Faculty Guide

# Becoming a Holy People


Clergy Development
Church of the Nazarene
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The **Modular Course of Study** is an outcome-based curriculum designed to implement the educational paradigm defined by the Breckenridge Consultations. Clergy Development is responsible for maintaining and distributing the Modular Course of Study for the Church of the Nazarene.

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# Series Foreword

### A Vision for Christian Ministry: Clergy Education in the Church of the Nazarene

The chief purpose of all persons—indeed, all of the creation—is to worship, love, and serve God. God has made himself known in His deeds of creation and redemption. As the Redeemer, God has called into existence a people: the Church, who embody, celebrate, and declare His name and His ways. The life of God with His people and the world constitutes the Story of God. That story is recorded principally in the Old and New Testaments, and continues to be told by the resurrected Christ who lives and reigns as Head of His Church. The Church lives to declare the whole Story of God. This it does in many ways—in the lives of its members who are even now being transformed by Christ through preaching, the sacraments, in oral testimony, community life, and in mission. All members of the Body of Christ are called to exercise a ministry of witness and service. No one is excluded.

In God's own wisdom He calls some persons to fulfill the ministry of proclaiming the gospel and caring for God's people, in a form referred to as the ordained ministry. God is the initial actor in this call, not humans. In the Church of the Nazarene we believe God calls and persons respond. They do not elect the Christian ministry. All persons whom God calls to the ordained ministry should continue to be amazed that He would call them. They should continue to be humbled by God's call. The *Manual* of the Church of the Nazarene states, "we recognize and hold that the Head of the Church calls some men and women to the more official and public work of the ministry." It adds, "The church, illuminated by the Holy Spirit, will recognize the Lord's call" (*Manual,* Church of the Nazarene, paragraph 400).

An ordained Christian minister has as his or her chief responsibility to declare in many ways the whole Story of God as fulfilled in Jesus of Nazareth. His or her charge is to "tend the flock of God . . . not under compulsion, but willingly, not for sordid gain but eagerly. Do not lord it over those in your charge, but be examples to the flock" (1 Pet 5:2-3, NRSV). The minister fulfills this charge under the supervision of Christ, the chief Shepherd (1 Pet 5:4). Such ministry can be fulfilled only after a period of careful

preparation. Indeed, given the ever-changing demands placed upon the minister, “preparation” never ceases.

A person who enters the Christian ministry becomes in a distinct sense a steward of the gospel of God (Titus 1:7). A steward is one who is entrusted to care for what belongs to another. A steward may be one who takes care of another person or who manages the property of someone else. All Christians are stewards of the grace of God. But in addition, in a peculiar sense a Christian minister is a steward of the “mystery of God,” which is Christ, the Redeemer, the Messiah of God. In all faithfulness, the minister is called to “make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel” (Eph 6:19, NRSV). Like Paul, he or she must faithfully preach “the boundless riches of Christ, and to make everyone see what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God who created all things; so that through the church the wisdom of God in its rich variety might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places” (Eph 3:8-10, NRSV).

In fulfilling this commission, there is plenty of room for diligence and alertness, but no room for laziness or privilege (Titus 1:5-9). Good stewards recognize that they are stewards only, not the owners, and that they will give an account of their stewardship to the master. Faithfulness to one’s charge and to the Lord who issued it is the steward’s principal passion. When properly understood, the Christian ministry should never be thought of as a “job.” It is ministry—uniquely Christian ministry. No higher responsibility or joy can be known than to become a steward of the Story of God in Christ’s Church. The person who embraces God’s call to the ordained ministry will stand in the company of the apostles, the Early Fathers of the Church, the Reformers of the Middle Ages, the Protestant Reformers, and many persons around the world today who joyfully serve as stewards of the gospel of God.

Obviously, one who does not recognize, or who understands but rejects, just how complete and inclusive a minister’s stewardship must be, should not start down the path that leads to ordination. In a peculiar sense, a Christian minister must in all respects model the gospel of God. He or she is to “shun” the love of money. Instead, the minister must “pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance, gentleness.” He or she must “fight the good fight of the faith” and “take hold of the eternal life, to which you were called” (1 Tim 6:11-12, NRSV).

Hence, the Church of the Nazarene believes "the minister of Christ is to be in all things a pattern to the flock—in punctuality, discretion, diligence, earnestness; 'in purity, understanding, patience and kindness; in the Holy Spirit and in sincere love; in truthful speech and in the power of God; with weapons of righteousness in the right hand and in the left' (2 Cor 6:6-7)" (*Manual*, Church of the Nazarene, paragraph 401.1). The minister of Christ "must be above reproach as God's steward, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not addicted to wine, not pugnacious, not fond of sordid gain, [8]but hospitable, loving what is good, sensible, just, devout, self-controlled, [9]holding fast the faithful word which is in accordance with the teaching . . . able both to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict." (Titus 1:7-9, NASB).

In order to be a good steward of God's Story one must, among other things, give oneself to careful and systematic study, both before and after ordination. This will occur not because he or she is forced to do so, but out of a love for God and His people, the world He is working to redeem, and out of an inescapable sense of responsibility. It cannot be too strongly emphasized that the attitude one brings to preparation for the ministry reveals much about what he or she thinks of God, the gospel, and Christ's Church. The God who became incarnate in Jesus and who made a way of salvation for all gave His very best in the life, death, and resurrection of His Son. In order to be a good steward, a Christian minister must respond in kind. Jesus told numerous parables about stewards who did not recognize the importance of what had been entrusted to them (Mt 21:33-44; 25:14-30; Mk 13:34-37; Lk 12:35-40; 19:11-27; 20:9-18).

Preparation for ministry in Christ's Church—one's education in all its dimensions— should be pursued in full light of the responsibility before God and His people that the ministry involves. This requires that one take advantage of the best educational resources at his or her disposal.

The Church of the Nazarene recognizes how large is the responsibility associated with the ordained Christian ministry and accepts it fully. Part of the way we recognize our responsibility before God is seen in the requirements we make for ordination and the practice of ministry. We believe the call to and practice of Christian ministry is a gift, not a right or privilege. We believe God holds a minister to the highest of religious, moral, personal, and professional standards. We are not reluctant to expect those standards to be

observed from the time of one's call until his or her death. We believe Christian ministry should first be a form of worship. The practice of ministry is both an offering to God and a service to His Church. By the miracle of grace, the work of the ministry can become a means of grace for God's people (Rom 12:1-3). One's education for ministry is also a form of worship.

The modules comprising the Course of Study that may lead a person to candidacy for ordination have been carefully designed to prepare one for the kind of ministry we have described. Their common purpose is to provide a holistic preparation for entrance into the ordained Christian ministry. They reflect the Church's wisdom, experience, and responsibility before God. The modules show how highly the Church of the Nazarene regards the gospel, the people of God, the world for which Christ gave His life, and Christian ministry. Completing the modules will normally take three or four years. But no one should feel pressured to meet this schedule.

The careful study for which the modules call should show that before God and His Church one accepts the stewardly responsibility associated with ordained ministry.

# Contents



# Introduction

### Intended Use of This Faculty Guide

This Faculty Guide serves as an instructor's guide for teaching principles of *Becoming a Holy People* to adult learners who are preparing for ordination in the Church of the Nazarene. The content is based on intended outcomes defined through the collaborative process conducted at Breckenridge, CO, USA, between 1990 and 1997. The materials prepare the pastor-teacher to present the topic by providing background reading, lesson plans, lectures, instructions to the teacher, and teaching resources for each class session. In most lessons complete lectures, questions for guided discussions, and defined learning activities are provided.

The pastor-teacher who will lead this module should hold a master's degree. Ideally, the pastor-teacher should have participated as a student in a module using this material prior to teaching the material to others. This faculty guide assumes that the pastor-teacher has some basic understanding of Wesleyan theology as presented in *Exploring John Wesley's Theology* and the Nazarene doctrine of holiness.

It is further assumed that learners participating in a module using this material will be high school graduates and be adult learners beyond the traditional college age. Learners are assumed to be motivated to learn, and to have adult life-experiences. No prior college classroom experience is assumed on the part of the learners.

It is strongly recommended that students complete the module *Exploring John Wesley's Theology* before enrolling in this module.

## Acknowledgments

Every module is the accumulation of effort by many people. Someone writes the original manuscript, others offer suggestions to strengthen the content and make the material more easily understood, and finally an editor formats the module for publication. This module is not different. Many people have contributed to this module. Every effort has been made to represent accurately the original intent of the principal contributors.

### Principal Contributor

The principal contributor for this module is Dr. Diane Leclerc. Dr. Leclerc is professor of Historical Theology and Homiletics at Northwest Nazarene University, where she has taught since 1998. She is an ordained elder in the Church of the Nazarene and has pastored two congregations, in Maine and in Idaho. She received the Bachelor of Arts in Religion from Eastern Nazarene College, the Master of Divinity degree from Nazarene Theological Seminary, and both her Master of Philosophy and Doctor of Philosophy degrees from Drew University.

She has published articles in the *Wesleyan Theological Journal* and has contributed to two books, including *Heart Religion in the Methodist Tradition and Related Movements.* Her full-length book, *Singleness of Heart: Gender, Sin, and Holiness in Historical Perspective,* won the Wesleyan Theological Society Book of the Year Award in 2002. Leclerc is an active member of the Wesleyan Theological Society and the Wesleyan-Holiness Women Clergy Association. She resides in Nampa, ID, with her husband and son.

### Responder

Each module was reviewed by at least one content specialist to ensure that the content did not represent a single, narrow view or opinion. The responder provided suggestions the principal contributor could integrate into this module.

John A. Knight, Ph.D. was the responder for this module. Dr. Knight is a general superintendent emeritus in the Church of the Nazarene. Prior to assuming the highest position in his denomination in 1985, he served with distinction as president of Bethany Nazarene College (now Southern Nazarene

University) and Mount Vernon Nazarene College (now University), editor of the *Herald of Holiness (now Holiness Today),* as well as pastor and professor. He has written several books and many articles for the church.

## Revision History

*Second Quarter 2005,* Revision 2, the current version,

- Text edited for gender inclusiveness.

*Second Quarter 2004*. Revision 1,

- the Lesson Overview, Introduction, Body, Close format was established.

## About This Module

The Church of the Nazarene identifies itself as a "holiness" denomination. This signifies two realities. First of all, our roots grow out of a tradition known as the "Holiness Movement" that arose in 19th-century America. We relate ourselves closely to other denominations born out of the same tradition. Holiness is an integral part of our historical identity. Yet, this "holiness" historical context also necessarily implies a "holiness" *theology* that undergirds subsequent historical events. The denominations and other associations of the movement all claimed—and claim—a particular understanding of a "doctrine of sanctification," which can also be articulated as a "theology of holiness." The very word "holiness" became an abbreviation for both of these realities—the "holiness movement" and "holiness doctrine."

The roots of this holiness doctrine can be traced back to the Early Church writers, particularly in the East—those Patristics who wrote in Greek. Aspects of the doctrine can be found throughout the history of the Middle Ages, the Reformation, and Anglicanism. John Wesley, of course, was the one who articulated a fully developed doctrine of sanctification; his theological vision, as well as his historical placement, led to the formation of the Methodist denomination—established in America in 1784. And yet, when Wesley's theology of "Christian Perfection" met the 19th-century cultural, religious, and historical context, theological changes necessarily arose.

In the last few decades a debate has arisen. This must be acknowledged at the very beginning of our explorations here. There have been scholars and preachers who have seen the 19th-century changes as grand *improvements* on Wesley, to be celebrated and held fast. On the extreme opposite side, there are scholars and preachers who see such changes as a

theological *disaster*, and cry for a return to Wesley's 18th-century articulation. There are other scholars and preachers who no doubt stand somewhere in the middle, often confused about the crucial issues, interpretations, and ultimate distinctives of the debate itself. Sides of the debate can be associated with names of scholars who represent them. The debate in some cases has been engaged fervently. Foremost, it is important here simply to recognize that the roots of the Church of the Nazarene grow from both sources, Wesleyan and Holiness. We are a Wesleyan-Holiness denomination. It will be the attempt of this author to give both of these sources due attention. It is her opinion that besides taking what is best from both, there is another critical agenda for the denomination today: how best to articulate a theology of holiness for the 21st century. Both the cry "back to Wesley" and "back to the holiness revival" need to be redirected toward the future.

Another crucial facet of holiness theology in today's context needs to be articulated before we begin. For various reasons—which will be presented and pondered in the lessons to follow—holiness theology, particularly the doctrine of entire sanctification, is losing emphasis in the churches of our denomination. There is either a generalized apathy, or such confusion about key definitional elements, that constructive, clear, healthy, realistic, and God-centered articulations of the doctrine are harder and harder to find. If this doctrine is our clear "distinctive" as a denomination, it is not too strong to say that there is no assurance it will be passed *well, if at all,* to the next generations. The only true way we can reclaim and re-proclaim our distinctive doctrine is through the preparation and education of our clergy. The author has committed herself to this project in light of what she believes to be a present "crisis" as articulated above. It is hoped that this specific module will provide a means of such crucial preparation for preaching and teaching holiness, now.

The structure of this module is not without an underlying support, namely, the Wesleyan quadrilateral. This is a methodology that holds to the primacy of Scripture. Yet, Wesley believed the Scriptures should be interpreted dynamically: *Scripture* has been interpreted by *tradition*—a history of interpretation that requires some fidelity; it witnesses to an *experience* of Christ and the Christian gospel that is dynamic and communal in character; it should be understood, organized, and effectively communicated through the aid of *reason*. Thus, the lessons in this

module will examine the theology of holiness from the perspective of: Scripture, tradition, reason, and experience. It will also examine related doctrines that are intricately involved in a strong interpretation of holiness—the doctrines of humanity, sin, and salvation. It will deal with the realm of "holiness ethics" and finally make some recommendations for articulating the theology of holiness and the doctrine of entire sanctification in the present context. It is extremely important that those preparing for ordained ministry in the Church of the Nazarene catch, hold, and employ the dynamism of the Wesleyan-Holiness theological paradigm, particularly in its expression of the doctrine of sanctification. This module is designed with our future denominational identity firmly in mind.

**Module Materials**

We have tried to design this module to be flexible and easy to adapt to your situation. For each lesson, there are several support pieces, which we have called simply "resources." These can be used in many different ways. Resources have been reproduced in the student guide for this module. The instructor will want a copy of the student guide for his or her own use.

1. The instructor may photocopy these to use for his or her own lecture outlines. There is space to add notes from the faculty guide, from the textbook, or from the additional suggested readings. Add in your own illustrations too!
2. The pages may be photocopied onto overhead transparencies for use in class.
3. These pages appear in the Student Guide for the students' use and participation.

One reason for developing this module is for the benefit of extension education. We understand that teachers all over the world are called upon to teach courses not in their area of specialty, but they teach them because they want to see pastors trained and leaders developed for the church. Extension education is basic to rapid church growth. We want to provide this as a resource for extension educators. If it helps others along the way, that's fine too.

Another reason for developing this module is to equip indigenous faculty. We believe a class like this is best taught and contextualized by someone from within the culture of the students. Many fine teachers, who are leaders in our churches around the world, do not have higher degrees in theology but have the skills to teach a module like this effectively. We want to set them free

to do so, and in so doing, to actually improve the module and make it more dynamic and meaningful for their context than it would have been had we held onto it and insisted on teaching it ourselves.

## Intended Outcomes for the Module

The *Manual,* Church of the Nazarene, and the *International Sourcebook on Developmental Standards for Ordination* define educational preparation for ordination. Additionally, each region of the International Church of the Nazarene has developed educational guidelines to qualify educational programs for ordination offered within their region.

The USA Region *Sourcebook for Ministerial Development* defines outcomes for the overall ministerial development program. The module assists candidates in developing these skills. Other modules in the program may also address the same outcomes. The specific outcomes that relate to this module are:

PROGRAM OUTCOMES

CN 22 Ability to articulate the distinctive characteristics of Wesleyan theology

CN 23 Ability to identify and explain the doctrine of holiness from a Wesleyan perspective

CN 27 Ability to identify the formative influences of the American Holiness Movement and the Church of the Nazarene

CP 10 Ability to synthesize, analyze, reason logically for discernment, assessment, and problem solving, and live with ambiguity

CP 11 Ability to analyze the validity of arguments and to identify their presuppositions and consequences

CP 21 Ability to envision, order, participate, and lead in contextualized, theologically grounded worship

OUTCOME STATEMENTS

- To recognize misconceptions about holiness that have been detrimental to understanding and articulating the doctrine, even keeping some from seeking the experience
- To relate holiness to Wesleyan theology as a whole, specifically to theological anthropology, the doctrine of sin, and the doctrine of salvation—broadly defined
- To identify and articulate Old Testament foundations for the doctrine of holiness

- To identify and articulate New Testament foundations for the doctrine of holiness
- To become familiar with figures and movements that are precursors of Wesleyan holiness.
- To understand John Wesley's theology of holiness
- To understand the 19th century's theology of holiness
- To compare and contrast Wesley and the 19th century's articulation of holiness
- To articulate the theology of holiness and doctrine of entire sanctification in both traditional and innovative language
- To differentiate the process and crisis of sanctification
- To identify important landmarks on the holiness journey
- To explain how holiness relates to the Wesleyan doctrine of the "means of grace"
- To articulate the foundations of a "holiness ethic"
- To articulate the substance—what it is—and the circumstance/structure—how it happens—of holiness theology
- To give students opportunity to write a holiness sermon
- To give the students opportunity to deepen their own experience of holiness

## Recommended Textbooks

Each module within the Modular Course of Study is intended to be textbook independent. This does not imply that the modules are textbook irrelevant, or that the module content cannot be enriched by selecting and requiring that students study a textbook along with the lessons provided in this faculty guide.

If these modules are adapted for use outside of the English-speaking countries of North America, a specific textbook may not be available in the language of the students. Therefore, the module does not rely on one textbook. The instructor may select any doctrinally sound textbook available to the students.

### Recommended Reading in this module

One of the assignments—Lessons 5 and 6—is to read *The Way of Holiness* by Phoebe Palmer. It might be helpful to have students begin reading before Lesson 5. Copies should be available in most libraries—public, college, district, or church. Students may want to purchase a copy for their own libraries. Books are available through Amazon and Wesley Books. It is also

one title included on a CDROM that can be purchased from the Wesley Center Online (http://wesley.nnu.edu) along with over 2000 such texts.

*The Way of Holiness* by Phoebe Palmer is also available online at http://wesley.nnu.edu/wesleyctr/books/indices/index-p-authors.htm. The editor wishes to thank Rev. Duane V. Maxey for the creation of the scanned and edited document and the Wesley Center Online with granting permission for its use.

Another assignment—Lessons 4 and 5—is to read John Wesley's piece, "A Plain Account of Christian Perfection." This is also available through the Wesley Center web site (http://wesley.nnu.edu), by purchasing the Wesley Center CDROM.

An electronic files of these two documents are included on the Modular Course of Study CDROM. You may distribute copies to students electronically or by printing the documents. Be sure to include the permission and copyright notices.

## Suggested Meeting Schedule

The module lessons are designed to last 90 minutes each. Each lesson is complete in itself with an opening, a middle, and a closing. They are sequential. Each lesson assumes the learners have mastered material presented in previous lessons. The lessons can be grouped in a variety of ways to accommodate the schedules of your learners.

When lessons are taught in the same meeting, instructors will need to adjust homework assignments because participants will not have time between lessons to prepare homework. It is very important for the instructor to always be looking ahead and planning for upcoming lessons.

Here are three suggestions—out of many—for ways that the meetings can be organized.

1. Resident campus. The class can meet two days a week for 90 minutes. Present one lesson per meeting time. Total time: 6 weeks.

2. Extension education. The class can meet one day—or evening—each week for 3 to 3½ hours. Present two lessons per meeting with a break period

between lessons. Participants will need to travel to a centralized location for meetings, so make it worth their time. Total time: 6 weeks.

3. Intensive module. The class can meet 3 consecutive days for 7 to 8 hours per day. Present two lessons in the morning with a break period between lessons, and two lessons in the afternoon with another break period between the lessons. Participants must complete reading assignments before arriving at the module site, and written assignments can be submitted 30 to 60 days following the class meeting. Total meeting time: Three days. (Elapsed time including reading and written assignments: 2 to 3 months.)

The module is divided into 12 lessons. The progression of these lessons can be seen in the chart below. Space is given for you to fill in the dates when your class sessions will meet.

| Date | Lesson |
|---|---|
| | 1. Preliminary Issues |
| | 2. Theological Foundations |
| | 3. Old Testament Foundations |
| | 4. New Testament Foundations |
| | 5. Tradition: Pre-Wesley Foundations |
| | 6. Tradition: Wesley on Christian Perfection |
| | 7. Tradition: The Holiness Movement |
| | 8. A Reasonable Doctrine: The Substance of Entire Sanctification |
| | 9. The Experience: The Structure of Entire Sanctification |
| | 10. The Experience: The Means to the End |
| | 11. The Experience: Holiness Ethics |
| | 12. Holiness for the 21st Century |

## About This Faculty Guide

*Note: It is critical to remember that active participation by the learners will enhance their learning. That means you will not be an information giver. This module is not about you. The focus of the module is helping students learn. Your role is to design an environment in which your students will learn. Sometimes you will give lectures. At other times you will guide discussions or assign your students to work in groups. These kinds of activities keep the participants actively involved in the learning process. Learning is a team activity.*

The faculty guide has been written to guide an instructor as he or she prepares to teach this module. It contains complete lesson plans and resources to provide a solid educational design for the topic. You will need to prepare for each lesson well in advance of the meeting time. Often there are background reading suggestions for the instructor, or you may know additional reference materials you want to interject into the lesson. Questions intended to be answered or discussed by the students are in italic type.

**A two-column format was chosen for the faculty guide.** The right-hand column contains the content of lectures, descriptions of activities, and questions to keep students involved. The left-hand column is to give suggested instructions to you, the teacher. It also contains examples you can use to illustrate concepts in the lectures. Whenever possible you should use examples from your own experience and from your students' real-life context.

Large white space has been left in the left column to allow you to write notes and personalize the faculty guide.

**The faculty guide has three major components:** the Faculty Guide Introduction, the Lesson Plans, and the Teaching Resources. The Introduction and Lesson Plans are in this document and the Resources are contained in the companion student guide. You are reading the Faculty Guide Introduction now. It provides a teaching philosophy for adult learners, background information for organizing the module, and ideas about conducting the lessons.

**Each section of the faculty guide is numbered** with a two-part page number. Page 5 of Lesson 3 would be numbered "3-5." The first number is the lesson number and the second is the page number within the lesson. Each resource sheet is numbered for the lesson in which the resource is first used. The first resource page for Lesson 2 is numbered "2-1."

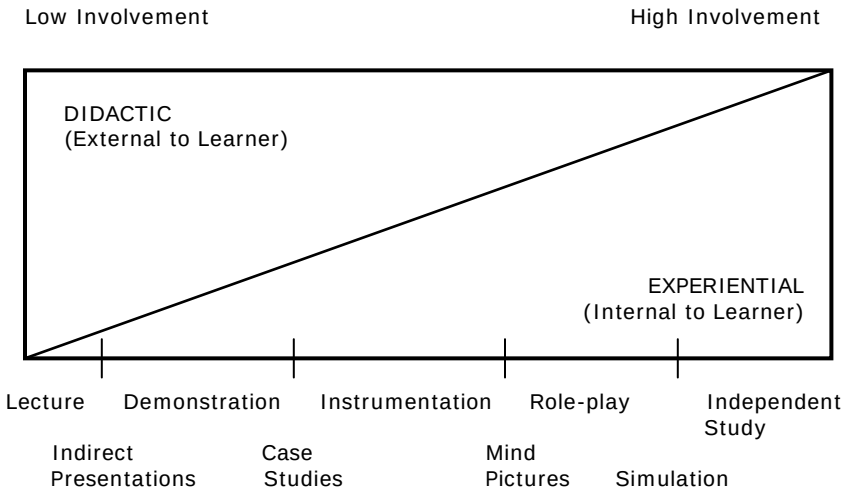
**The Lesson Plans are complete in themselves.** They contain an Overview, Introduction, Body, and Close. The Lesson Overview provides you with a planning tool for preparing and conducting each lesson.

