SANCTIFYING GRACE – Scott Campbell

**[^ black screen ]** Please open your purple worship books to page 48 and join me in the prayer to the Holy Spirit:

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of the faithful and kindle in us the fire of your love. Send forth your Spirit, and we shall be created. And you shall renew the face of the earth.

O God, who by the light of the Holy Spirit did instruct the hearts of the faithful, grant that by the same Holy Spirit we may be truly wise and ever enjoy your consolations. Through Christ our lord. Amen.

Please be seated.

Are You Sanctified?

Am I what? I’m not sure? I think so? Yes! Maybe? No? What does that word even mean? It seems so holy and righteous! I have no clue, but I sure would like to find out.

I remember the time someone asked me that question, and was I ever confused!

**The title of this talk is [^] Sanctifying Grace and my name is** **[^] Scott Campbell**.

For many of us, Sanctifying Grace can be really confusing because we may not simply understand what it is, and how it works in our life. It is my hope to shed a little light upon this word for you ladies today and hopefully it brings some clarity to what this “big holy” word really means.

During the last couple of days you have heard about God’s Grace and how it can take on different forms and be experienced in a variety of ways as we continue on our spiritual journey. In realty, **[^] All Grace is God’s Grace**.

I just want to give you a short overview of the previous Grace talks given by clergy this past weekend.

On Friday you heard a talk on **[^] Prevenient Grace**, where you heard that God has been active in your life from the moment you were conceived in your mother’s womb. God has been wooing you and calling you into a loving holy relationship from this very moment.

On Friday afternoon you heard a talk on **[^] Justifying Grace**, where by this precious gift of God it brings us to the point of acceptance and realization that God loves us just as we are.

On Saturday you heard Matt share some **[^] Means of Grace**, that help to strengthen and deepen our relationship with God through Baptism and Communion among a couple of other ways.

Also on Saturday you heard about **[^] Obstacles to Grace** being attitudes and actions that can hinder our relationship with God and our neighbor. ***But!*** All praise be to God for sending Jesus Christ who overcame every obstacle in our life.

Now on to **[^] Sanctifying Grace.**

**Sanctifying Grace is [^] the dynamic power of the Holy Spirit working in and through you**, so you may become all, that God desires you to be.

Sanctifying Grace works to keep you aligned with God.

**Sanctifying Grace [^] is a process.** It is an ongoing process of experiencing God’s Gracious Presence and opening yourself to the powerful work of the Holy Spirit and allowing yourself to be transformed into what God intends you to be.

Sanctifying Grace is a process of becoming more like Christ.

**[^] God loves you too much to keep you the same!** And to leave you where you are.

I want to try and simplify it for you ladies in one word. Shiplap!

It has nothing to do with Sanctifying Grace!

**[^ blank screen ]** But, when I said the word Shiplap, you all thought of one lady – I Joanna Gaines! Now admit it, none of you knew what Shiplap was until you watched “Fixer Upper” and now all of you want it in your house!

That’s just like Sanctifying Grace, you may not know exactly what it is, but I know you will want it in your life once you realize what it is, so you can grow closer in your relationship with God.

In John 15:1-8, we see the process of how God works in our life to make us Ripe for Glory and making us mature in our faith. It is the story of the Vine and the branches.

(Read John 15:1-8) Jesus is the Vine, You are the branches & God is the Gardner.

I want to share with you how you **may become** **[^] RIPE for glory!** Using this acronym.

In the show “Fixer Upper” Joanna and Chip have a family that is looking for a new home, they show them a house that looks OK, and is definitely outdated and everybody goes…..Yuck! I would never live in that house. But, Joanna says; “Wait a minute, I see potential in this house and after we do some work on it, I think you are going to be happy with the end result.” The family agrees to the process and they allow Joanna & Chip to begin the work.

The first part of the process in Sanctifying Grace is **[^] Restoring.**

Restoring our relationship with God & others.

We don’t earn the love of God by changing our ways, rather, we change our ways because God loves us and gives us a fresh start.

When Joanna & Chip enter a home, the first thing they do is have demolition day! They begin the restoration process by knocking away the old walls and begin to restore the home into the potential that lives with inside itself.

It is the same imagery in the Vine & Branches story. Where Jesus says that God is the gardener and every branch that does not bear fruit is cut away, and God prunes other branches so they may be more fruitful. God sees inside of you, the beauty that lives within you!

The second part of the process is **[^] Imparting.**

A New Life, A New Energy, A New You that you never believed was possible.

Sanctifying Grace is a part of the process by which the righteousness of Christ is imparted to us and becomes a part of us with inside of us. We have a change within because of this new strength we have from God and we begin to grow and become mature spiritually through the work of Sanctifying Grace.

After Joanna & Chip have removed all the walls and the rotted woodwork, because we know, they always find something inside that has termites or something bad that needs replaced on the inside of the house, they begin to put in new structure that is stronger and healthier for the home. They are imparting new life, new energy into the home.

