



HIGH Calling

Summer 2026

The *High Calling* is a publication of The Francis Asbury Society to serve as a link between FAS and its constituents, building loyalty and awareness so that the teaching and experience of Christian holiness may continue to be lived and proclaimed throughout the world.

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The Why, What, and How of Sanctification

By Bill Kierce, FAS President



In our last issue of *The High Calling*, we addressed the necessity of new birth for salvation. We now consider the Holy Spirit's work in the believer's sanctification. Throughout recent church history, the experience of a deeper spiritual life beyond conversion has been referenced by a variety of terms: being filled with the Spirit, baptism in the Holy Spirit, second blessing, full salvation, and entire sanctification, to name a few. Because the Francis Asbury Society represents a Wesleyan-Holiness tradition of Christian faith, we want to explore the work of the Holy Spirit and sanctification from the conjunction of Wesleyan and holiness historical and theological perspectives. From the outset, I acknowledge that this article will likely not satisfy everyone and I sincerely encourage you to keep reading to the end. In the broader Wesleyan movement, there has been much confusion and considerable disagreement over the meaning and mechanisms for entire sanctification. A friend of mine recently recounted his desire as a graduate student some years ago to pursue a PhD in Wesleyan theology. He was advised by an established Wesleyan scholar to explore a different research path, being warned by his mentor, "Within an hour of publishing your first paper, you will hear from five Wesleyan scholars wanting

to parse a single word, and all five will have a different opinion." Such is our legacy, at least in the minds of some.

We adhere to the Wesleyan tradition because we believe it is the closest to the New Testament example and because it converges many streams of critical influence throughout the history of the church. But like any theological framework, it is neither complete nor perfect. John Wesley was not a systematic theologian. His theology of sin and sanctification evolved throughout his lifetime. The one constant, from his earliest days, was Wesley's personal pursuit of holiness: as a student at Oxford, as a missionary to the American colonies, and as an Anglican cleric. One of the most dramatic and memorable testimonies regarding the disposition of God's grace in human history occurred in John Wesley's life on May 24, 1738, at an address on Aldersgate Street, London. While listening to the reading of the *Preface to Martin Luther's Commentary on Romans*, Wesley recorded in his journals that he felt "his heart strangely warmed," and knew for the first time that he was redeemed from sin by faith and not by works. The million-dollar theological question for the past nearly three hundred years has been, "Was Aldersgate Wesley's new birth, or was it his moment of entire sanctification?" For those who adhere to the former, it is natural to assign his subsequent Fetter Lane experience of January 1, 1739, when the Holy Spirit

fell upon sixty worshipers, as his *second blessing*, as many have done. But in reading the journals, letters, and sermons of John Wesley, he is inconsistent when describing the nature of both experiences—Aldersgate and Fetter Lane—from both a theological and sequential perspective.

There is a great renewal of interest in the message of biblical holiness around the world. Perhaps this is purely cyclical—a *what goes around* kind of thing. But I don't believe this is so. It is surely the heart cry of a world that is desperately searching for answers to universal human problems. Emerging philosophies of self-help or human flourishing can never address the issue of mankind's bent to self-destruction brought about by inbred sin. In its convening General Conference in 2024, the Global Methodist Church revived Wesley's mandate of "spreading Scriptural holiness" in its mission statement. Traditional holiness denominations—Nazarenes, Wesleyans, and others—are fighting to stem the same tide of liberal progressivism that undermined the doctrine of holiness in United Methodism. If we want to proclaim ourselves to be evangelical Wesleyan and/or holiness people, we should agree on some essentials of what this means. The world is watching and waiting.

What does biblical holiness look like in real time when it crawls off the pages of a systematic theology? Theology has always been essential to the church. It lays the foundation upon which our faith stands. But we must still build a house on that foundation, from which we hope real people will come and go to experience the fulness of life

in Christ together. The great challenge of building movements on the pursuit of biblical holiness today is that we often aren't clear on what we're building or sometimes even why. For instance, the new Global Methodist Church, despite our well-intended insistence upon biblical holiness, is a melting pot of theological influence. During the last three generations of UMC apostasy, any evangelical influence would suffice for those who fought the good fight of orthodoxy. Walk down the hallway in the Sunday school wing of our church buildings on Sunday and you will find content by John Piper, Max Lucado, Beth Moore, Rick Warren, etc. Really good material, but not Wesleyan. How do we recover our passion for heart holiness? And how do we wrestle holiness from the clutches of both its antagonists and protagonists to deliver to next generations a coherent understanding of the purifying and empowering life of God in the soul of humanity? The answers are not to be found in doubling down on brand identity, prescriptive experiences, or formulaic theologies but in utter dependence and surrender to the Person of the Holy Spirit, who does the sanctifying.

