**Wesley Academy 1**

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I. Life of John Wesley: 1703-1791

1688: Marriage of Samuel Wesley and Susanna Wesley.

1697: Samuel Wesley as priest of Church of England in Epworth parish.

June 17, 1703: John Wesley's birth as the 15th child among 19 children (9 children died in young age and 10 children grew to adulthood.) (From 1752 John's birth day became June 28 because of English congress ‘decision to use a new calendar.)

1707: Charles Wesley's birth as the 16th child.

Feb. 9, 1709: John at six years old was delivered from fire and his mother made his nickname "a brand plucked from the burning."

Jan. 28, 1714: John became a student of Charterhouse, a middle school and high school.

1716: Charles became a student of Westminster, course for middle school and high school.

June 24, 1720: John entered Oxford University Christ Church with a scholarship of 40 pounds. He studied classic literature, Latin poem, Greek New Testament, Hebrew Old Testament and theological books (no seminary at that time).

Sep. 19, 1725: John was ordained as deacon pastor by Bishop Potter and started to write a spiritual journal after reading of book of Jeremy Tayler's book on about Christian perfection.

March 17, 1726: John became a fellow of Oxford University Lincoln College and exercised holy life through reading works of Thomas a Kempis and William Law. He made a schedule to study theological books on Sunday, classics on Monday and Tuesday, logic on Wednesday, language on Thursday, metaphysics and physics on Friday and rhetorics, poetry and sermons.

Sep. 24, 1726: John started the course of M.A. (Master of Liberal Art)

1727: Charles was selected as a student of Christ Church.

Sep. 28, 1728: John was ordained as an elder pastor after two years of ministry in Epworth parish.

Nov. 1729: John joined Holy Club which Charles organized at Oxford University.

1735: Samuel died and two brothers left for mission in Georgia, U.S.A.

Dec. 1735: John was shocked by twenty six Moravians' peaceful and joyful attitude during a big storm.

Jan. 1736: Two brothers arrived in Savanna, Georgia.

August, 1736: Charles returned to England and John was struggled by the sue of Sophy Hopkey and her uncle.

Dec. 2, 1737: John left Savanna because of a serious trial.

Feb. 1, 1738: John returned to England and met Peter Boehler as spiritual counselor.

May 21, 1738: Charles's experience of regeneration.

May 24, 1738: John's experience of regeneration at Aldersgate street.

Sep. 1738: John's visit to Moravian center in Hernnhut.

April 1, 1739: John's first outfield preaching.

May 9, 1739: Construction of the first Methodist chapel (New Room) in Bristol.

Dec. 1739: John organized London Methodist Society with George Whitefield.

July 18, 1740 Fetter Lane Society was separated.

1741: Band meetings which were organized at Nicholas Street and Baldwin Street during 1738 and 1739 were more strengthened.

1742: According to the suggestion of Captain Foy, class meeting was organized for payment to debt of construction of New Room.

June 6, 1742: John visited his father Samuel's church and wanted to preach in that church, but he preached over his father's graveyard outside of church because he was forbidden to preach in that church by the Church of England.

1743: United Societies was organized by 5,000 Methodist members.

Oct. 20, 1743: John was attacked by people in Wednesbury.

June 25, 1744: First Methodist annual conference was held.

August 24, 1744: John preached his last sermon in Oxford University; sermon title was "Hypocrites."

1745: First lay preachers, Thomas Maxfield and John Cennick were appointed; 50 lay preachers were appointed.

1748: Kingswood School was opened.

1749: The books of *Christian Library* which Methodist members must read were published.

Feb. 18, 1751: John married Mrs. Mary Vazeille who had four children. At that time John was forty seven years old.

May, 1751: John resigned his teaching position as fellow of Oxford University; he held his teaching position for twenty five years and three months.

Jan., 1755: *Notes Upon the New Testament* was published.

Jan. 31, 1766: *A Plain Account of Christian Perfection* was published.

1777: Wesley's Chapel, City Road in London, was dedicated to Mother Church of World Methodists.

Oct. 8, 1781: John‘s wife Mary passed away, but he did not attend her funeral service because they were separated.

Feb. 28, 1784: John made Deed of Declaration and “The Legal Hundred" for preparation of his death.

Sep. 1-2, 1784: John ordained Thomas Coke who was already ordained as elder pastor in the Church of England as general superintendent for ordination of Francis Asbury.

Dec. 24, 1784: Francis Asbury was ordained as general superintendent on the third day after the deacon on the first day and elder on the second day.

