



THE MESSENGER

FIRST METHODIST CHURCH SPLENDORA

*Worship Passionately, Love Extravagantly
and Witness Boldly*

AUGUST 2025

www.firstmethodistchurchsplendora.org

Rev. Steven G. Lightfoot, Pastor

PASTOR'S MESSAGE



Entire Sanctification: What Is It and How Do I Get It?

Rev. Steven G. Lightfoot

I want to reflect this Summer on our initial study (has it really been two years ago?) on *Entire Sanctification*. I think it is important and requires that we revisit it from time to time, as we run this race, to remind us that the goal is still the goal.

Sanctification is the first step after justification. After we say "yes" to Jesus, we are immediately transformed into a child of the most high God, and we set out on our sanctifying journey. We work out, that is persevere and prove, our salvation daily on this sanctifying road, becoming more and more like Christ, following in his footsteps into perfect love, perfect righteousness, perfect holiness.

Make no mistake, as Paul tells us in Romans 5, it is not an easy journey to sanctification. We know *"that tribulation brings about perseverance;*

*⁴ and perseverance, proven character;
and proven character, hope;⁵ and*

hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us."

It is this working through tribulation that leads us to sanctification and ultimately entire sanctification, either gradually over time or suddenly all at once.

I want you to begin to understand that the purpose of each and every Christian person is to lead a sanctified life, to become holy. In John Wesley's sermon, *"The Scripture Way of Salvation"* he defines sanctification (holiness) for us: ***At the same time that we are justified, yea, in that very moment, sanctification begins. In that instant we are "born again," "born from above," "born of the Spirit." There is a real as well as a relative change. We are inwardly renewed by the power of God. We feel the "love of God shed abroad in our heart by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us," producing love to all mankind, and more especially to the children of God; expelling the love of the world, the love of pleasure, of ease, of honor [fame/attention/flattery, accolades], of money; together with pride, anger, self-will, and every other evil temper – in a word, changing the "earthly, sensual, devilish" mind into "the mind which was in Christ Jesus."***

Holiness is the result of God changing us from the inside out. We ask God for a clean heart and a right spirit and he
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gives us a clean heart and a right spirit. We pray for renewal, and God gives us renewal. We pray for God's will to be done in our lives and God's will is done in our lives. We cease being about the flesh, and we gravitate toward the things of God. And all of this transformation is by faith.

In his book *Perfect Love*, Kevin Watson gives us Wesley's description of this faith that leads to entire sanctification, which he describes as "love excluding sin." A person who has received entire sanctification, Wesley says, no longer sins because they have been captivated by the love of God. Wesley then says, don't take my word for it, take it from the authority of Scripture:

1 John 3:9 tells us, ***"No one who has been born of God practices sin, because His seed remains in him; and he cannot go on sinning, because he has been born of God."***

Wesley outlined the faith process concerning entire sanctification in 4 ordered steps, each one building on the step before it:

God has promised entire sanctification in Scripture

What God promises, God is able to do
God is able and willing to do it now
God actually does it

Paul tells us in Galatians 2:20, ***"I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me."***

In short, God delivers us, in entire sanctification from inward as well as outward sin. Wesley taught that entire sanctification brings with it a purification of heart by faith, which means that the receiver of entire sanctification is free from sins... sins like unrighteous anger. They might be angry at sins that are committed, at offences against God, like Jesus driving the moneychangers from the temple,

but at the same time they are angry at the offence against God, they feel only love and compassion for the offender. Can you see the difference between anger at sin and anger or hatred toward those who sin against us? The entirely sanctified person offers grace freely, just as Jesus offers grace. The entirely sanctified person is not defined just by the absence of sin in their heart, but rather is the person whose whole heart is totally filled with the love of God... with love for God and with love for people.

When I was ordained, I swore an oath to move on toward perfection. I proclaimed in front of an auditorium full of people that I would persevere, that I would endure, doggedly, toward the prize that is in Christ Jesus our Lord. I vowed to reach, to stretch, to strain for the hope of purity in Christ, and to lead others in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. What I truly vowed was that I would strive for perfection in love, in life, in holiness – that I would live into an entirely sanctified life. I work at understanding it each and every day, through reading and study. And I pray for God to grant me the sanctified life that I know he wants to give me. I ask and I ask and I ask again because I want him to hear my desire and to bestow that gift upon my life.

While I wait, the waiting is not static, the waiting is not passive, not at all. The waiting involves growth... As a result of my increase in understanding the heart of God, I have grown in my faith. I have changed as a person. I have been transformed and I am being sanctified day by day. And every day I see where I am now, ...today, ...not the man I used to be. That's a whole sermon in and of itself, but what I really want to say is that...

You too can be changed. You too can be transformed. You too can be entirely sanctified. All that is needed is for you to
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raise your expectations... raise your eyes to the level of the abilities and desire of God for your life, as explained to you in Scripture.

God desires that you be made holy. Believe God and it will be counted to you as righteousness. Believe God is able and that his promises are true. Believe God is willing. Believe God will do it and he will do it.

Entire sanctification, holiness of life, scriptural holiness is within your reach as a child of God. Entire sanctification, the absence of the desire to sin, the absence of the impact of sin on your life, the filling of the void in your heart, created by the absence of sin, with the God, who is by his very nature Love. That life is yours for the asking. Are you asking yet?

By His Grace,
Pastor Steven†

SUNDAY SCHOOL & BIBLE STUDY

For the entire month of August, there will be no Sunday School or Bible Study in order to give everyone a break. Sunday School will resume on September 7th and Class Meetings will resume Wednesday, September 10th. Bible Study will return later in the Fall.