WHY DO WE NEED TO BE SANCTIFIED?

It is no mystery that the most emphasized attribute of God in the Scripture is God's holiness. In fact, holiness is God's essential character. Holy is God's name and God's nature. Isaiah 57:15 (NIV) states, "For this is what the high and exalted One says, he who lives forever, whose name is holy..." Of course, this is not an isolated text. The Hebrew

term *qadosh*, translated over one hundred times in English as "holy," appears over three hundred times in the Old Testament to describe God's absolute purity and "otherness." *Qadosh* means "to be separate." By nature, God does not exist within the sphere of our human experience. God is apart from the world, or transcendent. This is why the Israelites were instructed not to make images of God's appearance or bow down to idols. Because God is separate from the world, God cannot be manipulated to act upon human command nor characterized in any way as human. God is also separate from all earthly gods. "For the Lord is the great God, the great King above all the gods" (Psalm 95:3). As a result, God's people are strictly forbidden to worship other gods or to entertain idols (Exodus 20:1–7). Idols are the products of human hands. We as human beings are the product of God's creation and are made in his image (Genesis 1:26). Therein lies the great distinction between mankind and God: we are made in His image, not He in ours.

New Title: Available July 7!



EZEKIEL: You will be My people; I will be your God

By John N. Oswalt

Format: Paperback

Page count: 195 pages

Retail price: \$14.95

The book of Ezekiel intimidates many aspiring students of the Bible. It is large and complex and is initially addressed to a situation and an audience about which many readers know nothing. Nevertheless, it is an essential book for understanding what it means for us to be God's people and for him to be our God. This volume aims to offer a simple roadmap for the non-specialist reader who wants some serious content but does not want to be overwhelmed. Read this book with an open Bible, and Ezekiel will no longer be a mystery.

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The image of God, or *imago Dei*, is the essence of God's character; it is the capacity to commune with God as part of the fellowship God enjoys as Trinity—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Therefore, as created beings in God's image, we cannot commune with the Holy One unless we ourselves are holy. It is no coincidence that when God is revealed as holy to the nation of Israel in the Old Testament, it comes with the caveat that because God is holy, we must also be holy (Leviticus 11:44). God's holiness is seldom referenced in the Scripture without an attached reference to the requirement for human holiness. In the New Testament, the apostle says in 1 Peter 1:15–16, "But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do, for it is written, 'Be holy, because I am holy.'" Make no mistake about it: *holiness of heart and life is the normal Christian life*. It is the life God expects and the life God will produce in us, if we allow it. Without holiness of heart and life, there is

no Christianity and no hope of salvation (Hebrews 12:14). Because we have no human capacity to produce holiness, to be holy, we must be made holy. For the Old Testament Hebrew, there was no mechanism for internal transformation. The righteousness of the law could only be fulfilled by adherence to the sacrificial system, which covered sin but could not cleanse it. But the sacrifice of Christ for us not only removes the legal stain of guilt in our lives but also cleanses our conscience and even consciousness of sin (Hebrews 9:13–15).

Being holy literally means "to be set apart." Just as God is separate from the world, so we as believers are commanded to be set apart as an expression of God's holy nature (2 Corinthians 6:17). Something that is set apart has a specific purpose; it has been created for a special task. For example, my toothbrush is kept in a separate place from my other possessions. It has a specific purpose, so it

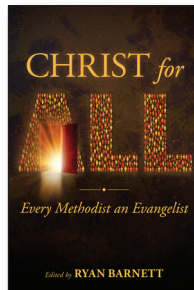
Christ for All, Indeed

By Aaron Mansfield

Do you have your copy of the new FAS book, *Christ for All: Every Methodist an Evangelist*? Why not? You can get it right here! In fact, do you have multiple copies? I have been handing 'em out like candy!

