



Rev. Mr. JOHN WESLEY'S

JOHN WESLEY

AND THE EARLY METHODIST REVIVAL



A Kingswood Course

The Work of Grace

What does it look like when we move beyond the nature of grace and into the work of grace?

How is it that the grace of God actually works in our own lives?

The Work of Grace

Grace is Free: It is free in all (not dependent on our merit) and free for all (not limited to a small elect).

“The Lord is good to all: and his tender mercies are over all his works.” (Psalm 145:9)

“Interpret every doubtful Scripture according to the grand truths which run through the whole.” (Wesley, Note on Romans 12:6, Explanatory Notes Upon the New Testament)

The Work of Grace

Grace is Co-Operant: God's grace empowers and enables us to respond to him freely in faith.

“Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God that worketh in you, both to will and to do of his good pleasure.”
(Philippians 2:12-13)

“First, God works; therefore you *can* work. Secondly, God works; therefore you *must* work ... Stir up the spark of grace which is now in you, and he will give you more grace.” (Wesley, On Working Out Our Own Salvation, ¶¶III.1,6)

The Reformed Tradition: Calvinists and Arminians

T – Total Depravity

U – Unconditional Election

L – Limited Atonement

I – Irresistible Grace

P – Perseverance of the Saints

Calvinist Position

Total Depravity – We are completely fallen in our sin and have no hope of salvation on our own.

Unconditional Election – God predestines those he chooses for salvation without any respect to anything within them.

Limited Atonement – Christ died only for the elect.

Irresistible Grace – God's grace is always effective and cannot be resisted or rejected by those to whom he gives it.

Perseverance of the Saints – It is impossible for those whom God elects to fall from grace.

Arminian Position

Total Depravity – We are completely fallen in our sin and have no hope of salvation on our own.

Conditional Election – All those who respond to God's grace will be saved.

Universal Atonement – Christ died for all.

Resistible Grace – God's grace is co-operant, and it will be effective wherever and whenever it is accepted. But it can also be reject by the power of God's grace.

Perseverance of Believers – All those will be saved who believe. True backsliding is a possibility.

Wesleyan Categories / Expressions of Grace

Prevenient Grace

Convincing Grace

Justifying Grace

Sanctifying Grace

Categories or Expressions of Grace

I. Prevenient (or Preventing) Grace –

Comes from the Latin term *praevenire* (or *gratia praeveniens*) which means “grace that comes before” or “grace which precedes.”

It is the grace that acts to give us a moral sense, the knowledge of God’s will, and an awakening to our sinful condition. A biblical image is the creation of the world.

Categories or Expressions of Grace

Passages of Scripture Evoking Prevenient Grace:

- “The Lord is good to all: and his tender mercies are over all his works.” (Psalm 145:9)
- “Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God that worketh in you, both to will and to do of his good pleasure.” (Philippians 2:12-13)

Categories or Expressions of Grace

II. Convincing Grace – The grace of repentance. It works to convict us of our sinful rebellion against God and move us to repentance.

A biblical image of convincing grace is John the Baptist preaching in the Wilderness, or the tax collector at the Temple saying, “Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner” (Luke 18).

Categories or Expressions of Grace

Passages of Scripture Evoking Convincing Grace:

- “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent and believe in the gospel.” (Mark 1:15).
- “Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, ‘Brothers, what shall we do?’ And Peter said to them, ‘Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.’” (Acts 2:37-38).

Categories or Expressions of Grace

III. Justifying Grace – The grace of pardon, or forgiveness. This grace saves us from the guilt of sin and restores us to God's favor.

Justifying grace leads us directly to the experience of new birth.

A biblical image of justifying grace is Christ crucified on the cross of Calvary.

Categories or Expressions of Grace

Passages of Scripture Evoking Justifying Grace:

- “For there is no distinction, since all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God; they are now justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a sacrifice of atonement by his blood, effective through faith.” (Romans 3:22b-25).
- “For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God – not the result of works, so that no one may boast.” (Ephesians 2:8-9).

Categories or Expressions of Grace

IV. Sanctifying Grace – The grace of holiness, or purification. This grace acts from our new birth onwards to heal us of the effects of sin and give us the power to live by Christ's love.