EXTRA MEASURE OF SECURITY

You may have noticed there have been cameras installed outside and inside our church as an extra measure of security in addition to the burglar alarm. If you are working at the church during “off hours,” it is prudent to keep the doors locked and practice caution in opening the door to strangers when you are alone in the building. Your safety is very important.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**3rd- Holy Communion Sunday and
Worship 9AM***

**6th- Live Nativity Meeting 5:30PM
Fellowship Hall**

10th- Worship Service 9AM*

Board of Stewards Meeting 12:45PM

16th- Food Pantry Day 9:00AM

17th- Worship Service 9AM*

24th- Worship Service 9AM*

**31st- Laity Sunday—Bob Hantelman
giving the message 9AM***

***Worship in-person or online**



AUGUST ANNIVERSARIES AND BIRTHDAYS

9 Pastor Steven Lightfoot

10 Diana LeBlanc

14 Leslie Bernard

♥ 17 Joe & Jeanette Melton

25 Jeremiah Johnson

26 Tracy Blake

♥ 28 Ellis & Linda Duke

28 Patty Lyons

29 Frankie Jones

30 Sherrie Johnson

♥ 31 Gene & Angie Ainsworth



LIVE NATIVITY IS RETURNING TO FMCS

The Board of Stewards has decided to coordinate the Christmas Angels Ministry along with a live Nativity program. A committee has been formed to bring the program out to the community. Angel Van Ostrand has accepted to coordinate the event with the help of many members. Mark your calendar for December 7th at 6:30PM for the event. If you are interested in helping or participating, there will be another planning meeting on Wednesday, August 6th at 5:30PM in the church Fellowship Hall. We hope to see you there. If you cannot make that meeting, get with Angel to find out how you can help.



BINGO NIGHT FUNDRAISER

On Friday, July 18, our church had our first Bingo Fundraiser and raffle. Sherry Stallings and Shirley Madruga co-chaired the event and it turned out to be quite a success! Including Bingo card sales, raffle and concession stand, the event earned \$1,700! A big Shout-out to Billie Jackson and Sherry Stallings for their donations of beautiful quilts and a crocheted afghan for the raffle. There will be another Bingo Night Fundraiser coming perhaps in the Fall. Watch for the announcement.

THE QUIET PLACE OF PRAYER

Prayer is worship. Out praying should be full of adoration, affection, and fondness for God—that He is who He is; that He created us in order to have someone on whom He could shower His love; that He stretched out His arms on the cross; that He intends, in the fullest sense, to make whole men and women out of us. In worship, as the old word *worth-ship* implies, we declare what we value the most. It's one of the best ways in the world to love God.

Prayer is the highest expression of our dependence on God. It's asking for what we want. We can ask for anything—even the most difficult things. *"Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God"* [Phillipians 4:6]. Anything large enough to occupy our minds is large enough to hang a prayer on.

Prayer, however by its nature is *requesting*. It's not insisting or clamoring. We can make no demands or deals with God. Friends don't make demands. They ask and then wait. We ask and then wait. We wait with patience and submission until God gives us what we request—or something more.

Prayer is asking for understanding. It's the way we comprehend what He is saying to us in Scriptures. Prayer focuses and unites our fragmented hearts.

In the quiet place of prayer, God comforts, instructs and listens to us. There we learn to love and worship Him.

Excerpted and adapted from *Seeing God* by David Roper c 2006 Discovery House Publishers.



PRAYER REQUESTS

*“The LORD is my rock, my fortress
and my deliverer; my God is my rock,
in whom I take refuge.” [Psalm 18:2]*

Gary & Merle Fritz
Ron & Debbie Hazelip - Hospice
Family of Joshua Dixon - Grief
Amy Tompkins Ricks - Caregiver
Fred Schaefer – Peace
Jeremiah Johnson
Carolyn Tompkins
Anita Gaudreau
Kelly Gaudreau
Travis & Marlyn Knowlton
Ray Ricks—continued healing
William Blake
The Smart Family
Tess Nardozi & Family
Lillian Kinard
Janice Langford
Tommy Johnson
Patti Lyons
Connie & Billy Gibson
Shirley & Bob Adams
Shirley Schumaker
David Goodrum
Cynthia Manis
Charles & Mawana Jones
Van Ostrand Family
Duke, Masterson and Shugart Families
Unspoken
Jeff & Christine Marzolla
Staff, Teachers and students preparing
for the new school year
Planning for the December Nativity
Emmaus Walk 125
Our Church
Pastor Seven & Family
Board of Stewards Meeting - August
10th - Planning for Church/Charge
Conference
Our Country



LOCAL METHODIST CHURCH NEWS

The MidTexas Annual Conference is leading disaster relief initiatives in the wake of severe flooding that impacted many communities within and near the surrounding area of the conference.

The catastrophic loss of life in Kerrville is overwhelming. Much of the flooding took place at **camps and RV parks**, though many homes and businesses were impacted. Kerrville GMC is working with disaster relief ministry, ***Texans on Mission*** and other relief groups to provide pastoral care, a depot for needed supplies, debris clearing and financial support for those who are in crisis due to the flood. They are also reaching out to neighboring communities in Hunt, Center Point and Comfort.

Though outside of the MidTexas Annual Conference, Ruidoso has experienced devastating floods in recent years. **Over 1,500 homes** have been lost in the last few years, with **300 from the most recent flood**. The MidTexas Annual Conference has given a grant to the Ruidoso GMC to help provide direct assistance to those most severely impacted. Ruidoso GMC assigns individual church members to care for impacted families. They pray with them, check in on them regularly and direct resources to assist rebuilding.

Please keep these areas in your prayers as restoration will take a long time.

