



Topic:

SANCTIFICATION

Bible Text: Thessalonians 4:3

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Prayer

Our father who art in heaven, we thank you for yet another time to dwell at your feet to learn of you. May the entrance of your word indeed bring light and may the seed sown in us grow to abundance in Jesus name. Amen

Study

I welcome every one of us to today's Bible Study in the name of the Lord, it's so good having you all present here once again. I hope you are all doing well and that we are still in the journey of faith. At our previous study, our teacher taught us about *justification* of which I believe that we all know what it means by now. Therefore we would be taking another study to further on that teaching so as to get a deeper understanding of our faith and walk in Christ. Praise God.

Our topic is **Sanctification**, I know many of us must have heard about the word sanctification before, but in most cases many are usually confused, and do not really know about the deep aspect of it. The Holy Spirit would be taking us on a journey into the deeper aspects of his word. This might be a long one tonight, and it won't be a sermon but a teaching, therefore, let us pay close attention as the Lord opens our understanding. Is someone still with me?

What is sanctification?

Sanctification is being set apart for Holy use, it is progressive holiness and growing purity. It can also mean dedication, holiness, consecration, separation etc.

It is important for us to know that it is the will of God that believers become sanctified.

1 Thessalonians 4:3 **For this is THE WILL OF GOD, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication:** it is what God actually wants for us all, He yearns to see us sanctified, that is, He delights in seeing that we are dedicated, consecrated to Him. He looks forward to seeing that we are Holy just as He is. Hence, this is not done or gotten by works but through the power of the Holy Spirit. It is practically impossible for anyone to get it through human efforts. Galatians 5:17 **For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.** The verse above tells us that the flesh and the Spirit are at war against each other, therefore, it is not possible for a man who is under the control of the flesh to get himself sanctified through the power of his own flesh.

For us to get a better and in-depth understanding about sanctification, we have to examine the stages of sanctification.

There are basically three stages of sanctification according to the word of God, which are:

1. Positional Sanctification

2. Progressive or Experiential Sanctification

3. Complete or Ultimate Sanctification

1. **Positional Sanctification:** This can also be referred to as justification, it is what we all get at salvation, the day a sinner believes and accept Christ, he is positionally sanctified before God, which tells us that it is the state of our holiness and righteousness when we got saved, at that point, God looks at us as being righteous because Christ's righteousness was imputed upon us while our sins were placed upon Christ. Hebrews 10:10 **By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ ONCE FOR ALL.** It was the redemptive work of Christ that sanctified us in the first stage. It is what believers get through faith, since nobody could work for it. Acts 13:39 **And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.** What the law of Moses could not do, the body of Christ did it on the cross for us, Hallelujah!!!

Therefore, It is all about the finished work of Christ, which we all keyed into as we believed in the Lord Jesus Christ and not through the works of merit because nobody merits what Christ did for us, it was only by grace we were able to be partakers. 1 Corinthians 1:30 **But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God IS MADE UNTO US wisdom, and righteousness, and SANCTIFICATION, and redemption:** Jesus was made

our sanctification.

Is someone still with me please?

Progressive or Experiential Sanctification: Of a truth the moment we all keyed into the redemptive work of Christ and received the first stage of sanctification we are still prone to falling into sin, although we are righteous before God because He sees Christ's holiness and righteousness on us, but at the same time we know that we still sin, since we are still in the flesh, there is no one on earth that would say that since when he has accepted Christ, he has not fallen into any sin. The scriptures says in 1 John 1:10 that " **If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.**" this tells us that we have sinned either in one way or the other because when we got saved it was our Spirit that received transformation/change not our bodies, neither was it our emotions, ideologies, characters, reasoning, etc. It is then our duties to get these things born again, that is, to get them to begin to function according to the dictates of the Spirit, and to get this done is not something easy, it takes conscious and constant efforts coupled with seriousness. So a times, we do things which we do not want to do by mistake. That was why Apostle Paul complained in Romans 7:15 " **I don't understand myself at all, for I really want to do what is right, but I don't do it. Instead, I do the very thing I hate.**" NIV this tells us that even apostle was still struggling with his flesh just the way we are doing these days. So when we fall into sin, we request for forgiveness immediately and try not to go back into such sin again.

