

GOOD NEWS
for the unsaved
WORLD!

(#159)
Sanctification – Overview; two types.

1

SANCTIFICATION – "becoming HOLY":
the transition from *justification* to *glorification*.

... and those he **justified** ...
Romans 8:30b (CSB)

... he also **glorified**.
Romans 8:30c (CSB)

SANCTIFICATION (BECOMING HOLY) occurs here.

- All those instructions about how to live are "lived-out" here.
- This is where the "fruit of salvation" grows (increases) in our lives.
- Though salvation is **NOT caused** by works, here is where we "work out" the salvation we now have ... **relying on God's** power to do it (Philippians 2:12-13).
- This is where we have our **struggles with sin** (Romans 7) and we look forward **to final victory**, when glorification has arrived.
- Here is where we learn to **love God and neighbor**.

2

THOUGH WE TEND TO FOCUS ON GOD'S *PRESENT* WORK OF SANCTIFICATION, THERE ARE ALSO *PAST* AND *FUTURE* ASPECTS.

PAST **PRESENT** **FUTURE**

... and those he **justified** ...
Romans 8:30b (CSB)

... he also **glorified**.
Romans 8:30c (CSB)

EVEN BEFORE TIME AND SPACE EXISTED,
God was making plans for our sanctification!

For God saved us and called us to live a **holy** life ... because that was **his plan from before the beginning of time**—to show us his grace through Christ Jesus.
2 Timothy 1:9 (NLT)

For he chose us in him **before the creation of the world** to be **holy** and blameless in his sight.
Ephesians 1:4 (NIV)

3

OUR EXPERIENCE OF SANCTIFICATION...

- THE PAST** – It **began** at the moment of salvation – when the changes related to justification took place.
Here's how Paul described what happened:
But you were washed, **you were sanctified**, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.
1 Corinthians 6:11b (CSB)
- THE FUTURE** – The process will be **completed** (and made permanent) when we are in God's presence – when the changes related to glorification take place.
... so that you will be blameless and **holy** in the presence of our God and Father **when our Lord Jesus comes** with all his holy ones.
1 Thessalonians 3:13b (NIV)
At that time, God's plans for our holiness, which he had before time and space existed, will have been fulfilled.

4

BUT A LOT IS HAPPENING BETWEEN THOSE TWO EVENTS!

- AT PRESENT** – Our lives in Christ are characterized by **struggle against sin and growth in holiness/sanctification**.
Holiness/sanctification is something we must pursue. It takes *effort*.
Make every effort ... to be **holy**; without **holiness** no one will see the Lord.
Heb 12:14 (NIV)
- ... let us **purify ourselves** from everything that contaminates body and spirit, **perfecting holiness** out of reverence for God.
2 Corinthians 7:1b (NIV)
- Yet because of what God is doing in us – and the Spirit's presence – we, though imperfect, can be considered "holy."
Example:
The apostle Paul wrote... To God's **holy** people in Colossae ...
Colossians 1:2a (NIV)

5

- In Christ**, God already sees us as holy. This is because Christ **is** our sanctification!
... you are in Christ Jesus, who became wisdom from God for us—our righteousness, **sanctification**, and redemption ...
1 Corinthians 1:30b (CSB)
Since we are "united with Christ," it is as though *his* blood was running through our veins. Our job is to bring our **conduct** into line with our **condition in Christ**.
- We need to pursue holiness; and since God is involved in our sanctification, **our success is guaranteed**.
He empowers us for success.
[Jesus] the one who **sanctifies** ...
Hebrews 2:11a (CSB)
... the **sanctifying work** of the Spirit, ...
1 Peter 1:2b (CSB)
Also, those under the New Covenant have the *desire* to pursue holiness.

6

"TEMPORARY SANCTIFICATION" – Three passages that don't "fit" our normal understanding of "sanctification."

Most Scripture passages about sanctification and holiness focus on something pertaining to eternal salvation.

↳ A small number of passages use these words in a different way – with a focus on matters that are temporary in nature.

- Most words can be used in more than one way; and this word is no different. Context will show us when this is the case.
- *None of these examples focus on something eternal.* A failure to recognize this can lead us into a serious misunderstanding of holiness and sanctification.
- In these examples, the sanctification refers to something *external*. It does not involve a change in the people's *hearts*.

7

#① SANCTIFICATION UNDER THE OLD COVENANT (compared to the sanctification that Jesus brings to us).

- To be saved under the Old Covenant, people needed changed hearts, just like we do. *But this change wasn't part of the Old Covenant.* (It was a separate issue.)
- Under that covenant, there was a "ceremonial" sanctification that had *temporary* value. The author of Hebrews contrasts this to the *heart/mind* changes that occur under the *New Covenant*.

★ What the Old Covenant sacrifices accomplished:

- These sacrifices had *temporary* value, and only cleaned the "outside."

The blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkled on those who are ceremonially unclean **sanctify** them so that they are **outwardly clean**.

Hebrews 9:13 (NIV)

8

★ Jesus' sacrifice is superior in all ways!

- Its effects penetrate to the heart, and cleanses the *conscience*.
- It has *permanent* value. No further sacrifices are needed... *ever*.
- Its sanctification enables us to serve the living God!

How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, **cleanse our consciences** from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God!

Hebrews 9:14 (NIV)

For God's will was for us to be made **holy** by the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ, **once for all time**. ...
For by that one offering he **forever** made perfect those who are being made **holy**.