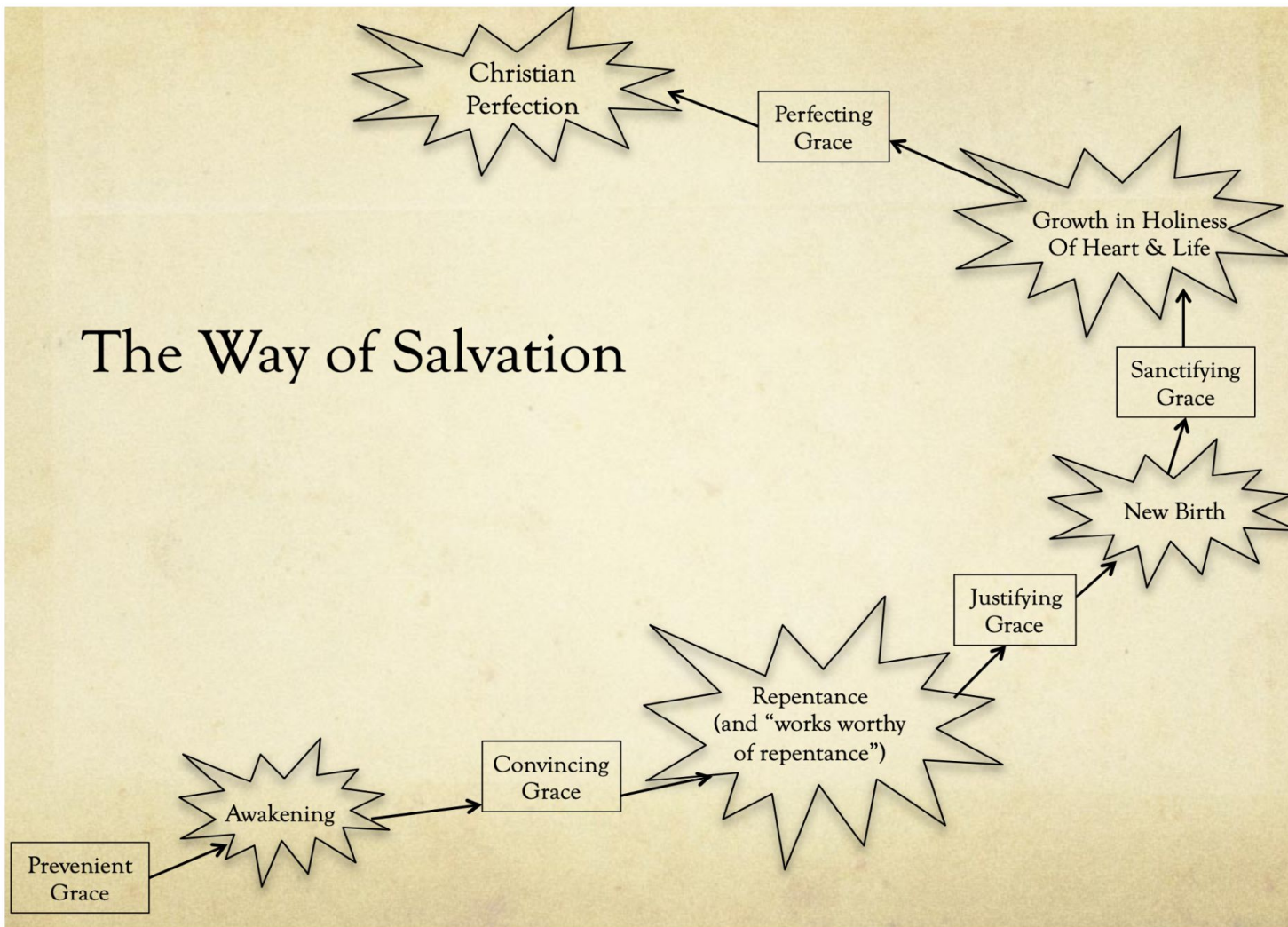
Biblical images of sanctifying grace are the many instances of believers receiving the anointing of the Holy Spirit in the Book of Acts.