Sanctification is a practical experience of our separation unto God. It is the effect of obedience to the word of God in one's life, so it is still the same as growing in Christ. 2 Peter 3:18 **But GROW in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.** Here we are being enjoined to grow in grace, we are not to remain at the baby stage of spirituality, it is very wrong and dangerous. God wants us to grow just the way a new born baby grows to become a full grown man. It would therefore be alarming if a child remains a baby after forty years of birth, it will be a source of concern to his parents, and for a child to grow, he must have been fed with good diets. In the same way, for someone who would be sanctified, his sanctification must have been effected through his obedience to the word of God. It is in this the work of making us like Christ is continued by God.

Philippians 1:6 AMP. **And I am convinced and sure of this very thing, that He Who BEGAN a good work in you WILL CONTINUE until the day of Jesus Christ [right up to the time of His return], developing [that good work] and perfecting and bringing it to full completion in you.**

Sanctification remains a continuous process until the day Christ would return, so this kind of sanctification is what a believer needs to pursue earnestly. We are to strive for holiness which is sanctification, we are commanded in Hebrews 12:14 to **Strive for peace with everyone, AND FOR THE HOLINESS without which no one will see the Lord.** We are also commanded to be holy just as He Who has called us is holy and this is

effected by the word of God. John 17:17 **Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.**

Sanctification also talks about the setting apart of believers for the purpose for which they are sent into the world. It is to be noted that we are sanctified and sent because Jesus Christ was sent and sanctified too. John 10:36 **Say ye of Him, whom the Father hath SANCTIFIED, and SENT into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God?**

As Jesus Christ was about leaving the earth when He prayed for His disciples, he talked about their being sent and sanctified just the way it is to all believer too.

John 17:18-19 **As thou hast SENT ME into the world, even so have I also SENT THEM into the world. [19] And for their sakes I SANCTIFY MYSELF, that THEY ALSO MIGHT BE SANCTIFIED through the truth.** Christ was set apart, he was Holy, he was righteous in the same way He wants us to be like him, totally different from the world. He is a pattern for we christians. We are also sent and sanctified by Him which is why we are called saints or sanctified ones. When we were living in worldliness, we were separated from the Father and by default, God's enemies but now we are standing with him and in him against the world, which means that our conducts must be separate from the world. Hebrews 10:14

3. Complete or Ultimate Sanctification: Apostle Paul talked about this in 1 Thessalonians 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.**" this stage of sanctification is also referred to as glorification, because it is linked to the appearing of Christ, this is when our complete sanctification would occur. This glorified state would be our ultimate separation from sin, which is our total sanctification in every regard.

This tells us that complete sanctification will happen at Christ's return and cannot happen before then because it is still possible for a man to fall into sin because of his human nature, although he must not go about sinning and must seek for repentance immediately he does so. But at the appearing of Christ we all get totally separated from sin, at this point, it is no longer possible to fall into sin because our nature would have been changed to that of Christ, so this has made the ultimate stage of sanctification possible, praise God!

How to be sanctified

1. One must pray for it and believe by having total trust and faith in Christ. 1 Corinthians 6:11, Hebrews 10:10
2. One must be regenerated through the Holy Spirit
3. We must continue in the faith through constant fasting, prayers and meditation on the word of God, it's a daily experience.

4. One must cooperate with the Holy Spirit in participating with Him in the process, it is impossible to be mistakenly sanctified, it's intentional.

5. We must be washed daily by the word of God.

Ephesians 5:26. When the word of God is read daily, the Holy Spirit then sanctifies us by the power in the word. The word washes us, purifies us, cleanses us and gives us access to the power of the Holy Spirit.

In conclusion

Sanctification is still the same as holiness and the fact that one is sanctified does not mean that he would no longer be tempted to sin or to go back to his former ways. One must then take his stand to resist temptation or to flee from it. James 4:7 **Submit yourselves therefore to God. RESIST the devil, and he will flee from you.** Joseph decided to flee from Mrs Portiphar Instead of waiting to speak in tongues, we can also flee. 1 Corinthians 6:18.

In the past, God granted us justification, a once and for all positional holiness in Christ. Now, God guides us to maturity, a practical and progressive holiness. In future, God will give us glorification, a permanent, ultimate holiness. This is where we would end this topic, thank you so much for your time, if you have any question please do ask. May your body, soul and spirit be sanctified in Jesus name. Amen. God bless you!

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