**Sanctifying Grace**

**Dan Smith**

Gentlemen 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 your 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 heart 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

I would like to share a story about a young man returning home from Viet Nam. He was excited to be home, to be with his loved ones and friends. But upon arriving home things had changed – his job was abolished and the country was in turmoil. It was hard to understand how the greatest country in the world could be in this condition. He felt helpless and empty. He needed help but it seemed no one was there. I will finish this story later.

The title of this talk is \*Sanctifying Grace and my name is \*Dan Smith

During these past few days you have learned of different types of grace. There are 3 main points that I would like for you to write down.

\*Point 1 “ALL GRACE IS GOD’S GRACE, ALL GRACE IS GOD’S GRACE”

We experience the one grace of God in many different ways as we continue on our spiritual journey.

Prevenient Grace is God’s activity from the moment of our conception to the moment we say yes to God, and beyond.

Justifying Grace is the gift of God by which we accept for ourselves the relationship God offers through Christ.

The means of Grace help us celebrate and strengthen our relationship with God.

Obstacles to Grace are attitudes and actions that hinder our relationship with God and with our neighbor. Through the cross, Jesus Christ has overcome every obstacle.

Point Number 2, \*”Sanctifying Grace is the gift of God providing the desire and power to grow in our relationship with God forever.”

Let me repeat “Sanctifying Grace is the gift of God providing the desire and power to grow in our relationship with God forever.”

Physical birth begins the process of growth and maturity. So too does spiritual birth begin the process of spiritual growth toward maturity.

Sanctifying Grace is the dynamic power of the Holy Spirit working in and through the heart and life of every believer. Grace is God’s active love toward us. Grace is God’s love in action toward others and toward the world God created. Our response to grace involves both love and action.

Point Number 3 \* “Sanctifying Grace is the process of opening ourselves to the work of the Holy Spirit in and through us, I repeat Sanctifying Grace is the process of opening ourselves to the work of the Holy Spirit in and through us.”

By receiving this divine energy it becomes transforming to our heart and life, it makes \*us ripe for glory. Let us look at the components of being ripe.

The R in Ripe represents \*Restoring, I repeat Restoring, Restoring our relationship with God and others. We cannot earn God’s love by changing our ways. Rather, we change our ways because God loves us and gives the grace to make a fresh start, day by day, hour by hour.

We receive God’s Spirit “bearing witness with our spirit”. That we are beloved children of God. (Romans chapter 8 verses 15 thru 17, again that’s Romans chapter 8 verses 15 thru 17.)

Our knowledge of our identity as children of God forms the foundation for all other relationships. In medical terms, one could say restoration is the process of spiritual growth and the recovery of our health, since we were once sick with sin.

The I in ripe represents \*Imparting, I repeat imparting. The imparting new life, new light, new strength, and a new heart.

Justifying grace is the moment when the righteousness of Christ is imputed to us. This means we are declared “not guilty” because of all that Christ did for us on the cross. We experience a change of status.

Sanctifying grace is the process by which the righteousness of Christ is imparted to us. It becomes a part of us, and we experience a change of heart. Each day we grow more in Christ in our attitudes and actions having been born again through justifying grace, we grow and mature spiritually through the work of Sanctifying Grace.

The P in Ripe represents \*Perfecting, I repeat perfecting, perfecting us in the image and the likeness of Jesus Christ. Conversion is a process, it happens once but not all at once.

The gifts of the spirit are given to help us grow and for the common good of the church/body of Christ. You can read more about these in (1 Cor. Chapters 12, 13, 14, again 1 cor. Chapters 12, 13, 14).

As a Christian matures, his or her life displays certain qualities known as the fruit of the spirit. “The fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control”. (Gal. chapter 5 verse 22, again that’s Gal. chapter 5 verse 22). Perfecting involves pruning (John chapter 15 verse 2 again that’s John chapter 15 verse 2.)

The bible tells us that every vine and fruit tree requires pruning, and so do we. A life in grace is a life in process and some of this is painful.

Christian perfection is both instantaneous and progressive. The Greek word for perfect can also be translated “mature or complete.” To be perfected in love is both God’s call and promise, in Christ you can be perfect, mature, and complete today and continue to grow in grace and be more like Christ next month.