About a year ago in our house group, I got convicted of something. In the group, we do a Bible study that finishes with what I call the disciple-making question: "What are you going to do about what we just read?" It takes a while for a group to break past simple, surface answers like, "I will trust God more." It takes time to get to specific actions. That evening, when it was my turn to answer, I said, "I am going to quit going through self-checkout at the grocery store." That is really specific! You can definitely know whether you are doing what the Lord asks on that one! The Spirit really convicted me that there I was at Kroger, with so many people and so many chances to engage, to get to meet people and find out where they are spiritually, to invite them to church—you name it! But I had been going in like a Navy SEAL—in and out, nobody gets hurt—and I don't get or take an opportunity to bless someone. I resolved to take the extra time and talk to people in line: the cashier, etc.

A couple days ago, a teenager I have talked with a time or two as he bagged my groceries was in a boot. He'd rolled his ankle going up for a rebound, he said. He was pretty bummed about it because the doctor says his recovery will be a long one. So I took my shot: can



I pray for you? He immediately bowed his head. He didn't even say anything; he just wanted prayer. So I prayed for him right there.

What's this got to do with the new book? Well, *Christ for All* is the kind of book that challenges readers to exactly the kinds of practical steps that can reach people for Christ! Things like praying for our neighbors, blessing them in practical ways, having your testimony ready to share, serving Christ by serving others outside the walls of your church, explicitly sharing Christ when the opportunity arises.

My assistant pastor and I are preaching through this book on Sundays and leading Wednesday group studies, always with our eye on the book's best feature: the challenge to take specific steps in sharing our faith with specific people. One of the things we are really looking forward to is having two of the authors come and preach on the topics they wrote about in *Christ for All*. Luthor Oconer, an Asbury Theological Seminary professor, will preach on one of the toughest parts of evangelism: sharing your faith with a stranger! And I am most excited that Bill Kierce, president of FAS, will preach on servant evangelism! I hope to have some testimonies to share of how putting the book's principles into action has helped my church grow in evangelistic effectiveness. Maybe you, too, could lead a study using our newest book! Christ for All. Indeed!

is not allowed to touch that which might contaminate it. A toothbrush is made for brushing teeth. One might use one to clean grout in a shower stall or scrub a toilet, but this is not the ultimate purpose of a toothbrush. And no thinking person is going to brush their teeth with a toothbrush when it has been utilized for one of these lesser purposes.

Beyond this, there is a beauty of holiness that extends far beyond its prohibitive commands. In the Scripture, holiness is intended to be contagious. When God gave Moses instructions for building the tabernacle in the wilderness, which was the physical symbol of God's presence among the nation of Israel, it was to be consecrated as holy. All that was within it was also declared to be holy. And in Exodus 30:29, God says, "whatever touches them [the holy things] will be holy." A holy life should be infectious to those it touches. Too often, because of our tendency to replace relationship with rules, people see the life of holiness as an austere one. Holiness people have at times deservedly gained a reputation for being overly sanctimonious and judgmental of others. This is no doubt due to our own fear of God's judgment should we break the rules. But God's concept of holiness is so very different from that. Rules, or

commandments, are given as an expression of two things: (1) *what* one values; and (2) *who* one values. If I command my children to be home before dark, it is not because I want to spoil their fun. It is because I love them and want to keep them safe. Each of the 613 laws in the Old Testament reflect the nature of a loving, holy God who desires that God's people live abundant lives in healthy relational communities (John 10:10). Who wouldn't want that kind of life if they only understood it?

WHAT IS THE EXPERIENCE OF SANCTIFICATION?

So, this is what we have established: God is holy; God does not and cannot commune with unholy people or things; and God requires the people who bear his name to be holy. But this presents a problem. We are not holy and are completely incapable of making ourselves so. When Adam sinned in Genesis 3 by presuming to become like God on his own, he experienced spiritual death. All of Adam's descendants—the entire human race—have inherited a sinful nature that naturally seeks self-interest over the interests of our Creator (Psalm 51:5; Ephesians 2:3). None of us is punished for Adam's failure, but we are doomed to repeat Adam's behavior because it is our human nature

to do so. And when we do, we die spiritually, as well (Romans 5:12). But praise be to God, there is a remedy for sin! In Jesus Christ, we may be redeemed from both its penalty and its power; and we don't have to wait for heaven for it to take place. The goal of sanctification is a heart that is wholly for God and free of self-interest. Only God can produce this state of being in a human heart.

