

THE
DISCIPLESHIP
PLACE

Communicating the Gospel in a
Pluralistic World



SESSION 7

The Wesleyan Way of Salvation: Sanctification

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The Wesleyan Way of Salvation: Sanctification

SESSION OVERVIEW

The Power of the Spirit as It Relates to Sanctification

The Grace of Entire Sanctification or Christian Perfection

Repentance and the Holy Life

The Circumcision of the Heart

Application

Exam

Discussion Guide for Mentor and Participant

INTRODUCTION

Justification and sanctification provide the two grandbranches of Christian salvation. Sanctification begins with regeneration.

“What makes Wesley’s theology distinctive is his ability to hold together in a working union two fundamentally important factors in the Christian life that have often been disconnected, the renewal of this relation (justification) and the living out of this relation (sanctification), neither of which is possible apart from the other.” *Runyon, The New Creation*, 222.

LEARNER OBJECTIVES

At the end of this session, you should:

- understand and be able to discuss the Wesleyan way of salvation as it relates to sanctification, repentance, and the holy life, growth in Christian holiness, and the new creation

THE POWER OF THE SPIRIT AS IT RELATES TO SANCTIFICATION

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THE NEW BIRTH—REGENERATION

Justification by grace involves a relational change between God and the penitent sinner. God removes the enmity—hostility—between himself and the penitent sinner, and restores a right relationship. Reconciled, we are at “peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ” (Rom. 5:1). Regeneration and sanctification involve a real or internal change.

Justification is theologically prior to regeneration, but they happen at the same time. In the new birth, God renews our fallen nature through the regenerating—re-creating (2 Cor. 5:17)—work of the Spirit. Justification restores the believer to God’s favor. The new birth restores the believer to the image of God. While justification removes the guilt of sin, regeneration takes away the power of sin (Wesley, *Works*, 6:44-45). Both come through being “in Christ.” Jesus called regeneration being “born from above.” He instructed Nicodemus, “Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above.” Jesus said, “What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit” (John 3:3, 6).

Regeneration is also the gift of eternal life (Rom. 6:23). “For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life” (John 3:16; 10:28, RSV). In keeping with the meaning of re-creation, Paul says if anyone is in Christ “there is a new creation.” The old passes away and all things become new (2 Cor. 5:17).

SANCTIFICATION

Regeneration initiates the comprehensive inward and outward change of heart and life the New Testament calls sanctification (Rom. 6:19b-22). “At the same time that we are justified, yea, in that very moment, sanctification begins.” We are inwardly renewed by the power of God. He changes “the earthly, sensual, devilish mind, into ‘the mind which was in Christ Jesus.’” (Wesley, *Works*, 6:44, 6:45.) H. Ray Dunning says, “The essence of sanctification is the renewal of humankind in the image of God.”

For Wesleyans, sanctification involves the whole range of God’s work in transforming His children into the image of Christ, and in bringing them to final salvation. Sanctification begins in regeneration, the new birth, and is called initial sanctification. It continues in entire sanctification, in growth in grace, and so far as this life is concerned, concludes in glorification (1 Cor. 15:51-54; 1 John 3:1-4).


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The span of sanctification has three dimensions:

- we have been redeemed
- we are being redeemed
- and we will be redeemed

“We wait,” says Peter, “for new heavens and a new earth, where righteousness is at home” (2 Pet. 3:13). All three are essential parts of the New Testament’s picture of Christian discipleship.

THE LIFE OF GOD IN CHRISTIANS

Pivotal for the Wesleyan way of salvation is a confidence that because the Spirit of Christ now dwells in us, we are no longer debtors to the flesh, subject to the power of sin. We believe the New Testament testimony to the atonement of Christ and the work of the Holy Spirit heralds the priority of transforming grace over the priority of sin’s power in Christians. It is the will of the Father that the Holy Spirit make effectual in us all the provisions of our Lord’s victorious atonement. His victory He now shares, through the Spirit, with all His sisters and brothers. This has everything to do with grace and faith, and nothing to do with human achievement or sinless perfection (Col. 2:8-15).