*The Lesson Introduction* should get participants' attention, orient them to the place this lesson holds in the overall module, define the intended objectives, and prepare them for the learning activities.

*The Lesson Body* is the core message of the lesson. The key is to keep the learners actively involved. Even in lectures, ask questions that prompt learners to think about the content, not just hear the lecture.

The following chart shows a continuum of learner involvement in different teaching methods. Lecture requires the least learner involvement, and independent study requires the most learner involvement.

## METHODS CONTINUUM




A variety of learning activities are used to present information and allow learners to experiment with their new knowledge. Each learner has a set of preferred methods of learning and has different life experiences that can color or filter what one actually learns. A variety of learning activities help adults adapt to the learning task—by hearing, by doing, by reading, by discussing, or by combinations of these. The learners should have opportunities to test and clarify their new learning by talking with the instructor and other participants, and applying new knowledge in real or contrived situations as soon as possible.

*The Lesson Close* provides a time for answering questions, reviewing the information, connecting this lesson to future lessons, making assignments, and punctuating the finish. The close does not provide any new information but gives a sense of closure to the lesson.

**Homework assignments** are important learning activities. They provide the student with an opportunity to synthesize classroom learning. Working on these assignments also extends the learning experience beyond the time constraints of class time.

The student—especially the adult student—needs frequent and timely feedback about his or her learning. While interaction with other students helps the learner refine what he or she is learning, feedback from the instructor is also critical to the quality of learning and ultimately to his or her persistence in the Course of Study.

It is your responsibility as the instructor for this module to provide students with timely responses to homework assignments in order to enhance the learning process. Reviewing and responding to homework will also provide you with critical information about what your students are learning and whether or not the teaching-learning process is succeeding.

Since these modules are preparing the learner for ordination rather than leading to a university degree, a letter grade may not be appropriate. Your response to the learners' assignments should be thoughtful and in most cases it should be written. Its purpose will always be to refine and enhance the learning of the student.

**Teaching Resources** are reproduced in the student guide. Each resource sheet is numbered for the lesson in which the resource is first used. The first resource page for Lesson 2 is numbered "2-1."

You must determine how each resource will be used in your context. If an overhead projector is available, transparencies can be made by replacing the paper in your photocopy machine with special transparency material.

The student guide for this module contains the series foreword, acknowledgments, syllabus, copies of all resources, lesson objectives, and assignments. A copy of the student guide should be made available to each student.

**Recommendations for printing** You may print this faculty guide if desired. The introduction and lesson plan segments are formatted for printing on both sides of the paper. The resource pages of the student guide should be printed on one side for use as transparency or handout masters.

The student guide should be printed on one side.

## A Hidden Agenda

**Hidden curriculum issues . . . because the way we teach teaches**

In each session, there are certain methodological and environmental things to consider.

**First,** consider the classroom arrangement. Whenever possible, the room should be arranged to encourage a sense of community. Either the group should sit in a circle or around a table. If the group is very large, chairs can be arranged for easily moving into clusters for discussion.

**Second,** consider how you present yourself as teacher. Standing behind a lectern with your students facing you in rows says you are above the students and have something to give them (although in a very large group this standing to teach may be unavoidable). Sitting as part of the circle makes the teacher a co-learner at the same level as the students. Speak naturally. Pay close attention to your students, and value the things they share. Learn their names. Encourage participation. Remember that you are modeling for them, and the way you teach will teach them far more than the words you say.

**Third,** invite the Holy Spirit's presence in the classroom. Do this each time the class meets.

**Fourth,** the sharing-of-stories activity does more than help the students begin to reflect on their own Christian experiences. It is a way to build community between the students. This is more than an exercise to be checked off. It is vital to set the tone of your intentional community.

When meeting times exceed 90 minutes, consider adding break times. The break between segments is an important time for community building. Remain available to the students during this time. Consider

offering coffee or tea during this time as a way to encourage fellowship.

## Journaling: The Key to Spiritual Formation

Journaling is a major assignment of each module in the Ministerial Preparation Course of Study. It is the integrating element that helps you draw spiritual meaning and ministerial application from the content of each module whether the module concentrates on content, competency, character, or context. It ensures that the "Be" component of "Be, Know, and Do" is present in every module in which you participate. What is journaling and how can it be meaningfully accomplished?

### Journaling: A Tool for Personal Reflection and Integration

*The Syllabus contains this explanation of journaling. Journaling provides the spiritual formation component for the module and is an integral part of the learning experience.*

*Have students read the journaling section during the Syllabus review in Lesson 1 and emphasize that journaling is an assignment for each lesson in the module.*

*When giving assignments in each lesson, assign journal writing each time the group meets.*

Participating in the Course of Study is the heart of your preparation for ministry. To complete each module you will be required to listen to lectures, read several books, participate in discussions, and write papers. Content mastery is the goal.

An equally important part of ministerial preparation is spiritual formation. Some might choose to call spiritual formation devotions, while others might refer to it as growth in grace. Whichever title you place on the process, it is the intentional cultivation of your relationship with God. The module work will be helpful in adding to your knowledge, your skills, and your ability to do ministry. The spiritual formation work will weave all you learn into the fabric of your being, allowing your education to flow freely from your head to your heart to those you serve.

Although there are many spiritual disciplines to help you cultivate your relationship with God, journaling is the critical skill that ties them all together. Journaling simply means keeping a record of your experiences and the insights you have gained along the way. It is a discipline because it does require a good deal of work to faithfully spend time daily in your journal. Many people confess that this is a practice they tend to push aside when pressed by their many other responsibilities. Even five minutes a day spent journaling can make a major difference in your education and your spiritual development. Let me explain.

Consider journaling time spent with your best friend. Onto the pages of a journal you will pour out your candid responses to the events of the day, the insights you gained from class, a quote gleaned from a book, and an ah-ha that came to you as two ideas connected. This is not the same as keeping a diary, since a diary seems to be a chronicle of events without the personal dialogue. The journal is the repository for all of your thoughts, reactions, prayers, insights, visions, and plans. Though some people like to keep complex journals with sections for each type of reflection, others find a simple running commentary more helpful. In either case, record the date and the location at the beginning of every journal entry. It will help you when it comes time to review your thoughts.

It is important to chat briefly about the logistics of journaling. All you will need is a pen and paper to begin. Some folks prefer loose-leaf paper that can be placed in a three-ring binder, others like spiral-bound notebooks, while others enjoy using composition books. Whichever style you choose, it is important to develop a pattern that works for you.

Establishing a time and a place for writing in your journal is essential. If there is no space etched out for journaling, it will not happen with the regularity needed to make it valuable. It seems natural to spend time journaling after the day is over and you can sift through all that has transpired. Yet, family commitments, evening activities, and fatigue militate against this time slot. Morning offers another possibility. Sleep filters much of the previous day's experiences, and processes deep insights, that can be recorded first thing in the morning. In conjunction with devotions, journaling enables you to begin to weave your experiences with the Word, and also with module material that has been steeping on the back burner of your mind. You will probably find that carrying your journal will allow you to jot down ideas that come to you at odd times throughout the day.

It seems we have been suggesting that journaling is a handwritten exercise. Some may be wondering about doing their work on a computer. Traditionally, there is a special bond between hand, pen, and paper. It is more personal, direct, aesthetic. And it is flexible, portable, and available.

With regular use, your journal is the repository of your journey. As important as it is to make daily entries, it is equally important to review your work. Read over each week's record at the end of the week. Make a

summary statement and note movements of the Holy Spirit or your own growth. Do a monthly review of your journal every 30 days. This might best be done on a half-day retreat where you can prayerfully focus on your thoughts in solitude and silence. As you do this, you will begin to see the accumulated value of the Word, your module work, and your experience in ministry all coming together in ways you had not considered possible. This is integration—weaving together faith development and learning. Integration moves information from your head to your heart so that ministry is a matter of being rather than doing. Journaling will help you answer the central question of education: "Why do I do what I do when I do it?"

Journaling really is the linchpin in ministerial preparation. Your journal is the chronicle of your journey into spiritual maturity as well as content mastery. These volumes will hold the rich insights that will pull your education together. A journal is the tool for integration. May you treasure the journaling process!

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*Lesson 1*

# Preliminary Issues

## *Lesson Overview*

### Schedule

| Start Time | Task or Topic | Learning Activity | Materials Needed |
|---|---|---|---|
| 0:00 | Introduction | Orient | Student Guide |
| 0:15 | Preliminary Issues | Lecture | Resource 1-1<br>Resource 1-2<br>Resource 1-3 |
| 1:15 | Student Response | Guided Discussion | |
| 1:25 | Lesson Close | Review, Assign | Student Guide |

# *Lesson Introduction*

(15 minutes)

## Orientation

*Introduce yourself to the class.*

*Go over the syllabus in the Student Guide and have the students fill in the information concerning time, location and contact numbers. You may want to send around a sign-up sheet so everyone can exchange email and phone numbers.*

*Read through the Module Vision Statement.*

*Make sure the students understand what is required in attendance, homework, and class participation.*

*Are there any questions?*

## Learner Objectives

*Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.*

*Restating the objectives for the learners serves as an advanced organizer for the lesson and alerts learners to key information and concepts.*

By the end of this lesson, participants should

- identify misconceptions about holiness
- recognize the complexity of our Nazarene heritage
- identify some key issues in a theology of holiness
- differentiate holiness and sanctification

# *Lesson Body*

## Lecture / Discussion: Preliminary Issues

(60 minutes)

*Keep these questions. You will return to them at the end of the course.*

*Get the students involved with the questions and concerns they have. Allow for open, honest comments without judgment or response.*

Before we begin, let's identify any questions we might have about the doctrines of holiness and sanctification.

Let's list our questions on the board. You may want to keep a copy for yourself.

Hopefully this module will address these questions. Let's keep them in mind as we progress.

### Importance of the Nazarene Doctrine of Holiness

The proclamation of the possibility to live a life of holiness is one of the primary reasons the Church of the Nazarene exists. Our understanding of holiness has two primary sources: the theology of John Wesley and the movement known as the Holiness Movement, which began in 19th-century America. This module is designed to help the student prepare for ministry in the Wesleyan-Holiness tradition and to offer a clearer understanding of the holiness experience.

We need to acknowledge that there have been many interpretations of the theology of holiness and the doctrine of sanctification *within* the tradition. If we begin with the theology of John Wesley, we must acknowledge that he himself interpreted prior sources that proclaimed aspects of holiness doctrine. There have been varying and countless interpretations of Wesley's theology, some that have not taken into account that Wesley's theology *developed* through the decades of his life.

The Holiness Movement changed aspects of Wesley, but certainly not uniformly. There were variations within the movement itself on what happens in the life of holiness. And then, there have been interpreters since, who have tried to understand Wesley, the Holiness Movement, and the adaptations of the Church of the Nazarene.

Through the decades, through the century of our existence, there have been differing interpretations of

 

the holy life. There has been theological *development* in our thought, with theologians adding various nuances to the doctrine along the way.

At times, there has even been intense debate over some issues. In light of such history, and in light of a real need to communicate the doctrine to future generations of Nazarenes, our task here is certainly not a simple one. And yet, the heart's cry of countless theologians and preachers and teachers is to present the gospel of full salvation as simply as possible.

Deeper than the barriers of differing ways to express concepts related to holiness, and differing opinions on more minute details of the doctrine, we believe there is an experience and a way of life that is real. *We believe in the grace of God to transform us in this life, so that we might grow in love and live victoriously.* We must never lose sight of the fact that this is much more than doctrine, more than abstract thought, more than putting together a workable system. This is about real people, real spirituality, real life. As one theologian has put it, doctrine only works if it works in overalls.

We will begin our discussion by identifying misconceptions related to holiness—those ideas that are clearly outside all constructive interpretations.

## Misconceptions

Let us begin our discussion of what holiness is by beginning with a clear understanding about what holiness is not. Through the years, various misconceptions have arisen in the Church that have made our theology not only misconstrued but also unhealthy, even abusive at times. There have been periods in our history when these wrong assumptions have been very damaging to genuine seekers of the holy life. We must acknowledge the reality that persons have left the tradition because of improper preaching and teaching about holiness and sanctification.

Mildred Bangs Wynkoop is a holiness theologian who has played a huge role in expressing our theology in a healthy way; many consider her as one who helped "save" our denomination at a crucial breaking point through her reappropriation and reexpression of Wesleyan theology. She calls us to examine what she terms the "credibility gap." What she means by this is that distorted views of holiness leave persons despondent when they see such a huge gap between what is being preached and what is actually being

*See Wynkoop,* A Theology of Love: The Dynamic of Wesleyanism (*Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1967), chapter 3.*

lived. Wynkoop calls for this gap to be lessened by realistic and life-giving expressions of our theology.

It is our attempt here to clarify our understanding of holiness by countering several myths. This is not an exclusive list but represents the attempts by the author of this module to guide our thoughts toward our goal. You may discover more.

1. Entire sanctification is the destination of the Christian life.
2. Entire sanctification takes away our ability to sin.
3. We do not receive the Holy Spirit fully until we are entirely sanctified.
4. Those not entirely sanctified are sinners and second-class citizens.
5. Only those who are entirely sanctified go to heaven.
6. Legalistic self-righteousness is what holiness looks like.
7. Sinlessness is the goal of the sanctified life.
8. The entirely sanctified do not face temptation.
9. Holiness and entire sanctification are synonymous.
10. It is impossible to live up to the expectations of the sanctified life.

Let's look at these in detail.

*Refer to Resource 1-1 in the Student Guide.*

*Give examples from your own experience throughout this lecture when possible.*

**False: Entire sanctification is the destination of the Christian life.**

There are three dangerous implications that arise from this false assumption.

- First of all, it implies that the experience of entire sanctification is the end of Christian growth. It is just as important to emphasize growth in grace *after* the experience of entire sanctification as it is prior to the experience.
- Second, it implies that we have arrived at the pinnacle of the Christian experience, and that God's grace has done all that it can do, which is also false. God designed that we would continue to be renewed in the image of God throughout our lives. Entire sanctification is a significant point, but certainly not the highest experience.
- Third, we must never imply that we are seeking after an *experience.* Entire sanctification is only possible when we are seeking first after God and the life lived in God. Entire sanctification has to do with our relationship with God; it is unfortunate if we disconnect the experience from its relational aspects.

 

**False: Entire sanctification takes away our ability to sin.**

As we will examine fully in the next lesson, sin is a complex issue when related to our understanding of holiness. But what we can say for certain is that nothing will ever take away our *ability* to sin. Our free will is always in play. God does not take away from us our own choices, and therefore we can always choose to sin. Grace provides us with a "way out," but ultimately it is our choice to respond to the Holy Spirit or reject God's aid. An assumption that even our very ability to sin after entire sanctification is taken away is clearly an error. It happened to be one that Wesley himself faced directly (the "Perfectionist Controversy"). He was quick to oppose and counteract it, strongly.

**False: We do not receive the Holy Spirit fully until we are entirely sanctified.**

It does not take very long to see that this is directly against scriptural teaching, and yet it is a myth that has been perpetuated. Paul says in Romans 8 that if we are in Christ we have received the Holy Spirit. It is the moment of our new birth when the Holy Spirit comes to abide in us. But even more technically, the Holy Spirit is very active in our lives even *before* we ever know Christ, in His ministry of prevenient grace.

We believe the Spirit is at work in the life of every individual from birth, drawing all persons to a relationship with God. We believe the Holy Spirit awakens persons to their need for salvation, convicts them of sin, and applies the atonement of Christ to them when they respond in faith. It is the grace of God, appropriated by such faith, that brings salvation. The Spirit indwells the believer from this moment on.

*Refer to Resource 1-2 in the Student Guide.*

**False: Those not entirely sanctified are sinners and second-class citizens.**

The relationship of sin and salvation is a complex one. There have been times in our history when sanctification has been overemphasized to such a degree that the new birth experience has been de-emphasized to a dangerous point. As a result, the Christian life up to the point of entire sanctification has, at times, been portrayed as a life of horrific bondage to sin, with little or no victory.

This is clearly against Wesley's thinking, as we will see in subsequent lessons. We should never view those who have been entirely sanctified as "better than"

those who have not; nor should we view those on the road toward entire sanctification as lesser Christians. If we are in Christ, we are thoroughly Christian.

A corollary of this wrong thinking is the belief that the best candidates for entire sanctification are backsliders! There is certainly no prerequisite of falling away from God in order to make a deeper commitment. The language of some who express the experience of entire sanctification—namely, "I have *recommitted* my life to Christ"—could falsely imply that some sort of failure or straying is *necessary* for the experience to happen. This is completely false. The ideal is that we grow in Christ between the first and second works of grace without any regression.

**False: Only those who are entirely sanctified go to heaven.**

This myth cropped up from a misinterpretation of a verse in Hebrews that says, "Without holiness no one will see the Lord" (Heb 12:14). This gross misconception grows out of the error of collapsing holiness into the experience of entire sanctification. As we will see in lessons that follow, holiness has a much broader meaning.

God's sanctifying work is imparted to us, from the moment of our new birth until our glorification in heaven, with entire sanctification being a significant step in the spiritual journey. It is a perversion of the gospel itself to imply that only those who have reached this step are candidates for eternal life. An even more subtle implication can be made here as a part of this myth. It could suggest that it is our own righteousness that "earns" a way into heaven. Which leads to the next issue.

**False: Legalistic self-righteousness is what holiness looks like.**

No one would ever actually say this. But there have been periods in our history where an onlooker might have thought we believed it! If holiness is reduced to a list of dos and don'ts, legalism is quick to follow. This was the problem with the Pharisees Jesus confronted. They looked only at the externals and forgot the significance of the heart and inner life. They also forgot that all righteousness comes from God.

Paul is clear in his letter to the Philippians that he was perfect when it came to obeying the law. But that was not enough. He needed Christ to clean him from the

 

inside out. One of the dangers of emphasizing the need for personal holiness is that we can forget its purpose and make it an end in itself. In other words, as we will see in coming lessons, holiness and love are inseparable. Which leads us to the next myth.

**False: Sinlessness is the goal of the sanctified life.**

The interpretation of Wesley is correct that emphatically states that if we conceptualize holiness as the absence of something, namely sin, not only have we given holiness a weak and misleading definition, but we are also in danger of losing the very heart of the Christian life. Holiness is about the *presence* of something: love. As Wynkoop writes, "Love is the essential inner character of holiness, and holiness does not exist apart from love." And love is completely relational. It might be able to conceive a life that is sinless, if we define sin as a rebellious act against the law of God. But this life would not be truly holy unless it exhibited genuine love. "Love for God and neighbor" *is* Wesley's definition of holiness.

*Wynkoop,* Theology of Love, *24.*

*Refer to Resource 1-3 in the Student Guide.*

**False: The entirely sanctified do not face temptation.**

Again, even though there is an immediate scriptural counteraction for this, it is still a myth that causes persons great confusion. Scripture tells us Jesus was tempted in the desert. It also explicitly tells us He was tempted in every way, just like us, except He did not yield to temptation. And so, we believe that even though Jesus was without sin from birth, and holy in every way, He himself faced temptation. And yet, often persons struggle under the belief that as they grow in their faith, temptation will lessen. If persons who have experienced entire sanctification have this result as an expectation of the experience, and then find themselves tempted, great suffering in the form of spiritual self-doubt can occur for needless reason.

**False: Holiness and entire sanctification are synonymous.**

This mistake is easy to make. We have grown accustomed to using language as a shortcut. But more than shortcuts are needed to understand fully the holy life. To be theologically technical, holiness and sanctification begin when a person is born again. God begins then the ***initial*** work of sanctification in the heart. The person then grows in grace, ***progresses*** in holiness and sanctification. Later, the person

experiences what we have termed ***entire*** sanctification. But this is not the end. ***Progressive*** sanctification continues from that point, until our ***final*** sanctification, also known as glorification, when we die. God's grace enables every step in holiness along the way.

**False: It is impossible to live up to the expectations of the sanctified life.**

Whereas previous generations might have flirted with legalism in their enthusiasm about the holy life, it is more common for younger generations to doubt the very possibility of being holy. Generic evangelicalism has taught them that they are sinners, saved by grace. And this *is* an important message. But what we mean when we sometimes employ the language of "full salvation" is that there is more. We are sinners saved by grace, but it is God's design to transform us from within to become something more.

It is our message as Wesleyans that the Christian life is not doomed to a cycle of perpetual sin and failure, where the power of sin seems greater than the power of grace! Rather, God designed, before the very foundation of the world, that we be like Christ in heart and life. God is faithful in His calling us to holy lives; and as Paul says in 1 Thessalonians, if God has called us, then He will do it in us. (5:24).

## Guided Discussion: Student Response

(10 minutes)

Examining these misconceptions has served as an introduction to our further explorations. They are offered in the spirit of Wesley himself, who often used the rhetorical form of defining some aspect of theology by first showing what it is *not*.

*Allow for student interaction and response.*

*Have you encountered any of these misconceptions?*

*Have you struggled with any of them yourself?*

*Can you think of anything else that is important NOT to say about holiness?*

Let's begin our journey into what holiness of heart and life is all about.

 

# *Lesson Close*

(5 minutes)

## Review

*Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.*

Look at the learner objectives for this lesson. Can you

- identify misconceptions about holiness?
- recognize the complexity of our Nazarene heritage?
- identify some key issues in a theology of holiness?
- differentiate holiness and sanctification?

## Look Ahead

Next week we will look at important theological foundations of holiness.

## Assign Homework

*Direct students to the Homework Assignments in the Student Guide.*

Write a three-page essay on what you believe about humanity, the image of God, and sin, from a theological perspective.

Write in your journal. This assignment is ongoing. Include your reflections, reactions, and insights on the material presented in class. It would also be helpful to read from John Wesley's journal throughout the course, available at http://www.ccel.org/w/wesley/journal/journal.htm.

# *Lesson 2*

# Theological Foundations

## *Lesson Overview*

### Schedule

| Start Time | Task or Topic | Learning Activity | Materials Needed |
|---|---|---|---|
| 0:00 | Introduction | Orient | Student Guide |
| 0:10 | Student Essays | Small Groups | Homework |
| 0:30 | Theological Foundations | Lecture | Resources 2-1—2-5 |
| 1:15 | Student Response | Guided Discussion | |
| 1:25 | Lesson Close | Review, Assign | Student Guide |

### Suggested Reading for Instructor

Bassett, Paul M. "Culture and Concupiscence: The Changing Definition of Sanctity in the Wesleyan Holiness Movement, 1867-1920." *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 28 (1993). Nampa, ID: Wesley Center, Northwest Nazarene University. http://wesley.nnu.edu/wesleyan_theology/theojrnl/26-30/28-4.htm

Dunning, H. Ray. *Grace, Faith, and Holiness: A Wesleyan Systematic Theology.* Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1988, 273-394.

Maddox, Randy. "Holiness of Heart and Life: Lessons from North American Methodism." *Asbury Theological Journal* 51 (1996): 65-93, 141-56.

Wynkoop, Mildred Bangs. *A Theology of Love: The Dynamic of Wesleyanism.* Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1967, 102-24, 149-64.