John Wesley distinguished between *justifying* and *sanctifying* grace. They are distinct operations of God's redemptive plan to restore the *imago Dei* to fallen humanity. The Scripture also distinguishes between these activities of God's redemptive purpose. However, they are not to be seen as purely sequential. Justification and sanctification are part of the same process of the soul's restoration to God's original design—the full expression of *imago Dei* in the believer. We can see the entire process unfold in Paul's epistle to the Romans, especially in chapters 1–8. And it is the only place we gain clear insight into the systematic and sequential nature of grace.

In English, Romans is spelled very much like the word *romance*. In many ways, that is an apt description of Paul's intent. One famous old preacher often referred to "the romance of redemption." And when we understand sin in terms of disrupting intimacy with God and sanctification as intimacy renewed or restored, then it makes perfect sense. In **Romans 1**, Paul addresses the concept of natural revelation, that all people have a basic knowledge of God

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through creation. In **Romans 2**, we are reminded that God is righteous in his judgment of humanity's sin. The law was given to reflect God's holiness and his desire for a covenant relationship with a chosen people, and God's love has been spurned. **Romans 3** declares God's faithfulness and introduces us to the possibility that righteousness may be achieved through faith. Abraham is the Old Testament example of faith in **Romans 4**, as his belief in God's promise was credited to him as righteousness by God. Then in **Romans 5**, the invitation is extended for us to claim this gift of life in Christ by faith alone, apart from works of the law. This is justifying faith, or the new birth Jesus spoke about with Nicodemus in the Gospel of John.

In **Romans 6**, the apostle Paul bridges God's works of justification and sanctification through a principle all too often neglected in traditional Wesleyan-Holiness teaching: the work of the cross. We want to jump immediately to the Holy Spirit's role in sanctification, but without fully understanding God's purpose in the cross, the Spirit's work is misunderstood and sometimes misrepresented. The apostle makes abundantly clear in Romans 6:1–2 that habitual sin is not acceptable in a true believer's life. This is affirmed in Hebrews 10:26. But it is not until Romans 8 that we see the prevalence of the Holy Spirit's role in victorious Christian living. For Paul, the cross is a three-dimensional object, as it is in physical reality. On one side of the cross, Jesus was crucified for us. By placing our faith in that finished work, our past sin is forgiven, and righteousness is *imputed* to us, a legal standing that means we receive credit for Christ's righteousness (Romans 1:17). This is the great truth restored to the Church in 1517 through Martin Luther and *The Great Reformation*.

However, Jesus is not the only one who died on the cross, according to Paul. He declares that every believer must reckon ourselves to have died with Christ (Romans 6:6, 11–14) so that in being resurrected with Christ to newness of life, we are set free from the old body of sin. It is here at the cross that a believer acknowledges that we are dead to sin, our old nature replaced by a new nature—the divine nature (2 Peter 1:4)—being born again to the nature of righteousness in Christ (2 Peter 1:4). Wesley taught that in justification a person receives a “disposition toward God” but that sanctifying grace is required to eradicate the old nature, or *the root of sin*. He says that this may happen any time after justifying grace, but it might not occur until the very end of a person's life.

I respectfully introduce a nuance at this point. I am not questioning or denying the sanctifying work of God in the believer after conversion and throughout one's life. However, I believe it is important to describe full salvation as the apostle Paul did, because Scripture is our only infallible source. It seems, according to Paul, it is the cross that renders the old nature powerless to grace. It is the Holy Spirit who activates and actualizes sanctification in the believer once justified before God. Just as the Spirit

of God raised Jesus from the dead, we also are raised in newness of life—present and future (Romans 6:5–14), becoming partakers of the divine nature (2 Peter 1:4). In sanctification, the righteousness (or holiness) of God that was imputed to us at the cross is now *imparted* to us through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit. Wesley also affirmed that the Spirit is active in a believer's life from the time of justification and before the actualization of entire sanctification.