Douglas Harink calls attention to Paul’s instructions to the Thessalonian Christians. His analysis accurately states what Wesleyans believe regarding Christian holiness. Harink says that not only did Paul condemn the Thessalonians’ former idolatry, but he also called them to serve the one God of Israel in holiness as they conducted themselves “in their activities and relationships.” While the Thessalonian Christians’ walk in holiness was “always genuinely their own,” it was also “wholly the work of God.” From Him, through the Spirit, they have received “freedom from bondage to the powers of sin and death, power for holy life, and confidence in the love of God” (Rom. 8).

The Thessalonians’ participation in God’s gracious work was to be “spread over the whole range of human life, active and passive, attitudinal and bodily, inner and outer, personal, social, and political.” The holy life, Paul tells them, is a labor of love by which they participate in the work of God. All this is good news. The gospel had delivered them from the coming wrath of God and had reconciled them to Him. Now, through the Holy Spirit and baptism, the Thessalonian Christians share in Jesus’ death and resurrection life. They are members of a new people, the *ekklesia*. In Jesus they have received “a new identity and the normative pattern of a new obedience.”

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The apostle Peter used similar language when speaking to “those who have received a faith . . . through the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ” (2 Pet. 1:1). When speaking of the life of God in Christians, Wesleyans believe no more and no less than Peter’s compact summary: “His divine power has given us everything needed for life and godliness through the knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness” (2 Pet. 1:3).

THE GRACE OF ENTIRE SANCTIFICATION OR CHRISTIAN PERFECTION



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Sanctification is an important aspect of the Christian life for all orthodox Christian denominations. They teach growth in the image of Christ in all life's dimensions. They know sanctification occurs through the work of the Holy Spirit. It unfolds through prayer, programmatic spiritual formation, Bible study, love for one's neighbor, public worship, and more.

But in some denominational traditions, accompanying the emphasis on sanctification is a parallel belief that throughout this life, Christians should think of themselves principally as sinners who have been saved by grace. One's sinfulness plays a central role in his or her identity as a Christian. Because the righteousness of God continues to be an alien righteousness, there is a sense in which the Christian's essential identity doesn't change. Alien means God now sees us through Christ's righteousness, but no real impartation of righteousness occurs. We are not really changed. By this understanding of Christian life, discipleship normatively occurs as conflicted life. The internal power of sin struggles endlessly against Christ's call to obedient life.

So, a Christian should expect that throughout his or her life, the norm will be that sin will exert a powerful counterbalance to the grace of transformation. Christ has removed the guilt of sin. We have been adopted as the sons and daughters of God. And the Holy Spirit works in us. But the enemy continues to claim and hold a major portion of our real estate, which he will not have to surrender in this life. We are sinners, saved by grace.

Our sisters and brothers who view the Christian life in this way are correct: our righteousness is alien, and never our own. Now and ever more we are reconciled to God only through faith in the faithful Christ. Today and tomorrow, we are justified by grace through faith alone. But the picture is incomplete. It fails to give appropriate place to the role of the Pentecostal Spirit. The New Testament is equally confident that the Spirit of the risen Lord, as He promised, takes up residence, cleanses, and empowers us to live according to the Spirit. "If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also through his Spirit that dwells in you" (Rom. 8:11). No wonder Peter, who was there on the Day of Pentecost, is confident that God "has given us everything needed for life and godliness" (2 Pet. 1:3). Upon this alone is the Wesleyan vision of Christian holiness founded. I once heard an eloquent, African-American pastor in North Carolina say while preaching an Easter sermon, "Too many Christians are living on the right side of Easter, but on the wrong side of Pentecost."

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Distinctive of the Wesleyan tradition is the conviction that the Spirit of God can decisively incline our hearts to love Him and our neighbor as ourselves. We accept the New Testament call and promise that Christians are to live a godly life in Christ Jesus. To us the New Testament is absolutely clear; whereas we once yielded ourselves without reservation to sin, now that we have been raised to new life in Christ, we must present our whole selves “to righteousness for sanctification” (Rom. 6:19).

