



What is salvation?

AND WHY DOES IT MATTER?

Are we humans basically good? ... Or basically bad?

GOOD...

“Then God said, ‘Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness...” Genesis 1:26

“You have made them a little lower than the angels and crowned them with glory and honor.” Psalm 8:5

BAD...

“There is no one righteous, not even one; ... All have turned away, ... there is no one who does good, not even one.” Romans 1:10, 12

“[F]or all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.” Romans 3:23



Image of God

“In his sermon ‘The New Birth’ ... John Wesley used three phrases to mark the dimensions of being created in the image of God: **natural image** (we are spiritual beings with freedom of will); **political image** (we are governors of the created world and engaged in relationships with others); and **moral image** (we are intended for holiness and righteousness).”

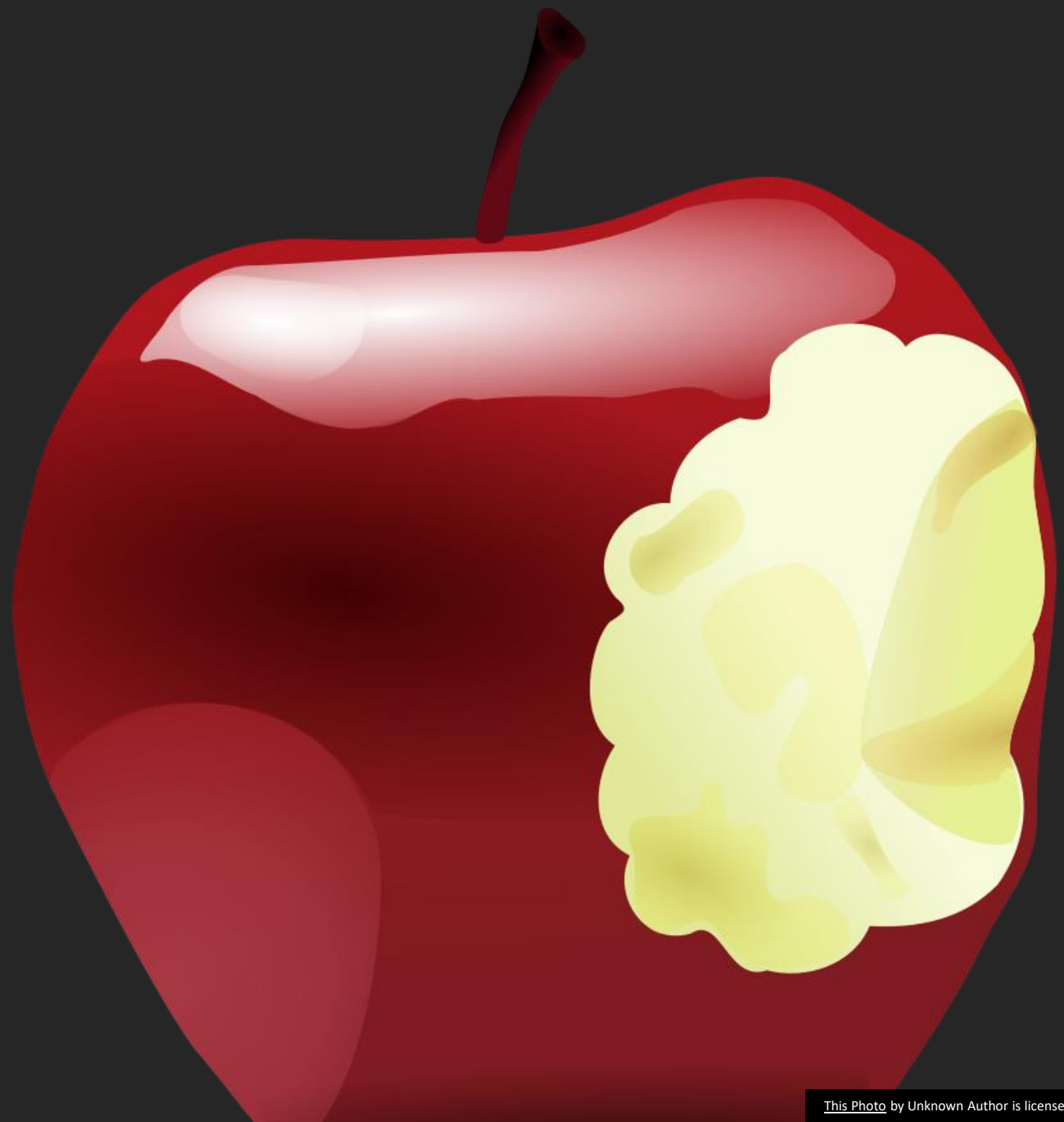
*So God created humankind
in his image, in the image of God
he created them; male and female
he created them.*

