



Lesson 14: Sanctification

Introduction:

The great theological battle of the 1500's was that of justification by faith alone versus justification by works. The theological debate over sanctification or *how to live and progressively become more like Christ* has been one of the key issues of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

Whether one has been taught *sinless perfection-eradication of the old nature* as taught by some holiness groups, or that all Christians are the same in spirituality or that there are various kinds of Christians, the issue is before us: How can the believer overcome sin within, the world without, satanic attacks, and bear the fruit of the Spirit?

These subjects need much more time than we are giving in this study. Instead we are only introducing the subject of our *being set apart to God in life and service while being conformed to the image of Christ*.

Scripture teaches that Christian living must include the following:

1. Knowing our identity in Jesus Christ; Romans 5:12-6:10.
2. Living a life of faith—trust—dependence upon God and His Word; Rom. 1:17; 2 Cor. 5:7; Gal. 5:6; Romans 6:11.
3. Reliance upon the Holy Spirit to overcome and put to death the desires and passions of the flesh; Romans 8:13; Col. 3:5-8 and to bear the fruit of the Spirit; Galatians 5:16-25.
4. Becoming like Christ is both a divine work in the believer and a work the believer must do in cooperation with God in this process. We do not become like Christ passively. We are in a war against sinful lust, appealing distractions; 1 John 2:15-17 and Satan who desires to devour us; 1 Peter 5:8-9. We are told to *put off* and to *put on* certain behaviors; Ephesians 4 and Colossians 3. We are told to work out our salvation; Philippians 2:12-13.
5. We are told not to grieve or quench the Spirit. We are told to be getting ourselves under the control of the Spirit moment by moment;

1 Thess. 5:19; Eph. 4:30; Eph. 5:18. This is an appeal to us to cooperate and obey God’s will to grow in grace.

6. Our godliness is also tied to developing spiritual disciplines that make one grow in maturity; 1 Tim. 4:7. Our commitment to the disciplines and the feeding on God’s Word will make the difference between those who mature and those who become stunted in their growth.

Time + Discipline and Reliance on the Spirit = Spiritual Maturity

Definition of Sanctification:

“It is a progressive work of God and man that makes us more and more free from sin and like Christ in our actual lives.” (Grudem)

“It is the work of God’s free grace, whereby we are renewed in the whole man after the image of God, and are enabled more and more to die unto sin, and live unto righteousness.” (Westminster Shorter Catechism).

J. I. Packer writes, “The concept is not of sin being totally eradicated (that is to claim too much) or merely counteracted (that is to say too little), but of a divinely wrought character change freeing us from sinful habits and forming in us Christ like affections, dispositions, and virtues.” (Concise Theology, p. 169).

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN JUSTIFICATION & SANCTIFICATION

JUSTIFICATION	SANCTIFICATION
Legal standing	Internal condition
Once for all time	Continuous throughout life
Entirely God’s work	We cooperate
Perfect in this life	Not perfect in this life
The same in all Christians	Greater in some than in others

Romans Chapters 6-8 is a Scriptural treatment of what life in Christ is to look like and how to appropriate it. Let us look at it to see how a life of godly living is maintained.

What Life in Christ is to Look Like		
Know	Identity with Christ	Romans 6:1-10
Reckon	Count on your identity, dead to sin, alive to the faith	Romans 6:11
Present	Make your body available to God.	Romans 6:12-13
Living Under Grace	Not under law, but under grace	Romans 6:14
	Life under grace is not a life of sin	Romans 6:15-23
	Law as a rule of life ended at the cross	Romans 7:1-6
	Struggle of one living under the law	Romans 7:7-13
	Believer living with the struggle with inward sin	Romans 7:14-25

(or a picture of Israel struggling to obey God while living under the law – Douglas Moo, Romans).