Hebrews 10:10, 14 (NLT)

9

★ Responding to this "temporary" situation:

We can REJOICE!

- We can praise God that Jesus has become the permanent solution for our sins, and the source of eternal sanctification!
- We do not have to do religious activities or "acts of goodness," in order to *earn* God's favor! We can do them because we already have God's favor. (The motivation is 100% the opposite.)
- We can also rely on *God's power* when we do these things, rather than on *our weakness* (while arrogantly thinking that we can actually succeed on our own).
- The saved in the Old Testament could also rejoice in God. They had changed hearts (separate from the Old Covenant). Though they didn't know what we know about Jesus, they still trusted God, who would in due time deal with these issues.

10

#② THE "SANCTIFICATION" OF "TEMPORARY BELIEVERS."

- The book of Hebrews shows the contrast between those who have changed hearts and those who are "temporary believers" – influenced by the things of God, but only as an *external* influence.
- Such people may, for a while, "clean up" their lives. The influence of genuine followers of Jesus (and perhaps even the Spirit who resides in Jesus' followers) may have a temporary "sanctifying effect" on these people. But the changes never penetrate to their hearts; and eventually, they turn away.
- Since they knew the truth, and turned against it, their judgment will be much more severe than for those who never heard.

How much worse punishment do you think one will deserve who has **trampled** on the Son of God, who has **regarded as profane** the blood of the covenant by which he was **sanctified**, and who has **insulted** the Spirit of grace?

Hebrews 10:29 (CSB)

11

★ *These are not saved people.* In Hebrews, we learn that "temporary believers" can experience many of the blessings that genuine believers may have, *but it is only temporary.*

...those who were once enlightened, who tasted the heavenly gift, who shared in the Holy Spirit, who tasted God's good word and the powers of the coming age, and who **have fallen away**.

Hebrews 6:4b-6a (CSB)

★ *Genuine followers of Jesus are different.* After each of the above passages, the author of Hebrews points to "better things" that make the difference between genuine and fake.

After Hebrews 6:4b-6a. } ... in your case we are confident of **things that are better and that pertain to salvation**.

Hebrews 6:9b (CSB)

After Hebrews 10:29. } But we are **not those who draw back and are destroyed**, but those who have faith and are **saved**.

Hebrews 10:39 (CSB)

12

- ★ Responding to this "temporary sanctification" that apostates* may have:

We have some WARNINGS!

- These passages remind us of the need for a heart change. "Skin-deep" salvation will not work.
- Many of the things that people tend to *assume* are indicators of salvation can also be imitated by the unsaved. Such things do not guarantee salvation.
- We need to recognize what Scripture describes as the characteristics of a *saved* person. Don't base your "assurance of salvation" on things that can be imitated by the *unsaved*!

* Apostate = someone who has abandoned the faith. They were never truly saved. (Someone who's heart has been changed by God *cannot* become "unchanged"!)

13

#③ THE "SANCTIFYING" INFLUENCE A CHRISTIAN MAY HAVE ON OTHERS.

- The "sanctification" in this passage is similar to that mentioned in the Hebrews passage: an unsaved person is being influenced – sin is being restrained.
- Here in 1 Corinthians, the person being influenced *opposes* Jesus and the Bible. In the book of Hebrews, the person being influenced *claimed* – for a while – to be saved.
- Here, one member of the family (in this case, one of the parents) has become a follower of Jesus. Since the saved person's values and conduct are now different, it will have some type of influence on the others in the family.

For the unbelieving husband has been **sanctified** through his wife, and the unbelieving wife has been **sanctified** through her believing husband. Otherwise your children would be unclean, but as it is, they are **holy**.

1 Corinthians 7:14 (NIV)

14

Some observations about this verse:

- This positive influence can exist *only* when genuine changes have occurred in the life of the one claiming to be saved.
- This example involves family members. But we can probably take it as a general principle, and apply it to other situations where the Christian has an influence on others.

★ This does not guarantee that the unsaved person will be saved!

The verses that come next indicate that salvation is not guaranteed. The person might not want to be influenced by the saved person's values, and decide to leave. (In that case, let them go in peace.)

But if the unbeliever leaves, let it be so. The brother or the sister is not bound in such circumstances; God has called us to live in peace.

How do you know, wife, whether you will save your husband? Or, **how do you know**, husband, whether you will save your wife?

1 Corinthians 7:15-16 (NIV)

The implication is that you don't know.

15

- ★ Responding to this "temporary sanctifying influence" that saved people may have on unsaved people they interact with:

We have ENCOURAGEMENT!

- Even if the others have no interest in following Jesus, our very presence – if we are living according to Scripture – may have a positive effect on them.
 - ✓ They may eventually be saved, but it's not guaranteed.
 - ✓ Our influence may have a restraining effect on their sins.
 - ✓ Even if they reject us, our lives will be a testimony to the truth and love of Christ.
- Our response to the situation will show how willing we are to follow Jesus – who warned us that divisions may sometimes occur (Matthew 10:34-38).

16

Your Mission: Praise God!!

① Because of the eternal sanctification that is occurring in your life. *

- ✓ All that God is doing.
- ✓ All that God has enabled you to do!

② Because of the "temporary sanctification" passages – what we can learn from them.

- ✓ Blessings.
- ✓ Warnings.
- ✓ Encouragement.

* (If you *aren't* saved, then repent and turn to Jesus. Then all these things will apply. If you're a "fake," pay attention to the warnings in Hebrews, while there is still time to repent and follow Jesus.)

17

Credits

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18