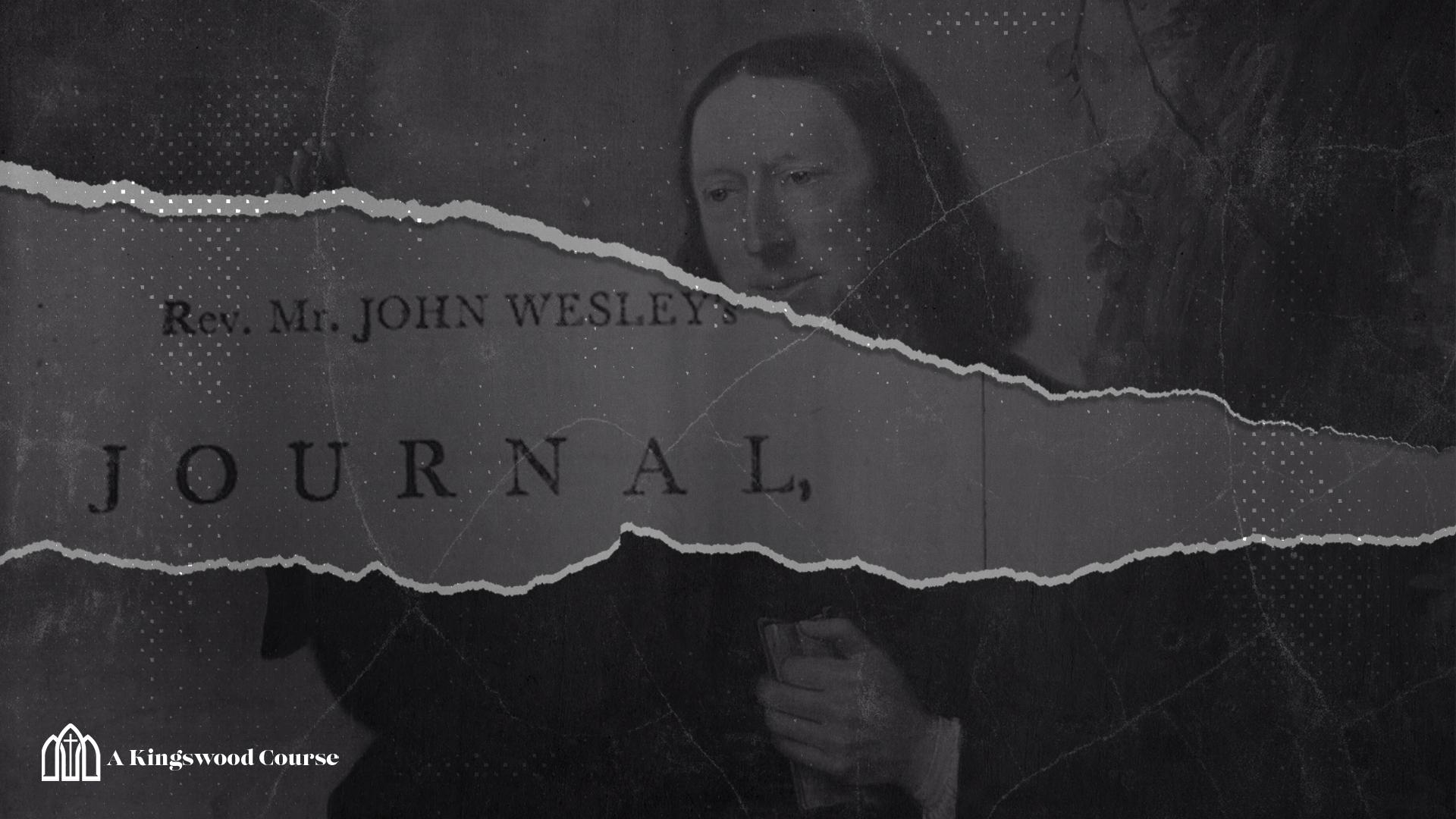
Categories or Expressions of Grace

Passages of Scripture Evoking Sanctifying Grace:

- “Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day.” (2 Corinthians 4:16b).
- “You have stripped off the old self with its practices and have clothed yourselves with the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge according to the image of its creator.” (Colossians 3:9b-10).
- “It is God’s will that you should be sanctified ... For God did not call us to be impure, but to live a holy life. Therefore, he who rejects this instruction does not reject man but God, who gives you his Holy Spirit.” (1 Thessalonians 4:3,7-8)

The Way of Salvation





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