Tension explained: The believer is seen as no longer being *bossed* or reigned over by sin in Romans Chapter 6. Because of our union with Christ and our identity with Him we are called to a new way of living. This is a life of presenting the members of our body to God producing *sanctification*; Rom. 6:19. Living free from the control of sin results in sanctification and the fruit is of the quality of eternal life; Rom. 6:22. The wages of the sin nature is always death, but the gift of God is eternal life.

Now, with such a wonderful picture of the Christian life the Apostle begins to describe a life lived under the law. Christians have been called to live under grace and not law; Rom. 6:14. Romans Chapter 7 pictures our being free from the law and then describes what life was like under the law.

One does not begin to breathe fresh air and come up for victory until the believer is reminded that Christ Jesus set us free from this kind of frustration Rom. 7:24-25. We are to live our lives in the Spirit under grace; Rom. 8:1-39. The requirements of the law have been fulfilled in us through our union with Christ in His perfect obedience and His death for our sin; Rom. 8:4.

Is the Christian life one of constant struggle and defeat because of indwelling sin or is it a life of continual reliance on God to keep us free from the reign of sin?

Life in the Spirit: Under the Reign of the Spirit Romans 8:1-39

_____ **in Christ: Rom. 8:1**

_____ **in Christ: Rom. 8:39**

_____ **in Christ: Rom. 8:2-38**

While believers are never said to eradicate the sin nature, they are promised that its reign over them is ended by the work of Christ and the enabling power of the Holy Spirit.

Three Aspects to our Sanctification:

1. _____ **Sanctification:** how God views us *in Christ*; 1 Corinthians 6:9, 11; 1 Cor. 1:1-2.

This sanctification is based upon the blood of Jesus Christ and our union with Jesus Christ.

All believers are considered *saints* or *holy* or *sanctified* because of their union with Christ and because of Christ’s work for them at the cross; Acts 20:32; Hebrews 10:10; Jude 1; 1 Cor. 1:30.

2. _____ **Sanctification:** present growth and experience of the believer.

This aspect of sanctification speaks *to growing in Christ, yielding-presenting their life to Christ, walking in the Spirit* and obedience to the revealed will of God.

God’s Word is sanctifying us; John 17:17. God’s Spirit is leading us and not being quenched or grieved – and there is growth in Christian character; 2 Peter 1:3-10; Galatians 5:6, 16-25; Romans 8.

Along with this growth in Christlikeness is the habitual *putting to death the deeds of the body*; Romans 8:13, while *putting on Christ*.

Ephesians Chapter 4 tells us to mature and grow up into Christlikeness; Eph. 4: 7-16. The practical living out of this growing and walking in holiness/sanctification is illustrated by *put off/put on* commands – *put off the old man/life and put on the new man*.

List Everything we are to Put Off and Put On

Ephesians 4:17-32

Put Off

Put On

See Colossians 3:5-13

Put to death sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desires, having put on the new self, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, bearing with one another.

3. _____ **Sanctification:** we shall be like Christ completely.

This looks to the day our bodies will be redeemed and inward sin will forever be removed from us. No more sin. No more temptation. Our change from glory to glory; 2 Cor. 3:16, will end in glory.

1 Thessalonians 5:23; Our God will ultimately and thoroughly sanctify us in our entire being.

“When he appears we shall be like him” 1 John 3:2.

The Means for Living a Holy Life Before God

God the Father is working in us; Philippians 2:12-13; 1 Thess. 5:23. The Son is setting us apart; Eph. 5:26; Heb. 2:11; 9:12, 14; 13:12, and the Holy Spirit is sanctifying us; Romans 15:16; 2 Thess. 2:13.