Just like God, when those rotted branches are removed from the Vine, God is imparting new life into you so that you will become even more fruitful than you ever imagined!

The third part of the process is **[^] Perfecting.**

Sanctifying Grace is a conversion process, it happens once, but not all at once. It is a lifelong process of dying to what is evil and rising to what is good and true (Christ in us).

The gifts of the Spirit are given to help us grow and to build up the body of Christ, we can learn about these gifts in 1 Corinthians chapters 12-14. And as a Christian grows and matures in faith, certain qualities of the Spirit begin to be revealed within us and we can find these qualities in the book of Galatians 5:22-23, you may know them as…Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Generosity, Faithfulness, Gentleness, and Self-Control.

**[^]** Sanctifying Grace is the doctrine of the “the more.” **[^]** God has more love, more power, more peace, and more joy in store for us.

After Joanna & Chip have put in new frames and structures within the house, they now begin the process of perfecting the home by adding in new plumbing and wiring and anything else that may have been a concern at one time and they are raising it up to what is good and true meeting the codes of the inspectors and giving every woman the perfect open concept kitchen with the large island and that pot filler on her stove.

Just like God when he prunes us, he is perfecting us into a life of grace, and sometimes this pruning process can be painful and time consuming.

**[^]** The fourth part of the process is **[^] Equipping.**

We are equipped by the Holy Spirit to do the work of Christ in the world and to be the Hands & Feet of Christ reaching out to all of our brothers and sisters in need.

Sanctifying Grace is the work of the Holy Spirit empowering us to serve Christ by reaching out to the least and lost of these. In Matthew 25, we learn of feeding the hungry, giving water to the thirsty, welcoming a stranger, clothing the naked, caring for the sick and visiting the prisoner, all of these are the work of the loving hands of a Christian.

Every person is gifted, and every gift is needed to accomplish the will of God.

The Holy Spirit equips us to obey the Great Commandment:

“Love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and to love your neighbor as yourself.”

The Holy Spirit also equips us to follow the Great Commission:

“Go! And make disciples of all nations.”

Just as Joanna & Chip have finished restoring, imparting, and perfecting the home it is time for Joanna to Equip the home with all the beautiful details that make it complete by adding Shiplap to places you never imagined!

God has equipped you to serve and grow because something new is inside you. God has pruned those branches and the fruit of those branches begin to become even more fruitful.

In John 15:12-17, Jesus shares with us a new command. “My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends…..You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit – fruit that will last – and so that whatever you ask in my name the Father will give you. This is my command: Love each other.”

**[^] How do we grow in Sanctifying Grace?**

**[^] Growth in grace is a natural process.**

Jesus told us that a life in grace is as natural as the life of a branch connected to a healthy vine. It is allowing God to continue to prune away those branches in our lives to make us healthy and restored into the image of Christ.

**[^] We open our hearts to receive grace as a free gift from God.**

Romans 5:5 says: “God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.” We don’t earn it or deserve God’s love we simply open our hearts to receive it.

**[^] We share grace in the body of Christ** (God’s Community). Through participation in the gathered community and small accountability groups, we receive strength and nurture just as a branch does from the vine.

For three days we have prayed for the Holy Spirit to come and fill us with the fire of Love. In Emmaus, small accountability groups are called group reunions. When we meet with a small group, we follow the order on the group reunion card, which you will learn about later today. Group reunions are the Emmaus community’s primary means of support on the journey toward spiritual maturity.

**[^ blank screen ]** When that person asked me if I was Sanctified, I had no clue what they were asking me, let alone realize that I was actually in the process of being sanctified. You see, that process started many years ago. Prevenient Grace led me to a loving woman who prayed for me daily to come to church with her, because I never attended church when I was growing up. Prevenient Grace also led me to Bible Studies, where I had no idea what I was studying, and I learned that Jesus loved me even with all of my junk I had in my life. Justifying Grace led me to an altar where I accepted Jesus Christ as my personal savior because of His love for this poor wretched soul that was in need of redeeming. Then, Sanctifying Grace led me to my knees when I sought out God’s will and not my will in my life; Sanctifying Grace led me to hear the still small voice of God when I was called into the ministry even when I told God you have the wrong person; and Sanctifying Grace was still working in that call when I answered yes Lord, I will follow you wherever you lead me. Sanctifying Grace continues to be the dynamic power of the Holy Spirit working in and through me, so that I may continue to become all that God desires me to be.

God loved me too much to leave me the same, and God loves you too much to leave you the same. Open yourself to the power of the Holy Spirit and God’s Sanctifying Grace transforming you into what God intends you to become.

**[^]** De Colores! **[^ black screen ]**

SCRIPTURE REFERENCES

John 15: 1-8

1 Corinthians 12-14

Galatians 5: 22-23

Matthew 25

John 15: 12-17

Romans 5: 5