 

# *Lesson Introduction*

(10 minutes)

## Accountability

*Ask several of the students what significant ideas they remember from the first lesson.*

*Ask if they were able to find a source for Wesley's journals.*

## Orientation

Many theological topics form a foundation for the study of holiness. In this lesson we will be looking at several of these topics.

## Learner Objectives

*Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.*

*Restating the objectives for the learners serves as an advanced organizer for the lesson and alerts learners to key information and concepts.*

By the end of this lesson, participants should

- relate theological anthropology to the doctrine of holiness
- explain the effects of sanctification on the image of God
- distinguish between human nature and sin nature
- relate the doctrine of sin to the doctrine of holiness

# *Lesson Body*

## Small Groups: Student Essays

(20 minutes)

*Divide the class into groups of about three students each.*

*Move around among the groups and listen to the comments.*

*If time allows, have the groups report or call on someone to read his or her essay that seems to be well stated.*

*Collect the homework papers. You need to evaluate the papers, giving your critique of the thoughts and presentation of the ideas.*

*Evaluation does not mean giving a grade, as grades are not the measure of completing this module. Completion is based on attendance, participation, and showing competence in the ability statements.*

In your group read each other's essays. Ask questions of each other, challenge each other to support statements.

Look for similarities and differences in each of the essays.

## Lecture: Theological Foundations

(45 minutes)

It is absolutely crucial to have a solid understanding of related theological issues before we begin explorations of holiness. These interconnected theological categories are: humanity and the *imago Dei;* sin—personal and original sin; and salvation. This lecture will serve as a skeletal view of these issues. Other modules will offer more detailed formation of these doctrines.

The following has been excerpted and adapted from the module *Exploring John Wesley's Theology*, also written by the author of this module.

### Humanity

*Refer to Resource 2-1 in the Student Guide.*

Foundational to a Wesleyan understanding of humankind—also known as the doctrine of theological anthropology—is that human beings are relational. They were created for relationship. They were created for love, created to love. Interpreters of Wesley have highlighted that the very definition of the image of God —*imago Dei—is* this capacity to love.

Other traditions have defined the image in various ways. An interpretation of the image in the Early Church period—which was deemed heretical—proposed that the image was an actual physical resemblance to God. There do seem to be many anthropomorphized images in Scripture. But ultimately, orthodoxy claims that these should be interpreted metaphorically.

Many Western interpreters of the image have stated that it resides in our human capacity to reason. This is the view of many classical theologians, including the great Catholic theologian, Thomas Aquinas (d. 1275). Another interpretation is that humanity resembles God in its relationship to lesser creation. Just as God stands in a hierarchical position over humanity, so too does humanity stand in a hierarchical position over the earth. Still another interpretation of the image is that of human freedom. God created us free and self-determining.

Wesley was aware of these various interpretations, but according to Wynkoop and others, he holds strongly to the image as love. H. Ray Dunning and others have expanded on the definitive relationships of humanity as it was meant to be: we were created to love God, love others, and have an appropriate love for self and for the world.

Key to understanding a Wesleyan view of humanity is the fact that after the Fall, the image remains. It is severely distorted but not obliterated. And therefore, salvation for Wesley—broadly defined to include sanctification—is the process of the restoration and renewal of the image of God in us. This idea, that the image remains after the Fall, has led some Wesley interpreters to speak of a doctrine of total *deprivity* instead of total *depravity*.

Through the Fall, we are *deprived* of our primary relationship with God, and our other relationships are therefore distorted; but the capacity for love and the hope of renewal remains. And, in a Wesleyan-Holiness paradigm, prevenient grace is immediately offered to everyone born. The very strong Calvinist doctrine of total *depravity,* on the other hand, is not as optimistic—through the Fall we are totally depraved, without God in the world, and corrupted beyond repair in this life. These two very different understandings of the Fall and the *imago Dei,* will produce very different doctrines of sin and salvation in Wesley and Calvin.

## Sin

When discussing sin, there are two categories that need to be addressed here: personal sin and original sin. It is impossible to understand the doctrine of sanctification, specifically entire sanctification, unless these theological foundations are laid.

### Personal Sin

*Refer to Resource 2-2 in the Student Guide.*

Often Calvinists and Wesleyans argue over the issue of sin in believers' lives. And yet it is not always recognized that these two traditions hold to two very different understandings of what sin is. The arguments are based on key definitions. According to John Calvin, sin is falling short of the glory of God, or missing the mark. Therefore *any* non-Godlike qualities or imperfections in humanity are considered sinful. It is quite understandable then, that they would claim we sin in thought, word, and deed daily. Most simply put, we are sinful because we are not God.

But Wesleyans have stressed the volitional element of sin. Sin, for Wesley, is a willful transgression of a known law of God. In other words, sin is always a conscious act of rebellion against what God desires for us. And, in a sense, this definition is key to understanding facets of our articulation of sanctification, as we claim that this type of rebellion is not necessary. There can be victory over sin—using this definition. However, Wesley did not offer this definition as the only definition of sin.

For example, Wesley was quick to point out that there are sins of omission as well as commission. A sin of commission is when we commit an act forbidden to us. We break a law. But James is clear in his letter that sin is also a correct label whenever we know the good we ought to do and do not do it—omit doing it. In a very real sense, particularly in light of Matthew 25, we know we should take care of the poor, visit the sick and imprisoned, and produce other acts of mercy. And yet, most of us omit these on a daily basis. And thus, according to this definition, we sin. As we progress in this module, we should ask the question, "How does sanctification affect this type of sin?"

In a real way, the closer we draw to God, the deeper our need to live a "confessional" life, confessing our complete dependency on God at the very deepest level of our being. In other words, the issue of breaking an obvious law or even omitting a good deed may become less and less the issue as we grow in grace. But then

the Holy Spirit, in His molding and shaping work, can go deeper into our heart; our response should be godly sorrow whenever we grieve the heart of God.

Wesley tired of the debate over whether sanctification led to sinlessness. His deeper concern was living a life filled with the love of God, and growing in our discernment of how we can best express this to a needy world. Sometimes our concern over sin is, as John says in his first letter, out of a fear of punishment. Wesley, following John, wanted to stress that perfect love casts out fear. And when we grow beyond such fear, our motivation changes. We do not seek holiness for our own sakes but for the sake of loving God with our whole being and loving our neighbor as ourselves. When we do this, we are being who God created us to be. As Wesley stated, love will exclude sin.

## Original Sin

*What happened when Adam and Eve sinned?*

*Allow for student response.*

*How does original sin affect us?*

Let's begin our investigation with a discussion of the essence of original sin.

*Diane Leclerc,* Singleness of Heart: Gender, Sin, and Holiness in Historical Perspective *(Scarecrow Press, 2001).*

While most interpreters of Wesley have followed a traditional—Augustinian—interpretation of original sin as pride, a new interpretation of Wesley has been offered by the writer of this module. While Wesley uses the word pride often, it is never used as the overarching paradigm of original sin, according to this analysis. Wesley's most direct sermon on the topic, "original sin" (1754), shows this lack of dominance of the word pride. Here*, idolatry* is unmistakably classified as the primary definition of original sin, with "pride," "self-will," and "love of the world" listed under it.

*Refer to Resource 2-3 in the Student Guide.*

*See Sermon 44, "Original Sin," paragraph II.1-10,* Works *(Jackson), 6:57-62.*

Wesley says, "all pride is idolatry"; as is "love of the world." In other words, there are two forms of original sin: inordinate love of self (pride) and inordinate love of others, here listed as "love of the world;" Wesley further explains this phrase: "What is more natural to us than to seek happiness in the creature, instead of the Creator?" Wesley also wrote a sermon entitled "Spiritual Idolatry," which he penned nearer the end of his life. It will be helpful to quote one passage at length:

*Ibid., paragraph II.7, 6:60.*

*Ibid., paragraph II.9.*

> Undoubtedly it is the will of God that we should all love one another. It is his will that we should love

> our relations and our Christian brethren with a peculiar love; and those in particular, whom he has made particularly profitable to our souls. These we are commanded to “love fervently;” yet still “with a pure heart.” But is not this “impossible with man?” to retain the strength and tenderness of affection, and yet, without any stain to the soul, with unspotted purity? I do not mean only unspotted by lust. I know this is possible. I know a person may have an unutterable affection for another without any desire of this kind. But is it without idolatry? Is it not loving the creature more than the Creator? Is it not putting a man or woman in the place of God? giving them your heart? Let this be carefully considered, even by those whom God has joined together; by husbands and wives, parents and children. It cannot be denied, that these ought to love one another tenderly: they are commanded so to do. But they are neither commanded nor permitted to love one another idolatrously. Yet how common is this! How frequently is a husband, a wife, a child, put in the place of God. How many that are accounted good Christians fix their affections on each other, so as to leave no place for God! They seek their happiness in the creature, not in the Creator. One may truly say to the other, I view thee, lord and end of my desires. That is, “I desire nothing more but thee! Thou art the thing that I long for! All my desire is unto thee, and unto the remembrance of thy name.” Now, if this is not flat idolatry, I cannot tell what is.

If we take this seriously, it will have important ramifications for how holiness and sanctification are preached.

*Refer to Resource 2-4 in the Student Guide.*

Original sin was also a key issue in the development of Holiness theology in America. Phoebe Palmer—writer, evangelist, and theologian—developed doctrines of sin and holiness that had significant implications for the Holiness Movement of the 19th century. We will discuss her at length in Lesson 7. For our purposes here, Palmer follows Wesley in his discussion of spiritual idolatry, and yet speaks from a woman’s perspective.

Rather than reciting the traditional litany of those things that interfered with the spiritual life—selfishness, lack of faith, betrayals of the flesh—Palmer, with striking frankness admitted that the primary obstacle to her spiritual growth had been “a large house involving proportionate cares.”

Her own experience of entire sanctification involved her relinquishing of the "idols" of husband and children. It is crucial to note that while Palmer's experience of sanctification involved a kind of liberation from earthly affections and domestic obligations, such liberation did not develop out of a discontent with family ties. The first commandment, then, enables the second: Loving God with *all* one's being—unrivaled—enables love for others. Thus Wesley's own preferred definition of holiness, love, not only is made possible through an overturning of the traditional idolatry of *self*, but is also made possible through an overturning of an idolatry of others.

Wesley and the Holiness Movement strongly believed that what Adam and Eve did in the garden had lasting effects on the rest of humanity. And yet, interestingly, he is not concerned about *how* these effects are transmitted as much as the fact that they were. What does concern Wesley is the question of the guilt associated with original sin. Western theology argues that being in the state of original sin, the corruption of humanity into which we are born, makes us guilty before God, even though we did nothing individually and volitionally to deserve it. The guilt as well as the corruption are inherited. Wesley will maintain, however, that original sin does not bring guilt but only a predisposition toward sin. We are guilty for the sins we voluntarily commit.

Some have said that Wesley takes a *via media* between Augustine and Pelagius on the topic of sin. Thus Wesley has been called a "Semi-Pelagian." Augustine and Pelagius were contemporaries in the late third and early fourth centuries. Pelagius held that not only did human beings not inherit guilt from Adam, but they also did not inherit any corruption. And therefore each person has the same choice Adam and Eve had in the garden. He affirmed that we are born with *natural freedom*.

Augustine, on the other hand, pushed hard for a very strong doctrine of original sin, total depravity, and inherited guilt. The conclusion of the debate was that Pelagius was deemed heretical by orthodox Christianity. Wesley rejected Pelagius—although showing some sympathy for him. And yet he does not parallel Augustine's doctrine either.

The *via media* comes through Wesley's doctrine of prevenient grace. The grace God gives to every human being born into the world gives that person *graced freedom*. Although a bent toward sin is in fact

inherited, grace is given so that sinning—actual sin—is maintained as a choice for which we can rightly be held accountable. Wesley's rejection of inherited guilt maintains God as truly just. It also keeps Wesley from being pressed into a position of affirming predestination. Augustine's doctrine of sin was so strong that only a predetermined, irresistible act of God could save us. Wesley avoided this logical conclusion through his affirmation of universal, prevenient grace.

The significance and meaning of original sin changed and developed over our history. It will be essential to identify these modifications in later lessons, and in our discussions of entire sanctification specifically.

## Salvation

*Refer to Resource 2-5 in the Student Guide.*

It is important to understand that in a Wesleyan scheme, salvation technically is the whole of the Christian journey. We are *being* saved. Now, this does not mean we aren't assured of our acceptance by God when we first come to Him. Nor does it mean we are in some way earning our salvation as we go. But it does mean the saving act of God continues through the process of sanctification until we die. God is transforming us through grace as we take each step.

We use the language of the *way* of salvation, not just the point or moment of salvation. In other words, God is *imparting* righteousness to us. This is a key distinction from our Calvinist friends. They stress that God *imputes* the righteousness of Christ to us. Here is the distinction. Imputed righteousness means God *perceives* us as righteous through Christ. Imparted righteousness means God actually *makes* us righteous through His sanctifying work.

With that said, let's go back to that moment when we receive Jesus as our personal Savior. There are many things that occur at that point.

**Justification:** To be justified by God implies that our sins are forgiven. The guilt of our sins is taken away. God no longer condemns us for our transgressions against Him.

**Regeneration:** Wesley's favorite word for salvation is "new birth." This concept implies that we are regenerated, "born again," and are new creations in Christ.

**Adoption:** Paul strongly affirms the significance of being a child of God and co-heir with Christ. This aspect of salvation also implies that we are born into a family, a community of brothers and sisters in Christ. This prevents us from imagining salvation as a purely private event and life.

**Redemption:** Redemption implies liberation from sin. Exodus acts as a metaphor for redemption. Redemption also implies receiving a new purpose: to love God with all our being and our neighbor as ourselves. Our lives are redeemed from sin and for love.

**Reconciliation:** We are reconciled to God. This is the sense that the alienation and estrangement from God implicit in sin is overcome when we come into a new relationship with God.

**Initial Sanctification:** This signifies the belief that the moment of salvation begins the process of being made righteous, as God actually makes us clean, not only in the sense of our sins being forgiven, but more deeply, in the sense that our intentions, our inclinations, our purpose, and destination change through the grace of God.

## Guided Discussion: Student Response

(10 minutes)

*Allow for response and discussion.*

*How does Wesley's understanding of humanity make you feel or see yourself?*

*Where do you find yourself in response to Wesley's view of sin?*

*Do any of these saving words particularly impact you personally?*

# *Lesson Close*

(5 minutes)

## Review

*Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.*

Look at the learner objectives for this lesson. Can you

- relate theological anthropology to the doctrine of holiness?
- explain the effects of sanctification on the image of God?
- distinguish between human nature and sin nature?
- relate the doctrine of sin to the doctrine of holiness?

## Look Ahead

Next week we will examine the Old Testament foundations of holiness.

## Assign Homework

*Direct students to the Homework Assignments in the Student Guide.*

Read the following Old Testament passages, and consult commentaries if available to you: Genesis 3; Leviticus 17:1-26:46, specifically 19:18, 20:7; Deuteronomy 6:4-5; 10:16; 30:6; Psalms 15, 29, 37, 51, 93, 110; Isaiah 6; Ezekiel 36:23-27; Zechariah 13:1. Write out possible questions or ideas that come to mind as you read. Be prepared to participate in discussion.

Develop a sermon outline based on one of the OT passages from above. Make two copies.

Write in your journal. Include your reflections, reactions, and insights on the material presented in class. It would also be helpful to read from John Wesley's journal throughout the course, available at http://www.ccel.org/w/wesley/journal/journal.htm.

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# *Lesson 3*

# Old Testament Foundations

## *Lesson Overview*

### Schedule

| Start Time | Task or Topic | Learning Activity | Materials Needed |
|---|---|---|---|
| 0:00 | Introduction | Orient | Student Guide |
| 0:10 | Old Testament Foundations | Lecture/Discussion | Resource 3-1<br>Resource 3-2<br>Resource 3-3 |
| 0:55 | Homiletical Review | Lecture/Discussion | Resource 3-4<br>Homework |
| 1:25 | Lesson Close | Review, Assign | Student Guide |

### Suggested Reading for Instructor

Callen, Barry L., and Richard P. Thompson (eds.). *Reading the Bible in Wesleyan Ways.* Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 2004.

Knight, John A. *All Loves Excelling: Proclaiming Our Wesleyan Message.* Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1995.

Purkiser, W. T. *Exploring Christian Holiness.* Vol. 1, *The Biblical Foundations.* Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1983.

Oswalt, John N. "Wesley's Use of the Old Testament in His Doctrinal Teachings." *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 12 (Spring 1977). Nampa, ID: Wesley Center, Northwest Nazarene University. http://wesley.nnu.edu/wesleyan_theology/theojrnl/11-15/12-5.htm

 

Tracy, Wesley D. "The Cleansing Blood of Jesus." In *Biblical Resources for Holiness Preaching: From Text to Sermon, Vol. 2.* Edited by H. Ray Dunning and Neil B. Wiseman. Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1990-1993, 259-71.

Turner, George Allen. *The Vision Which Transforms: Is Christian Perfection Scriptural?* Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1964. 13-52.

Wright, John W. “Toward a Holiness Hermeneutic: The Old Testament Against Israelite Religion.” *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 31 (Spring 1996). Nampa, ID: Wesley Center, Northwest Nazarene University. http://wesley.nnu.edu/wesleyan_theology/theojrnl/26-30/30-2-04.htm

# *Lesson Introduction*

(10 minutes)

## Accountability

*In pairs have the students look over each other's sermon outlines offering ideas and comments.*

*Return and collect homework. The students will hand in one copy of their sermon outlines and keep a copy for later use.*

## Learner Objectives

*Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.*

*Restating the objectives for the learners serves as an advanced organizer for the lesson and alerts learners to key information and concepts.*

By the end of this lesson, participants should

- articulate the themes of the "analogy of faith."
- relate the "analogy of faith" to Old Testament theology
- identify key passages for holiness in the Old Testament
- identify basics of moving from text to sermon

# *Lesson Body*

## Lecture / Discussion: Old Testament Foundations

(45 minutes)

### Holiness in the Old Testament

It is impossible to explore the subject of holiness doctrine in Scripture to its extent in the next two lessons. The depth and breadth of scholarship focused on a theology of holiness and sanctification is immense. There are also issues that are debated, with arguments on both sides with equally intricate exegesis involved, sometimes on just one word. With this in mind, the lessons here are given as basic overviews. In this case, as always, the minister needs to be a lifelong learner and deepen his or her own knowledge of the clear, scriptural basis for the doctrine of holiness.

*Refer to Resource 3-1 in the Student Guide.*

Before we begin our discussion of holiness in the Old and New Testaments, it is advantageous to remind ourselves about some aspects of Wesleyan ways of reading Scripture. Wesley had a great deal of advice about how to interpret Scripture. He was very aware of the crucial necessity of finding the context of a passage and avoiding "proof-texting." He used the original languages. He investigated the historical and cultural situation in a text. Ultimately, Wesley developed what is called the "analogy of faith." This phrase refers to a connection of biblical doctrines that arise out of the "whole tenor of Scripture." We should ask of every passage in the Bible: what does it add to our understanding of human sin, justification by faith, new birth, and present inward and outward holiness?

*Responsible Grace*: John Wesley's Practical Theology *(Nashville: Kingswood Books, 1994), 38.*

As Randy Maddox states, "He believed that it was the shared articulation of these truths that gave the diverse components of Scripture their unity. Accordingly, he required that all passages be read in light of these truths." The Church of the Nazarene has resolutely resisted binding its members to acceptance of the realm of speculation and ultimately to any *non-essential* to our life in God and our quest for holiness. Ultimately then, the Bible finds its authority in its faithful witness of Christ, and in the fact that its truth of salvation and sanctification through Christ has been experienced and verified by believers through the centuries. Certainly, those of us in the Wesleyan-Holiness tradition see a biblical theology of holiness as a crucial essential.

This next discussion is an extremely brief overview of holiness in the Old Testament, in light of all that could be examined. The word “holy” or “holiness” appears more than 830 times in Hebrew in the Old Testament. In most cases the word conveys the meanings of radiance, separation, and purity. Its opposite means the common, the ordinary, the secular, or the unsanctified. Sanctification is a derivative of the word for holy, most often meaning “to set apart” for an intended purpose.

Thus not only human beings can be sanctified, but also objects, if such an object is used for a holy purpose. A person can be sanctified in the sense of being cleansed within, or purified. A person can be made “perfect” in the sense of complete or whole, and “righteous” in the sense of a devotion to God that purifies and enables moral uprightness. Our format from here will be to make brief comments on passages from Genesis forward.

## Pentateuch

### Genesis

*Refer to Resource 3-2 in the Student Guide.*

In the Book of Genesis we find the foundational theology of humanity and sin that will shape our understanding of God’s commandment to be holy. In chapter 3 we find the description of the Fall. The consequences of that event will be played out in subsequent biblical stories. But it is also important to note that Genesis also calls persons to live holy lives. In the context of establishing a covenant, God commands Abraham to “walk before me and be blameless” (17:1). Despite all the tragedy that has resulted from sin, God continues to call for relationship with humanity based on His love for His creation.

### Exodus

In the Book of Exodus we find the Hebrew people enslaved and abused under the power of Egypt. We also see God call Moses to a holy purpose in freeing these slaves. The entire book can be seen as a metaphor for freedom from sin, freedom from the bondage of its effects, and movement toward a promised land of holiness. We can find this theme in early Holiness Movement hymnody. We also find in Exodus the “sanctification” of the firstborn, which leads to the development of a tribe of priests who are again set aside for a holy purpose. The giving of the Ten Commandments offers the people the parameters for holy living.

### Leviticus

The Book of Leviticus offers us what is known as the Holiness Code, found between chapters 17 and 26. This is a long list of cultic and ethical regulations. Yet there was a deeper meaning to the laws, as there is in any ethical admonishment. The meaning here was to create a holy people. It would be too easy to ignore this meaning in light of minute regulations we find irrelevant and archaic. The deeper meaning of the ethical code can be seen in 20:7: "be holy, for I am holy." It is clear that God is not calling individuals only to a holy life, but the whole of the people God called into covenant with himself. Matthew will put these words into the mouth of Jesus.

### Deuteronomy

It is in the Book of Deuteronomy where we find the Jews' most sacred text, known as the Shema (6:4-5). When asked which are the greatest commandments, Jesus rightly goes first to this sacred text: Love the Lord with all . . . He then goes to Leviticus 19:18 to complete His idea of the greatest command. Jesus goes on to say that if we obey these two, we will fulfill all of the law. These verses were Wesley's primary source of his definition of holiness as love. We also find in Deuteronomy a new symbol for inner cleansing, the concept of "circumcision of the heart."

*See 10:16 and 30:6.*

*Allow for student response and discussion.*

*From the notes you made from your readings from these books, what did you find in their relationship to holiness?*

*What questions did you have?*

## Historical Books

*Refer to Resource 3-3 in the Student Guide.*

In the historical books—Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 and 2 Samuel, 1 and 2 Kings, 1 and 2 Chronicles, Nehemiah, Esther—we find the Jewish people finally inhabiting the promised land, Canaan. This has become a great metaphor for spiritual victory, sometimes even equated with the experience of entire sanctification—although most often connected with entering heaven. And yet in these books, we also find a recital of how the chosen people fail the covenant, out of their own rebellious disobedience. But we also see particular persons whose stories are highlighted as examples of godly agents of righteousness.

### Psalms

According to W. T. Purkiser, "The book of Psalms gives us our clearest insight into the nature of piety in the Old Testament. It describes the type of character possible to those who walk with God." Qualities of yieldedness, openness, dependence on God, loyalty, commitment, and obedience show this type of character.