Sanctifying grace is the doctrine of “the more.” God has more love, more power, more peace, and more joy in store for us. The means of grace are means of growth. Sanctifying grace is our deepest joy and our greatest good in all of our relationships.

The E represents \*Equipping, I repeat Equipping, Equipping us to do the work in the world to be the hands and feet of Christ. Sanctifying grace is the work of the Holy Spirit empowering us to see and to serve Christ in the least and lost of our city, state, and the world.

(Read Matthew chapter 25 verses 31 thru 40, I repeat Matthew chapter 25 verses 31 thru 40).

The Holy Spirit equips us with gifts for ministry. ( 1 Cor. Chapter 12 verse 4, again that’s 1 Cor. Chapter 12 verse 4.)

The Holy Spirit equips us to obey the great commandment (Matthew chapter 25 verses 37 thru 39, I repeat Matthew chapter 25 verses 37 thru 39) and (Matthew chapter 28 verses 18 thru 20, I repeat Matthew chapter 28 verses 18 thru 20.)

\*So how do we grow in Sanctifying Grace? To start with, \*growth is a natural process. In (John chapter 15 verses 1 thru 12 that is, John chapter 15 verses 1 thru 12.) Jesus tells us that a life in grace is as natural as a branch connected to a vine. We abide in Christ, through \*prayer. This is important because it is through prayer and worship that we truly open ourselves to God.

Through \*study, we come to know better just how Christ’s word abides in us. In study, we give our minds to God and grow in the mind of Christ. You can read more about this in John chapter 15 verses 7,and 10, that’s John chapter 15 verses 7 and 10, and Philippians chapter 2 verses 5 thru 8, that’s Philippians chapter 2 verses 5 thru 8.

We bear fruit for God’s glory through our Christian \*action. In this, we give our hands to God and participate in the work of Christ. These works include: works of mercy, like providing food, water, and clothing. See (Matthew chapter 25 verse 35 that is Matthew chapter 25 verse 35).

The other types of works are those of justice (release of captives, freedom to the oppressed). For this see (Luke chapter 4 verse 18, that is Luke chapter 4 verse 18).

All these things I have mentioned are gifts of the Lord. Each and every one, they seem pretty good, and I think that if we thought about it, there isn’t a single one that we would not want to have. Guess what… all we have do, all you have to do to receive these gifts is to open your hearts. Open your hearts to receive as a gift. It’s just that simple. (Romans chapter 5 verse 5, that’s Romans chapter 5 verse 5) says: God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.

We do not earn God’s love. \*We do not deserve God’s love. Rather, we simply open our hearts and receive it. This is why when we share grace in the body of Christ our community of active Christians, we become blessed. When we participate in activities of the gathered community, small accountability groups, and the like, we receive strength and mercy. Another way to say this is that, we come alive in Christ, learn the mind of Christ, and help one another remain rooted and grounded in God’s love. This is because when we respond, with and by, full participation in the mission of Christ in the world, we share the gift of grace that God has shared with us.

You can read more about this in ( Ephesians chapter 2 verse 5, again that’s Ephesians chapter 2 verse 5, Philippians chapter 2 verses 1 thru 12 that’s Philippians chapter 2 verses 1 thru 12, and Ephesians chapter 3 verses 14 thru 19 that’s Ephesians chapter 3 verses 14 thru 19).

For three days we have prayed for the Holy Spirit to come and fill us with the fire of love. We have learned that: God wants a relationship with us, even more than we want a relationship with God. God’s role in sanctifying grace is to fill us with the Holy Spirit and fire. Our corresponding role is to open our hearts, and walk in the spirit with Christ day by day.

Also, small groups are an important means of sanctifying grace for disciples. From the time Jesus called the first disciples to this very day, small groups have been, and still are an essential means of grace. Because of this, group reunions are the Emmaus community’s primary means of support on the journey toward spiritual maturity.

Okay, you can put your pens down. \*

Remember, at the beginning of this talk I was telling you about a young man who had just returned home from Viet Nam. Gentlemen, I was that young man. On several occasions a good friend had invited me to his church. I realized that something was missing in my life and that I could not make those changes on my own. So I decided to attend one Sunday morning. At an altar of prayer I received my Lord. I’ve had my ups and downs like everybody else, but gentlemen, through all of it God has sustained me. My prayer is that you allow God to make you the kind of person He wants you to become.

\*DE COLORES