1. Union with Christ; 1 Cor. 1:2, 30; Rom. 6:1-10.
2. Reckoning on God’s Word – you are alive to God; Rom. 6:11.
3. Presenting your body to God moment by moment; Rom. 6:12-23.
4. Know that you are living under a gracious God who has already borne your penalty for sin and who is now training us to live right without eternal penalty for failure – he is raising sons and not criminals; Hebrews 12:5-20.
5. God’s Word cleanses us; John 17:17.
6. Blood of Christ continues to cleanse us from the inward defilement of sin within; 1 John 1:5-7.
7. Flee and heed the warnings of God about temptation; 1 Thess. 4:3; 1 Cor. 6:18; 2 Timothy 2:22.
8. No temptation is greater than God’s escape plan for you; 1 Cor. 10:13.
9. Work with God – do not be passive—be vigilant and alert—work out the salvation he has worked in us; Philippians 2:12-13.
10. Rely upon the person of the Holy Spirit who wants to fill us, lead us, and deliver us from indwelling sin; Romans 8:13; Galatians 5:16-25.
11. Pray that you enter not into temptation; Matt. 6.
12. Pray when you are in temptation. God delivers from temptation and in it.
13. Christian growth must take place in community with other Christians; Hebrews 10:24-25. We need each other to exhort us and stimulate us to pursue God’s will; Heb. 3:13.

Recommended For Further Study:

Is there a “Second Blessing” that makes one above or superior to the normal Christian?

Read Grudem, Chapter 10 on “Baptizing and Filling Work of the Spirit,” pgs. 131-152.

How many classes of believers are there?

Re-read Grudem, Chapter 9, “Sanctification,” pgs. 116-128.

Next Week Lesson 15: Preservation by the Savior and Perseverance for the Saints, Part 1

what's so great about Salvation?

word
forLIFE
Classes

Break Out Session – Lesson 14

Group Discussion Background

In each of our break out sessions we will probe three aspects of the truths presented during each class through a series of discussion questions as described below.

WHAT: What is the key informational content?

SO WHAT: What is the implication of this information? Or said another way, why is the truth of this information important?

WHAT NOW: How will you apply this truth or what will you do now that you know this truth?

Our goal for these classes is not simply to increase our knowledge, but for lives to be transformed by truth. (Romans 12:2)

Discussion Questions: (25 minutes)

Ask the group at least 2-3 of the following questions and allow the group to thoroughly explore and discuss.

1. In hearing the teaching and doing the homework related to our sanctification, was there anything you heard or studied that created a question in your mind or was difficult to understand? Were there insights you thought especially meaningful about sanctification and what this truth means?
2. In verses, such as Romans 6:13; Philippians 2:12-13; Hebrews 12:14; 1 Thessalonians 4:3 and Hebrew 5:14; God describes various ways in which we are to participate with God in our sanctification. What are these ways we can cooperate with God in the work of sanctification?
3. Can we as Christians achieve sinless perfection in this life? What verse(s) would you use to support or refute this proposition? If not be sinless, should we sin less with the passing of time?
4. As you look back over the past few years of your life, can you see a pattern of definite growth in sanctification? What are some of the things you used to delight in which no longer interest you? What positive things do you see yourself doing today that you did not do before?

Time to Care – Share – Bear (15 minutes)

During this time, the group is encouraged to share in each other's lives and demonstrate care for one another by bearing one another up through prayer.

Wrap-Up (5 minutes)

Answer any remaining questions and clarify the homework for the following week.



Lesson 14 Homework

1. Read Grudem, pgs. 155-175, Chapter 11, "The Perseverance of the Saints."
2. Be familiar with the following passages – it would be good to memorize some of these passages:

Romans 8:32-39; John 10:10-29; 2 Timothy 1:12; 1 Peter 1:5;
Jude 24

3. Answer question #1, Grudem, p. 173 – Do you have assurance that you are truly born again? What evidence do you see in your own life to give you that assurance? Do you think that God wants true believers to go on throughout life worrying about whether they are really born again, or to have firm assurance that they are his people? (See 1 John 5:13.) Have you seen a pattern of growth in your Christian life over time? Are you trusting in your own power to keep on believing in Christ, or in God's power to keep your faith active and alive?

4. Define these terms:

Assurance of salvation

Eternal Security

Perseverance of the Saints