*Allow for student response and discussion.*

*Let's look at Psalms 15, 29, 37, 51, 93, and 110. From your reading, what are the qualities you find in relation to holiness?*

### Prophetic Books

Brief comments will be offered concerning the prophets. Isaiah chapter 6 is an incredible passage. It offers us a symbol of cleansing in a powerful way. It also gives us a clear message that those who have been called into a sanctifying relationship with God and are blessed with His forgiveness and cleansing work, are also called to live out this sanctified life as ones set apart for God in service. "Here I am, send me" should be the response of those growing in the grace of God.

Jeremiah is a prophet who examines the effects of sin, and the sinful nature. He laments the disobedience of his people. And yet he also hopes for a new day when the law will be written, not just on tablets of stone, but on persons' hearts, so that there may be an inward motivation and inward power to live a holy life.

Ezekiel echoes sentiments of hope.

Joel prophesies about the coming of the Holy Spirit, which Peter states is fulfilled on the day of Pentecost.

*Allow for student response and discussion.*

*Look at Ezekiel 36:23-27. What is its meaning?*

*Do you have any questions or comments from this portion of the lesson?*

## Lecture: Homiletic Review

(30 minutes)

*Direct the students to have their sermon outline out and to be looking at it in light of the lecture.*

*Refer to Resource 3-4 in the Student Guide.*

It is strongly recommended that each student write a holiness sermon during this module. There is an entire module devoted to the skill of preaching. But for those who have not yet taken that module, and to provide a review, we will look at Resource 3-4. This chapter, written by Wes Tracy, is reprinted from a two-volume

set of sermon resources edited by H. Ray Dunning and Neil B. Wiseman titled *Resources for Holiness Preaching: From Text to Sermon.* It is a clear example of how to prepare a sermon from a specific scriptural text.

Let's review the suggestions Dr. Tracy gives for preparing this sermon.

*As the instructor, thoroughly review Resource 3-4 prior to class time. You should review this resource with the students, concentrating on the process used to prepare the sermon from the text.*

*In your discussion, talk about how you prepare sermons and highlight the parts of the reprinted chapter that illustrate steps in sermon preparation.*

*You have approximately 30 minutes for this activity.*

*After discussing Resource 3-4, conclude this activity and close the lesson.*

Compare the process you used to produce the Old Testament sermon outline with the steps described by Dr. Tracy. One of your assignments for the next lesson is to write another outline based on a New Testament passage. Use the steps that we have learned today as you review the scripture and prepare your New Testament sermon outline.

# *Lesson Close*

(5 minutes)

## Review

*Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.*

Look at the learner objectives for this lesson. Can you

- articulate the themes of the "analogy of faith"?
- relate the "analogy of faith" to Old Testament theology?
- identify key passages for holiness in the Old Testament?
- identify basics of moving from text to sermon?

## Look Ahead

Next lesson we will look at the New Testament foundations of holiness theology.

## Assign Homework

*Direct students to the Homework Assignments in the Student Guide.*

Read the following New Testament passages, and consult commentaries if available to you: Matthew 5-7; John 17; Romans 6-8; 1 Corinthians 13; Galatians 5:17-24; Philippians 3:12-15; Colossians 1:22-23; 1 Thessalonians 5:22-23; James 1-2; 1 John. As you read make notes of thoughts or questions that arise.

Develop a sermon outline based on one of the NT passages from above. Make two copies.

Write in your journal. Include your reflections, reactions, and insights on the material presented in class. It would also be helpful to read from John Wesley's journal throughout the course, available at http://www.ccel.org/w/wesley/journal/journal.htm.

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# *Lesson 4*

# New Testament Foundations

## *Lesson Overview*

### Schedule

| Start Time | Task or Topic | Learning Activity | Materials Needed |
|---|---|---|---|
| 0:00 | Introduction | Orient | Student Guide |
| 0:05 | Sermon Outlines | Small Groups | Resource 4-1 |
| 0:30 | New Testament Foundations | Lecture/Discussion | Resource 4-2<br>Resource 4-3<br>Resource 4-4 |
| 1:15 | Student Response | Guided Discussion | |
| 1:25 | Lesson Close | Review, Assign | Student Guide |

### Suggested Reading for Instructor

Carver, Frank G. "Biblical Foundations for the 'Secondness' of Entire Sanctification." *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 22 (Fall 1987). Nampa, ID: Wesley Center, Northwest Nazarene University. http://wesley.nnu.edu/wesleyan_theology/theojrnl/21-25/22-10.htm

Deasley, Alex. "Entire Sanctification and the Baptism with the Holy Spirit: Perspectives on the Biblical View of the Relationship." *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 14 (Spring 1979). Nampa, ID: Wesley Center, Northwest Nazarene University. http://wesley.nnu.edu/wesleyan_theology/theojrnl/11-15/14-03.htm

Lennox, Stephen J. "Biblical Interpretation, American Holiness Movement, 1875-1920." *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 33 (Spring 1998). Nampa, ID:

 

Wesley Center, Northwest Nazarene University. http://wesley.nnu.edu/wesleyan_theology/theojrnl/31-35/33-1-02.htm

Lovell, Ora D. “The Present Possession of Perfection as Presented in First John.” *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 8 (Spring 1973). Nampa, ID: Wesley Center, Northwest Nazarene University. http://wesley.nnu.edu/wesleyan_theology/theojrnl/06-10/08-4.htm

Mattke, Robert A. “The Baptism of the Holy Spirit as Related to the Work of Entire Sanctification.” *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 5 (Spring 1970). Nampa, ID: Wesley Center, Northwest Nazarene University. http://wesley.nnu.edu/wesleyan_theology/theojrnl/01-05/05-3.htm

Purkiser, W. T. *Exploring Christian Holiness.* Vol. 1, *The Biblical Foundations.* Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1983.

Turner, George Allen. “The Baptism of the Holy Spirit in the Wesleyan Tradition.” *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 14 (Spring 1979). Nampa, ID: Wesley Center, Northwest Nazarene University. http://wesley.nnu.edu/wesleyan_theology/theojrnl/11-15/14-05.htm

Wynkoop, Mildred Bangs. *A Theology of Love: The Dynamic of Wesleyanism.* Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1967.

# *Lesson Introduction*

(5 minutes)

## Accountability

*Return and collect homework (sermon outline).*

## Learner Objectives

*Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.*

*Restating the objectives for the learners serves as an advanced organizer for the lesson and alerts learners to key information and concepts.*

By the end of this lesson, participants should

- identify key passages for holiness in the New Testament
- relate the "analogy of faith" to New Testament theology
- identify key passages for the concept of sanctification in the New Testament

# *Lesson Body*

## Small Groups: Sermon Outlines

(25 minutes)

*Divide the class into groups of three students each.*

In your group carefully read through each other's sermon outlines. Note questions or comments you have concerning the outlines.

*Refer to Resource 4-1 in the Student Guide.*

When everyone has read each of the outlines and made comments, talk through each of the outlines with the writer. Offer constructive critiques that will benefit each of you so you can improve your outline and write a sermon from that outline.

Divide the time wisely so each of the sermons can be discussed.

Each of you are to select one of your outlines and develop a sermon manuscript from that outline. A first draft is due Lesson 9 and a final draft is due Lesson 11.

## Lecture / Discussion: New Testament Foundations

(45 minutes)

Biblical interpretation is a matter of gaining all of the factual information possible, and then *interpreting* it. It is obvious that Christians from different traditions interpret Scripture differently. We might want to claim that these differences are on non-essential elements of theology. Unfortunately, this is not always the case. For example, there is a great theological divide between how Wesleyans and Calvinists understand even foundational aspects of theology, such as sin, salvation, and also sanctification.

Those of us from the Wesleyan tradition are willing to "think and let think" as Wesley said in his sermon entitled "Catholic Spirit" on many, many issues. But the interpretation of issues such as righteousness, holiness, sanctification, and perfection are non-negotiable in maintaining our theological integrity. They are at the very heart of the "analogy of faith," the primary lens by which Wesleyans interpret Scripture.

And yet, as mentioned briefly in our last lesson, there are divergent edges, if you will, *within* the Wesleyan-Holiness exegetical landscape when it comes to interpretation of certain passages or certain concepts.

In light of this, it is perhaps best to begin with the extent of such a landscape. In other words, what do Wesleyan-Holiness people agree on when it comes to the biblical support of our foremost doctrine?

These include:

*Refer to Resource 4-2 in the Student Guide.*

1. The Christian life, as God designed before the very foundations of the world, is a life of growth toward holiness. Our purpose and destiny, *in this life*, is *not* portrayed in Scripture as a life of continual struggle over sin, as we wait to escape into the next. We are not bound to sin, without hope. We are not its slaves if we are in Christ and growing in our sanctification. We are not, by necessity, defeated and beaten down by sin while we are in the body.

   But rather, God has designed for us to be recreated and renewed in the image of God, to reflect the character of Christ, and to be abounding in love. God's commands would otherwise be cruel. Why would He call us to be perfect if it is beyond any capability? Wesleyan-Holiness interpreters see the entirety of the New Testament message as one of great optimism about what the grace of God can do in the life of an individual, and even in a community, who are devoted to following Him.

2. We believe the righteousness God enables and produces in us, as we cooperate with His grace, is an actual righteousness, *not* just an "imputed righteousness." If we were only imputed with righteousness, we would be metaphorically covered over by Christ's own righteousness, as a white robe hiding our actual filth. We believe the whole of the biblical message is that God remakes us, cleanses us from all unrighteousness, and transforms us within, so we can not only be covered by the blood of Christ but also be changed into the character of Christ.

3. As one Early Church father once said, God became like we are—human—so that we might become like Him, namely like Jesus Christ. Christlikeness is the goal of the Christian life. But this can be nebulous, unless we articulate clearly what Christ was like.

*Allow students to respond.*

*Name characteristics of Jesus Christ we should emulate.*

Put most succinctly, Jesus was the fullest manifestation of obedience and love. These are

crucial aspects of the holy life. As He participated in God, He remained obedient and without sin. But as suggested in our first lesson, holiness, even for Jesus, is more than sinlessness. It is the presence of love. Love is the highest goal. Jesus' teaching clearly exalts love as the highest law. Love is God's essence. The giving of Jesus was the fullest expression of God's love. And through His atonement, and the work of the Holy Spirit, we are enabled to love, being "filled to the measure with the fullness of God."

4. To be a part of the tradition known as the Holiness Movement, which the Church of the Nazarene is, we must say something about the scriptural basis for a "second work" of grace. The lesson on the Holiness Movement will examine in greater detail why this is a crucial part of our identity. For now, let it suffice to say that to stand within the Holiness circle, one must affirm a second significant transition in the Christian life. To be precise, it is *possible* to be Wesleyan and deny this; it is *impossible* for those who identify themselves as part of the Holiness tradition to do so. There are various interpretations of what happens in this second experience, various interpretations of how it occurs. But Holiness interpreters affirm its reality based on Scripture.

*As an example, the United Methodist denomination is fully Wesleyan, yet United Methodism does not in general embrace the doctrine of entire sanctification.*

5. There is a dynamic element in sanctification. In one sense, God makes us holy as a completed event. In another sense, we are always in process. One way to articulate this is "become what you are," which seems to be implied in the Greek in 2 Corinthians 7:1. Another way to say this would be: we have already been made perfect, but not yet. These may seem paradoxical. What they convey is even though there are the extremely important experiences of justification and entire sanctification within the Christian life, we will not be complete until the day we see Christ face to face. We are continuously growing into what we have been made.

*See Philippians 3:12.*

Again, the following offers the briefest of overviews of holiness found in the New Testament.

## The Gospels

*Refer to Resource 4-3 in the Student Guide.*

Within the Gospels we find the very words of Jesus as guidance, and the example of how He lived *His* life as the path of the life to which *we* are called when Matthew writes, "Be perfect, therefore, as your

heavenly Father is perfect" (5:48). The word for perfection in the New Testament can be translated in different ways. In this verse, the best translation comes from the root word *telos*. This word implies moving toward the end or culmination with a deep sense of purpose. Sometimes it is translated maturity. It should not be translated as absolute, divine perfection.

The command Jesus makes is a command to move toward—or perhaps return to—the purpose for which we were created. And what is that purpose? This can be expressed through Jesus' answer to the question, "What is the greatest commandment?" Jesus answers, love the Lord your God with all your being—from the Shema—and your neighbor as yourself—from Leviticus. According to Wesleyan interpreters of the Bible's theology, this is the reason we were created, to have fellowship and to love to overflowing. The call to holiness is a call to love. The Sermon on the Mount is a description of how this love works itself out in practical life.

Mark adds an emphasis in his Gospel, as do Luke and John. Mark is concerned to reveal to us that the "heart" is the source of all moral or ethical corruption, or all good. Holiness is more than an external conformation to a righteous law. Luke emphasizes, as he will in Acts, the work of the Holy Spirit. He also offers a gospel "for the poor." Luke seems particularly insistent to insert the unexpected person into the forefront of Jesus' concern: the outcast, the sinner, the alien, the woman, the poor, the sick, the banished, the gentile—the persons least "worthy" of His care. John offers key passages, such as the Last Supper discourses, the high priestly prayer, and the command "Receive the Holy Spirit."

## The Acts of the Apostles

In the Book of Acts we see the coming of the Holy Spirit and the grand effects of His coming. The Holy Spirit is named over 60 times in this one book, from the first chapter to the last. John Wesley's close associate, John Fletcher, associates the experience of entire sanctification with the Spirit baptism recorded in Acts 2. Later Holiness figures—such as Asa Mahan—would reinforce and spread this interpretation. It is not, however a universally held conjunction within the present-day movement.

Was the event of Pentecost a one-time occurrence? Is it meant to be repeated throughout history in the

 

hearts of individual believers? If so, what does it represent to the individual? There are some biblical exegetes who see Pentecost, and a baptism with the Holy Spirit, as an historical event only, signifying the birth of the Church. Others interpret it to mean a new birth experience. Some see it as a metaphor for the progressive work of cleansing throughout the Christian life. Our Pentecostal friends see it as the means of receiving the gift of "tongues." And some, as suggested, see it as a *necessary* symbol to understand truly the experience of entire sanctification.

Those who hold to this last interpretation point to mini-Pentecost experiences later in the book at Caesarea, Samaria, and Ephesus. It has certainly been a powerful metaphor for countless people in describing their own second work of grace experience. It is important to note that in Acts the experience was never a solitary experience. It transpired in community and affected the community. Today, we should never forget that our sanctification experience is never, ever for ourselves alone. As it changes us, we seek to change the world.

## Paul's Letter to the Romans

Holiness runs through every fiber of this letter. Romans is by far Paul's most "theological" work. Again, it is beyond our scope here to deal with such theology in depth through the countless verses that add to our understanding. It must suffice to mention only a few themes here.

1. The Christian life is not a life of antinomianism.
2. There is a deeper problem at work in us than just our own volitional choices of disobedience.
3. The futility of the law to save or sanctify us.
4. Life in the Spirit is a life of victory through the conquering love of God.
5. Our appropriate response to the possibility of this type of spiritual life is none other than a complete and full consecration of our whole selves to God.

*Allow for student response.*

*What do you consider to be the key verses from Romans 5—8?*

## Corinthian Correspondence

*Refer to Resource 4-4 in the Student Guide.*

Perhaps more than any other, the letters to the church at Corinth reveal the conflict between the hope of fulfilling our potential as those created for love and righteous living, and the stark reality that many do not. This is not to imply that Paul envisions the

Corinthians as hopeless failures. In fact, he sees them as the exact opposite. He calls them saints and praises them for their faith. And yet, he does not hesitate to challenge them to live out their faith in real-life situations.

There are conflicts of loyalty within the church that need resolution. Here, he says, is the way to be holy in this or that situation. There are conflicts between church members, who are even threatening to sue each other. Paul walks us through scenario after scenario where his guidance is needed. And his call is consistent. He does not suggest for a moment that they are beyond hope, that they will always struggle with sin, that there is no real ethical change possible.

Quite the contrary. Paul prods them on, as 2 Corinthians 7:1 implies, "You are saints in Christ, so be holy; become who you are." In the midst of all the specifics, we also find the great love chapter in Paul's first letter, chapter 13. Perhaps Paul's most profound words come in the midst of his forceful attention to the underbelly of personal and communal life. Paul is no idealist with concepts too lofty to intersect with where we live. No, Paul the realist can look life right in the eye and proclaim that holiness is real.

## Other Pauline Epistles

In Galatians we find life lived in the Spirit described in chapters 3 and 5, and contrasts this life to life lived in the "flesh," *sarx*. Ephesians adds to our understanding of the corporate nature of holiness. It also gives us a beautiful prayer for holiness that Paul prays for this church.

*See Eph 3:14-21.*

Philippians is a rich book that gives us the assurance that God's work will be completed in us as we walk with Him. Paul also quotes the great, early hymn that describes the willingness of Christ to empty himself for us in chapter 2. In chapter 3 Paul is clear about the futility of his own efforts toward perfection as a Pharisee, and gives it all up, for the sake of knowing Christ, and the power of His resurrection. We are made whole, complete, and mature as His power lives within us.

Colossians offers us a direct statement regarding the very purpose of our reconciliation to God; it is "to present [us] holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation—if [we] continue in [our] faith, established and firm, not moved from the hope held out in the gospel" (1:22-23).

*Read this passage.*

A crucial verse for the Wesleyan-Holiness Movement is found in 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24. The tense of the verb implies that God's sanctifying work can happen now. It also reminds us that it is God who does the sanctifying. We can only submit, consecrate, and surrender to His work within us.

### Hebrews, James, and the Epistles Attributed to Peter and John

In the Book of Hebrews we find numerous symbols from the Old Testament applied to the new covenant that is in Christ. Christ becomes our High Priest. Many of the symbols employed in Hebrews evoke cleansing, holiness, and sanctification. We are sanctified through the blood of the perfect sacrifice, we are cleansed, and we share in the very holiness of God.

James addresses several themes. He offers insights into the nature of temptation, sin, and double-mindedness, and practical guidance for living the life of holiness, which can be summed up in this verse: "Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world" (1:27). Explicit here is the need for personal *and* social holiness.

And finally, the Book of 1 John is rich with the theology of holiness and love. It is the book on which John Wesley most relied in formulating his understanding of perfect love, or Christian perfection.

*What selections/verses of 1 John do you feel are most insightful?*

*Allow for student response.*

*How does this book aid our understanding of holiness?*

## Guided Discussion: Student Response

(10 minutes)

*Allow for student response and discussion.*

*From your reading and the notes you took, are there any topics or questions you would like to explore?*

*What verses help you the most in understanding holiness? Why?*

# *Lesson Close*

(5 minutes)

## Review

*Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.*

Look at the learner objectives for this lesson. Can you

- identify key passages for holiness in the New Testament?
- relate the "analogy of faith" to New Testament theology?
- identify key passages for the concept of sanctification in the New Testament?

## Look Ahead

Next session we will examine the pre-Wesley historical foundations of holiness.

## Assign Homework

*Direct students to the Homework Assignments in the Student Guide.*

Read John Wesley's "A Plain Account of Christian Perfection." Write a 2- to 3-page response paper. You will be reading half of this document for this lesson's homework and half for the next lesson. Your paper for this lesson should reflect your thoughts on what is said in the first half.

Write in your journal. Include your reflections, reactions, and insights on the material presented in class. It would also be helpful to read from John Wesley's journal throughout the course, available at http://www.ccel.org/w/wesley/journal/journal.htm.

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*Lesson 5*

# Tradition: Pre-Wesley Foundations

## *Lesson Overview*

### Schedule

| Start Time | Task or Topic | Learning Activity | Materials Needed |
|---|---|---|---|
| 0:00 | Introduction | Orient | Student Guide |
| 0:10 | Pre-Wesley Foundations | Lecture | Resource 5-1<br>Resource 5-2<br>Resource 5-3 |
| 1:10 | Student Response | Guided Discussion | |
| 1:25 | Lesson Close | Review, Assign | Student Guide |

### Suggested Reading for Instructor

Bassett, Paul, ed. *Great Holiness Classics*. Vol. 1, *Holiness Teaching: New Testament Times to Wesley.* Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1997.

Greathouse, William M. *From the Apostles to Wesley: Christian Perfection in Historical Perspective*. Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1979.

Bassett, Paul M., and William M. Greathouse. *Exploring Christian Holiness.* Vol. 2, *The Historical Development*. Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1985.

 

# *Lesson Introduction*

(10 minutes)

## Accountability

*Call on several students to share their thoughts on the reading of the first half of "A Plain Account of Christian Perfection."*

*Return and collect homework. You may want to have the students keep their response papers and turn them in next lesson with their final paper on the sermon.*

## Learner Objectives

*Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.*

*Restating the objectives for the learners serves as an advanced organizer for the lesson and alerts learners to key information and concepts.*

By the end of this lesson, participants should

- identify theological movements that lay a foundation for an understanding of holiness and sanctification, prior to Wesley
- identify persons influential on Wesley's understanding of holiness, from the patristic age to the 18th century

# *Lesson Body*

## Lecture: Pre-Wesley Foundations

(60 minutes)

It is extremely important to know that the doctrine of holiness is a biblical doctrine. It is no less important to see that it is also a historical one, sewn securely into the fabric of Christian orthodoxy from the beginning. An overview of significant periods and persons follow, with emphasis on their contribution to the development of holiness thought.

### The Early Church

*Refer to Resource 5-1 in the Student Guide.*

Fairly early on in the history of Christianity, subtle differences between those in the "east" and those in the "west" can be seen. As time progressed, the differences widened, until finally in 1054, Eastern and Western Christianity officially split into Roman Catholicism and Eastern Orthodoxy.

The line between the two is usually drawn according to who spoke Greek and who spoke Latin. The line that divides geographically cuts down through the Mediterranean world into North Africa. The two political and ecclesiastical centers were Rome for the West and Constantinople in the East—present-day Istanbul in Turkey.

When the Western Roman Empire fell in the 400s, it entered into what is known as the dark ages. The leaders of the Western Church, in light of the cultural decline, attempted to maintain unity through ecclesiastical power. Popes, as the leaders of the Western Church called themselves, varied in their strength during the next 500 years.

In the meantime, the Eastern half of Christianity, the Church and its bishops of Constantinople, remained very, very strong. The dark ages missed them completely. They continued to thrive theologically and politically. The eventual break of Christianity in 1054 was influenced both by theological and political issues. The two theological issues that were explicit were:

- the role of icons
- an addition to the Nicene Creed made by the Western Church, but not endorsed by the Eastern Church

### Theological Method

Theological method in the East tended to be directed toward liturgy and worship. It was also greatly influenced by the ascetic movement, which valued prayer above right belief. In the West the tendency was an attempt to give rational arguments and systematic treatments of doctrines. Extreme, ascetic practices in the West were actually condemned by some—"Donatism" was deemed heretical for its hyper-concern for issues of purity.

### Theological Anthropology

Early on, Eastern theologians view the human person in a very, very positive light. They stress the significance of the *imago Dei*—image of God—and are highly optimistic about human potential in this life. The Fall of Adam and Eve is conceptualized in this way: Adam and Eve were created perhaps as children, not as mature adults! Therefore their fall to temptation is seen very sympathetically. The Fall in the West is seen as the dramatic undoing of humanity. Adam was created as a mature, perfect human being with original perfection. The Fall severely damaged, if not destroyed the *imago Dei*. The Fall was into complete darkness. Human potential is thus severely limited in this life.

### Sin

In light of the East's understanding of the creation and fall of Adam and Eve, their doctrine of sin is understood as a "disease" or aberration of original humanity, that needs to be *cured* by the salvation of Christ and the presence of the Spirit. The person needs to be transformed, which is possible in this life through the work of God. Sanctification is thus emphasized. For Western thinkers, sin is conceptualized as guilt that needs to be forgiven, through the atonement of Christ, and that continually. Justification is thus emphasized.

