

SANCTIFICATION

1 Thessalonians 4:3 (ESV)

“For this is the will of God, your sanctification”

- One of the most misunderstood teachings in the NT
- We tend to shy away from the idea of “*being holy*”
- But sanctification is a biblical doctrine and must be taken seriously

I. SALVATION INVOLVES MORE THAN JUST “GOING TO HEAVEN WHEN YOU DIE”

1. Salvation involves –
 - a. regeneration – a change in our nature – new creation (2 Cor 5:17)
 - b. justification – a change in our standing before God
 - c. adoption – a change in our relationship with God
 - d. sanctification – a *process* of being changed into the image of Christ
 - e. glorification – our eternal state of being
2. In justification we are *declared* righteous - In sanctification we *become* righteous
3. Justification is what God does *for us* - Sanctification is what God does *in us*
4. Justification puts us into a right *relationship* with God - Sanctification exhibits the *fruit* of that relationship

TRANSITION: Sanctification is a very important biblical doctrine related to the purpose of salvation

II. THE MEANING OF SANCTIFICATION

1. The words "sanctify," "saint," "hallow," and "holy" all come from the same Greek root - hagizo or hagiozo (ha-geed-zo)
2. The word means *"to set apart"* – *"to make holy"* – *"to separate for God's use"*
 - a. In the Old Testament, things were made holy – or sanctified – like the utensils used in the Temple
 - b. People were also sanctified or made holy – priests, prophets, the judges of Israel (Samson)
 - c. In the NT *all believers are declared to be holy - saints* - and set apart for God's use and purpose
3. Two thoughts are prominent in a definition of sanctification

- a. Separation from evil
 - 1) Sanctification involves turning away from sin and its consequences
 - 2) Sin pollutes and defiles
 - 3) We cannot be in active fellowship with God if we are actively involved in sin
 - 4) The call to salvation is the call to a lifestyle that forsakes the patterns of the world and follows the pattern of Jesus
 - 5) *“But as he who hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation”* (1 Peter 1:15)
 - b. Dedication unto God
 - 1) In salvation we have been “sprinkled by the blood of Jesus” and dedicated to God for God's use
 - 2) Sanctification, as a condition of the heart, affects every facet of the Christian's life
 - 3) It is the heart of the Christian faith, the theme of the Holy Scriptures, and the purpose of God for His people
 - 4) Sanctification means that we are being conformed to the image of Christ
 - 5) Rom 12:1-2
4. Sanctification means living a life that is *separated* from the sinful world and *dedicated* to God

III. THE TIME OF SANCTIFICATION

1. Salvation is a big subject
2. We tend to limit the idea of salvation to one aspect – being saved from sin and going to heaven when we die
3. The three “tenses” of salvation
 - a. We have been saved – declared righteous (instantaneous)
 - b. We are being saved – become righteous (process)
 - c. We will be saved – “we shall be like Him” – (completion)
4. At the moment of salvation the process of sanctification begins (Heb 2:3)

TRANSITION: Sanctification is a process of becoming that continues throughout this life

IV. THE MEANS OF SANCTIFICATION

1. God

- a. Sanctification has its origin in **the work of God** (1 Thess 5:23 – ESV)

“Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

- b. Salvation is an act of God from beginning to end –
1) regeneration; 2) sanctification; 3) glorification

2. **BUT** - God works in and **through us** to bring about sanctification

- a. When we are saved instantaneously (regenerated), we become responsible to God for living a life worthy of our calling

- 1) The purpose of God in redemption is to produce many sons (Heb 2:10 – ESV)

For it was fitting that he, for whom and by whom all things exist, in bringing many sons to glory, should make the founder of their salvation perfect through suffering.

- 2) This responsibility involves cooperating with God for spiritual growth and transformation

- Paul (Eph 4:1)
- Peter urges his readers to grow (2 Pet 3:18) - *“Grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ”*
- The writer of Hebrews calls upon his readers to “move on”

- b. The process of sanctification is not “one size fits all”

- c. We CAN RESIST God – and we DO!

3. The **example** of Jesus

4. The **Holy Spirit** (1 Thess 2:13)

5. The **Word** of God (Jn 17:17)

CONCLUSION: (Romans 12:1, 2)

“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God”