Because the Holy Spirit births us into the nature of God at our spiritual conversion, called *regeneration*, we immediately notice a change in our desires, or our inclinations, as Wesley described. Where we once were pulled toward acts of self-interest, self-promotion, and self-gratification, now we want to do what honors and glorifies God. This inevitably becomes a struggle for the new believer, though not a warfare between two resident natures. However, just because we have died to our old nature doesn't mean it hasn't left a stink upon us. Indeed, every aspect of our lives has been affected and infected by the old sin. Our mind and heart now made new in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17), our physical members (emotions and behaviors) have not yet developed a sanctified muscle memory. Paul describes this struggle in **Romans 7** using graphic imagery. The new person in Christ wants to please God, because in our inner being we now delight in God's law (Romans 7:22). This is an important statement as to the nature of the new believer. However, another law, the law of sin and death, continues to work upon us. There is a consciousness of sin that has stained our lives until we are made free from its haunting tyranny. As a result, the experience of many believers is to become frustrated and confused by the conflict between what we want to do and our inability to produce the outcomes our new heart desires. At this point, many Christians give up the dream of being made holy in this life and settle into a routine of sin, confession, and forgiveness. Some theological traditions even promote the idea that Christians sin every day in word, thought, and deed. But this is clearly not God's intention for us (Romans 6:1–2). While some would maintain that the old nature is eradicated in a singular moment of entire sanctification subsequent to justification, I propose that the person Paul describes in Romans 7 is one who has been justified by faith and is being regenerated in righteousness but who does not yet possess sufficient ability to live out the new reality.

There are a couple of strong evidentiary factors to which I appeal in describing the believer's transition from Romans 7 into the glorious truth of Romans 8. First, the apostle Paul applies a metaphor all too familiar in the Roman world to explain what is happening in the struggle of Romans 7. He says, “What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body that is subject to death?” (Romans 7:23–24). First, note that sin is likened to something or someone that is already dead, *the body of death*. Second, Paul is referencing a form of punishment in the

Roman world in which a person convicted of killing another would be sentenced to carry the corpse on his person. The ongoing sentence of sin and death is depicted in Romans 7 as a person carrying the corpse of the old life. We have been pardoned for its murder when we were justified. There is now no condemnation for us.

In **Romans 8**, there is a transformational breakthrough for the believer. Upon recognizing our lack of ability, we cry out for God to do something in us that we cannot do for ourselves: *Free me from this body of death and liberate me for a life of joyful obedience.* The Christian is not made for a life of sinning, either willfully or habitually. We are made for a life of righteousness, and this is not of our own doing. We must be made holy. The Holy Spirit is the Purifier (John 14–16). Our new life is one of purity and power in the Spirit, rivers of living water flowing from a once-stagnant heart (John 7:37–39). The second important principle of note in the transition from Romans 7 to Romans 8 is found by examining the terminology inherent in the text. This is a vital distinction. In Romans 7, personal pronouns representing the self-life are used at least thirty-two times. The Holy Spirit is not mentioned once. There is no wonder that the chapter ends in frustration and a plea for help in verses 23 and 24.

Romans 8 bursts forth with the victorious answer to the believer's desperation: "Therefore, there is now no

condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ the law of the Spirit who gives life has set you free from the law of sin and death..." (Romans 8:1–2). In Romans 8, Paul uses the personal pronoun "I" only twice and the Holy Spirit is referenced a total of sixteen times. Dr. Dennis Kinlaw often described the essence of sin as "a preoccupation with self-interest." Sin is not a list of prohibited activities. It is a lust for our own way. In English, the middle letter in the word "sin" is "I." In Spanish, the word for self is *ego*. Every time we capitalize the "I" in our lives and our ego demands gratification, we act in sin. This is the dilemma of the Romans 7 person. But when the Holy Spirit invades our life with sanctifying grace, holiness becomes more than a pursuit or a frustrated aspiration. It becomes a reality. This begins with a simple act of faith: believing that God has made deliverance from willful, habitual sin available to us; fully surrendering self to the cross of Christ, reckoning ourselves dead to sin; praying to be continually filled with the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 5:18); and habitually responding to the Spirit's promptings (John 16:8) with an obedient heart, which Paul calls "living according to the Spirit" (Romans 8:4).