### Christology

Through Irenaeus and others in the East, an emphasis is made on the significance of Jesus Christ's incarnation and His "recapitulation" or "doing over" of humanity. While His death is the paramount event for the salvation of humankind, His entire life is seen as salvific. His life is certainly the ultimate model for what it means to be truly human. In the West, the emphasis is placed on Jesus' death and the "substitutionary" atonement He made for human sin.

### Pneumatology

Those in the East were concerned that the Holy Spirit be seen as a person, and not just the relationship between the Father and the Son. They also did not want to create a Trinitarian hierarchy. Those in the West have been accused of downplaying the individuality of the Spirit; they did add a line to the creed that basically subordinated the Spirit significantly. This was one of the reasons the East and West eventually split—it is known as the *Filioque* Controversy.

### Trinity

The East tends to emphasize the "essential Trinity"—the unity and interpenetration of the Godhead. The West tends to emphasize the "economic Trinity"—the distinct functions of each individual person of the Trinity.

### Soteriology

In the East a person's participation in salvation through their free will, which accepts the mercy and grace of God, is emphasized. Salvation is a dynamic cooperation between humanity and God. This is known as "synergism." There is also great emphasis on "sanctification," also related to a doctrine known as "theosis" or "deification" or "divinization" in early Christian literature. In the West, the compelling, even irresistible grace of God is emphasized. Salvation is an act of God alone. This is known as "monergism." Sanctification is conceptualized much differently in the West, which held to little optimism about Christian progress in this life.

*Refer to Resource 5-2 in the Student Guide.*

Eastern thinkers include: Shepherd of Hermas, Irenaeus, Origen, Clement of Alexandria, Chrysostom, Pseudo-Macarius, Gregory of Nyssa, Basil, Ephraem Syrus. Western thinkers include: Tertullian, Cyprian, Jerome, Ambrose, and Augustine.

From the Eastern theologians we find

- an understanding of Christ as the Second Adam and a theory of the Atonement known as "Recapitulation"
- a strong doctrine of human free will
- a formidable doctrine of Christian ethics and character formation
- a clear association of holiness with love
- a clear emphasis on the work of the Holy Spirit in the expectation of heart purity and perfection

It is perhaps easy to see that Wesley and his theological descendents were highly influenced by the Eastern form of Christian theology. Although a few details of the above descriptions are not emphasized by Wesley—Adam and Eve created as children—the overall tone of the East is thoroughly optimistic about what God's grace can do in the present life of an individual who cooperates with the empowering work of the Holy Spirit.

We can be remolded into the image of God, progressively restored to our original design, enabled to fulfill our purpose in God, and filled with love to fulfill the great commands. It is Augustine who moves the West even further toward a pessimistic direction. Calvin will be extremely indebted to Augustine. The whole theological tenor of Western Christianity will be influenced.

Wesley's reading of Eastern sources puts him squarely on the side of theological optimism, an optimism he saw come alive before him as he preached the message of new creation and sanctification to his Methodist followers. The Holiness Movement becomes even more intensely optimistic in the next century. The roots of this grand expectation are found in the Early Church.

## The Medieval Period to Wesley

While Wesley's dominant source for scriptural holiness was the Eastern theologians, the idea of holiness is not neglected completely in the West; from key persons we can glean invaluable insight as well. We will simply highlight a few of these Western figures and movements below.

*Refer to Resource 5-3 in the Student Guide.*

### Bernard of Clairvaux (d. 1153)

As the West emerges from the dark ages we see a rise in intellectual stimulation and accomplishment. We also see a renewal of monastic interest. Bernard was the founder of a new order, the Cistercians. He is known for other significant historical events, but it is his devotional works that display a deep spirituality with holiness overtones. By portraying the relationship of a person with God as that of a marriage, he extols the depth of love God has for each individual. In the words of Paul Bassett,

> The insistence by Bernard that God is the initiator, sustainer, and goal of Christian love is in no way new, of course. But what is new in Bernard (new

> insofar as it had been missing or mute since Augustine) is the expectation that through the action of divine love, our love can be perfect in this life.

*Paul M. Bassett and William M. Greathouse,* Exploring Christian Holiness, *Vol. 2,* The Historical Development *(Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1985), 121-22.*

Since Augustine, the concept of perfection had slowly been disassociated with love. "Bernard reunites the two."

### Thomas Aquinas (c. 1225-1274)

As Paul Bassett points out:

> Basic to understanding Thomas is his opposition to any thinking that sets God and His world in opposition to each other or in contrast and discontinuity with each other. Thomas firmly believes that sin has separated God and [humanity] and [humanity's] world. But that separation is a consequence of sin, not a consequence of nature.

Exploring*, 2:129.*

As Thomas himself implies, our inclination to virtue cannot be totally destroyed. This is crucial to Wesley's own understanding of sin and the image of God. From Thomas, Wesley also gains insights into the doctrine of prevenient grace, sin as a volitional act, and the meaning of perfection.

### Post-Reformation Catholic Mysticism

Francois de Sales (1567-1622)
Francois Fenelon (1651-1715)
Madam Guyon (1648-1717)

From the Mystics, Wesley gained a deep appreciation of the transforming power of an inner life and their understanding of perfection. The specific means of grace, of prayer, and of solitude he incorporated into his own understanding. He did hesitate, however, to embrace such mysticism, for two primary reasons. First, he believed the pursuit of mystical union with God was not the primary goal of the Christian life. Second, and likewise, he rejected their tendency toward what is known as Quietism, an actual rejection of good works as counter to a dependence on the grace of God. He would reject some of the Moravians' teaching for this same reason. Interestingly, some scholars are beginning to make connections between the mysticism of Madam Guyon and the 19th-century Holiness Movement. Phoebe Palmer is now being studied from the perspective of mysticism. We do know that Palmer read Guyon through the suggestion of her good friend, Thomas Upham.

**Reformed Pietism**
Johann Arndt (1555-1621)
Philipp Jakob Spener (1635-1705)

Pietism was a movement within primarily German Protestantism. In light of the rigidifying of doctrine after the initial reformers Martin Luther and John Calvin, there were those in Protestant circles who began concentrating on the practices of piety, which was rooted in the inner experiences of the religious life. Philipp Spener wrote an important Pietist text, *Pia Desideria,* which was a proposal of six ways to restore the fervency of true Christian faith. He also began to institute close circles of prayer and Bible reading; he emphasized the priesthood of all believers and the inner work of the Holy Spirit. One form of Pietism was Moravianism, which was extremely important in Wesley's own spiritual development.

## Guided Discussion: Student Response

(15 minutes)

*What do you see as strengths of the Eastern thought?*

*What do you see as weaknesses?*

*What do you see as strengths of the Western thought?*

*What do you see as weaknesses?*

*Do you have any additional questions or comments concerning this lesson?*

# *Lesson Close*

(5 minutes)

## Review

*Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.*

Look at the learner objectives for this lesson. Can you

- identify theological movements that lay foundation for an understanding of holiness and sanctification, prior to Wesley?
- identify persons influential on Wesley's understanding of holiness, from the patristic age to the 18th century?

## Look Ahead

Next lesson we will examine John Wesley's doctrine of Christian perfection.

## Assign Homework

*Direct students to the Homework Assignments in the Student Guide.*

Read Resource 5-4, which is the second half of "A Plain Account of Christian Perfection." Write a 4- to 5-page review of this work, incorporating your response paper from the last lesson.

Begin reading *The Way of Holiness* by Phoebe Palmer, available at the Wesley Center website (approximately half of this book).

Write in your journal. Include your reflections, reactions, and insights on the material presented in class. It would also be helpful to read from John Wesley's journal throughout the course, available at http://www.ccel.org/w/wesley/journal/journal.htm.

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# *Lesson 6*

# Tradition: Wesley on Christian Perfection

## *Lesson Overview*

### Schedule

| Start Time | Task or Topic | Learning Activity | Materials Needed |
|---|---|---|---|
| 0:00 | Introduction | Orient | Student Guide |
| 0:10 | Wesley on Christian Perfection | Lecture/Discussion | Resource 6-1<br>Resource 6-2<br>Resource 6-3 |
| 0:55 | A Plain Account of Christian Perfection | Small Groups | Resource 6-4<br>Homework |
| 1:25 | Lesson Close | Review, Assign | Student Guide |

### Suggested Reading for Instructor

Bassett, Paul M. and William M. Greathouse. *Exploring Christian Holiness.* Vol. 2, *The Historical Development.* Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1985.

Maddox, Randy. *Responsible Grace: John Wesley's Practical Theology.* Nashville: Kingswood Books, 1994.

 

# *Lesson Introduction*

(10 minutes)

## Accountability

*Call on each student to give one significant idea they picked up from reading* A Way of Holiness.

*Return homework. You will collect the homework papers after the discussion time.*

## Learner Objectives

*Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.*

*Restating the objectives for the learners serves as an advanced organizer for the lesson and alerts learners to key information and concepts.*

By the end of this lesson, participants should

- identify Wesley's conclusions about Christian perfection
- understand the developmental nature of Wesley's thought
- articulate Wesley's definitions for the following terms: Christian perfection; entire sanctification; *via salutis*; purity of intentions; love for God and neighbor

# *Lesson Body*

## Lecture: Wesley on Christian Perfection

(45 minutes)

*Refer to Resource 6-1 in the Student Guide.*

*Cell*, The Rediscovery of John Wesley *(New York: H. Holt and Company, 1935), 347.*

"The Wesleyan reconstruction of the Christian ethic of life is an original and unique synthesis of the Protestant ethic of grace and the Catholic ethic of holiness." What George Croft Cell meant by this statement is that throughout the history of the Christian Church, holiness has been a part of the quest of the devout. This was particularly emphasized in the roots of what became the Roman Catholic Church. It remained an emphasis when the Protestant Reformation occurred.

As we know, part of Martin Luther's agenda was to proclaim the doctrine known as *sola fide*—salvation comes by grace through faith alone, not through human works. What John Wesley does, in light of his Anglican and Moravian influences, is to take the aim of the Christian life, holiness, and extend *sola fide*, which has been applied by the Reformers to the doctrine of *justification*, to the doctrine of sanctification. Put simply, we can be *sanctified* by faith alone. John Wesley's entire biography can be summarized perhaps in that one phrase.

Wesley was born into an Anglican parsonage in 1703. His parents were influential in his development, not only physically, intellectually, spiritually, but also theologically. His mother, Susanna, was one of his primary correspondents regarding theological issues until her death. John's father, Samuel, introduced him to the richness of Christian history as a source for doctrine and piety.

When John went to Oxford, he made his quest for holiness a priority, and joined a type of accountability group formed by his brother, Charles, called the Oxford Holy Club. A crucial part of his own life agenda arose in this group. The pursuit of holiness must always include social action toward the poor and needy, and not just personal piety and study. And yet when Wesley went to Georgia, he found his own life lacking. He began to question even his faith. When he returned to London, he attended a Moravian meeting on Aldersgate Street, where he experienced an understanding of his own salvation that was elusive to him prior to this significant event in 1738.

From this point on, Wesley would become an itinerant preacher and the father of a movement that believed in justification and sanctification by faith. "God has given [the Methodists] a full view . . . They maintain, with equal zeal and diligence, the doctrine of free, full, present justification, on the one hand, and of entire sanctification both of heart and life on the other; being as tenacious of inward holiness as any mystic, and of outward, as any Pharisee."

*Works, 7:204-5.*

It is crucial to realize that after 1738, Wesley's *order* of salvation changes. Randy Maddox prefers to use the term way of salvation, or the *via salutis*, implying a more fluid conceptualization of growth. Prior to 1738, Wesley envisioned a process of "sanctification" that would hopefully, eventually lead a person toward justification. Once Wesley understood justification from the perspective of the Reformers; he now saw it as a free gift that enables new birth in Christ. It is only after an assurance of our relationship with God wrought in faith that the process of sanctification can begin—not as some sort of works righteousness, but as the result of participation in the grace of God as a believer.

*Refer to Resource 6-2 in the Student Guide.*

Interestingly, after 1738, Wesley identifies three important writers who shaped his understanding of the holy life, writers he read before 1738; in 1725 he prepared for his ordination and encountered the following:

- Thomas à Kempis (1379-1471) was a German monk who wrote the classic, *Imitation of Christ*.
- Jeremy Taylor (1379-1761) was a fellow at Oxford and the chaplain of Charles I. Wesley gleaned much from Taylor's *The Rule and Exercises of Holy Living and Dying*.
- William Law (1686-1761), with whom Wesley had correspondence, wrote two influential works, *Christian Perfection* and *Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life*.

From these three "practical mystics" he gained three primary ideas that related to his doctrine of Christian perfection:

1. Christian perfection purifies the intentions of the heart.
2. The imitation of Christ is crucial to the life of holiness.
3. Love for God and neighbor is both definitive and normative of a holy life.

These three ideas would consistently characterize Wesley's understanding of holiness throughout the years.

In 1741 Wesley wrote the sermon, “Christian Perfection.” Here he spells out the ways in which a Christian can and cannot be perfect. On the negative side, Wesley believes Christians, however mature they are, do not approach the absolute perfection of Godlike characteristics such as omniscience, infallibility, or omnipotence. A Christian’s reason remains limited and his or her judgments are quite subject to error. His or her actions are at times limited by the (amoral) infirmities of the present human condition. Very important is the understanding that a Christian should not expect to be free from temptation in this life.

On the positive side, here in 1741, Wesley claimed that even newborn Christians are perfect in the sense of being free from needing to commit outward sin; more mature Christians are perfect in the sense of being free from evil thoughts and inward tempers. In other words, “Wesley claimed that New Birth brings freedom from outward sin while Christian perfection provides further deliverance from all inward sin.” This would characterize Wesley’s thought for the next two decades.

*Maddox,* Responsible Grace, *181. See 180-87.*

In 1761 Wesley wrote another sermon, “On Perfection.” Here he emphasizes that it involves having the mind of Christ, being renewed in the image of God, being perfected in love, and that this love perfects both inward and outward holiness. In addition to this sermon, the 1760s proved to be a time when Wesley found himself needing to clarify his position on sanctification.

In the Society in London, Thomas Maxfield and George Bell, its leaders, began to proclaim that perfection was an “angelic” perfection that required no further work. They undervalued the need for growth in grace, or even the witness of the Spirit that the events had occurred. They stated that with the words “I believe” this absolute perfection was complete. They also implied that only those sanctified in this manner would see eschatological salvation. Wesley quickly countered them. After this event, Wesley was more careful to integrate and balance his belief in the possibility of present attainment of entire sanctification with his strong emphasis on gradual growth and progressive sanctification both before and after.

The following quotes evidence this balance:

> It is a divine evidence and conviction, first, that God hath promised it in the holy Scripture . . . It is a divine evidence and conviction, secondly, that

 

> what God hath promised He is able to perform . . . It is, thirdly, a divine evidence and conviction that He is able and willing to do it now. And why not? Is not a moment to Him the same as a thousand years? He cannot want more time to accomplish whatever is His will. And He cannot want or stay for any more worthiness or fitness in that persons He is pleased to honour . . . To this confidence, that God is both able and willing to sanctify us now, there needs to be added one thing more—a divine evidence and conviction that He doeth it. If you seek it by faith, you may expect it as you are; and if as you are, then expect it now . . . Expect it by faith; expect it as you are; and expect it now. To deny one of them, is to deny them all; to allow one, is to allow them all.

Works, *6:52-53.*

And:

> [We wait] not in careless indifference, or indolent inactivity; but in vigorous, universal obedience, in the zealous keeping of all the commandments, in watchfulness and painfulness, in denying ourselves, and taking up our cross daily; as well as in earnest prayer and fasting, and a close attendance on all the ordinances of God. And if any man dream of attaining it any other way (yea, or of keeping it when it is attained, when he has received it even in the largest measure,) he deceiveth his own soul. It is true, we receive it by simple faith: But God does not, will not, give that faith, unless we seek it with all diligence, in the way he hath ordained.

Works, *11:402-3.*

And so, Christian perfection as defined by Wesley, is none other than perfect love, abounding in the heart, cleansing anything counter to that love. Sanctification, or the means by which perfect love enters the Christian, is seen by Wesley as an event that is both instantaneous and gradual. We progress in our ability to love from new birth to death. But there is a moment, labeled “entire” when a deeper experience of love is shed abroad in our hearts, which then allows victory over sin and a more profound outward expression of love for God and neighbor.

*Refer to Resource 6-3 in the Student Guide.*

In 1766 Wesley published *A Plain Account of Christian Perfection, as Believed and Taught by the Rev. Mr. John Wesley, From the Year 1725 to the Year 1765*. Wesley did not take into account his own theological development, but presents his case as if he had always believed what he believed in 1765! But we do find in *Plain Account* a good representation of Wesley’s mature thought—without denying changes even after

its publication. He offers a summary of his beliefs that we will reproduce here.

1. There is such a thing as perfection; for it is again and again mentioned in Scripture.
2. It is not so early as justification; for justified persons are to "go on to perfection" (Heb 6:1).
3. It is not so late as death; for St. Paul speaks of living men that were perfect (Phil 3:15).
4. It is not absolute. Absolute perfection belongs not to man, nor to angels, but to God alone.
5. It does not make a man infallible: None is infallible, while he remains in the body.
6. Is it sinless? It is not worthwhile to contend the terms. It is "salvation from sin."
7. It is "perfect love" (1 John 4:18). This is the essence of it; its properties, or inseparable fruits, are rejoicing evermore, praying without ceasing, and in everything giving thanks (1 Thess 5:16ff).
8. It is improvable. It is so far from lying in an indivisible point, from being incapable of increase, that one perfected in love may grow in grace far swifter than he did before.
9. It is amissible, capable of being lost; of which we have numerous instances.
10. It is constantly both preceded and followed by a gradual work.
11. But is it in itself instantaneous or not? . . . It is often difficult to perceive the instant when a man dies; yet there is an instant when life ceases. And if ever sin ceases, there must be a last moment of its existence, and a first moment of our deliverance from it.

## Small Groups: A Plain Account of Christian Perfection

(30 minutes)

*Divide the class into groups of three each.*

*Refer to Resource 6-4 in the Student Guide.*

*Allow 5-10 minutes for the groups to report to the class.*

*Collect homework.*

In your group read each other's papers from your reading of Wesley's "A Plain Account of Christian Perfection."

Critique and discuss the papers. Challenge each other to defend statements that have been made.

Write out at least three key statements/ideas—that the three of you agree on—of major significance from this work. Be prepared to report to the class.

 

# *Lesson Close*

(5 minutes)

## Review

*Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.*

Look at the learner objectives for this lesson. Can you

- identify Wesley's conclusions about Christian perfection?
- understand the developmental nature of Wesley's thought?
- articulate Wesley's definitions for the following terms: Christian perfection; entire sanctification; *via salutis*; purity of intentions; love for God and neighbor?

## Look Ahead

Next lesson we will examine the Holiness Movement's theology.

## Assign Homework

*Direct students to the Homework Assignments in the Student Guide.*

Finish reading *The Way of Holiness* by Phoebe Palmer and write a four-page book review of this book.

Write in your journal. Include your reflections, reactions, and insights on the material presented in class. It would also be helpful to read from John Wesley's journal throughout the course, available at http://www.ccel.org/w/wesley/journal/journal.htm.

# *Lesson 7*

# Tradition: The Holiness Movement

## *Lesson Overview*

### Schedule

| Start Time | Task or Topic | Learning Activity | Materials Needed |
|---|---|---|---|
| 0:00 | Introduction | Orient | Student Guide |
| 0:10 | The American Holiness Movement | Lecture/Discussion | Resources 7-1—7-5 |
| 1:05 | The Way of Holiness | Small Groups | Homework |
| 1:25 | Lesson Close | Review, Assign | Student Guide |

### Suggested Reading for Instructor

Bassett, Paul M. and William M. Greathouse. *Exploring Christian Holiness.* Vol. 2, *The Historical Development.* Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1985.

Coppedge, Allan. "Entire Sanctification in Early American Methodism: 1812-1835." *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 13 (Spring 1978). Nampa, ID: Wesley Center, Northwest Nazarene University. http://wesley.nnu.edu/ wesleyan_theology /theojrnl/11-15/13-3.html

Dayton, Donald W. "Asa Mahan and the Development of American Holiness Theology." *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 9 (Spring 1974). Nampa, ID: Wesley Center, Northwest Nazarene University. http://wesley.nnu.edu/wesleyan_theology/theojrnl/06-10/09-7.htm

 

_____. *Discovering an Evangelical Heritage*. New York: Harper & Row, 1976.

Dieter, Melvin E. "The Development of Holiness Theology in Nineteenth-Century America." *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 20 (Spring 1985). Nampa, ID: Wesley Center, Northwest Nazarene University. http://wesley.nnu.edu/wesleyan_theology/theojrnl/16-20/20-05.htm

Reasoner, Victor P. "The American Holiness Movement's Paradigm Shift Concerning Pentecost." *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 31 (Fall 1996). Nampa, ID: Wesley Center, Northwest Nazarene University. http://wesley.nnu.edu/wesleyan_theology/theojrnl/31-35/31-2-7.htm

# *Lesson Introduction*

(10 minutes)

## Accountability

*Call on several students to share what they have found in the Wesley journals.*

*Return homework. You will collect the homework papers at the end of the small-group time.*

## Learner Objectives

*Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.*

*Restating the objectives for the learners serves as an advanced organizer for the lesson and alerts learners to key information and concepts.*

By the end of this lesson, participants should

- identify the roots of the American Holiness Movement
- identify key persons within the movement.
- identify Holiness denominations of the 19th century
- articulate the synthesis of Wesley's theology and American revivalism
- connect the movement with social reform

# *Lesson Body*

## Lecture / Discussion: The American Holiness Movement

(55 minutes)

The Methodist church in America was established in 1784 when Wesley allowed for the ordination of two ministers *as Methodists*, instead of as Anglicans, in light of the mass exodus of Anglican priests from America during the Revolutionary War. At first, these American Methodists were extremely loyal to the person and the theology of John Wesley. But within a generation, the word "father" when referring to Wesley changed to "founder."

Increasingly the Methodists in America wanted to see themselves as their own governors. But the shift was not only an ecclesiastical one but also clearly a cultural one. There was an American ethos that American Methodism embraced. This would change the way Wesleyan theology was articulated.

*Refer to Resource 7-1 in the Student Guide.*

The beginning of what would later be known as the American Holiness Movement started with a strong emphasis on the doctrine of Christian perfection *in* the Methodist Church. Theologians and church leaders of early American Methodism did not neglect the doctrine.

Nathan Bangs, who was responsible for the education of new Methodist ministers in America, kept the doctrine at the forefront. Scholars mark the launching of *Guide to Christian Perfection*, a magazine edited by Timothy Merritt, as highly significant to later developments of the Holiness Movement. Through the century, the movement spread to other parts of the world through missionary work, revivals, camp meetings, conferences, and conventions.

Its theology can be seen as a unique synthesis of John Wesley's doctrine of Christian perfection and American revivalism. America during the 19th century evidenced an intense optimism about human nature and human potential, which only increased in the minds of those who held to the Christian paradigm of grace. A type of utopianism is also characteristic of this ethos. The concepts of the American dream, American independence and freedom, and the hope of the American frontier all affected American theology. Methodism fully embraced this type of optimism.

The type of revivalism in America also deserves note. While revivalism had long called for a moment of conversion to faith in Christ, it took on new meaning when wedded with the Wesleyan idea of entire sanctification. In revivals, persons are now called to a moment of full consecration to Christ, resulting in heart cleansing and Pentecostal power.