We have heard, “Little children, let no one deceive you. Everyone who does what is right is righteous, just as he is righteous” (1 John 3:7). We believe God can so work in the regenerate heart, hungry for the holy life, that the hunger can be satisfied. Those who present their bodies as living sacrifices will find their sacrifices received. The Spirit’s promise is that the God of peace, through Jesus Christ, will comprehensively—entirely—sanctify the child of God—spirit and soul and body (1Thess. 5:23-24).

This is the confident Wesleyan hope of entire sanctification to which we believe all Christians are called. The phrase entire sanctification describes a decisive event in which a disciple comprehensively presents himself or herself to Christ’s reign and glory, and the Holy Spirit bears witness to the presentation by sealing it with His powerful witness. Intentionally decisive in character, marked by a qualitative difference between before and after, entire sanctification is set within the entire process by which God renews His people in His image. It is requisite preparation for holy living. We believe entire sanctification to be an essential dimension of living according to the riches of God’s grace.

REPENTANCE AND THE HOLY LIFE



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The Wesleyan vision of Christian holiness becomes a reality by grace through faith alone. This means at every moment we are radically dependent upon God's grace, not upon our own accomplishments or righteousness. Theodore Runyon says what makes John Wesley's theology distinctive is his ability to hold together the renewal of the relationship between God and persons—justification, and living out the relationship—sanctification. A Christian does not leave justification behind and move on to sanctification. We continue to be reconciled—converted—to God by grace alone.

If it is true that justification leads to sanctification, it is also true that sanctification endlessly unfolds in a process by which more and more of life is defined by the reign of God. What is provisionally established in entire sanctification becomes ever more explicit in the obedience of faith.

“Every day, every hour,” Fanny Crosby prayed, “Let me feel Thy cleansing power.” This should daily be the prayer of all Christians. Those who love God most dearly, and who are most open to His grace, are also most free to confess when they have neither loved God as they ought nor loved their neighbor as themselves. Rather than the life of Christian holiness shutting out recognition of failures that need God's forgiveness, it should make us increasingly sensitive to, and repentant of, the ways in which we offend both the Holy God and our neighbor. For some reason, and to our detriment, the Holiness tradition has tended not to understand the holy life in this way.

The life of Christian holiness has everything to do with God's grace, and nothing to do with a self-deceptive perfectionism that claims not to need confession. Grace and love make confession possible and urgent, not unnecessary and negligible. As children of grace, we live between the already and the not yet of the kingdom of God. On the way to complete maturity, children of grace will be anxious to discover and confess the times they offend God and others. The Lord's Prayer, “Forgive us our trespasses, even as we forgive those that trespass against us,” is a prayer for Jesus' disciples, not for strangers. At all times, pilgrims should be quick to confess where the image of Christ has yet to achieve its full stature.

GROWTH IN CHRISTIAN HOLINESS

The new birth and entire sanctification are essential punctuation points in a continuum of transforming grace. But they are not stopping points. They are portals of entry for continuing growth and transformation. The Spirit continually renews in us the image of God.


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Christians live in the peace and rest of Christ, but there is no place for aimlessness or laziness. “The only man who has the right to say he is justified by grace,” Bonhoeffer said, “is the man who has left all to follow Christ. Such a man knows that the call to discipleship is a gift of grace, and that the call is inseparable from the grace.” (*Bonhoeffer, The Cost of Discipleship, 51.*) The author of the Book of Hebrews said, “Let us also lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith” (Heb. 12:1-2).

THE NEW CREATION

Among Christian theologians, few have been more expansive, hopeful, and confident regarding the grace of God than John and Charles Wesley. The thirst for the holy life did not waste itself on narcissistic introspection. Instead, Christ the Victor, who has big plans for His creation, had captured them. They had adopted Paul’s cosmic sweep of redemption (1 Cor. 15:20-28; Eph. 1:7-10; Col. 1:15-20). The God who wants all persons to come to repentance and life (2 Pet.3:9), and who includes the creation in the economy of redemption (Rom. 8:18-25), fueled their preaching and hymn writing.

For them, new creation involves the whole creation. God is through Christ and by the Spirit working to redeem the heavens and the earth from all that sin has visited upon them. There is good reason for “Joy to the world.” If one wants to embrace the Wesleyan way of salvation, he or she must be prepared to follow the exalted Lord who is making all things new (Rev. 21:5).