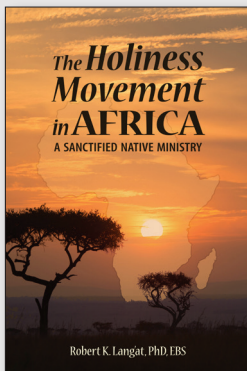
So, the question remains: How does this movement from justifying grace to sanctifying grace, or from aspirational holiness to actualized holiness, occur in a Christian's life?

HOW DOES A BELIEVER

EXPERIENCE SANCTIFICATION?

The Greek verb translated "to sanctify" is *hagiazō*. It means "to set apart or consecrate." The word is translated "sanctify" six times and "sanctified" nine times in the New Testament. Paul proclaims it is the will of God that every believer should be sanctified (1 Thessalonians 4:3). Those who are sanctified by the Holy Spirit (Romans 15:16) are called to be God's holy people (1 Corinthians 1:2). The New Testament says that we are sanctified by God's name (1 Corinthians 6:11), God's Word (John 17:3, 17), and God's Spirit (Romans 15:16; 1 Corinthians 6:11; 2 Thessalonians 2:13) through faith (Acts 26:18). This kind of faith affirms that God has set us apart for good works (Ephesians 2:10), to be clean in our hearts toward God and others (1 John 4:7–21), and that God has made this state of being available to every Christian. What wonderful news! It is possible for a believer to appropriate holy love and be liberated from active, willful, and habitual sin to the degree that one is responsive to the conviction of the Holy Spirit (John 16:8) and surrenders self to the work of the cross

New Title: Coming Soon!



The Holiness Movement in Africa: A Sanctified Native Ministry

By Robert K. Lang'at, PhD, EBS

Format: Paperback
Retail price: \$19.95

This book is a comprehensive and seminal work that contends that the current evangelical and pietistic character of Christianity in Africa owes its origins to the Holiness Movement. It makes a historiographical case that African Christianity in its mainline Protestant, Evangelical, Pentecostal, as well as charismatic renewal forms, have their theological roots in historic holiness traditions. It is a case for vital and dynamic interface between revivalism and missions.

(Romans 6). Paul reminds us that it is God himself who is faithful to sanctify us. For the follower of Jesus who has received a new disposition toward God through the new birth but regularly struggles with old habits, self-defeating behavior, or preoccupation with self, there is but one alternative: surrender fully to the work of Christ's cross as the instrument of death to our flesh. Upon our desire for God to do that work of mortification to all that is unholy in us, he will surely do it (1 Thessalonians 5:24). God will leave nothing undone nor any part of our self-life remaining that we surrender to his purifying grace.

Death is a hard and painful process. In Roman times, no one survived a cross. Neither do we. Our flesh cries out for relief. The temptation from the crowd at the cross to Jesus was, "Come down and save yourself." That is our temptation, as well. But every time we try to thwart the cross's work in us, we are destined to repeat the process until our flesh succumbs. This is what Jesus meant when he said that anyone who wants to follow him must take up their cross daily (Luke 9:23). However, on the other side of the cross there is always resurrection life. On the other side of Romans 7, there is Romans 8. On the other side of justification and spiritual struggle, there is sanctification. Surrender is the action on our part, and sanctification is the action on God's part. The Holy Spirit is the agent of transformation.

Does this occur instantaneously or gradually? Yes. It is both. We are justified and sanctified by what Christ has done for us (1 Corinthians 6:11). The instantaneous crisis that leads us toward a sanctified life, or the baptism in the Holy Spirit, is our realization of this truth and our surrender to it. There could be a singular crisis or a series of them that propel the believer into a deeper surrender to grace. Sanctification is the process by which the Spirit of God empowers us to yield to the crucifixion of our self-life, through which we are being made holy. We are declared to be holy in justification and made holy through sanctification. The sign of entire sanctification is holiness of heart and life exhibited in perfected love for God and others (Hebrews 12:14; 1 John 4:7–21), what Wesley called "Christian perfection." However, even forty years after his Aldersgate and Fetter Lane experiences, Wesley did not profess to have arrived at this state in his own life. Herein lay the inconsistencies and divergences within Wesleyan movements and their offspring on how sanctification is practically enacted in the believer. Holiness is the desire of every true Christian, because the Holy Spirit births and nurtures the life of God in us. But the "how" to anything is often not as important as that the "what" gets done. God is the Doer; we are not. The Wesleyan-Holiness, charismatic, and Pentecostal movements agree that Spirit-baptism is a singular and definitive experience but differ significantly on its defining characteristics. In the absence of *Four Easy Steps to Sanctification* in the Scripture, our aversion to ambiguity causes us to create checklists around the process.

