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PLACE

Communicating the Gospel
in a Pluralistic World



SESSION 7

The Wesleyan-Holiness Way of Salvation: Sanctification

CLT Bible Study

The Wesleyan-Holiness Way of Salvation: Sanctification

Certificate of Lay Ministry
Communicating the Gospel in a Pluralistic World
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The Wesleyan-Holiness Way of Salvation: Sanctification

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THE POWER OF THE SPIRIT AS IT RELATES TO
SANCTIFICATION

THE GRACE OF ENTIRE SANCTIFICATION OR
CHRISTIAN PERFECTION

REPENTANCE AND THE HOLY LIFE

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DISCUSSION GUIDE FOR MENTOR AND
PARTICIPANT

LEARNER OBJECTIVES

At the end of this session, you should:

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

INTRODUCTION

Justification and sanctification provide the two grand branches 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.

THE POWER OF THE SPIRIT AS IT RELATES TO SANCTIFICATION



NOTES

THE NEW BIRTH—REGENERATION

Justification by grace means that God removes the hostility between himself and the repentant sinner and restores a right relationship. We are no longer enemies of God but are now family. Through reconciliation, we are at “peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ” (Romans 5:1). Regeneration and sanctification involve a real or internal change.

According to theological reasoning, we are justified before we are regenerated. But in simple experience, justification happens at the same time as regeneration. When we are justified, we are also regenerated. In the new birth, God renews our fallen nature through the work of the Holy Spirit, who regenerates or re-creates us (2 Corinthians 5:17). 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 “born from above” or “born again.” He told Nicodemus, “Very truly I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God unless they are born again.” He added, “Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit] gives birth to spirit” (John 3:3, 6).

Regeneration is also the gift of eternal life (Romans 6:23). “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life” (John 3:16; see also 10:28). Paul also wrote about the re-creation that happens to those who are in Christ. “The old has gone, the new is here!” (2 Corinthians 5:17).

SANCTIFICATION

Regeneration begins the total change in what the New Testament calls sanctification (Romans 6:19b-22). This change happens inwardly in people’s hearts and outwardly in how they live. Wesley writes, “At the same time that we are justified, yea, in that very moment, sanctification begins.” The power of God inwardly renews us. God 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 describes everything God does in transforming his


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children into the image of Christ and bringing them to final salvation. Sanctification begins when we first believe in Jesus and are born again. Regeneration, also known as the new birth, is called initial sanctification. The transforming process of sanctification continues to entire sanctification, growth in grace, and concludes when we die with glorification (1 Corinthians 15:51-54; 1 John 3:1-4).

The process of sanctification encompasses three aspects:

- We have been redeemed.
- We are being redeemed.
- We will be redeemed.

Peter wrote, “But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, where righteousness dwells” (2 Peter 3:13). All three are essential parts of the New Testament’s picture of Christian discipleship.

THE LIFE OF GOD IN CHRISTIANS

The Wesleyan-Holiness way of salvation believes that because the Spirit of Christ lives within us, we are no longer slaves to the flesh or bound by the power of sin. We believe that the New Testament clearly teaches that Christ’s atonement and the Holy Spirit’s work in us through transforming grace is greater than the power of sin. The Father’s will is for the Holy Spirit to make all the benefits of Christ’s victorious atonement effective in us. His victory is now shared through the Spirit with all his sisters and brothers. This is all about grace and faith, not human achievement or sinless perfection (Colossians 2:8-15).

Douglas Harink highlights Paul’s guidance to the Thessalonian Christians. His analysis accurately describes what Wesleyans believe about Christian holiness. Harink explains that Paul not only criticized the Thessalonians’ past idol worship. He also encouraged them to serve the one God of Israel in holiness in all their actions and relationships. The Thessalonians’ journey towards holiness was “always genuinely their own.” But it was also “wholly the work of God.” God provided through his Spirit “freedom from bondage to the powers of sin and death, power for holy life, and confidence in the love of God” (Romans 8).

Harink writes that the Thessalonians’ involvement in God’s gracious work was meant to be spread across all aspects of their lives, including “active and passive, attitudinal and bodily, inner and outer, personal, social, and political.” Paul told them that living a holy life is a labor of love in which they participate in God’s work. This is all good news. The gospel saved them from God’s coming wrath and reconciled

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them to him. They shared in Jesus' death and resurrection life through the Holy Spirit and baptism. They became part of a new community, the *ekklesia* (church). In Jesus, they received a new identity and new standard for obedience.

The apostle Peter used similar language when he wrote to "those who through the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ have received a faith as precious as ours" (2 Peter 1:1). When we think about God's purpose for us as Christians, Wesleyans believe what Peter summarized so well: "His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness" (2 Peter 1:3).

