



Editors Note

As October appears out of the from the behind the sun another academic year looms. Teachers and lecturers start to dust off elbow patched jackets. Students begin to familiarise themselves with lengthy reading lists that will herald wisdom and discovery. So, too, Holiness lands once again with the same regularity and the same aims, presenting a typically broad range of scholarship across theme and locale.

Our first two pieces consider how our institutions, both church and state, can best function and thrive. Jonathan Chaplain “repris[es] the case for disestablishment” of the Church of England, assembling a robust case for the Church handing back its state sponsored status so it can more freely, and more truly, exercise its own “spiritual autonomy”. Not just the Church, the state too is offered the chance to manifest a religious impartiality it has long attested to. Beyond the Methodist Church’s 2004, *Report on Church, State and Establishment*, Chaplain argues now it is time to consider once more this age old relationship.

Catrin Harland-Davies offers a timely piece that contextualises the long history of disagreement in the church since its first thinkers encountered theological difference. Harland-Davies looks to reassert the place of holiness, rather than a more dogmatic dedication to purity for its own sake, in guiding us as we encounter positions other than our own. In a contemporary world where difference can become polarising, even schismatic, recalling that a “willingness to compromise on purity” might well lead us towards “achiev[ing] holiness” feels as pertinent as ever.

Then, we turn to the dual forces of wisdom and grace in two varied contexts. Towards the former Kojo Okyere engages wisdom theology and Proverbs 2 to produce a powerful ecological lens that critiques the practice of Galamsey, illegal informal mining in Ghana that has and continues to have drastic environmental impacts. Here, Proverbs 2 offers a “hermeneutic of salvation that is active ethical and transformative”, offering wisdom and courage much needed in the present.

In the latter, Wan Yin Lim evokes the life of Simone Weil to think through the notion of prevenient grace. Aligning Weil’s account of grace through attention with Wesley’s optimism of grace, Lim is able to draw out synergies that offer formulations of what grace might look like in modern multicultural and multireligious society. Where embracing this plurality has posed challenges in recent times, reassuringly, we are reminded that “we are fenced by grace, even in a world of crises and suffering”.

Lastly, on a self-indulgent personal note, I offer notice that this will be the last issue of Holiness edited by myself. It’s been an immense pleasure and privilege to work with the authors and readers of this vivid and thought provoking publication. I thank you all for your energy and commitment over my tenure, and look forward to joining the ranks of those taking the journal in rather than putting it out.

Joseph Powell