Formulas are popular. Anyone can follow them. And to be accepted by others, people can even fake them. Other than what has been outlined here from Romans 1–8, the Scripture doesn't provide us a clear sequential diagram of justifying-to-sanctifying grace. But Jesus promises us the indwelling and empowering presence of the Spirit, who guides us into all truth (John 14–16), and proclaims that we would be filled with cleansing power by the Spirit (Luke 7:37–39; Acts 1:8; Acts 2:1–4).

My purpose is not to discredit the nature or necessity of God's distinctive works of grace in justification and sanctification. Far from it! It is simply to suggest that our tribal concerns for brand identity should not supersede the reality that God does what God does, whether it fits our formula or not. I am convinced from Scripture, experience, and tradition that there is a second blessing available to every believer who acknowledges their need for a fuller experience of God's grace after the new birth. I'm also convinced that there is a third, fourth, fifth, and fiftieth blessing for those who pursue God with a whole heart. Not everyone experiences grace in the same exact way. It is enough to know that God is Sanctifier and full salvation is entirely available to all who long for a life that genuinely reflects that character of the Holy One.

In the Book of Acts, early Christians encountered the Holy Spirit in various sequences. The one hundred twenty believers present in the Upper Room in Acts 2, who had previously professed their faith in Jesus as Messiah, gloriously received the long-promised outpouring of God's Spirit, which gave birth to the apostolic Church (Joel 2:28–32). It is evident in Acts that some of God's people experience multiple outpourings of the Spirit (Acts 2–4). One group of believers in Ephesus had not even heard of the Holy Spirit when they were converted to the Christian faith as Gentiles (Acts 19). There is not a defensible formula for Spirit-baptism in the record of the early church other than it happens to all who seek the Lord with their whole hearts. Theologies built on singular proof texts cannot stand the rigors of scrutiny. Neither is there a consistent or credible formula for entire sanctification in church history prior to the seventeenth-century Pietists and later Wesleyans. There have been multitudes of sincere God-seeking saints throughout the ages who pled before God for lives of holiness. Were they left unfulfilled because we hadn't yet determined the mechanisms of God's activity through the benefits of modernity? No, surely not. If God is the same yesterday, today, and forever (Hebrews 13:8), then God's sanctifying grace has always been accessible to those who seek him (Matthew 7:7–8). This rich deposit of spiritual truth called entire sanctification that we steward in the Wesleyan and Wesleyan-Holiness movements is not just for us; it is for all who seek Him. We need to stop protecting our treasure from the supposed dangers of corruption imposed by those who are not yet *one of us* and make grace contagious for all. We are simply told in Scripture to receive

the Spirit (John 20), to be led by the Spirit (Romans 8; Galatians 4–5), and to be continually filled with the Spirit (Ephesians 5:18, *continual tense of the verb*). What must be consistent in our preaching and teaching of holiness is this and only this: be wholly surrendered to God and you will be wholly sanctified by God. We may expect it in this life and even at this moment. Then, let's trust God to be the Doer of the thing. Hallelujah and Amen!

Dr. Timothy Tennent (2015) recounted a story told often by Dr. Robert Coleman. One extremely hot day, Dr. Coleman was working in his garden. Seeing his dad toiling in the summer sun, the laborer's young son brought him a glass of water. Dr. Coleman noticed immediately that the glass was dirty. The child had climbed to the sink and grabbed the first glass he saw, one waiting to be washed, and filled it with lukewarm tap water. Dr. Coleman comments that, "The glass may have been dirty and the water warm, but it was brought to me in perfect love." This describes sanctification: we are purified from everything that contaminates heart and spirit by Holy Love. The Holy

Spirit creates in the Christian a new heart that is ignorant of its former self-importance, one reoriented toward love, and then begins cleaning the container.

Friends, let us continually surrender our hearts as a dirty glass to the Holy One and ask that he continually fill us with clean water, trusting that he knows how to present us faultless before the throne of grace.

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