

## The Absolute Basics of the Wesleyan Way – Chapter 8

1. Last chapter dealt with *justification*; this chapter shifts to *sanctification*. Sanctification is the process by which God makes us holy.
  - a. Are you familiar with the word “sanctification?” If you’ve heard it before, what does it bring to mind?
  - b. What are some healthy and unhealthy ways to talk about sanctification in church?
2. Both the Old and New Testaments present holiness as a characteristic of God – and as a characteristic God wants his people to have (1 Peter 1:15-16, for example).
  - a. What does it mean to say that God is holy?
  - b. In what ways can humans be holy?
  - c. Why is holiness a good thing for us to desire?
3. Sometimes the New Birth (being born again) can be spoken of as “initial sanctification.” That is why Christians are referred to as “saints” (“holy ones”) so often in the New Testament. When we’re born again the Holy Spirit comes to live within us. The Holy Spirit is the agent of sanctification.
  - a. Consider the authors’ illustration of learning to play the upright bass. How does this illustrate sanctification?
  - b. Still considering their illustration, whose activity is required for you to learn to play the upright bass? Are some actions more important than others? Why?
  - c. We talk about salvation being “by grace through faith, not by works.” (We see this explicitly in Ephesians 2.) Because sanctification is part of salvation, this is just as true of sanctification as it is of justification. When you consider that God’s intention is for us to be holy, how is becoming holy “by grace through faith, not by works?” What is meant by “works?” What do “works” have to do with the process?
4. On pages 50-51 the authors say, “God wants to make us so distinct, so set apart, so holy, that our connection to God shapes all our decisions... The key point here is that God calls his people to be different. Different from the world and different from the way we were when God first saved us.”

- a. How has your life changed since you first became a Christian?
  - b. How have the changes in your life tracked with your expectations?
  - c. What does it look and feel like for “our connection to God to shape all our decisions?” What examples do you have of how that works?
  - d. What are some ways in our context that Christians need to be different from the people around us?
5. The authors say, “Sanctification is the twofold process of dying to sin and growing in grace.”
- a. Consider Romans 6. What do you see here about “dying to sin?”
  - b. What has been your experience of “dying to sin?” What does that look like in our context?
  - c. What keeps us from “dying to sin?” Why is it difficult?
  - d. What does it mean to “grow in grace?”
  - e. What some ways you have grown in grace since you became a Christian?
  - f. What are some ways you would like to grow in grace in the future?
  - g. What are some things the church does – or can do – to help people “die to sin” and “grow in grace?”
  - h. How up front and intentional is the church in helping people “die to sin” and “grow in grace?”