THE GRACE OF ENTIRE SANCTIFICATION OR CHRISTIAN PERFECTION



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Christians of all denominations believe that sanctification is important to the Christian life. Becoming more like Christ is important for all Christian groups. They believe this happens through the Holy Spirit's work. It is experienced through prayer, learning about God, studying the Bible, loving others, worshipping together, and more.

But some denominations believe that even though we can be sanctified, we are also still sinners saved by God's grace. So Christians should expect that they will always struggle with sin, even though they are trying to be better. This belief means that God sees us as righteous because of what Christ did, not because we are actually made righteous. We remain sinners, so we will always struggle to do the right thing. We are not really changed but only considered righteous through grace. Theologians use the words "imputation" to mean that we are only counted as righteous and "impartation" that we are actually made righteous. Being only considered righteous means that discipleship is a conflicted life. There is a battle between the internal power of sin and trying to live by Christ's call to obedience.

According to this view, sin will fight the work of grace throughout all of one's life. Jesus took away the guilt of our sins, and we are now part of God's family. The Holy Spirit works in us. But sin still has a big influence on us. The enemy has a claim on a big part of our real estate, and he will not give it up as long as we are alive. We are sinners, saved by grace.

Our sisters and brothers who view Christian life in this way are right: our righteousness is never our own. We are only seen as righteous because of what Christ did, not because of anything we did. 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 fully recognize the role of the Holy Spirit. The New Testament is equally confident that the Spirit of the risen Lord is with us. The Spirit lives in us, cleanses us, and helps us live the way God wants us to. "And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies because of his Spirit who lives in you" (Romans 8:11). No wonder Peter, who was there on the Day of Pentecost, is confident that God "has given us everything we need for a godly life" (2 Peter 1:3). The foundation of the Wesleyan-Holiness view of Christian holiness is based on God brings change in use through his Spirit. While preaching an Easter sermon, I once heard an eloquent African-American pastor in North Carolina say, "Too many Christians are living on the right

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side of Easter but on the wrong side of Pentecost.”

The Wesleyan-Holiness tradition believes that the Holy Spirit can lead us to really want to love God and our neighbor as ourselves. Our distinct doctrine is that the Holy Spirit helps us develop a deep desire for love. As the New Testament teaches, we believe that Christians are called to live a godly life in Christ. The New Testament is clear that we no longer have to submit to sin (Romans 6:6-7). Because we have been raised to new life in Christ, we can now present our whole beings “to righteousness leading to holiness” (Romans 6:19).

We have heard, “Dear children, do not let anyone lead you astray. The one who does what is right is righteous, just as he is righteous” (1 John 3:7). When our hearts are renewed through the Holy Spirit, the Holy Spirit creates a hunger in our hearts for holiness. This hunger can be satisfied the more we give ourselves to God. As we offer our bodies as living sacrifices, God accepts and sanctifies our sacrifice through his grace (Romans 12:1-2). The Holy Spirit promises that God will make us completely holy—our spirit, soul, and body (1Thessalonians 5:23-24).

The Wesleyan-Holiness tradition is optimistic about the power of God’s grace. This optimism is expressed in the hope of entire sanctification to which we believe all Christians are called. Entire sanctification describes when we dedicate ourselves completely to Christ’s reign and glory. We fully commit ourselves to following Jesus and his teachings. The Holy Spirit confirms this commitment by his powerful witness.

This big decision creates a clear change in a person’s life as he or she becomes more like God. This change is necessary for living a holy life. We see “entire sanctification” as a key part of living a life full of God’s grace. Our lives are changed decisively. There is a clear difference between before and after. Entire sanctification is one of the significant ways God renews us in his image. Entire sanctification prepares us to live in holiness. It is key to living life to the full as promised and empowered by God’s grace.

REPENTANCE AND THE HOLY LIFE



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The Wesleyan-Holiness vision is that Christian holiness is made possible by grace through faith alone. We depend totally on God's grace in every moment and situation. We no longer depend on our own achievements or righteousness. Theodore Runyon says that what makes John Wesley's theology distinct is how he held together the renewal of our relationship with God in justification and how this relationship is lived out in sanctification. A Christian does not leave justification behind and then move on to sanctification. We continue to be reconciled to God by grace alone.

Since justification leads to sanctification, then it is also true that sanctification is a never-ending process where God guides more and more of life. The more we trust in God's sovereignty and yield to his guidance, the more of his grace and provision for holy living we will experience. What starts in entire sanctification becomes clearer in the obedience that comes through faith.

Fanny Crosby prayed, "Every day, every hour, let me feel Thy cleansing power." This should be the daily prayer of all Christians. Those who love God the most and are most open to his grace should also be the ones most willing to admit when they have not loved God or others as they should. Christian holiness should not lead us to ignore our failures but show our need for God's forgiveness. We become more sensitive and aware of the need to repent because we realize we have offended the Holy God and our neighbor. Unfortunately, and sadly, some in the Holiness tradition have missed this important part of the holy life.