There is a peculiar affinity between Wesleyan theology—especially Wesley’s doctrine of sanctification—and movements for social change. When Christian perfection becomes the goal of an individual, a fundamental hope is engendered that the future can surpass the present. At the same time, a holy dissatisfaction is aroused with regard to any present state of affairs—a dissatisfaction that supplies the critical edge necessary to keep the process of individual transformation moving. Moreover, this holy dissatisfaction is readily transferable from the realm of the individual to that of society—as was evident in Wesley’s own time—where it provides a persistent motivation for reform in the light of a more perfect way that transcends any status quo.

THE CIRCUMCISION OF THE HEART

JOHN WESLEY, SERMON SEVENTEEN
PREACHED AT ST. MARY'S, OXFORD, BEFORE THE UNIVERSITY, ON JANUARY 1, 1733
(SELECTED)



NOTES

“Circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter.” Rom. 2:29.

1. It is the melancholy remark of an excellent man, that he who now preaches the most essential duties of Christianity, runs the hazard of being esteemed, by a great part of his hearers, “a setter forth of new doctrines.” Most men have so lived away the substance of that religion, the profession whereof they still retain, that no sooner are any of those truths proposed which difference the Spirit of Christ from the spirit of the world, than they cry out, “Thou bringest strange things to our ears; we would know what these things mean:”—Though he is only preaching to them “Jesus and the resurrection,” with the necessary consequence of it—If Christ be risen, ye ought then to die unto the world, and to live wholly unto God.
2. A hard saying this to the natural man, Who is alive unto the world, and dead unto God; and one that he will not readily be persuaded to receive as the truth of God, unless it be so qualified in the interpretation, as to have neither use nor significance left. He “receiveth not the” word “of the Spirit of God,” taken in their plain and obvious meaning; “they are foolishness unto him: Neither” indeed “can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned:”—They are perceivable only by that spiritual sense, which in him was never yet awakened for want of which he must reject, as idle fancies of men, what are both the wisdom and the power of God.
3. That “circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter;”—that the distinguishing mark of a true follower of Christ, of one who is in a state of acceptance with God, is not either outward circumcision, or baptism, or any other outward form, but a right state of soul, a mind and spirit renewed after the image of Him that created it; — is one of those important truths that can only be spiritually discerned. And this the Apostle himself intimates in the next words, “Whose praise is not of men, but of God.” As if he had said, “Expect not, whoever thou art, who thus followest thy great Master, that the world, the one who follow him not, will say, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant!’ Know that the circumcision of the heart, the seal of thy calling, is foolishness with the world. Be content to wait for thy applause till the day of thy Lord’s appearing. In that day shalt thou have praise of God, in the great assembly of men and angels.”


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I design First, particularly to inquire, wherein this circumcision of the heart consists; and, Secondly, to mention some reflections that naturally arise from such an inquiry.

I.

1. I am, First, to inquire, wherein that circumcision of the heart consists, which will receive the praise of God. In general we may observe, it is that habitual disposition of soul which, in the sacred writings, is termed holiness; and which directly implies, the being cleansed from sin, “from all filthiness both of flesh and spirit;” and, by consequence, the being endued with those virtues which were also in Christ Jesus; the being so “renewed in the spirit of our mind,” as to be “perfect as our Father in heaven is perfect.”
2. To be more particular: Circumcision of heart implies humility, faith, hope, and charity. Humility, a right judgment of ourselves, cleanses our minds from those high conceits of our own perfection, from that undue opinion of our own abilities and attainments, which are the genuine fruit of a corrupted nature. This entirely cuts off that vain thought, “I am rich, and wise, and have need of nothing;” and convinces us that we are by nature wretched, and poor, and miserable, and blind, and naked. It convinces us, that in our best estate we are, of ourselves, all sin and vanity; that confusion, and ignorance, and error reign over our understanding; that unreasonable, earthly, sensual, devilish passions usurp authority over our will; in a word, that there is no whole part in our soul, that all the foundations of our nature are out of course.
3. At the same time we are convinced, that we are not sufficient of ourselves to help ourselves; that, without the Spirit of God, we can do nothing but add sin to sin; that it is He alone who worketh in us by his almighty power, either to will or do that which is good; it being as impossible for us even to think a good thought, without the supernatural assistance of his Spirit, as to create ourselves, or to renew our whole souls in righteousness and true holiness.
4. A sure effect of our having formed this right judgment of the sinfulness and helplessness of our nature, is a disregard of that “honor which cometh of man,” which is usually paid to some supposed excellency in us. He who knows himself, neither desires nor values the applause which he knows he deserves not. It is therefore “a very small thing with him, to be judged by man’s judgment.” He has all reason to think, by comparing what it has said, either for or against him, with what he feels in his own breast, that the world, as well as the god of this world, was “a liar from the beginning.”


