



Hebrews 4:12 (KJV)

For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper
than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing
asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow,
and is a discernor of the thoughts of the intentions
of the heart.

SANCTIFYING GRACE

Becoming More Like Christ

Teaching Conference Notes

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Scripture references are included throughout for teaching and study. Readers and teachers are encouraged to read the cited passages directly from their preferred Bible translation.

This material is designed as a teaching resource. The speaker may expand, shorten, or adapt illustrations and discussion time according to the audience and ministry setting.

Teaching Purpose

To show that grace continues after conversion as the Holy Spirit restores, imparts new life, matures believers in love, and equips them for mission.

Teaching Sections

- One Grace, Experienced in Different Ways
- R - Restoring Relationships
- I - Imparting New Life
- P - Perfecting Us
- E - Equipping for Mission

Teaching Covenant

- Allow Scripture to examine your own heart before applying the teaching to someone else.
- Do not confuse grace with permission to remain unchanged.
- Listen for the invitation of the Holy Spirit and respond honestly.
- Ask, “Lord, what are You saying to me?”

Teaching Section 1: One Grace, Experienced in Different Ways

Read

Ephesians 2:8-10; Titus 2:11-14

Big Idea

The grace that draws and saves us is also the grace that continues to transform us.

Teach

There is one grace of God experienced in different ways. Prevenient grace describes God’s activity before our response. Justifying grace describes receiving the relationship God offers through Christ. Sanctifying grace describes the continuing work of the Holy Spirit in the believer.

Spiritual birth begins spiritual growth. Just as physical birth is a beginning rather than a completed life, justification begins a life that must mature.

Sanctifying grace is not self-improvement dressed in religious language. It is the dynamic work of the Holy Spirit in and through the believer.

Application

Stop measuring Christian life only by the date you began. Ask what the Holy Spirit is forming in you now.

Key Statements

- Grace begins before us, saves us, and continues transforming us.
- Spiritual birth is the beginning of growth.
- Sanctification is Spirit-led transformation.

Reflection and Discussion

- Where do you see evidence of spiritual growth?
- Where do you sense God still working?

Teaching Section 2: R - Restoring Relationships

Read

Romans 8:14-17; 2 Corinthians 5:18-20

Big Idea

Sanctifying grace continues healing the relationships damaged by sin.

Teach

We cannot earn God's love by changing our ways. The Spirit bears witness that we belong to God and affirms our identity as His children.

Restoration is part of spiritual growth: healing from the sickness and alienation of sin, learning to live reconciled to God and responsibly toward others.

Restoration does not mean pretending harm never occurred. Grace brings truth into the healing process and calls us toward faithful, wise relationships.

Application

Name the relationship most in need of God's restoring work: with God, another person, or within your own understanding of identity.

Key Statements

- Grace restores.
- Identity as God's child precedes performance.
- Reconciliation is part of maturity.

Reflection and Discussion

- Why is it difficult to believe we cannot earn God's love?
- Where is restoration needed?

Teaching Section 3: I - Imparting New Life

Read

Ezekiel 36:26-27; 2 Corinthians 5:17

Big Idea

Sanctifying grace does not merely change our status; the Holy Spirit works to change our heart.

Teach

The April teaching distinguishes justification and sanctification this way: justifying grace changes our status; sanctifying grace changes our heart.

God imparts new life, new light, new strength, and a new heart. Grace becomes increasingly visible in who we are, not merely in what we claim.

This is the movement toward new creation: patterns, desires, reactions, priorities, and relationships are brought under Christ's transforming influence.

Application

Do not settle for a Christian label without Christian formation. Ask where Christ's life needs to become more visible in your character.

Key Statements

- Grace gives new life.
- Transformation reaches the heart.
- New creation becomes visible in character.

Reflection and Discussion

- What heart-level changes have you seen since following Christ?
- Where do you need new strength?

Teaching Section 4: P - Perfecting Us

Read

John 15:1-8; Galatians 5:22-23

Big Idea

God matures believers in love and Christlikeness through an ongoing process that includes fruitfulness and pruning.

Teach

Conversion is decisive, but growth is not completed all at once. The Spirit develops maturity and the fruit of the Spirit over time.

Jesus' picture of the vine includes pruning. A life in grace is a life in process, and some of that process can be painful because God removes what hinders fruitfulness.

The April teaching uses "perfect" in the sense of mature or complete and speaks of the doctrine of "the more": more love, more power for faithful living, more peace, and more joy as we continue growing in grace.

Illustration

A fruitful branch is not punished by pruning; it is prepared for greater fruitfulness.

Application

Ask what God may be pruning, strengthening, or maturing rather than assuming every discomfort means abandonment.

Key Statements

- Growth is a process.
- Pruning serves fruitfulness.
- Christian maturity is maturity in love.

Reflection and Discussion

- Where is spiritual pruning taking place?

- What would maturity in love look like in your present relationships?

Teaching Section 5: E - Equipping for Mission

Read

1 Corinthians 12:4-7; Matthew 22:37-39; Matthew 28:18-20

Big Idea

The Holy Spirit transforms us not only for personal growth but also to equip us for Christ's work in the world.

Teach

The Spirit gives gifts for ministry and strength for obedience. Sanctifying grace turns inward transformation outward into service.

The Great Commandment and Great Commission belong together: love God and neighbor, and make disciples. Mature grace becomes active mission.

The movement of sanctifying grace is from self-directed living toward Spirit-led living, producing holiness, wholeness, Christlikeness, and service.