## Important Persons and Places

*Refer to Resource 7-2 in the Student Guide.*

### Phoebe Palmer

Phoebe Palmer has been called the matriarch of the movement. Phoebe Worrall was born in a quintessential, American Methodist home. Her father, Henry Worrall, had relocated to America shortly after the War of Independence, for he admired American ideals. Henry Worrall married Dorthea Wade, who was also a strongly committed Methodist. They attempted to raise their 15 children—eight of which survived to adulthood—after a pattern of familial piety similar to that of Susanna Wesley. Despite the fact that Phoebe Worrall received only the equivalent of a grammar school education, her own nurturing of her literary ability would be invaluable in later years when her writing—books, tracts, articles, and poetry—made her known to countless readers.

At 19 years of age, Phoebe Worrall married Walter C. Palmer, a physician in New York City. It was the Palmers' financial situation that would support their own Christian endeavors such as campaigns across America, Canada, and the British Isles, and a publishing company. Phoebe married a man who was able and quite willing to support her religious vision. A cruel series of intimate personal tragedies—the deaths of three children—led to a religious experience (entire sanctification) in 1837 that impelled Phoebe Palmer to enter a religious vocation, which in turn influenced the lives of thousands, began a movement, and birthed several denominations that today count her their matriarch.

With her sister, Sarah Lankford, Palmer led the famous "Tuesday Meetings" held in her home—often considered the birthplace of the Holiness Movement—which became gender-mixed under her leadership. She wrote dozens of books and tracts; she edited the most influential holiness magazine of the century (what Merritt had started); she started an inner-city mission and is said to have produced a theological imperative that subsequently made women's charity work commonplace; she was influential in Methodist higher

 

education; and she was a revivalist of the caliber and popularity of Charles Finney himself. Twenty-five thousand were converted, and thousands upon thousands sanctified, under her evangelistic ministry. In many respects, Phoebe Palmer was not the "typical," mid-19th-century woman. She was certainly not bound to the domestic sphere.

Her own frustration to reach the instantaneous experience because of the complexity conveyed through Methodist preaching, gave her great impetus to make the doctrine accessible to laity. She is perhaps best known for providing a three-step *formula* known as "the altar covenant."

1. A seeker of entire sanctification first *consecrates* all completely to God by placing everything on God's altar.
2. He or she must then have *faith* that the "altar sanctifies the gift."
3. The individual must *testify* to the experience.

This altar phraseology reduced what could be a complicated and perplexing search for holiness into a "shorter way" that offered absolute assurance. Palmer herself, as well as many of the Holiness Movement's strongest supporters, remained Methodist.

### Oberlin College

*Refer to Resource 7-3 in the Student Guide.*

The revivalistic Calvinism of the 19th century met the traditionally Wesleyan doctrine of Christian perfection at Oberlin College in Ohio. Oberlin was founded in 1834 at a conjunction of previous events. Abolitionism was a growing concern across the States, often directly connected to religious fervor.

Lane Theological Seminary in Cincinnati became a place of deep controversy over the issue of slavery. Lyman Beecher, president, instituted an agenda of social reform. Beecher believed in gradual abolition, but he also admitted blacks to the school. Students, including Theodore Weld, pushed for more radical abolitionist action and put such into action by treating blacks as equals, associating with them outside the seminary.

This incised the townspeople, who pressured the trustees to act. The decision was made to forbid students from living out abolitionist sentiments and to quiet all classroom or faculty discussions of slavery. Forty students withdrew in protest. In the meantime, a school had begun known as the Oberlin Institute. It

was explicit about its reform agenda and its belief in human equality. They contacted Asa Mahan, a trustee of Lane who supported the students. He agreed to come as the first president. The Lane students followed, as well as nearly 300 others the first year. Oberlin admitted both blacks and women.

Oberlin theology was not disconnected to its social agenda. Calvinists such as Charles Finney, the great revivalist—professor of systematic theology—and Mahan were attentive to one new revivalist theme spreading across America, Canada, and Great Britain—entire sanctification.

Entire sanctification can be defined as a second crisis experience following regeneration. In its Wesleyan form it is an experience that "eradicates" original sin, or cancels out the "carnal nature" and the "bent toward sinning," thus enabling an entirely sanctified person to significantly progress in a life of holiness, or virtuous living. Calvinists such as Finney rejected a necessary connection between the doctrine of Christian perfection and Methodism, and began preaching a new synthesis of Calvinism and sanctification which became known as "New Theology" or "New Calvinism."

This received great criticism from more traditional, Calvinist denominations. This theology is thoroughly optimistic about personal and social change that can come through sanctification. It has been suggested that the waning of Oberlin's radicalism after Finney and Mahan is directly related to its return to more traditional, Calvinist theology, away from 19th-century perfectionism.

### Keswick and Suppressionism

The first conference of a theological stance—which eventually became known for a place, Keswick, England—was held in 1873. In 1875, this conference was invited to Keswick by its Anglican curate. Its historical and theological significance is found in its relationship to and reinterpretation of the doctrine of entire sanctification held by the Methodist-related churches of the later 19th century.

Rather than emphasizing the "eradication" of sin as found in Methodist perfectionism, Keswick was started and maintained by non-Wesleyan figures such as Robert and Hannah Whitall Smith, and W. E. Boardman, who emphasized "the higher Christian life." Calvinist Keswickians, like Wesleyans, emphasized a distinct moment of full consecration, but they differed

 

in their belief that the power of the old nature is *countered* by the presence of the Holy Spirit, rather than cleansed away.

The movement became associated with D. L. Moody and Billy Graham's revivalism, and institutions such as Moody Bible Institute, Wheaton College, and Dallas Theological Seminary. There were early attempts at cooperation between the Wesleyans and Keswickians, but when Keswick theology became closely associated with a premillennial eschatology—that is less interested in social reform, according to its critics—distance grew.

The convention continues to meet annually and attracts visitors from all parts of the world. The Holiness Movement considers this expression of Christian perfection more like a "cousin" than a "sister."

*Allow for response.*

*Have you had any opportunity to interact with anyone who follows Keswick theology?*

*What was the experience? Positive? Negative?*

## Theological and Ecclesiastical Developments

*Refer to Resource 7-4 in the Student Guide.*

We will now flesh out the theological implications of the synthesis of Christian perfection and American revivalism just mentioned. In this new American cultural context, Wesley's doctrine of sanctification was rescripted in several key ways.

1. The blend of holiness theology with revivalism was seen clearly in the emphasis on the *instantaneousness* of entire sanctification. Persons were now called to come to an altar and seek the experience. Wesley would have cautioned his people to wait somewhat passively for the experience. Holiness revivalism emphasized that the experience was available to all who seek it, *now.*

2. The movement also modified Wesley in its adoption of a linkage of entire sanctification with "the baptism of the Holy Spirit." It was actually an associate of John Wesley, John Fletcher, who first utilized this connection. Asa Mahan became the proponent of it in the 19th century.

3. Connecting entire sanctification with the baptism of the Holy Spirit clearly connected the doctrine with

the New Testament image of Pentecost. The Pentecostal experience thus became a transferable experience for all believers that happens in a moment of faith; this conviction greatly affected the way the doctrine was preached in the Holiness Movement for generations to come.

4. Arising out of the utilization of baptism language is the linking of holiness with Pentecostal power. Persons who experienced entire sanctification were empowered to accomplish what was beyond their own human limitations, or even cultural norms—as in the case of women.

5. Far from being a culmination, as Wesley finally came to conceive it, the 19th century form of holiness doctrine stressed entire sanctification as a new beginning. There is no reason why a person should wait for Christian maturity to seek the experience. Entire sanctification will enable swifter progress toward maturity.

6. The Holiness Movement also made direct connections to social reform. Holiness churches, through the lens of optimistic empowerment, were early associated with abolition, temperance, suffrage, and female ordination.

When the fervor of holiness doctrine became prominent in revivals and camp meetings, some Methodist laity returned to their churches dissatisfied. Denominations formed as a result were known as “come outers”—those that came out of Methodism for the purpose of emphasizing the transforming power of the experience of entire sanctification. Out of this same history, Pentecostalism was born. But although their roots are similar, Pentecostalism is not officially tied to Holiness tradition churches.

The following is a list of the major denominations affiliated with the Christian Holiness Partnership—a cooperative organization founded in 1837 for the purpose of proclaiming the message of entire sanctification which continues today.

- Brethren in Christ Church
- Churches of Christ in Christian Union
- The Church of God (Anderson, IN)
- Congregational Methodist Church
- Evangelical Christian Church
- Evangelical Church of North America
- Evangelical Friends Alliance
- Evangelical Methodist Church

- Free Methodist Church
- The Church of the Nazarene
- Primitive Methodist Church
- The Salvation Army
- The Wesleyan Church

*Allow for response.*

*Have any of you had any experience with any of these other Holiness denominations?*

*What has been your experience?*

There are other smaller Holiness groups. More prominent denominations will be briefly examined.

**Holiness Denominations**

*Refer to Resource 7-5 in the Student Guide.*

The Free Methodist Church organized in 1860. “Free” implied stances on two important issues of the time. The Free Methodists were abolitionists and opposed slavery without question. Another issue in that time was the widespread practice of renting and selling church pews, thus relegating the poor to benches in the back of the sanctuary. “Free” Methodists called for free seats and rejected the idea of selling seating to support church ministries.

The Wesleyan Church also had roots in abolitionism and reform; it was originally called the Wesleyan Methodist Connection, organized in the early 1840s. Orange Scott was the founder of the denomination. He was a fervent abolitionist, and when the Methodist Episcopal Church began to avoid the slavery issue and pressured Scott to stop preaching and lecturing from an antislavery stance, a break became inevitable.

The Salvation Army, founded by William and Catherine Booth, was explicit about its commitment to holiness doctrine and social reform designed to help the poor.

The Church of God (Anderson) was founded by Daniel S. Warner in 1881. Besides a clear holiness message, one of its early premises was an anti-sectarian, anti-denominationalism stance. Warner withdrew from association with the National Association for the Promotion of Holiness because of this belief. The Church of God rejoined the association—now called the Christian Holiness Partnership—in more recent years.

There is strong affiliation among churches from the Holiness tradition.

The Church of the Nazarene is the largest Holiness denomination. Phineas Bresee was a Methodist

minister who wanted an appointment to aid a holiness connected mission to the poor in Los Angeles. When his bishop refused to make the appointment, with obvious distaste for the holiness element that still lingered within the Methodist Episcopal Church, Bresee left his position as pastor. In 1895 he began a group that he named the Church of the Nazarene.

The name signifies an explicit association with criticism of Jesus for being from Nazareth. The Nazarenes were committed to the poor and the outcast. But Bresee also greatly emphasized the doctrine of entire sanctification. In 1908, several other groups from various parts of the country with similar theological interests merged with the Church of the Nazarene. An early and continued supporter of the National Holiness Association connects this denomination with others for the purpose of promotion of holiness doctrine.

## Small Groups: The Way of Holiness

(20 minutes)

*Divide the class into groups of three each.*

In your group read each other's review of Phoebe Palmer's book.

Discuss the differences and similarities of your reviews.

*Call on each group to read their statement.*

Decide on a statement that summarizes your group's assessment of the book. Be prepared to read it to the class.

*Collect homework papers.*

 

# *Lesson Close*

(5 minutes)

## Review

*Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.*

Look at the learner objectives for this lesson. Can you

- identify the roots of the American Holiness Movement?
- identify key persons within the movement?
- identify Holiness denominations of the 19th century?
- articulate the synthesis of Wesley's theology and American revivalism?
- connect the movement with social reform?

## Look Ahead

Next lesson we will look at the "substance" of entire sanctification.

## Assign Homework

*Direct students to the Homework Assignments in the Student Guide.*

Work on your full sermon manuscript. The first draft is due Lesson 9.

Write in your journal. Include your reflections, reactions, and insights on the material presented in class. It would also be helpful to read from John Wesley's journal throughout the course, available at http://www.ccel.org/w/wesley/journal/journal.htm.

*Lesson 8*

# A Reasonable Doctrine: The Substance of Entire Sanctification

## *Lesson Overview*

### Schedule

| Start Time | Task or Topic | Learning Activity | Materials Needed |
|---|---|---|---|
| 0:00 | Introduction | Orient | Student Guide |
| 0:10 | The Substance of Entire Sanctification | Lecture/Discussion | Resource 8-1—8-4 |
| 1:10 | Student Response | Guided Discussion | |
| 1:25 | Lesson Close | Review, Assign | Student Guide |

### Suggested Reading for Instructor

Dieter, Melvin E. *Five Views on Sanctification.* Grand Rapids: Academie Books, 1987.

Dunning, H. Ray. *Grace, Faith, and Holiness: A Wesleyan Systematic Theology.* Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1988, 478-504.

_____. *A Layman's Guide to Sanctification.* Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1991, Part II.

Grider, J. Kenneth. *Entire Sanctification: The Distinctive Doctrine of Wesleyanism.* Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1980, chap. 3.

 

Staples, Rob L. “Sanctification and Selfhood: A Phenomenological Analysis of the Wesleyan Message.” *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 7 (Spring 1972). Nampa, ID: Wesley Center, Northwest Nazarene University. http://wesley.nnu.edu/wesleyan_theology/theojrnl/06-10/07-1.htm

Wynkoop, Mildred Bangs. *A Theology of Love: The Dynamic of Wesleyanism.* Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1967, 302-36.

# *Lesson Introduction*

(10 minutes)

## Accountability

*Call on several students to share things that they have learned from reading Wesley's journal.*

*Return homework.*

## Learner Objectives

*Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.*

*Restating the objectives for the learners serves as an advanced organizer for the lesson and alerts learners to key information and concepts.*

By the end of this lesson, participants should

- define Christian perfection in relation to philosophical influences
- observe sanctification from the following perspectives: ontological, teleological, and relational
- describe what is meant by the substance of sanctification

# *Lesson Body*

## Lecture / Discussion: The Substance of Entire Sanctification

(60 minutes)

*For the beginning of the lecture you may want to ask the students to close their Student Guides so they are not influenced by the definition of the writer.*

### Defining Entire Sanctification

*Define entire sanctification.*

*Allow for discussion. Write the different ideas on the board or overhead.*

This question raises the heart of what theologians have called the *substance* of the experience—"the what." By *structure* or *circumstance* holiness theology is referring to "the how," which will be studied in the next lesson. The question of definition can be as simple or as complex as we make it. In general, the laity will search after the most simple of answers. But simple does not imply foundationless. Everything we are learning in the course should serve as a foundation for being able to express our doctrine clearly.

*Again write the definitions so all can see and participate.*

*Can you define entire sanctification in a sentence?*

*Refer to Resource 8-1 in the Student Guide.*

Here is one—and only one—try at it: entire sanctification can be defined as a second crisis experience following regeneration; it is an experience, received by faith, where God effectively deals with the "carnal nature" or the "bent toward sinning," thus enabling an entirely sanctified person to progress significantly in a life of holiness and love—victorious and virtuous living.

*Suggest that the students add the other definitions they produced on this resource page.*

John Wesley called this experience Christian perfection. The 19th century preferred "second blessing" or "baptism with the Holy Spirit." Both sources imply an experience that changes us inwardly, allowing us to progress in virtue and love outwardly. Perfection for Wesley had precise meaning. Today, we often miss its significance because of muddled definitions. A brief discussion of philosophy may help.

*Refer to Resource 8-2 in the Student Guide.*

To the great philosopher Plato perfection implied the absolute Good—or God. Anything less than this was imperfect, or less than absolute good. It would therefore be impossible for a human being to be perfect. Aristotle, on the other hand, introduces the

idea of perfection as this: something—or someone—can be perfect if it is fulfilling the purpose for which it is created. A perfect chair is the chair that holds a person up who is sitting in it, even if the chair has scratches or dings on it. Interestingly, Calvinists tend to rely heavily on Plato. While Wesley is Platonic in some respects, on the issue of perfection, he is Aristotelian. Also, there is within Wesleyanism a dynamic element of perfection. It is not a static state, but one that can grow.

Reuben Welch once gave this helpful example. His daughter began piano lessons early in her life. She would practice and practice a piece until it was played perfectly. But of course as she got better, her ability to play harder and harder pieces grew. When she was older, she was able to sit down and play an extremely hard piece, also perfectly. In both instances, she was able to perform perfectly. But obviously there was growth in her ability to do more.

The purpose for which we were created is to love God with our whole being and our neighbors as ourselves. Holiness optimism believes this is possible through God's grace. But the task is never done. We can never love enough, in the sense that we are "done" as if a task is achieved or a level is reached. Love is as new as every new moment. Therefore it is possible to fulfill our purpose in love, and yet also grow in our ability to do so as we progress before and *after* entire sanctification. Entire sanctification offers a significant point of the infilling of God's love and God's Spirit, but it is not the end of the journey.

## The Effects of Entire Sanctification

*Allow for response.*

*But what does entire sanctification do for us?*

Let's address this issue by invoking some theological words.

Entire sanctification has *ontological*, *teleological,* and *relational* effects in our lives.

*Refer to Resource 8-3 in the Student Guide.*

### Ontological Effects

When theologians talk about ontology, they are referring to the "study of being." While this can take on rather abstract meaning in theological explorations, it also has a very practically relevant meaning, one that is relevant to our understanding of holiness. In other words, what does it mean to be? What does it mean to be in relation to God? In relation to others? In relation

 

to ourselves? And what of our nature? What does it mean to be human? We have addressed some of these questions in previous lessons. Here it is important to note that we can conceive of sanctification in terms of how it affects our being or nature. Put most simply, the question is: Does sanctification change our very nature? If so, how?

Although there are different nuances between Wesley and the 19th-century Holiness Movement on this issue, in general, Wesleyan-Holiness theology affirms that God does indeed transform our nature through sanctification—or more precisely put, God renews our original nature. It is often said that we sin because sin is "only human," or "I sin because I am human." This is simply wrong, theologically. And it has unfortunate, practical implications.

God's original design for humanity was inherently good. It was only after the Fall that humans became sinful and began to be influenced by this original sin in every succeeding generation. Therefore, technically, sin is an aberration of the human condition—a great malformation. It is *not* "only human" to sin. Sin takes us away from our humanity, not closer to it. If this is true, then to be renewed through sanctification—both in its crisis and progressive form—is to be restored in nature to what God originally intended.

Perhaps a helpful metaphor would be that of cancer. In our original state, we are healthy, cancer free. But as cancer invades a part of the body, the body becomes diseased; the body is still a body, its essence does not change. But it is a disfigured body, if you will. It is only as the disease is removed from the person that the body of that person returns to its original state of health.

By implication then, to become holy is to become truly human. Unfortunately, some preaching has implied that sanctification makes us superhuman, which can set up expectations that are not realizable. But to be truly human, through God's inner transformation and restoration of our nature, is to become all we were created to be: holy, and wholly ourselves.

### Teleological Effects

If our "ontology" is changed—restored—by sanctification, then our "telos" or destiny changes as well. Some translations of the Bible use the word "perfect" when translating the Greek word, *telos*. What this literally means is complete, or full, in the sense of

a culmination, maturity. It is sometimes translated as "end" and means the maturity of time, circumstances, or character. It can also mean that which has reached completion consistent with an intended end. It carries with it a sense of destiny—*not* in some predetermined way, but in the sense that those who allow themselves to be influenced by the sanctifying grace of God are in line with their intended destiny.

We were created to live in communion with God, and that eternally. Although sin has entered the world, God will bring all things to completion where we will again have communion with Him forever. Our relationship with God now, therefore, is not only a restoration of Eden but also a foretaste of the kingdom of God.

**Relational Effects**

A focus on "relationality" is not a creation of the postmodern era or church! It existed before the foundations of the world; God, in triune nature, and in self-expression through the creation, is essentially relational. And we, created in God's image, are also essentially relational. Postmodernism gives an important critique of the Enlightenment, which focused its attention on the individual. An individual—envisioned as an isolated self—is a complete abstraction with no correspondence to reality, the critique goes.

Theologically speaking—in a Wesleyan mode, specifically—this means the human cannot be imagined without reference to relationships; to be human necessarily means being in relation—to God, others, self, and world. To be holy means to be in proper and loving relationship with each of these. This is God's design and destiny for humanity.

If sin is a distortion of these relationships through various forms of non-love or "existential estrangement" if you will, then holiness necessarily implies restoration of not only our nature and our telos but our very capacity for relationships as well. Love was never an abstraction for Wesley, and holiness is impossible void of active participatory love.

It is redundant to label a Wesleyan theologian as a "relational theologian," which is sometimes used. Similarly—as Mildred Bangs Wynkoop has so adequately shown in her study of Wesley's concept of Christian perfection—holiness and love, although distinct in definition, are synonymous in practical life.

By examining holiness from these three perspectives, some ongoing issues in holiness theology are addressed.

## Some Issues in Holiness Theology

*Refer to Resource 8-4 in the Student Guide.*

We will touch on three issues here, although this is not an all-inclusive list.

1. Why is it significant to make our holiness doctrine "Trinitarian"?

In the light of the theological diversity in the Church so evident as we move into the 21st century, theologians are calling for a return to the Trinity as the basis for all other theological rendering. And therefore, to be appropriately congruous with the tradition of the Christian Church of the last 1,700 years, it is important that holiness theology also ground itself in a Trinitarian paradigm.

Why is this important? It has been too easy in our holiness history to fall into the danger of bifurcating—or more precisely, trifurcating—the work of the first, second, and third persons of the Trinity. To be specific, it has been too common to hear something to the effect that Jesus Christ saves and the Holy Spirit sanctifies the believer. Or that when we are sanctified we receive the Holy Spirit.

This is one of the practical problems that has arisen when "baptism with the Holy Spirit" language is utilized as a metaphor for entire sanctification. Such a metaphor can be useful, but not if it sends the message that the unsanctified believer—which is actually a misnomer in and of itself, which we will see in our next lesson—does not have the Holy Spirit in his or her life. It also separates sanctification from the atonement of Christ.

To be more precise, both salvation and sanctification are possible through God's sacrifice of the only begotten Son. This proceeds through Jesus' obedience to death, even death on a cross, which is applied to our lives by the Holy Spirit as we respond to and appropriate God's free gifts of forgiveness and cleansing, through the drawing—prevenient—grace, resulting in the assuring grace of this same Spirit. The whole work of God in the heart of a human is a work of the Trinitarian God.

2. Does a relational paradigm imply "positional" holiness?

In the last fourth of the 20th century a new paradigm for understanding the doctrine of holiness was advocated by several theologians. It attempted to reformulate the doctrine, believing the paradigm of midcentury had become sterile and irrelevant, in light of massive cultural change. Interestingly, proponents of this new paradigm believed a return to Wesley was the very means of making holiness contemporary.

They found Wesley himself to be, as stated before, a relational theologian. A rediscovery of Wesley, for these interpreters, meant a rediscovery of the relational dynamic of holiness theology. This type of call for rediscovery continues as we move into the 21st century. As one scholar has recently expressed it—Ron Benefiel, president of Nazarene Theological Seminary, who holds a Ph.D. in sociology—there is a need to "retradition" ourselves if we have any chance of holding on to our Wesleyan-Holiness identity, in an age when Evangelicalism is increasingly synonymous with Fundamentalism.

When this new—yet old—relational paradigm began to be expressed in the 1970s and1980s, it met with great resistance. And the charge leveled against them was the danger of "positional holiness." Positional holiness is often used to describe a Calvinist or Keswickian understanding of sanctification. As stated in Lesson 2, for a Calvinist, we are only made righteous through the *imputation* of Christ's righteousness. Because of our "position" before God through the atonement of Christ, God *perceives* us as righteous, although we do not possess any righteousness ourselves. Keswickians take this understanding of justification and apply it to sanctification as well. There is no inner cleansing, other than the power of the Spirit to suppress our sinful nature.

Wesleyan-Holiness thought, on the other hand, wants to stress that God imparts righteousness to us—God makes us actually righteous through an inward work of grace, beginning at the moment of justification and particularly significant at the time of entire sanctification. "Positional holiness" is a correct label for the Calvinistic or "Suppressionistic" understandings of how God brings about holiness or righteousness to the believer.