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And even as to those who are not of the world; thought he would choose, if it were the will of God, that they should account of him as of one desirous to be found a faithful steward of his Lord's goods, if haply this might be a means of enabling him to be of more use to his fellow-servants, yet as this is the one end of his wishing for their approbation, so he does not at all rest upon it: For he is assured, that whatever God wills, he can never want instruments to perform; since he is able, even of these stones, to raise up servants to do his pleasure.

5. This is that lowliness of mind, which they have learned of Christ, who follow his example and tread in his steps. And this knowledge of their disease, whereby they are more and more cleansed from one part of it, pride and vanity, disposes them to embrace, with a willing mind, the second thing implied in circumcision of the heart—that faith which alone is able to make them whole, which is the one medicine given under heaven to heal their sickness.
6. The best guide of the blind, the surest light of them that are in darkness, the most perfect instructor of the foolish, is faith. But it must be such a faith as is “mighty through God, to the pulling down of strong-holds,”—to the overturning all the prejudices of corrupt reason, all the false maxims revered among men, all evil customs and habits, all that “wisdom of the world which is foolishness with God;” as “casteth down imaginations,” reasoning, “and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringeth into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.”
7. “All things are possible to him that” thus “believeth.” “The eyes of his understanding being enlightened,” he sees what is his calling; even to glorify God, who hath bought him with so high a price, in his body and in his spirit, which now are God's by redemption, as well as by creation. He feels what is “the exceeding greatness of this power,” who, as he raised up Christ from the dead, so is able to quicken us, dead in sin,” by his Spirit which dwelleth in us.” “This is the victory which overcometh the world, even our faith;” that faith, which is not only an unshaken assent to all that God hath revealed in Scripture—and in particular to those important truths, “Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners;” “He bare our sins in his own body on the tree;”

“He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world;” [N.B. The following part of this paragraph is now added to the Sermon formerly preached.] but likewise the revelation of Christ in our hearts; a divine evidence or conviction of his love, his free,


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unmerited love to me a sinner; a sure confidence in his pardoning mercy, wrought in us by the Holy Ghost; a confidence, whereby every true believer is enabled to bear witness, “I know that my Redeemer liveth,” that I have an “Advocate with the Father,” and that “Jesus Christ the righteous” is my Lord, and “the propitiation for my sins,”—I know he hath “loved me, and given himself for me,”—He hath reconciled me, even me, to God; and I “have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins.”

8. Such a faith as this cannot fail to show evidently the power of Him that inspires it, by delivering his children from the yoke of sin, and “purging their consciences from dead works;” by strengthening them so, that they are no longer constrained to obey sin in the desires there of; but instead of yielding their members unto it, as instruments of unrighteousness,” they now “yield themselves” entirely “unto God, as those that are alive from the dead.”
9. Those who are thus by faith born of God, have also strong consolation through hope. This is the next thing which the circumcision of the heart implies; even the testimony of their own spirit with the Spirit which witnesses in their hearts that * *N. B. The following part of this paragraph is now added to the Sermon formerly preached.* they are the children of God. Indeed it is the same Spirit who works in them that clear and cheerful confidence that their heart is upright toward God; that good assurance, that they now do, through his grace, the things which are acceptable in his sight; that they are now in the path which leadeth to life, and shall, by the mercy of God, endure therein to the end.