Application

Identify one gift, strength, experience, or opportunity God can use through you in service to another person.

Key Statements

- Grace equips.
- Spiritual gifts are given for service.
- Maturity moves from self-direction toward Spirit-led mission.

Reflection and Discussion

- What gifts has God given you?
- What keeps believers from stepping into mission?

Closing Challenge

Do not stop at spiritual birth. Remain open to the Holy Spirit's restoring, imparting, perfecting, and equipping work until the life of Christ becomes increasingly visible through you.

Closing Prayer

Holy Spirit, continue Your work in us. Restore what is broken, impart new life, mature us in love, and equip us to serve. Make us holy, whole, and increasingly like Jesus. Amen.

Personal Response

What is the Lord showing me personally?

What truth do I need to receive or obey?

What specific act of obedience will begin this week?

Spiritual Birth and Spiritual Growth

Read

Philippians 1:6; 1 Peter 2:2-3

Deepening the Teaching

Just as physical birth begins growth, justification begins the believer’s continuing formation. Sanctifying grace names the Holy Spirit’s ongoing work of making us increasingly like Christ.

Growth is neither self-improvement without God nor passive waiting without response. Grace empowers practices, choices, community, obedience, and mission.

Teaching Application

Ask participants to name one area where they can see genuine growth since beginning to follow Christ.

Key Takeaway

Grace is not merely a truth to understand; it is God’s gift to receive and a life to live.

Notes / Personal Response

R - Restoring Relationships

Read

2 Corinthians 5:18-20

Deepening the Teaching

Sanctifying grace heals what sin has damaged. Restoration begins with God and reaches outward toward others and inward toward a healthier identity.

We do not earn God’s love by repairing ourselves first. We receive love and then learn to live from that restored relationship.

Teaching Application

Identify one relationship that needs prayer, truth, boundaries, forgiveness, or reconciliation.

Key Takeaway

Grace is not merely a truth to understand; it is God’s gift to receive and a life to live.

Notes / Personal Response

I - Imparting New Life

Read

Ezekiel 36:26-27; Galatians 2:20

Deepening the Teaching

Your April teaching distinguishes changed status from changed heart. Justifying grace declares a new standing; sanctifying grace increasingly forms a new way of living.

The Spirit gives new desires, strength, light, and direction. Old patterns may not disappear instantly, but grace creates capacity for a genuinely different life.

Teaching Application

Ask: What desire or habit is the Holy Spirit reshaping in me?

Key Takeaway

Grace is not merely a truth to understand; it is God's gift to receive and a life to live.

Notes / Personal Response

P - Perfecting in Love

Read

Matthew 5:48; Colossians 3:12-14

Deepening the Teaching

Christian perfection in this teaching is maturity or completeness in love, not a claim of flawless performance. The goal is a heart increasingly ordered by love of God and neighbor.

Maturity can be real today and still deepen tomorrow. We can become more patient, more generous, more peaceful, and more Christlike as grace continues its work.

Teaching Application

Choose one fruit of the Spirit to practice intentionally for the next seven days.

Key Takeaway

Grace is not merely a truth to understand; it is God's gift to receive and a life to live.

Notes / Personal Response

Pruning and the Pain of Growth

Read

John 15:1-8

Deepening the Teaching

Jesus' vine imagery reminds us that fruitfulness includes pruning. Some growth requires letting go of habits, loyalties, attitudes, or distractions that once felt normal.

Not every painful event is divine pruning, but God can use conviction, correction, discipline, and wise community to remove what prevents fruitfulness.

Teaching Application

Ask participants what God may be asking them to release so healthier fruit can grow.

Key Takeaway

Grace is not merely a truth to understand; it is God's gift to receive and a life to live.

Notes / Personal Response

E - Equipping for Mission

Read

1 Corinthians 12:4-7; Ephesians 4:11-16

Deepening the Teaching

Sanctifying grace is not only inward improvement. The Spirit equips believers to participate in Christ's work. Gifts are given for service and for building up the body.

Maturity and mission belong together. The more Christ forms us, the more our lives become available for love, witness, service, and disciple-making.

Teaching Application

Identify one gift, skill, experience, or resource that can be placed more fully in God's service.

Key Takeaway

Grace is not merely a truth to understand; it is God's gift to receive and a life to live.

Notes / Personal Response

The Doctrine of More

Read

Ephesians 3:16-21

Deepening the Teaching

Your April teaching calls sanctifying grace the doctrine of “the more”: more love, more power for holy living, more peace, more joy, and deeper Christlikeness. This is not a promise of an easier life; it is confidence that God is not finished forming us.

Spiritual complacency says, “This is enough.” Sanctifying grace asks, “What more does Christ desire to form in me?”

Teaching Application

Have participants complete: Lord, I want more of Your ____ in my life.

Key Takeaway

Grace is not merely a truth to understand; it is God’s gift to receive and a life to live.

Notes / Personal Response

Conference Response: From Self-Directed to Spirit-Led

Read

Galatians 5:16-25

Deepening the Teaching

The goal of sanctifying grace is a life increasingly led by the Spirit. The fruit of the Spirit gives practical language for examining that transformation.

End not with vague inspiration but with a next step: remain connected to Christ, practice the means of grace, stay in community, obey what God reveals, and serve.

Teaching Application

Allow prayer for fresh surrender to the Holy Spirit and one written commitment for the coming week.

Key Takeaway

Grace is not merely a truth to understand; it is God’s gift to receive and a life to live.

Notes / Personal Response