Aug. 14, 1785: John Fletcher who was appointed as John's successor passed away and his wife Mary became an extraordinary preacher.

1787: Manchester conference appointed Sarah Mallet as the first official woman lay preacher.

March 29, 1788: Charles passed away.

July 30, 1790: John wrote a letter to politician William Wilberforce to work for the liberation of black slavery continuously.

Feb. 22, 1791: John wrote his last sermon and last letter.

Mar. 2, 1791: John passed away and was buried in the backyard of Wesley's Chapel at City Road in London when he was 87 years and 8 months. His height was 160CM, his weight was 55kG, his published books were more than 200, he preached 42,000 times in 50 years and he journeyed 400,000 km for evangelism.

II. Historical Theological Backgrounds:

A. St. Augustine:

1. Prevenient grace: Augustine's concept of prevenient grace influenced Wesley.

"Qui fecit nos sine nobis, non salvabit nos sine nobis."

2. Sanctification: Augustine's concept of sanctification influenced Wesley.

3. Good works: Augustine's concept of good works influence Wesley. (good works as final salvation's condition)

B. Martin Luther:

1. Justification by faith through grace: Aldersgate street experience.

2. Criticism about Lutheran Moravian's solafieism after visiting to Herrnhut:

The debate between Wesley and Zinzendorf in Sep. 3, 1741 at Gray's Inn Walks in London:

1) Z: perfectio in Christus<---->W: perfectio in se; Z: Luther's ‘simul justus et peccator’ perspective ("Christus est sola perfectio nostra": "Christ is our only perfection"..."Omnis nostra perfectio est in Christo"[All our perfection is in Christ]...."Omnis Christiana perfectio est, fides in sanguine Christi" [All Christian perfection is simply faith in Christ's blood.])<----> W; inherent and imparted righteousness.... "should live a holy life"... "he is holy in se (in himself) as well as in Christus (in Christ)"..."Ego vero credo, Spiritum Christi operari perfectionem in vere Christianis"(Truly I believe that it is The Spirit of Christ that works in true Christian to achieve their perfection.)

2) Z: imputata perfectio<---->W: inhaerens perfectio); Z: "Nullam inhaerentem perfectionem in hac vita agnosco."( I know of no such thing as inherent perfection in this life...."Est tota Christiana perfectio, imputataa, non inhraerens."

3) Z: "Sanctitas evangelica est fides"(Faith is evangelical sanctification)<---->W:"Nonne credens, dum crescit in amore, crescit pariter in sanctitate?"(Don't you believe that while he or she is growing in love, he or she is growing in holiness?)

4) Z: momentary sanctification("Eo momento quo justificatur, sanctificatur penitus"..."Totaliter amat eo momento, sicut totaliter sanctificatur"...."non magis aut minus") <---->W: gradual sanctification(II Cor. 4:16, "Renovaamur de die in diem"[We are renewed day by day.]..."crescendum esse in gratia" [pursuit of holiness through means of grace])

C. John Calvin:

1. Third use of the law: Wesley was influenced by Calvin's third use of the law through his mother Susanna. So he emphasized spiritual discipline for sanctification with law of love.

2. Criticism about double predestination:

3. Free will as prevenient grace against Calvin's slaved will:

4. Imputation and impartation against Calvinist's imputation alone:

D. The Church of England:

1. High church system: liturgical worship including sacrament, formal worship order and written prayer.

2. Mysticism: Jeremy Taylor and William Law.

3. Arminianism: Wesley learned Arminianism from the Church of England and developed further.

E. The Eastern Orthodox Church:

1. Macarius: divinization (theopoiesis).

2. John Crysostom: free will and love.

3. Gregory of Nyssa: gradual sanctification by the power of the Holy Spirit.

III. Prevenient Grace:

<Introduction>

When Adam and Eve fell, we lost our holiness and righteousness. But our natural image of God: reason, will and emotion are partially corrupted. The grace of prevenient restores our natural image of God.