It is He who giveth them a lively expectation of receiving all good things at God’s hand; a joyous prospect of that crown of glory, which is reserved in heaven for them. By this anchor a Christian is kept steady in the midst of the waves of this troublesome world, and preserved from striking upon either of those fatal rocks—presumption or despair. He is neither discouraged by the misconceived severity of his Lord, nor does He despise the riches of his goodness.” He neither apprehends the difficulties of the race set before him to be greater than he has strength to conquer, nor expects there to be so little as to yield in the conquest, till he has put forth all strength.

The experience he already has in the Christian warfare, as it assures him his “labor is not in vain,” if “whatever his findeth to do, he doeth it with his might;” so it forbids his entertaining so vain a thought, as that he can otherwise gain any advantage, as that any virtue can be shown, any praise attained, by faint hearts and feeble hands; or, indeed, by any but those


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who pursue the same course with the great Apostle of the Gentiles “I,” says he, “so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air: But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection; lest, by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.”

10. By the same discipline is every good soldier of Christ to injure himself to endure hardship. Confirmed and strengthened by this, he will be able not only to renounce the works of darkness, but every appetite too, and every affection, which is no subject to the law of God. For “every one,” saith St. John, “who hath this hope, purifieth himself even as He is pure.” It is his daily care, by the grace of God in Christ, and through the blood of the covenant, to purge the inmost recesses of his soul from the lusts that before possessed and defiled it; from uncleanness, and envy, and malice, and wrath; from every passion and temper that is after the flesh, that either springs from or cherishes his native corruption: as well knowing, that he whose very body is the temple of God, ought to admit into it nothing common or unclean; and that holiness becometh that house for ever, where the Spirit of holiness vouchsafes to dwell.
11. Yet lackest thou one thing, whosoever thou art, that to a deep humility, and a steadfast faith, hast joined a lively hope, and thereby in a good measure cleansed thy heart from its inbred pollution. If thou wilt be perfect, add to all these, charity; add love, and thou hast the circumcision of the heart “Love is the fulfilling of the law, the end of the commandment.” Very excellent things are spoken of love; it is the essence, the spirit, the life of all virtue. It is not only the first and great command, but it is all the commandments in one. “Whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are amiable,” or honorable; “if there be any virtue, if there be any praise,” they are all comprised in this one word—love. In this is perfection, and glory, and happiness. The royal law of heaven and earth is this, “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength.”
12. Not that this forbids us to love anything besides God: It implies that we love our brother also. Nor yet does it forbid us (as some have strangely imagined) to take pleasure in any thing but God. To suppose this, is to suppose the Fountain of holiness is directly the author of sin; since he has inseparably annexed pleasure to the use of those creatures which are necessary to sustain the life he has given us.

This, therefore, can never be the meaning of his command. What the real sense of it is, both our blessed Lord and his Apostles tell us too frequently, and too plainly, to be misunderstood. They all with one


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mouth bear witness, that the true meaning of those several declarations, “The Lord thy God is one Lord;” “Thou shalt have no other Gods but me;” “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy strength” “Thou shalt cleave unto him;” “The desire of thy soul shall be to His name;”—is no other than this: The one perfect Good shall be your one ultimate end.

One thing shall ye desire for its own sake—the fruition of Him that is All in All. One happiness shall ye propose to your souls, even an union with Him that made them; the having “fellowship with the Father and the Son;” the being joined to the Lord in one Spirit. One design you are to pursue to the end of time—the enjoyment of God in time and in eternity. Desire other things, so far as they tend to this. Love the creature as it leads to the Creator. But in every step you take, be this the glorious point that terminates your view. Let every affection, and thought, and word, and work, be subordinate to this. Whatever ye desire or fear, whatever ye seek or shun, whatever ye think, speak, or do, be it in order to your happiness in God, the sole End, us well as Source, of your being.

13. Have no end, to ultimate end, but God. Thus our Lord: “One thing is needful:” And if thine eye be singly fixed on this one thing, “thy whole body shall be full of light.” Thus St. Paul: “This one thing I do; I press toward the mark, for the prize of the high calling in Christ Jesus.” Thus St. James: “Cleanse your hands, ye sinners, and purify your hearts, ye double-minded.” Thus St. John: “love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.” The seeking happiness in what gratifies either the desire of the flesh, by agreeably striking upon the outward senses; the desire of the eye, of the imagination, by its novelty, greatness, or beauty; or the pride of life, whether by pomp, grandeur, power, or, the usual consequence of them, applause and admiration; “is not of the Father,” cometh not from, neither is approved by, the Father of spirits; “but of the world:” It is the distinguishing mark of those who will not have Him to reign over them.