But the charge of "positional holiness" leveled against more "relational" theologians in the Wesleyan-Holiness tradition is unfounded. To emphasize the relational aspect of holiness, expressed through love, does not neglect the transformative work of God in our inner

 

being. It certainly does not deny the ontological and teleological changes that come through the process and crisis of sanctification.

3. Is the word “eradication” still valid?

Recently, the word “eradication” was eradicated from the Nazarene *Manual.* This word has a long history and was used specifically to distinguish our theology of holiness from that of the Suppressionists—Keswickianism. In other words, for a long time the word was a part of our theological identity. And yet, witnesses to the change that occurred at the General Assembly say that removing the word from the article of faith had no opposition. The word has apparently lost its power, if not its relevance in the present context.

Why was it removed? The main problem with the word is its unfortunate implications. It is a metaphor, clearly. To eradicate something is to root it out, almost in the sense of a surgical procedure that cuts something detrimental out of the body. This led, regrettably, to a conceptualization of sin as a substance, a thing that is removed from us. Yet, if sin is envisioned as a substance, how do we make sense of the metaphor if we sin again? Is sin then “surgically” transplanted back into us? The metaphor becomes nonsensical.

If, however, the metaphor of cleansing is used—perhaps still in a medical meaning as if a wound is cleaned out—it is not impossible for an infection to return. This idea of sin actually fits Wesley’s understanding of sin as a “disease” very well. Those who have embraced a relational view of sin, which is certainly an extremely credible option, can still utilize the image of cleansing; it is not impossible to talk about a relationship as being healed or “cleansed” of what has caused estrangement.

This idea of cleansing might be a stretch for those who embrace a more relational paradigm, but it is a metaphor that still can hold some meaning. Whatever metaphors are embraced, the most important aspect of sanctification is that sin is effectively dealt with by the work of God. We can resist this work, or cease to cooperate with it, but God is able to do the work. “The one who calls you is faithful, and He will do it” (1 Thess 5:24).

## Guided Discussion: Student Response

(15 minutes)

*Allow for student response and discussion.*

*How does the preaching/teaching you have heard match up to what we have been looking at in this lesson?*

*What language/metaphors/illustrations help your understanding?*

*How can we do a better job of presenting entire sanctification?*

# *Lesson Close*

(5 minutes)

## Review

*Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.*

Look at the learner objectives for this lesson. Can you

- define Christian Perfection in relation to philosophical influences?
- observe sanctification from the following perspectives: ontological, teleological, and relational?
- describe what is meant by the substance of sanctification?

## Look Ahead

Next lesson we will study what is meant by the "structure" or "circumstance" of sanctification.

Bring your *Manual,* 2005-2009, to class with you.

## Assign Homework

*Direct students to the Homework Assignments in the Student Guide.*

Complete a first draft of a full sermon manuscript based on one of your two outlines. Bring two copies to class.

Write in your journal. Include your reflections, reactions, and insights on the material presented in class. It would also be helpful to read from John Wesley's journal throughout the course, available at http://www.ccel.org/w/wesley/journal/journal.htm.

# *Lesson 9*

# The Experience: The Substance of Entire Sanctification

## *Lesson Overview*

### Schedule

| Start Time | Task or Topic | Learning Activity | Materials Needed |
|---|---|---|---|
| 0:00 | Introduction | Orient | Student Guide |
| 0:10 | Sermon Manuscripts | Small Groups | Homework |
| 0:35 | Experience: The Structure | Lecture/Discussion | Resource 9-1—9-3 |
| 1:15 | Explanation to a Seeker | Guided Discussion | |
| 1:25 | Lesson Close | Review, Assign | Student Guide |

### Suggested Reading for Instructor

Staples, Rob L. "Sanctification and Selfhood: A Phenomenological Analysis of the Wesleyan Message." *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 7 (Spring 1972). Nampa, ID: Wesley Center, Northwest Nazarene University. http://wesley.nnu.edu/wesleyan_theology/theojrnl/06-10/07-1.htm

Wynkoop, Mildred Bangs. *A Theology of Love: The Dynamic of Wesleyanism.* Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1967, 337-61.

 

# *Lesson Introduction*

(10 minutes)

## Accountability

*Ask the students to give a brief critique of their learning experience with this module.*

*Collect one copy of the first draft of the sermon manuscript.*

*The students will need your evaluation of this draft returned to them as quickly as possible.*

## Learner Objectives

*Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.*

*Restating the objectives for the learners serves as an advanced organizer for the lesson and alerts learners to key information and concepts.*

By the end of this lesson, participants should

- articulate their own experience of sanctification
- precisely identify the "structure" of the experience of entire sanctification
- explain how one is entirely sanctified to a seeker of the experience
- differentiate the expectations of the process and crisis of sanctification
- articulate the importance of "secondness"

# *Lesson Body*

## Small Groups: Sermon Manuscripts

(25 minutes)

*Divide the class into groups of two to three each.*

In your group read each other's manuscripts. As you read, note questions or comments. The purpose of this is to help each other think through and clarify what is said. Also, respond to how the hearer will perceive what is said.

From the comments and suggestions your peers have made and from the comments and suggestions that I make, you will write a final draft that is due Lesson 11.

## Lecture / Discussion: Experience: The Structure

(40 minutes)

*Discussion Question: Have several students share their own testimony of entire sanctification, and attempt to analyze the similarities and differences in the experiences.*

It will be helpful to begin our discussion of the "how" of entire sanctification by quoting the article of faith—*Manual,* 2005-2009.

**X. Entire Sanctification**

13. We believe that entire sanctification is that act of God, subsequent to regeneration, by which believers are made free from original sin, or depravity, and brought into a state of entire devotement to God, and the holy obedience of love made perfect. It is wrought by the baptism with the Holy Spirit, and comprehends in one experience the cleansing of the heart from sin and the abiding, indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit, empowering the believer for life and service. Entire sanctification is provided by the blood of Jesus, is wrought instantaneously by faith, preceded by entire consecration; and to this work and state of grace the Holy Spirit bears witness. This experience is also known by various terms representing its different phases, such as "Christian perfection," "perfect love," "heart purity," "the baptism with the Holy Spirit," "the fullness of the blessing," and "Christian holiness."

14. We believe that there is a marked distinction between a pure heart and a mature character. The former is obtained in an instant, the result of entire sanctification; the latter is the result of growth in grace. We believe that the grace of entire sanctification includes the impulse to grow in grace. However, this impulse must be consciously nurtured, and careful attention given to the requisites and processes of spiritual development and improvement in Christlikeness of character and personality. Without such a purposeful endeavor, one's witness may be impaired and the grace itself frustrated and ultimately lost.

*Refer to Resource 9-1 in the Student Guide.*

There are several key ideas in this article of faith that makes this doctrine our denominational distinctive. We believe:

- **Entire sanctification is subsequent to regeneration—**this then implies there is a second crisis experience in the Christian journey that takes a person beyond what is accomplished at the time he or she was saved.

- **Entire sanctification frees us from depravity—** the difference between Wesleyan-Holiness theology and the Reformed tradition is that we believe the power of sin can be dealt with effectively (broken, cleansed) so we might live victoriously in this life.

- **Entire sanctification is characterized by entire devotion to God—**consecrating everything (ourselves, our possessions, our family, and friends), to God and committing our whole being to His service is the first requisite of the entirely sanctified life.

- **Entire sanctification results in obedience and love—**when the power of sin is cleansed by grace, we are filled with a new power through grace to be obedient to God's deepest desires for us. Our intentions are purified, and our capacity to love grows into a true ability to love.

- **Entire sanctification has an element of both taking away and giving to—**in other words, our inner disposition to sin is "taken away," but immediately the abiding presence of the Spirit dwells within us in deeper and more pervasive ways than ever before. Wesley spoke of this when he said, "love—God's love—excludes sin in the heart."

- **Entire sanctification is through faith—by grace—alone—**John Wesley took Martin Luther's doctrine of *sola fide* and applied it to the second work of grace. Just as we can do nothing to deserve salvation, we can do nothing to deserve sanctification. We must always cooperate with the grace of God, but we cannot earn it.

- **Entire sanctification is—usually—followed by the witness of the Spirit—**one of Wesley's most important doctrines is what is known as the witness of the Spirit, also known as the doctrine of assurance. The Spirit testifies with our spirit that we are the children of God. We have applied this also to the experience of entire sanctification. Of note, Wesley was aware later in his life that because of non-spiritual factors—such as perhaps mental illness, in today's terms—it is conceivable that a person is unable to experience this inner assurance.

- **Several metaphorical phrases can be utilized to describe entire sanctification—**this implies there is no one linguistical statement that is better than another. Certain periods of history have preferred certain phrases over others, but none is normatively dominant. All language is metaphorical in a sense. We will revisit this issue when we get to Lesson 12.

- **Entire sanctification requires subsequent growth, which must be intentionally nurtured—**as stated in Lesson 1, entire sanctification is far from the end. We do not arrive and wait it out after the experience! We are enabled by the experience of entire sanctification to grow without some previous encumbrances. As the article says, there is a key difference between a pure heart and Christian maturity. To have our heart's intentions purified gives us new potential, but it is still the maturing, growing process that realizes, more and more, this potential.

- **This growth is growth in Christlike character—w**e must always see the goal of the Christian journey to become more and more like Christ. This is definitive and normative of the sanctified life, with Christ's love at the forefront of our understanding of the character of God.

*Refer to Resource 9-2 in the Student Guide.*

*You will need a copy of this diagram for yourself.*

## The Structure of an Experience

The diagram in Resource 9-2 is a representative of the whole sanctifying work of God in our lives.

This represents what is sometimes called the *ordo salutis*, or the order of salvation. Some Wesley scholars prefer *via salutis*, or way of salvation, to depict a more fluid, ongoing dynamic. At birth, each person is given prevenient grace, which will draw them toward a relationship with God.

If the person cooperates with this grace, a "conversion" or saving moment results, through an awakening, conviction, repentance, and faith. At this same point, the process of sanctification begins with what we call **initial sanctification**. God gives righteousness and begins to impart that righteousness in such a way that the person is then being made holy—a present-tense, active verb.

This is not a completed event, however. **Progressive sanctification** follows. This can also be called gradual sanctification, growth in grace, or even spiritual formation. As growth occurs, the person will be drawn to a place where an even deeper commitment is possible.

This is the moment of **entire sanctification**. *After* this deeper work of grace takes place, **progressive sanctification** again follows. Growth continues, through sustained entire devotion, until the person dies, who then experiences **final sanctification**, also known as glorification.

But the question still remains: How does entire sanctification transpire? It is here that we see some differences between Wesley and the 19th-century paradigm. In light of the whole scope of Wesley's writings, Wesley did in fact believe entire sanctification could occur in this life. Countless testimonies from his Methodist people confirmed this in Wesley's mind and heart. But his advice for those seeking after the experience was to "wait for it in the means God has ordained." This waiting did not imply a passivity—attending to the means of grace is a very active lifestyle, as we will see next lesson. But it did reflect Wesley's deep reverence for God's timing to do the work, which is usually unknown to those who are waiting.

In the 19th-century model, however, persons were taught to seek after the experience, almost

aggressively—to pursue it now, and expect it now. A formula developed, known as the "altar covenant." It involved three distinct steps.

- First the person seeking entire sanctification must consecrate all to God by placing it on the "altar" of Christ.
- Second, he or she must have faith that God is capable of sanctifying him or her wholly, and that God wants to do it now. Persons who have exercised this faith can be absolutely sure that God has in fact sanctified them.
- The only thing left to do is to testify to the experience.

Some have critiqued this "formula" severely, believing it leads to a type of "claim it," mind-over-matter, rationalistic, even austere version of "faith alone." Interestingly, while this charge may have some credence in the abstract, persons who followed this pattern most often displayed deep emotion, which is then in turn also criticized.

It is hard to see how the critics of this paradigm can charge 19th-century seekers with sober rationalism and exaggerated emotionalism at the same time. What is true is that the altar covenant made the experience of entire sanctification accessible to all persons.

Phoebe Palmer, for example—the first to articulate the altar covenant paradigm—had struggled for years to find the experience, because the Methodist teaching on the subject in the first part of the century was too "sophisticated" and obtuse for average laity. She desired to help simple folk find a "shorter way" than she had, as she negotiated her way through a frustrated and thwarted longing for the experience; her formula did in fact help thousands and thousands of people find the "second blessing." American optimism and revivalism gave this shorter way a context of rich soil in which to bear fruit.

### Cautions

*Refer to Resource 9-3 in the Student Guide.*

While this new revivalism of the 19th-century—which preached salvation *and* entire sanctification as available now "for the taking"—allowed many to find the experience, it must be stated that the danger also exists to fix and solidify that model of the "way of holiness," as if it is frozen in time as *the* truth.

Whenever a spiritual experience—that always transcends any language used to explain it—is

 

formulized, there is the danger of rigidifying the experience. As a result, it could be assumed that if a person's experience differs even in the minutest ways, the experience is illegitimate.

In other words, we should not put the doctrine of entire sanctification in a box, nor propagate the notion that anything outside of our defined parameters is suspect.

- The experience for some is as quiet as a whisper; for others as loud as lightning.
- For some it simply requires the next step of obedience; for others it is a wrenching of the soul.
- For some it can come early in the Christian life; for others after years and years of seeking.
- For some it is a response to holiness preaching; for others it can be an experience to which they are drawn by God, having never heard it explained.

It could be said that the experience of entire sanctification is as unique as each individual. It is unhelpful, sometimes even damaging to compare and contrast our experience with others. While there are of course characteristics of the experience itself, demanding that a person's testimony mimic others is only to set up a standard that allows us to judge and criticize what does not fit the mold.

It is the belief of this author that we need to *balance* the interpretation of entire sanctification given by Wesley with his American successors. This balance can often guard against any excesses. And yet one area that truly deserves our attention remains.

**The Question of Secondness?**

The doctrine of entire sanctification clearly needs a renewed emphasis as we move into the 21st century. Language and symbol need to be used in such a way that persons in this new context and new millennium can find that significant deeper work of God for themselves. In light of the recent plight of many to grasp a doctrine that can be confusing, or perceived as unrealistic, new articulations are extremely needed.

And yet, in an attempt to address these legitimate issues, some have suggested that a *de-emphasis* of a second crisis moment could prove helpful. Many are sympathetic to these concerns. But to abandon the concept of "secondness" would be to call into question our denominational identity and purpose for existing.

While we must certainly find ways to keep the articulation of entire sanctification dynamic, relevant, and realistic, and to allow for differences from person to person, to blend the event of entire sanctification with the process of progressive sanctification into a single concept is to separate ourselves from what it means to be a Holiness church.

Part of the problem that has led some to suggest a de-emphasis can be addressed more helpfully by emphasizing even more the transformation possible to us through spiritual formation. Re-emphasizing Wesley's understanding of the "means of grace" is absolutely crucial to a balanced and healthy proclamation of God's sanctifying work in the lives of God's people.

## Guided Discussion: Explanation to a Seeker

(10 minutes)

*Allow for interaction and discussion.*

*Write the ideas on a board or overhead for all to see and make changes.*

*The lectures caution against limiting sanctification to a formula. Be sure students do not fall into a rigid formula, but allow for differences from person to person.*

People will ask the question: How do I become sanctified? In light of today's lesson and discussions, explain to a seeker of the Experience how one is entirely sanctified using contemporary language.

 

# *Lesson Close*

(5 minutes)

## Review

*Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.*

Look at the learner objectives for this lesson. Can you

- articulate your own experience of sanctification?
- precisely identify the "structure" of the experience of entire sanctification?
- explain how one is entirely sanctified to a seeker of the experience?
- differentiate the expectations of the process and crisis of sanctification?
- articulate the importance of "secondness"?

## Look Ahead

Next lesson we will continue our discussion of the experience and look at the means to the end.

## Assign Homework

*Direct students to the Homework Assignments in the Student Guide.*

Write a three-page essay on what you believe about "growth in sanctifying grace" and spiritual formation.

Write in your journal. Include your reflections, reactions, and insights on the material presented in class. It would also be helpful to read from John Wesley's journal throughout the course, available at http://www.ccel.org/w/wesley/journal/journal.htm.

Bring your journals to class next lesson to share some of the thoughts and insights you have gained during this module.

*Lesson 10*

# The Experience: the Means to the End

## *Lesson Overview*

### Schedule

| Start Time | Task or Topic | Learning Activity | Materials Needed |
|---|---|---|---|
| 0:00 | Introduction | Orient | Student Guide |
| 0:10 | Student Essays | Small Groups | Homework |
| 0:30 | The Experience: the Means to the End | Lecture/Discussion | Resource 10-1<br>Resource 10-2<br>Resource 10-3 |
| 1:15 | Student Response | Guided Discussion | |
| 1:25 | Lesson Close | Review, Assign | Student Guide |

### Suggested Reading for Instructor

Maddox, Randy. "Reconnecting the Means to the End: A Wesleyan Prescription for the Holiness Movement." *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 33 (1998).

Staples, Rob L. *Outward Sign and Inward Grace*. Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1991.

Dunning, H. Ray. *Grace, Faith, and Holiness: A Wesleyan Systematic Theology.* Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1988, 539-65.

 

# *Lesson Introduction*

(10 minutes)

## Accountability

*In pairs have the students share with each other from their journals.*

*Return homework if you have not already returned the first-draft sermons.*

## Learner Objectives

*Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.*

*Restating the objectives for the learners serves as an advanced organizer for the lesson and alerts learners to key information and concepts.*

By the end of this lesson, participants should

- identify all of the Wesleyan means of grace
- clearly understand the meaning and purpose of: spiritual disciplines, growth in grace, progressive—gradual—sanctification, and spiritual formation

# *Lesson Body*

## Small Groups: Student Essays

(20 minutes)

*Divide the class into groups of three to four students each.*

In your group read each others' essays. Discuss the various thoughts presented. Challenge each other to support the ideas and statements.

*Allow about two minutes for each group to report at the end of this time section.*

Decide on a few key ideas and statements from the essays to present to the class.

*Collect homework.*

## Lecture / Discussion: The Experience: The Means to the End

(45 minutes)

### Wesley on the Means of Grace

In Wesley's mature thought, he strongly admonished Methodists, particularly Methodist ministers and teachers, to emphasize both entire sanctification and progressive sanctification. To emphasize one over the other was to be in error. There have been times in the history of the Church of the Nazarene when we have not been as careful about this crucial balance.

There have been times when the experience of entire sanctification has been so emphasized that there was little mention about growing in our sanctification, other than stress on the need to follow a moral code. In recent years, however, there has been a revived interest in the day-by-day walk in the Christian journey. This has come both from a renewed emphasis on the "means of grace" in the Wesleyan tradition, and a great interest in the topic of "spiritual formation" more generally.

*Refer to Resource 10-1 in the Student Guide.*

At the very heart of Wesley's understanding of progressive sanctification, of how a Christian grows, is his concept of the "means of grace." He writes, "By 'means of grace' I understand outward signs, words, or actions, ordained by God, to be ordinary channels whereby he might convey to persons prevenient, justifying, or sanctifying grace." Further, "All who desire the grace of God are to wait for it in the means that he has given."

*Wesley,* Works (Jackson). *5:187.*

*Ibid., e.g., 5:190, 192.*

The "means" are the ways in which we open ourselves to experience God's love and grace in our lives. Too often we do activities such as reading our Bibles or praying, because by doing them we "prove" to God our willingness to obey, or worse yet, as a work by which we earn God's favor.

But Wesley's understanding takes us beyond sheer obedience or any type of works righteousness, by emphasizing that the ways in which we act as Christians are actually beneficial to our *own* growth and transformation into the likeness of Christ. To be perfectly clear, Wesley strongly stated that "the use of the means will never atone for one sin; that is the blood of Christ alone." But how do we receive the benefits of Christ's atonement? Wesley is clear: by attending to the means.

*Ibid.,5:189.*

There are three categories into which Wesley has placed certain activities:

- There are the "general" means of grace
- The instituted means of grace
- The prudential means of grace

This is how Wesley categorized Christian activities that have deep spiritual benefit. The general means of grace include keeping the commandments, denying ourselves, taking up our cross, and exercising the presence of God. By denying ourselves, Wesley believed we could draw closer to God when distractions are willingly set aside. By "taking up our cross," Wesley believed we could also draw closer to God and His purposes, by doing things that go against our natural inclinations. Exercising the presence of God is the practice of being conscious of God throughout the day. Each of these general means opens us to the grace of God.

*Allow for student response.*

*Have any of these had significant affect on your spiritual lives?*

By the "instituted" or "particular" means of grace, Wesley refers to those means in which Christ himself directs His disciples to participate. These would include things such as prayer, searching the Scriptures (which is similar to the concept of *Lectio Divina*, which refers to reading, praying over, and meditating on devotionally), the Lord's Supper, fasting, and "Christian conference," by which Wesley meant Christian conversation. As Christians speak about God together, grace is poured out upon the participants in such conversation.

The "prudential" means of grace have been developed over time, having been recognized as "wise" actions in the life of growth in grace. These include:

- class meetings—small groups—where accountability is stressed
- prayer meetings that bring the Body into purposeful prayer
- covenant and watch night services, which stress the need to reaffirm our commitments to be entirely devoted to God
- love feasts—a type of testimony service that met for the purpose of building up leaders and mature Christians
- visiting the sick and doing all the good one can—this was crucial in the life of all early Methodists, sometimes called "works of mercy"
- reading devotional classics—Wesley took great care to provide his people with significant Christian writing throughout the centuries of Christianity because he believed God would in fact grace those who pondered the wisdom that had come before

*Allow for student response.*

*Can you think of anything more contemporary that could be added to the list of prudential means?*

## The Means of Grace, Spiritual Formation, and Sanctification

*Refer to Resource 10-2 in the Student Guide.*

"The phrase 'spiritual formation' derives from Galatians 4:19 where St. Paul wrote, 'My dear children, for whom I am again in the pains of childbirth until Christ is formed in you.' Paul uses the word 'morphoo' (form)—closely related to 'metamorphoo' (Transform)—and it refers to the essential nature, not mere outward form. Paul is praying that the inward nature of the Galatian believers would become so like Christ that one could say that Christ has been formed in them. They would be mere humans, not divine, not a Savior themselves, but they would have real Christlike character and behavior."

*Wes Tracy, RIIE.*

The authors of *Upward Call* define spiritual formation in these words:

*Wesley Tracy, E. Dee Freeborn, Janine Tartaglia, and Morris A. Weigelt.* The Upward Call *(Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1994), 12.*

"The whole person in relationship with God,
Within the community of believers,
Growing in Christlikeness,
Reflected in a Spirit-directed, disciplined lifestyle,
And demonstrated in redemptive action in our world."

Tracy further states, “Spiritual formation then is the outworking of the grace of God in the hearts and actions of human beings. The transforming power comes from God—every bit of it. We cannot transform ourselves. Through the centuries, however, believers have discovered that certain disciplines, devotional skills and practices, and acts of Christian service keep us in the presence of Christ where the Holy Spirit has a chance to go on transforming us.”

And therefore ongoing renovation in God’s progressive, sanctifying work intimately involves those “very spiritual disciplines, devotional skills, and practices that open the door to the transforming Spirit.”

Through saving grace we are Christian through and through. And yet we are always in the process of *becoming* Christian, becoming what we are. This aspect of sanctification is about maturing in the life of Christian faith. As one teacher of spiritual formation suggests, this understanding of “attending to the means” rejects any romantic notion that claims that just to live is to be about the process of becoming more Christian.

Progressive is much more intentional than that, and stresses our response and cooperation with God’s work. Some have advocated a model of Christian life that simply calls us to have good feelings about ourselves and to feel our way through faith. While personal experience and real passion for God are crucial, there is a risk of excessive subjectivism that insists that good feelings determine Christian formation.