Genesis 1.27

Original Sin

“The instrument is now quite untuned.” (Wesley’s Sermon, **The Image of God**)

“The same account is given by all the Apostles, yea, by the whole tenor of the oracles of God. From all these we learn, concerning man in his natural state, unassisted by the grace of God, that ‘every imagination of the thoughts of his heart is’ still ‘evil, only evil,’ and that ‘continually.’” (Wesley’s Sermon [Original Sin](#), II,1).



Our Sin Problem

What is Sin?

- Disobeying God
- Missing the mark
- Turning away from God
- Trying to do it all ourselves



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Sin's Consequences

- Separation from God
- Alienation from others
- Brokenness
- “For the wages of sin is death...” Romans 6:23



God's Response

“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.” John 3:16 (NIV)

The Work of Christ: AMAZING GRACE!

DYING FOR OUR SINS...



CONQUERING DEATH...



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Wesley's Three-Fold View of Grace

1. Preventive Grace
2. Justifying Grace
3. Sanctifying Grace

Grace

Prevenient Grace

Prevenient grace literally means "the grace that comes before." Prevenient grace calls us into a relationship with God before we are even aware of God. It prepares us for the dawning awareness that God loves us so much that God seeks us out first.

John Wesley likened prevenient grace to the **porch** of a beautiful house, beckoning us to step up to the door and come inside.

Repentance is the human response to this grace. Repentance is a choice we make to turn away from our own path and to instead turn home toward God.

Justifying Grace

John Wesley likened justifying grace to the door of God's house.

When we ask God to forgive us of our sins and place our faith/trust in Jesus to save us from the consequences of those sins, God forgives us, and we become reconciled / set right / reunited with God!

Through the work of God in Christ our sins are forgiven, and our relationship with God is restored. According to John Wesley, the image of God — which has been distorted by sin — is renewed within us through Christ's death.



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About a quarter before nine,
while he was describing the change
which God works in the heart
through faith in Christ,

I felt my heart strangely warmed.

I felt I did trust in Christ,
Christ alone for salvation,
and an assurance was given me
that He had taken away my sins,
even mine, and saved me
from the law of sin and death."

John Wesley, 1738

Sanctifying Grace

Sanctifying grace enables us to grow into the image of Christ and leads to inward and outward holiness. Wesley likened sanctifying grace to ascending a **staircase** within God's house.

Salvation is not a static, one-time event in our lives. It is the ongoing experience of God's gracious presence transforming us into whom God intends us to be. John Wesley described this dimension of God's grace as sanctification, or holiness.

Through God's sanctifying grace, we grow and mature in our ability to live as Jesus lived. As we pray, study the Scriptures, fast, worship, and share in fellowship with other Christians, we deepen our knowledge of and love for God. As we respond with compassion to human need and work for justice in our communities, we strengthen our capacity to love neighbor. Our inner thoughts and motives, as well as our outer actions and behavior, become more and more aligned with God's will and testify to our union with God.



Christian Perfection

The goal of the sanctified life is to be perfected in love, to experience the pure love of God and others, a holiness of heart and life, a total death to sin. We're not there yet; but by God's grace, as we United Methodists say, "*we're going on to perfection!*"

Wesley described *Christian perfection* as a heart "habitually filled with the love of God and neighbor" and as "having the mind of Christ and walking as he walked."

SOURCES

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