The life of Christian holiness has everything to do with God's grace. It has nothing to do with thinking that we can be perfect and do not need to confess anything. Grace and love make confession possible and urgent, not unnecessary and insignificant. As children of grace, we live between the already and the not yet of the kingdom of God. The kingdom is here now in part, but we still have to deal with the world's challenges. Someday, God's kingdom will come in fullness, and we will experience the perfection God intends for us. Meanwhile, as we mature, we realize our weaknesses and learn to trust more in God's grace. On this journey to maturity, we must confess the times we offend God and others. The Lord's Prayer has this important line: "Forgive us our trespasses, even as we forgive those that trespass against us." Note that this prayer is for Jesus' disciples and not for strangers. At all times, as pilgrims on this journey, we should be quick to confess where we have not fully lived up to the image of Christ.


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GROWTH IN CHRISTIAN HOLINESS

The new birth and entire sanctification are important steps in the journey of being transformed by God's grace. But they are not stopping points. They are like doors that lead to more growth and change. The Spirit continually renews in us the image of God.

Christians live in the peace and rest of Christ. But this does not mean we can be without purpose or lazy. Bonhoeffer wrote, "The only man who has the right to say he is justified by grace 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). Hebrews 12:1-2 says, "Let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith."

THE NEW CREATION

Few Christian theologians have been more hopeful and confident about God's grace than John and Charles Wesley. They did not seek self-focused thinking in their desire for the holy life. Rather, they became captured by Christ the Victor and his big plans for his creation. They adopted Paul's idea that Christ would redeem all creation (1 Corinthians 15:20-28; Ephesians 1:7-10; Colossians 1:15-20). Their preaching and hymn writing were inspired by their belief that God wants everyone to repent and live (2 Peter 3:9) and that all of creation is included in his plan for salvation (Romans 8:18-25).

For them, new creation involves the whole creation. God, through Christ and by the Spirit, is working to redeem the heavens and the earth from all the harm caused by sin. That is why we can say, "Joy to the world." If someone wants to follow the Wesleyan-Holiness way of salvation, he or she must be ready to follow the exalted Lord who is making everything new (Rev. 21:5).

Wesleyan theology, especially Wesley's doctrine of sanctification, is closely related to movements for social change.

When becoming perfect like Christ becomes people's goal, they begin to hope that the future can be better than the present. The seed of optimism is planted within them. But at the same time, they become unhappy with how things are now. They have a new motivation to keep changing and improving. This personal dissatisfaction can also be applied to society. There were a lot of injustices and



social challenges in Wesley's time. His optimism that God can change people inspired him to seek to change the status quo.

THE CIRCUMCISION OF THE HEART



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

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

1. It is the melancholy [sad] 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 [suggests] 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


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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 [inclination] 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 [love]. 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 [take over] 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; though 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 [approval], 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 strongholds,”—to the overturning all the prejudices [opinions] 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 [atoning sacrifice] 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, 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


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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 [atonement] 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 thereof; 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 [thought] 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 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.”


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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 not subject to the law of God. For “everyone,” 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 forever, 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 anything but God. To suppose this, is to suppose the Fountain of holiness is directly the author of sin; since he has inseparably annexed [added] 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 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.


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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 a 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 [ends] 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, as 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 continually 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.

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

**NOTES**

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 fulfill 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.”

Edited by Dave Giles with corrections by Ryan Danker and George Lyons of Northwest Nazarene University for the Wesley Center for Applied Theology. © Copyright 1999 by the Wesley Center for Applied Theology. Text may be freely used for personal or scholarly purposes or mirrored on other websites, provided this notice is left intact. Any use of this material for commercial purposes of any kind is strictly forbidden without the express permission of the Wesley Center at Northwest Nazarene University, Nampa, ID 83686. Contact webadmin@wesley.nnc.edu for permission or to report errors. Words inserted in [] are modern words that capture Wesley’s ideas.

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 outcomes can we anticipate in the life of a disciple as a result of sanctification?
 - 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. Justification 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 enslaved to the power of sin.
 - A. True
 - B. False

5. Sanctification is an important part of the Christian life only in the Wesleyan-Holiness 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 the reign of God defines more and more of life.
 - A. True
 - B. False

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

EXAM

**NOTES**

9. The New Creation includes the restoration of heaven and 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 involves the soul regularly being inclined towards God.
 - A. True
 - B. False

12. Circumcision of the heart is possible without the supernatural assistance of the Holy Spirit.
 - A. True
 - B. False

13. Circumcision of the heart leads us to submit to God despite our uncertainty about God's goodwill 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 the participant raises 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?