. 4.12.

<sup>57</sup>Dorres, Kroeger, Klostermann, p. 48, H 5.2, line 25.

<sup>58</sup>Liddell and Scott, *An Intermediate Greek-English Lexicon*, founded upon the seventh edition of *Liddell and Scott’s Greek-English Lexicon* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1994), 452.

We can see further in "Homily Five," paragraph five (*The Christian Library*, Homily Four, paragraph four) another instance of Wesley's translation being influenced by his particular views on original sin. He translates Macarius thus,

Herein Christians differ from all men besides. The Lord hath given them truly to believe on Him, and to be worthy of those spiritual good things. For the glory, and the beauty, and the heavenly riches of Christians are inexpressible, and purchased only with labour, and pains, and trials, and many conflicts. But the whole is owing to the grace of God.<sup>59</sup>

The translation assumes that even though there are trials which "purchase" "the heavenly riches," Wesley divides the sentence structure to state "But the whole is owing to the grace of God." This division assumes that all movements of the will are first prompted by God. The logic runs thusly: Christians endure trials and remain faithful, but even if they do, the whole of salvation is a gift nonetheless.

The Macarian Homily actually reads,

5.5 For in the "renewal of the mind" and the peace of reasonings and the love of the Lord and a desire for heavenly things, the good creation of Christians differs from all humanity of the world; therefore the coming of the Lord has happened, the ones who are truly believing in him are deemed worthy from these of spiritually good things. With hard work and from sweat, *many testings and trials provided entirely by God*, the glory and the beauty and the wealth—the unutterableness of heaven—is of Christians.<sup>60</sup>

Macarius is saying that the trials and testings are entirely from God, not that salvation is entirely from God (though he does believe this) as Wesley's translation intimates. Trials and testings from God fits into Macarius' theology of the free will. Even after the Fall, humanity is able, because of the natural image which still remains in the soul, to turn to God without a spiritual awakening. In the process of perfection, God sends the testings to develop the free will so that it will choose him. This necessitates a constancy of prayer fixed upon Christ. Wesley's translation places the emphasis upon God's work in the soul and Macarius' places the emphasis upon the movement of the free will in co-operation with grace. Where Wesley's doctrine of perfection allows for a co-operation of grace *after* the first movement of the Spirit, salvation still relies upon that first movement of prevenient grace. God in this instance for Wesley is the one who delivers us from those trials and testings because our free will needs that first movement. Macarius on the other hand is able to say that even testings come from God because he wants the free will to work in co-operation with grace.

What is even more telling about Wesley's understanding of Macarius is what he omitted from "Homily Five" (in *The Christian Library*, Homily

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<sup>59</sup>*Christian Library*, Homily 4, paragraph 4.

<sup>60</sup>Dorres, Kroeger, Klostermann, H 5.5, 50 (my emphasis).

Four). He omits, for example the notion that the soul can first move toward God at all. Macarius writes,

(220) For the soul, which, having truly the impulse<sup>61</sup> toward the Lord wholly and completely, draws the love of the impulse toward him. And as far as is possible, it binds to the Lord alone out of a deliberate choice, and then the soul gains the aid of grace and denies itself and does not follow the will of its mind (because the will goes deceitfully with us because of communing with and enticing evil).<sup>62</sup>

The one who uses the deliberate choice of the natural image draws God to himself and then grace aids the believer. Grace responds to the preparation of the soul by the soul,

But if each loves the Lord and his commandments, from that fact he or she is adied and then lifted up and all the precepts of the Lord become pleasing to him or her while the love of him heals each completely in all parts.<sup>63</sup>

These passages and others which refer to God's testing of the free will are omitted from Wesley's version of the Macarian homilies.

What may be most indicting to Wesley's slant against the first movement of the will toward grace is found in the quote used in *The Scripture Way of Salvation*. Again, Wesley uses the quote to establish that sin and grace cohabit the soul after justification. Yet, in the paragraph where this quote can be found, Macarius has this concluding sentence,

They experience at the same time natural movements along with strong thoughts toward God, even though they are not totally given to good.<sup>64</sup>

The movements of the will are "natural." They are not entirely suppressed or disordered by sin. The celestial image, where humanity relies upon God for its sustenance, has been lost, but the natural image of free will still remains and has a natural inclination toward God, "even though they are not totally given to good."<sup>65</sup>

Further instances of where John Wesley has omitted sections which show this relationship between free will can be seen if a personal translation is compared to Wesley's. By John Wesley's editing, he makes it seem as though the will plays little part in Macarius' Homilies in the beginning of the process of salvation. He emphasizes to his followers works for the purpose of

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<sup>61</sup>This impulse comes from the "deliberate choice" which is to follow.

<sup>62</sup>Dorres, Kroeger, Kolstermann, 54.

<sup>63</sup>Dorres, Kroeger, Kolstermann, 55.

<sup>64</sup>*Pseudo-Macarius*, 138.

<sup>65</sup>John Wesley does mention the "natural conscience" ("prevenient grace") which from time to time moves within people so that they have the opportunity to turn toward God. It is God's action within the person. The distinction here is that where the natural conscience is moved by God "from time to time" according to Wesley, Macarius' "natural image" never left people in the first place as a result of the fall of humanity. See "Scripture Way," in *Works*, 2:156-7 (Section I, para. 2). See also, "On Working Out Our Own Salvation" in *Works*, 3:207 (Section III, para. 4) and "On Conscience" in *Works*, III.482 (Section I, para. 5).

sanctification.<sup>66</sup> Macarius shows how works not only prepare the soul for grace after justification like Wesley puts forth in *The Scripture Way of Salvation*, but are key to the reception of justifying grace. Other than this small but large distinction, the Macarian homilies are left much intact in Wesley's now archaic old English. Though influenced by the process of salvation and the mortification of the flesh through works, Wesley still remains a man of his day who fused elements of the fourth century to his post-Reformation understanding of the total disordering of the image and likeness of God in humanity after the Fall.

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<sup>66</sup>Wesley does make a case in "Scripture Way," in *Works*, that works, e.g. 'repentance and fruits meet for repentance' are 'in some sense necessary to justification,' but he goes on to say that one can be justified 'if there is not time for works' by faith alone (section III, para. 2). But works are "so necessary that if a man willingly neglect them he cannot reasonably expect that he shall ever be sanctified in the full sense, that is "perfected in love" (section III, para. 4). So, where works are necessary but not essential to justification, they are necessary *and* essential to sanctification.