So if we are touched by prevenient grace we can do justice and love mercy and walk humbly with God like Micah 6:8. Biblical scholars see Mica 6:8 as one of the most democratic messages. As you know Jimmy Carter took his vows on Micah 6:8 when he had inauguration ceremony of president of U.S.A. Wesley also used Micah 6: 8 as main text to explain the concept of prevenient grace: "do justice, love mercy and walk with God humbly." We can see Wesley's expression in his sermon, "The Scripture Way of Salvation":

If we take this in its utmost extent it will include

all that is wrought in the soul by what is frequently

termed 'natural conscience', but more properly,

'preventing grace'; all the 'drawings' of 'the

Father', the desires after God, which, if we yield

to them, increase more and more; all that 'light'

wherewith the son of God 'enlightened every

one that cometh into the world', showing every

man 'to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk

humbly with his God'; all the convictions which

his Spirit from time to time works in every

child of man. Although it is true the generality

of men stifle them as soon as possible, and

after while forget, or at least deny, that ever

they had them at all.

This prevenient grace is the grace comes from God before even we have faith. Pre means before and vein means come in Latin. So this grace comes on us before faith. This prevenient grace is given to all the human beings. Wesley believed Jesus the Christ died for all the human beings, while John Calvin believed Jesus the Christ died for the limited number of predestined people.

Wesley emphasized in his sermon "Free Grace":

First, it is free in all to whom it is given.

It does not depend on any pore or merit

in man; no, not in any degree, neither in

whole, nor in part. It does not in any wise

depend either on the good works or

righteousness of the receiver; not on anything

he has done, or anything he is. It does not

depend on his endeavours. It does not depend

on his good tempers, or good desires, or

good purposes and intentions; for all these

flow from the free grace of God.

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But is it free for all, as well as in all? To this

some have answered: "No: it is free only for

those whom God hath ordained to life, and they

are but a little flock. The greater part of mankind

God has ordained to death; and it is not free

for them. Them God hateth; and therefore before

they were born decreed they should die eternally.

Even though this grace is given to all the people, so many people do not know it, forget it and deny it. There is a famous painting by Hullman Hunt "Jesus who is knocking at our door of mind." This painting shows Jesus knocking at our door of mind. But he cannot open our mind. We must open our mind from inside. That means prevenient grace is given to all, but it is "responsible grace" which Randy Maddox, Duke University professor interprets since it is up to us whether we open the door or not.

In Luke chapter 19 we know Zaccaeus who climbed up mulberry tree to see Jesus because he was very short. Like Zacchaeus we have to climbed to the tree to see Jesus, when Jesus comes to us.

We had an art piece in my university, Methodist Theological University in Seoul, which I and my classmates of seminary donated: 2 meter by 2meter ceramic to show clearly prevenient grace on the wall of main chapel of the university. This painting shows a student standing on mulberry tree to look for Jesus. I love this art piece to give us inspiration for prevenient grace of God.

We are responsible to do justice and love mercy for the isolated, the disadvantaged and the poor. President Obama made good slogan: "we can do". But Wesley made better slogan: "we can do and we must do." God initiated to open our mind with knocking at our door. Wesley emphasized Divine-human cooperation in his sermon, "On Working Out Our Own Salvation". He used passage Philippians 2: 12-13: " 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."

And we can open it and we must open it. Wesley used passage John 5:17: God works and then we can and must work. Prevenient grace is conscience in another word. Wesley interpreted that conscience is restored to all the human beings not by nature but prevenient grace. That is not human-Divine cooperation (Pelagian synergism: human being 50% and Divine cooperation 50%) but Divine-human cooperation (evangelical synergism): Divine initiation (God 100%) and human response (human being 100%).

We shall then see there is no opposition

between these-'God works; therefore do you

work'-but on the contrary the closest connection,

and that in two respects. For, first, God works;

therefore you can work. Secondly, God works;

therefore, you must work.

First, God worketh in you; therefore you can work

-otherwise it would be impossible. If he did not

work it would be impossible for you to work out

your own salvation...............................................................

Secondly God worketh in you; therefore you must

work: you must be 'workers together with him'

(II Cor 6:1); otherwise he will cease working.

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Even St. Augustine, who is generally supposed to

favour the contrary doctrine, makes that just

remark, *Qui fecit nos sine nobis, non salvabit nos*

*sine nobis: he that made us without us, will*

*not save us without ourselves.*

He (God will not save us unless we save ourselves, unless deny ourselves, take up our cross daily, and work of piety and mercy.

When I was six years old, I experienced prevenient grace. One day I fought with my friend on Sunday morning. I threw a stone. So his ear was torn and bled. His mother scolded me. I was so upset and I did not attend at Sunday worship service. Without attending at worship service I rather enjoyed to play all day long. In the late afternoon I played with big rod and I fell down into ditch with big rod. And then I cried out: "help me! help me!" My mom heard my voice and came to get me. She washed my body and she told me: "you were punished by God because of your absence from worship service". She asked me to sing a hymn more than thirty times "My sin will be cleansed by Jesus' blood." I sang that song more than thirty times with repentance. By the grace of God I have never missed Sunday worship service since then for my life.