Here, then, is the sum of the perfect law; this is the true circumcision of the heart. Let the spirit return to God that gave it, with the whole train of its affections. “Unto the place from whence all the rivers came thither let them flow again. Other sacrifices from us he would not; but the living sacrifice of the heart he hath chosen. Let it be continual offered up to God through Christ, in flames of holy love. And let no creature be suffered to share with him: For he is a jealous God. His throne will he not divide with another: He will reign without a rival.

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Be no design, no desire admitted there, but what has Him for its ultimate object. This is the way where in those children of God once walked, who, being dead, still speak to us:” Desire not to live, but to praise his name: Let all your thoughts, words, and works, tend to his glory. Set your heart firm on him, and on other things only as they are in and from him. Let your soul be filled with so entire a love of him, that you may love nothing but for his sake.” “Have a pure intention of heart, a steadfast regard to his glory in all your actions.”

“Fix your eye upon the blessed hope of your calling, and make all the things of the world minister unto it.” For then, and not till then is that “mind in us which was also in Christ Jesus;” when, in every motion of our heart, in every word of our tongue, in every work of our hands, we “pursue nothing but in relation to him, and in subordination to his pleasure;” when we, too, neither think, nor speak, nor act, to fulfil our “own will, but the will of him that sent us;” when, whether we;’ eat, or drink, or whatever we do, we do all to the glory of God.”

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APPLICATION

**NOTES**

1. Spend some time exploring various internet sites for the words: “Wesleyan entire sanctification”.
2. Write a reflection paper based on the following questions. Be prepared to share that paper with your mentor.
 - Explain the relation of justification to sanctification.
 - What should we expect to result from sanctification in the life of the disciple?
 - Discuss John Wesley’s sermon, “The Circumcision of the Heart.” What was new or helpful? What was not clear?

EXAM

**NOTES**

1. Justification involves a _____ change.
 - A. relational
 - B. real or internal

2. Sanctification involves a _____ change.
 - A. relational
 - B. real or internal

3. The new birth restores the believer in the image of God.
 - A. True
 - B. False

4. Wesleyans hold that, although the Spirit of Christ now dwells within us, we remain subject to the power of sin.
 - A. True
 - B. False

5. Sanctification is an important aspect of the Christian life only in the Wesleyan tradition.
 - A. True
 - B. False

6. Entire sanctification is a decisive event, marking a clear before and after in the life of the disciple.
 - A. True
 - B. False

7. Sanctification includes an ongoing process by which more and more of life is defined by the reign of God.
 - A. True
 - B. False

8. John and Charles Wesley were distinctively optimistic, hopeful, and confident regarding the grace of God.
 - A. True
 - B. False



9. The New Creation includes the restoration of the heaven and the earth.
 - A. True
 - B. False

10. Circumcision of the heart describes God's work renewing our mind and heart in His image.
 - A. True
 - B. False

11. Circumcision of the heart includes a habitual disposition of the soul toward God.
 - A. True
 - B. False

12. Circumcision of the heart is possible apart from the supernatural assistance of the Holy Spirit.
 - A. True
 - B. False

13. Circumcision of the heart produces a submission to God despite our uncertainty about God's good will towards us.
 - A. True
 - B. False

14. Circumcision of the heart produces humility.
 - A. True
 - B. False

15. Circumcision of the heart causes us to love God above all else.
 - A. True
 - B. False

DISCUSSION GUIDE FOR MENTOR AND PARTICIPANT



NOTES

Be prepared to discuss the following with your mentor.

1. Review the exam questions and answers. Discuss any issues or questions they raise for you?
2. Explain the relation of justification to sanctification.
3. What should we expect to result from sanctification in the life of the disciple?
4. Discuss John Wesley's sermon, "The Circumcision of the Heart." What was new or helpful? What was not clear?