Wesley has given us a model that allows for our intentionality that cooperates with God’s gracious initiative. Progressive sanctification, then, is crucial in the Christian life; the process is a crucial follow-up to important moments of commitment. The Wesleyan understanding of the means of grace aims at Christian maturing, which never ceases in the journey.

### The Sanctifying Sacrament

*Refer to Resource 10-3 in the Student Guide.*

In his book, *Outward Sign and Inward Grace,* Rob Staples strongly reminds Wesleyans of our tradition and the appropriate understanding of the Christian sacraments. In this important work, he states that the Lord’s Supper should be seen as—which implies it actually *is*—a sacrament of sanctification. It will serve us well to quote one passage of Staples at length:

Sanctification, which for Wesley has instantaneous aspects, is also a "progressive work, carried on in the soul by slow degrees, from the time of our first turning to God" (*Works* 6:74). One important means of furthering that sanctifying work is participation in the Lord's Supper. [William] Willimon is correct in saying: "The Lord's Supper is a 'sanctifying ordinance,' a sign of the continuity, necessity, and availability of God's enabling, communal, confirming, nurturing grace. Our characters are formed, sanctified, by such instruments of continual divine activity in our lives."

*Willimon,* The Service of God: Christian Work and Worship *(Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1983)*, *125.*

Persons brought up in the Wesleyan/holiness churches have generally not been well instructed as to the potential of the Eucharist as a means for the promotion of holiness. For them, the very normality, regularity, and ritualistic nature of the sacrament militates against such an understanding. The invitation to the Lord's Supper is not particularly heard as a call to holiness.

[And yet] "Sanctification asserts that the Christian life ought not to be formed in a haphazard way. It takes constant, life-long attention, habits, and care to employ this character. The normality, the constancy of the Eucharist is part of its power. This meal need not be special, nor exhilaratingly meaningful (though sometimes it is both). This is the normal food of Christians, the sustaining, nourishing stuff of our life."

*Ibid., 127.*

Whereas baptism is the sacrament of initiation and consequently is not repeated, the sacrament of sanctification is to be celebrated again and again from baptism until death.

*Staples, 204-5.*

In Wesley's sermon, "The Duty of Constant Communion," he is quite strong that the Eucharist should be celebrated "constantly." He argued strongly against those who feared its frequency would diminish its efficacy. This is because he saw it as an extremely significant *means of grace*. Should we pray less frequently because we fear it will lose its meaning? Of course not.

The Eucharist in Wesley's eyes is a means by which the soul is peculiarly nourished. This does not mean Wesley believed in a transubstantiation of the elements. The act, which involves memory as well as the direct activity of the Holy Spirit, is a direct way of participating in the ongoing transforming grace of God.

 

As such, it should not be neglected. And yet, as Staples suggests, it seems as though those of us in the Holiness tradition have not made this connection. However, it is now being recognized that at the close of revivals and camp meetings across the country in the 19th century, Eucharist was often served. Perhaps these Holiness prescribers were not as disconnected from Wesley's understanding of the "sacrament of sanctification" as assumed. Either way, a renewed focus on the Eucharist is needed as we preach holiness in the 21st century, for it can be an important means of progressive sanctification.

## Guided Discussion: Student Response

(10 minutes)

*What questions or comments do you have concerning this lesson?*

*How can we communicate this lesson to our congregations?*

# *Lesson Close*

(5 minutes)

## Review

*Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.*

Look at the learner objectives for this lesson. Can you

- identify all of the Wesleyan means of grace?
- clearly understand the meaning and purpose of: spiritual disciplines, growth in grace, progressive—gradual—sanctification, and spiritual formation?

## Look Ahead

Next lesson we will examine “holiness ethics.”

## Assign Homework

*Direct students to the Homework Assignments in the Student Guide.*

Read and review *Manual* paragraphs 33-41 on The Covenant of Christian Conduct. Write a two-page response.

Select a favorite Wesley quote and write why it has made an impression on you.

Write in your journal. Include your reflections, reactions, and insights on the material presented in class. It would also be helpful to read from John Wesley’s journal throughout the course, available at http://www.ccel.org/w/wesely/journal/journal.htm.

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*Lesson 11*

# The Experience: Holiness Ethics

## *Lesson Overview*

### Schedule

| Start Time | Task or Topic | Learning Activity | Materials Needed |
|---|---|---|---|
| 0:00 | Introduction | Orient | Student Guide |
| 0:10 | The Experience: Holiness Ethics | Lecture/Discussion | Resource 11-1<br>Resource 11-2<br>Resource 11-3 |
| 0:55 | Student Response | Guided Discussion | Homework |
| 1:25 | Lesson Close | Review, Assign | Student Guide |

### Suggested Reading for Instructor

Dayton, Donald. *Discovering an Evangelical Heritage*. New York: Harper and Row, 1976.

Massey, James Earl. "Race Relations and the American Holiness Movement." *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 31 (Spring 1996). Nampa, ID: Wesley Center, Northwest Nazarene University. http://wesley.nnu.edu/wesleyan_theology/theojrnl/31-35/31-1-02.htm

Powell, Sam, and Michael Lodahl. *Embodied Holiness: Toward a Corporate Theology of Spiritual Growth.* Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1999.

Wynkoop, Mildred Bangs. *A Theology of Love*, Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1967, 165-183.

 

# *Lesson Introduction*

(10 minutes)

## Accountability

*Call on several students to read their Wesley quotes.*

*Return homework. Collect Wesley quote papers.*

## Learner Objectives

*Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.*

*Restating the objectives for the learners serves as an advanced organizer for the lesson and alerts learners to key information and concepts.*

By the end of this lesson, participants should

- explain both personal and social holiness and their interconnection
- explain the goal of the holy life
- explain Wesley's words, "affections," and "tempers"
- identify and theologically correct abuses such as legalism and antinominianism
- relate the Covenant of Christian Conduct to holiness theology

# *Lesson Body*

## Lecture / Discussion: The Experience: Holiness Ethics

(45 minutes)

### The Imperative of Wesleyan-Holiness Theology

Every aspect of Wesley's relentless focus on an individual's holiness was for the purpose of making that individual an agent of perfect love to those around him or her. This was not, and is not a self-made holiness in any way, but a grace-wrought "new creation," completely based on the atoning work of Christ, and the empowering presence of the Holy Spirit. This grace continuously given, resulted in true transformation. Inward transformation, if it were real and sustained, necessarily led to what Wesley would call "acts of mercy." As he is so often quoted, "there is no holiness but social holiness."

The heeded admonition of particular acts of service in the world permeated the ethos of Methodism, not only in the time of Wesley, but also in the next century and beyond. Scholars are now recognizing that well before what is known as the "Social Gospel Movement" of the early 20th century—a movement associated with liberal Protestantism—Methodism, and the Holiness Movement of the late 19th century in particular, evangelized the downcast, assisted the needy, ministered to the sick, fed the poor, advocated for the oppressed, and sought liberation for slaves and women all in the name of perfect love for God and neighbor.

This social dimension of holiness was the assumed and unquestioned imperative to which all persons in the Wesleyan tradition were called. The imperative was, and is fulfilled, because of what God is doing within. The next lesson will make this connection explicit.

At other times in our history, holiness was not defined so positively or so communally. At these troubled points, holiness was defined in moralistic or legalistic terms, where an external set of criteria was *the* measure of an individual's holiness. This led to the danger of equating prescribed moral codes with personal holiness, which in reality neglected the very core of the Wesleyan message of holiness of heart and life.

It is the belief of this author that during this present age of moral ambiguity, a reclamation of a holistic Wesleyan ethic is imperative to the future of the Church of the Nazarene. At the heart of this reclamation is a need to examine not only the standards or behaviors of holy living, but the internal motivation for such living as well.

One scholar has even suggested that the 19th-century holiness paradigm of entire sanctification that eventually led to the misuse and abuse of moral codes neglected Wesley's dependence on the English empiricism of his day and his use of Aristotle's understanding of character and virtue. Wesley was also highly influenced by Thomas Aquinas's Christian appropriation of Aristotle's ethical paradigm.

*See Randy Maddox, "Holiness of Heart and Life: Lessons from North American Methodism,"* Asbury Theological Journal *51 (1996): 151-72.*

## Character and Virtue

Wesley was deeply indebted to Aristotle's discussion of character development and the virtuous life. A bit of Aristotle's ethical thought will be helpful here.

*Refer to Resource 11-1 in the Student Guide.*

Aristotle believed there are four "causes" in all entities, including the human being: the material, the efficient, the formal, and the final. The "material cause" asks the question of why something does what it does. Aristotle believed the answer to this question was found in the tendencies of the object itself.

But there is a deeper "cause" that is definitive of not only tendencies or actions, but of nature. This is the "formal cause." This makes a chair a chair and not a house. The "final cause" of an entity determines its end, or its *telos*. What is the purpose to which the entity—person—is drawn? The final cause is first pure potentiality that seeks to be actualized. It is actualized through habituation. He believed the *telos* of the human being is happiness. By happiness Aristotle means a balance of the intellectual virtues and the ethical virtues.

In other words, happiness or fulfillment only comes when we act what we know. There is some aspect of *willing* to be virtuous that is necessary, as well as the need to habituate through virtuous action the actualization of a virtuous character.

He elaborates on four types of character that potentially emerge from this tension between knowing and doing.

- First, there is the "vicious" character. In this

instance, the person knows what he or she ought to do, but chooses to do otherwise, with no remorse.

- The "incontinent" character describes the person who knows what ought to be done, chooses in fact to do it, but then fails to follow through, and does not act in the way decided upon.
- The "continent" character is closer to the ideal, but misses it because of motivation. This character knows the good and does the good, but only out of duty—out of the demands of the ought-to.
- The truly "virtuous" character knows the good, does the good for the sake of virtue itself, not out of the internal pressure of guilt, nor external pressure of a fear of punishment, or even a promise of reward. The virtuous person acts in complete harmony with the knowledge he or she possesses, out of an internal desire for good, for good's sake.

Aristotle believed there are numerous virtues for the person to seek in order to be counted as a virtuous person—such as courage, temperance, generosity, and truthfulness. One solitary act of courage, however, does not make a person courageous. To become truly courageous, a person must habituate courageous acts until they become "natural" or actualized in his or her being. It is also important, for Aristotle, to learn courage through watching another courageous person. So, understanding or knowledge—intellectual virtue—is balanced with sustained and consistent action—ethical virtue. This is the truly "happy" person.

Thomas Aquinas "Christianizes" this paradigm. This influenced Wesley. According to Aquinas, it is only through grace that we have potential in the first place; and it is only through grace that we actualize that potential. Crucial is the understanding that we are not attempting to do the good, in some Pelagian manner. We are changed in nature, through grace, and consequentially enact the good. Obviously this is primarily an act of God, with which we cooperate. It is more than knowledge or habituated action. It is true inner transformation that allows for holy habits and holy character. For Wesley there is a deep, interpenetrating connection between God's grace, holiness character, and holiness acts. But how does Wesley articulate this connection? In the language of "tempers" and "affections."

*These words do not communicate to the average person today. Ask the students to articulate more contemporary words that convey the same meaning.*

 

## Tempers and Affections

Wesley, well planted in the context of the English empiricist philosophy of his age, rejected the notion that knowing the good will necessarily result in virtuous action. In place of this, Wesley believed reason alone is insufficient to motivate goodness. There must be an inward change for virtuous living to be possible.

*Refer to Resource 11-2 in the Student Guide.*

This inward change was a change in what Wesley called the "affections." Most simply put, the "affections" were the converging point for the will and emotions. The affections are indispensable, motivating inclinations that lie beneath all human action. As Randy Maddox states, "in their ideal expression, the affections integrate the rational and emotional dimensions of human life into a holistic inclination toward particular choices or acts . . . [The affections] are not self-causative, but are awakened and thrive in response to experience of external reality."

*Maddox, "Holiness of Heart."*

In this way, Wesley introduces an external force, namely grace, that Aristotle excludes. "In what Wesley held forth as the crucial instance, it is only in response to our experiences of God's gracious love for us, shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, that the human affection of love for God and others is awakened and grows."

And yet, there is more here than individual acts enabled by the gracious action of God. The affections can, and should be habituated into enduring "tempers" as we cooperate with God's gracious action in our lives. It is then out of these good "tempers" that actions flow. The major and most primary temper to develop in us is love for God and neighbor. These tempers are then actualized when they result in acts of love. Closely related, if not synonymous, is the temper of holiness.

Let's relate this to our discussion of holiness to this point. Holiness begins when we come to Christ initially, and are initially sanctified. It could be said that our *telos,* or potentiality of true holiness and agape love, is restored to God's original design. This is an awakening to which we respond.

As we grow in grace, our potentiality begins to progress on a long process toward actualization. Grace enables change in our affections. Affections, which become habits over time, and which are deeply impacted through attending to the means of grace,

become tempers out of which our actions flow. A deeper work of God in our hearts, entire sanctification, enables these tempers to become more and more and more a part of who we are.

We then continue to live these out in holy love. We might even say that through entire sanctification our inclinations change—our "nature"—and our potentiality is dramatically increased. And yet, Wesley also wanted to stress that these tempers do not determine our action in the sense that we cease to have a choice to act against them. Our liberty is our capacity to enact, or not, actions out of our inclinations, that either respond to, or resist God's grace.

*Maddox.*

While God can purify our inclinations in an instant (entire sanctification), "God's grace does not infuse holy tempers instantaneously complete. God awakens the 'seed' of every virtue. These seeds then strengthen and take shape as we responsively grow in grace." The seeds bear fruit in our actions, in holy living. This is why theologians often pair these two phrases when describing Wesley's scheme: holiness in *heart and life*.

We change within, or more appropriately, we *are changed* within—by grace—so that we act outwardly in life from a purified heart. Sanctification, in all its aspects, is the actualization of the potentiality of holy love. This is the meaning of Wesley's understanding of soteriology—the entire life lived in God. Truly, we are new creations in Christ, in the sense that our potential is renewed—reflecting the image of God—and is actualized as we participate in, and act in the love, grace, and power of God.

## Avoiding the Extremes

*Refer to Resource 11-3 in the Student Guide.*

When we become moralistic or legalistic in our understanding of holiness, it is often a result of losing the crucial balance between God's grace and our response, by falling toward the side of our own action. Holiness then becomes defined by a prescribed moral list to which we attempt to match our behaviors, rather than a way of *being*.

On the other hand, losing this crucial balance on the side of God's grace can result in a type of antinomianism, where grace becomes "cheap." Paul addressed antinomianism, particularly in the book of Romans. If sin causes grace to abound, doesn't sin bring glory to God? Paul gave a resounding no! Grace changes our character, *if* we receive it and cooperate

with it. The result will be actions that parallel that character.

Wesley wrote a work, "The Character of a Methodist," that clearly shows us that our actions spring out of what God has done within us, instantaneously, and over time as we mature. We become who we are. We act because we are becoming who God created us to be. What do we do? Love God, with all our being, and our neighbors as ourselves, not because we ought to, but for love's sake.

A Wesleyan-holiness ethic, then, is doing all we can to enable others to actualize their own human potential at any given moment whether through

- acts of mercy—caring for the needy and suffering
- righting social injustice—addressing the oppressing structures underneath human suffering
- evangelism—giving hope to those suffering in despair by proclaiming the transforming power of God's love

And yet, unfortunately, popular, evangelical Christianity today is sometimes known more for its deep-seated individualism, its escapist mentality, its separationist tendencies, and even its hate for the "other." Wesleyan-holiness theology offers a radically different paradigm. And the Church of the Nazarene, as an evangelical Church, has opportunity to redeem the word evangelical, and to make a difference in the world's perception of Christianity in general. "Holiness" and "perfect love," as taught and lived by John Wesley and his followers, is not only our past, but our future, if we let it guide us—not just as our "distinctive" but as our directive. Next lesson we will explore this directive as it applies to where our steps should lead us next.

## Guided Discussion: Student Response

(30 minutes)

*How do we apply what you have learned from this lecture to the value of the "Covenant of Christian Conduct" in the* Manual *of the Church of the Nazarene?*

*Write out the ideas on the board or overhead for all to see.*

*Challenge the students to be specific and support what they are saying.*

*Challenge them to think beyond the surface level.*

*Collect homework papers.*

# *Lesson Close*

(5 minutes)

## Review

*Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.*

Look at the learner objectives for this lesson. Can you

- explain both personal and social holiness and their interconnection?
- explain the goal of the holy life?
- explain Wesley's words, "affections," and "tempers"?
- identify and theologically correct abuses such as legalism and antinominianism?
- relate the Covenant of Christian Conduct to holiness theology?

## Look Ahead

In the next lesson we will finish the module, and examine a theology of holiness for the 21st century.

## Assign Homework

*Direct students to the Homework Assignments in the Student Guide.*

Finish a final full manuscript of a holiness sermon based on your outline, and peer and instructor critiques of your earlier draft.

Write in your journal. Include your reflections, reactions and insights on the material presented in class. It would also be helpful to read from John Wesley's journal throughout the course, available at http://www.ccel.org/w/wesely/journal/journal.htm.

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*Lesson 12*

# Holiness for the 21st Century

## *Lesson Overview*

### Schedule

| Start Time | Task or Topic | Learning Activity | Materials Needed |
|---|---|---|---|
| 0:00 | Introduction | Orient | Student Guide |
| 0:15 | Holiness for the 21st Century | Lecture/Discussion | Resource 12-1 |
| 1:00 | Return to the Original Questions | Guided Discussion | Questions from the first lesson |
| 1:25 | Lesson Close | Review, Assign | Student Guide |

### Suggested Reading for Instructor

Shelton, R. Larry. "A Wesleyan/Holiness Agenda for the Twenty-First Century." *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 33 (Fall 1998). (Not online as of February 2004; coming soon).

Strong, Douglas M. "Sanctified Eccentricity: Continuing Relevance of the Nineteenth-Century Holiness Paradigm." *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 35 (2000).

 

# *Lesson Introduction*

(15 minutes)

## Accountability

*In pairs have the students read each other's sermon.*

*Return and collect homework. Make arrangements for returning the evaluated sermons.*

## Learner Objectives

*Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.*

*Restating the objectives for the learners serves as an advanced organizer for the lesson and alerts learners to key information and concepts.*

By the end of this lesson, participants should

- synthesize the Wesley vs. 19th century debate
- recognize the relevance of holiness in the contemporary age
- offer suggestions for adaptations in holiness language

# *Lesson Body*

## Lecture / Discussion: Holiness for the 21st Century

(45 minutes)

It is the strong belief of the author of this module—supported by countless others—that there is great need to "retradition" ourselves as a denomination as we move into the 21st century. This is not to imply that we are simply to go back to Wesley or the Holiness Movement, and blindly insert the same language or metaphors into our present context. Certainly holiness needs to be recontextualized as well.

But if we affirm that the *reality* of what is known as "holiness" or "sanctification"—which we believe was faithfully preached by Wesley and his successors—transcends time and space, we must see it as a vital message to be passed to future generations. It is particularly crucial that we reclaim and proclaim our theological distinctive, especially in light of the situation of many of our churches, which is sometimes not even recognized. To make this point clear, we will quote Douglas Strong at length:

*Refer to Resource 12-1 in the Student Guide.*

> Since Calvinist forms of Christianity predominated within early American religion, Methodism was considered to be a theological intruder in relation to the dominant spirituality of the early Republic. Interestingly, this Calvinist critique has re-emerged among historians in the latter half of the twentieth century, articulated by self-proclaimed guardians of evangelical orthodoxy, nearly all of whom hail from Calvinistic or Calvinistically-inclined Baptist traditions and see the Wesleyan heritage as theologically dangerous.
>
> These neo-evangelical historians interpret nineteenth-century American religious history primarily as the story of fanatical emotionalism, anti-intellectualism, and works righteousness. They agree that the nineteenth century was the "Methodist century" as some religious historians have called it. But they believe that this fact was exactly the problem of the nineteenth century.
>
> Although this generic, late twentieth century, Baptisified neo-evangelicalism is not at all theologically congenial to the Wesleyan message,

nevertheless many Holiness churches have been assimilated under its all embracing umbrella.

Holiness churches, for example, have happily participated in the burgeoning prosperity of American neo-evangelicalism. Ironically, although Holiness churches were long resistant to cultural accommodations, they have now fully identified with the consumerism that typifies today's American evangelicals. It seems that late twentieth-century Holiness churches have forgotten their nineteenth-century roots. Many of them have largely lost their distinctiveness—thriving numerically, but without their saltiness. This may be what Keith Drury is referring to when he states that the Holiness Movement is dead. It is dead, because, on a popular level, it has accepted the Calvinist neo-evangelical paradigm in place of its own.

*Strong, "Sanctified Eccentricity: Continuing Relevance of the Nineteenth-Century Holiness Paradigm"* Wesleyan Theological Journal *35 (2000), 11-12.*

One of Wesley's chief concerns was that his Methodists live out their sanctification in holy love, which immediately implied acts of mercy to those in need. The theological underpinnings of the 19th-century Holiness Movement directly motivated participation in activities for social change, such as abolition, urban mission work, even women's rights.

Phineas Bresee was deeply concerned about the poor and founded a denomination he intentionally named to represent his convictions. The Church of the Nazarene's roots are squarely in the Wesleyan-Holiness tradition; the doctrine of entire sanctification and the call to holy love was originally its life pulse and reason for existence. And yet, as Strong suggests, we are in danger of losing our way in terms of our concern for the oppressed and less-fortunate, and in emphasizing our unique theological heritage. Again, this is not to suggest that we romanticize the past, but it is important. Strong continues:

> The problems with the nineteenth century are easily identifiable. Optimism could lead to a liberal stress on human sufficiency; decisionism could lead to Pelagianism; experiential immediacy could lead to emotional fanaticism; moral earnestness could lead to legalism; and inclusive fellowship could lead to sectarian separatism. But it is important to lift up commendable qualities, as well.
>
> In my quest for a usable past, I have tried to discern the characteristic marks or features of nineteenth-century spirituality that have value for us. Rather

*Strong, "Sanctified Eccentricity," 19.*

than simply a particular doctrinal emphasis, Holiness men and women expressed an ethos, a vision, a distinctive spirituality.

*Allow for response.*

*Discuss these potential problems.*

*How do you see them at work in your ministry/congregation?*

This is the challenge: to regain or recreate an ethos, a vision, and a distinctive spirituality as we attempt to articulate the doctrine of holiness in the next century. This is not a task, however, for one theologian or one preacher or one teacher. It will take persons like you to contribute to the conversation. May God empower you to do so.

*In light of these quotes and comments, how might you envision our doctrinal distinctive of entire sanctification for the contemporary situation?*

*Describe the "situation," the new context sometimes expressed as "postmodernism."*

*Is there a need for a change in our vocabulary in light of the situation?*

*What should we hold onto from Wesley and the Holiness Movement?*

## Guided Discussion: Return to the Original Questions

(25 minutes)

Let us return to the original questions formulated from the class on the day of Lesson 1.

*See if the students can now answer them, or contemplate them on a deeper level.*

Review of this module/class:

*How has this module been helpful to you?*

*How will it affect your ministry?*

*How will it affect your preaching and/or Christian education program?*

*How will it affect your own spiritual journey and your service in the world?*

*Any closing remarks?*

 

# *Lesson Close*

(5 minutes)

## Review

*Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.*

Look at the learner objectives for this lesson. Can you

- synthesize the Wesley vs. 19th century debate?
- recognize the relevance of holiness in the contemporary age?
- offer suggestions for adaptations in holiness language?

## Assign Homework

*Direct students to the Homework Assignments in the Student Guide.*

Live holiness of heart and life.

## Closing

*End with a time of prayer for each of the students.*