For Wesley prevenient grace is appeared in several functions in our life: conscience, reason, will, God's providence and repentance.

A. Conscience as prevenient grace:

1. Good conscience: hearing the Word of God and practicing the Word of God.

Someone who has good conscience hears the Word of God and obeys and practices the Word of God in daily life.

2. Tender conscience: hearing the Word of God and not practicing the Word of God.

Someone who has tender conscience can hear the Word of God and cannot obey or practice the Word of God.

3. Hardened conscience: not understanding the Word of God and not practicing the Word of God.

Someone who has hardened conscience cannot hear the Word of God and cannot obey or practice the Word of God.

B. Reason as prevenient grace: knowledge of God.

For Wesley human reason can understand God and knowledge of God by prevenient grace through the Holy Spirit. Reason as prevenient grace can explain our faith like Apostle Creed and explain our faith in Trinity to unbelievers. Reason as prevenient grace can help farmer, artist, architect, scientist and musician. But reason has limitation not to create faith, hope and love.

C. Free will: response to salvation.

1. To open our heart: Prevenient grace is not salvation itself but dawning or entrance of salvation. If our will open our heart to accept Jesus the Christ as my redeemer, we can enter to salvation.

2. To aspire salvation: Like Zaccaeus we can aspire salvation and spiritual growth and maturity.

3. To work out our own salvation with fearing and trembling: By leading of the Holy Spirit and responding of our will we can work out our own salvation: repentance, justification and sanctification with fearing and trembling. The Holy Spirit warns and guides our own salvation. Wesley insists in his sermon, “The Great Privilege of Those that are Born of God":

You see the questionable progress from grace to sin.

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(3). The Spirit of God gives him warning that sin is

near, and bids him more abundantly watch unto prayer;

(5) The Holy Spirit is grieved; his faith weakened and

his love of God grows cold; (6) The Holy Spirit reproves

him more sharply, and said, 'This is the way; walk thou

in it.'

4. Evangelical synergism: not Pelagian human-Divine cooperation (human being 50% God 50%) and Calvinistic monergism (God 100% human being 0%), but Divine-human cooperation (God 100 % human being 100%).

D. A comparative study between Calvin's predestination and Wesley' prevenient grace:

Calvin's predestination Wesley's prevenient grace

1. Total depravity: 1. Prevenient grace (by the Holy spirit):

2. Unconditional election: 2. Conditional election (faith)

3. Limited atonement (for the elected): 3. Universal atonement (for all):

4. Irresistible grace: God's grace 4. Resistible grace: God's

alone. grace: human response.

5. Perseverance: 5. Possibility of fall:

Even though Wesley rejected double predestination, he accepts predestination of foreknowledge which is predestined in Jesus the Christ whom someone believes as redeemer. It is conditional election: faith is condition. It is very similar to Karl Barth's theology of predestination in the church which includes all the believers.

E. God's Providence (special predestination): Jacob, Paul.

Wesley do not believe in double predestination for salvation but believe in special predestination for mission like Jacob in the Old Testament and Paul in the New Testament. Jacob's elder brother Essuh can be saved because he made a hug of reconciliation with his younger brother Jacob. Judah was not elected as disciple of special predestination, but he could be saved if he repented.

Even though Wesley rejects predestination for salvation, he insists providence for individual. God is preserver with providence and love as well as creator.

F. Repentance:

1). Legal repentance: recognizing our sins.

Legal repentance means a repentance to be recognized by law of Moses and new law of love.

2). Evangelical repentance: turning point (u-turn) from actual sins.

Like prodigal son or Zacceus a repentance of new life repenting and believing in the gospel.

3). Repentance of believers: continuous repentance of remaining inner sin (root of sin, original sin). Even a born again Christian must repent continually in terms of dying old self and resurrecting new self. Through repenting of inner sin we can grow to imitate of Jesus the Christ. It is process of sanctification. For Wesley repentance is the porch, faith is the door and sanctification is religion itself.

\* Questions for sharing one another among small groups:

1). Have you had an experience of prevenient grace which Jesus initiated to visit you personally before you came to Jesus?

2). Are you open your mind when Jesus is knocking to the door of your mind?

3) Do you believe in God's providence and love for your whole life?