

## When Does Sanctification Take Place?

(1) 1 Cor. 1:2, R.V.—“Paul, called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God, and Sosthenes our brother, unto the church of God which is at Corinth, *even them that ARE sanctified* in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ in every place, their Lord and ours.”

1 Cor. 6:11, R.V.—“And such were some of you; but ye were washed, but *ye were sanctified*, but ye were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and in the Spirit of our God.”

*FIRST PROPOSITION: All members of the Church of God already are sanctified in Christ Jesus.*

The moment anyone becomes a member of the Church of God by faith in Christ Jesus, that moment he is sanctified.

QUESTION: In what sense are we already sanctified?

ANSWER:

(a) Heb. 10:10, 14—“By the which will we are sanctified *through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ* once for all.... For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.” (Compare v. 1.)

By the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all we are cleansed forever from all the guilt of sin, we are “perfected forever” as far as our standing before God is concerned. The sacrifice does not need to be repeated as the Jewish sacrifices (v. 1). The work is done once for all, sin is put away (Heb. 9:26. Compare Gal. 3:13) forever, and we are set apart forever as God’s peculiar and eternal possession. (b) There is another sense in which every believer may be already sanctified. (Rom. 12:1—“I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.”) It is the believer’s present and blessed privilege, and immediate and solemn duty, to present his body to God a living sacrifice—not some part or parts of the body, but the whole body with its every member and every faculty. Such an offering is “well pleasing to God.” (R.V. Marg.) As God in the Old Testament showed His pleasure in an offering by sending down fire to take it to Himself, so when the whole body is thus offered to God He still sends down fire, the fire of the Holy Ghost, and takes to Himself what is thus presented. The believer, then, so far as the will, the governing purpose of his life, the centre of his being, is concerned, is wholly God’s or perfectly sanctified. He may and will daily discover, as he studies the Word of God and is illumined by the Holy Spirit, acts of his, habits of life, forms of feeling, speech and action that are not in conformity with this central purpose of his life. These must be confessed to God as blameworthy, and be put away, and this department of his being and life brought by God’s Spirit and the indwelling Christ into conformity with God’s will as revealed in His Word.

The victory in this newly discovered and unclaimed territory can be instantaneous. For example, I discover in myself an irritability of temper that is manifestly displeasing to God. I can go to God and confess it, renounce it and then instantly, not by my own strength, but by looking to Jesus and claiming his patience and gentleness, overcome it

and never have another failure in that direction. And so with everything in my life that I am brought to see is displeasing to God.

(2) 1 Thess. 3:12—“And the Lord make you to *increase and abound* in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you.”

4:1, 10, R. V.—“Finally then, brethren, we beseech and exhort you in the Lord Jesus, that, as ye received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, even as ye do walk—that ye *abound more and more* ... for indeed ye do it toward all the brethren which are in Macedonia. But we exhort you, brethren, that ye *abound more and more*.”

2 Pet. 3:18, R.V.—“But *grow* in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be the glory both now and forever. Amen.”

2 Cor. 3:18, R.V.—“But we all, with unveiled face reflecting as a mirror the glory of the Lord, are transformed into the same image *from glory to glory*, even as from the Lord the Spirit.”

Eph. 4:11–15—“And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; but speaking the truth in love, *may grow up* into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ.”

*SECOND PROPOSITION: There is a progressive work of sanctification; an increasing in love; an abounding more and more in a godly walk and in pleasing God; a growing in the grace and the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; a being transformed into the image of our Lord Jesus from glory unto glory, each new gaze at Him making us more like Him; a growing up into Christ in all things, until we attain unto a full-grown man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.*

(3) 1 Thess. 5:23, R.V.—“And the God of peace himself *sanctify you wholly*; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved entire without blame *at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ*.”

1 Thess. 3:12, 13—“And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you: to the end he may *establish your hearts unblamable in holiness* before God, even our Father, *at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints*.”

*THIRD PROPOSITION: The complete sanctification of believers is something to be sought for in prayer, to be accomplished by God in the future.*

It is at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his saints that He is to establish our hearts unblamable in holiness before our God and Father, and that our spirit and soul and body are to be preserved entire without blame. (Compare 1 Jno. 3:2.) It is through our Lord making us to increase and abound in love unto one another and unto all men that this is accomplished. It is not in the life that now is, nor is it at death, but at the coming of Christ that we are entirely sanctified in this sense.

#### **IV. The Results of Sanctification**

(1) Heb. 10:14—“For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified.”

*FIRST PROPOSITION: By the one offering, the sacrifice of Himself for sins, Christ hath perfected forever those who are sanctified.*

Their standing before God as guiltless is already forever secured for the sanctified. The sanctification here spoken of is the separation from the guilt of sin and unto God secured by the shed blood.

(2) Heb. 2:11—“For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren.”

*SECOND PROPOSITION: Those whom Jesus sanctifies are of one with Him, and He is not ashamed to call them brethren.*

(3) 2 Thess. 2:13—“But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to *salvation through sanctification* of the Spirit and belief of the truth.”

*THIRD PROPOSITION: We are saved through sanctification.*

Sanctification results in salvation. The sanctification here spoken of is the sanctification which the Holy Spirit works; and the salvation here spoken of is not salvation in the mere sense of the forgiveness of sins, but salvation in the fullest sense of deliverance from sin’s dominion and presence.

(4) Heb. 12:14, R.V—“Follow after peace with all men, and the sanctification without which no man shall see the Lord.”

*FOURTH PROPOSITION: Sanctification results in seeing the Lord.*

The sanctification here spoken of is sanctification in the sense of separation from sin, the sanctification which is the outcome of our eager desire for it and God’s chastening. (Compare vv. 10, 11.) Without this cleansing from sin it will be impossible to know the blessed vision of the Lord that awaits those who are purified. The purity that leads to this blessed vision of God is not merely outward purity but heart purity. (Matt. 5:8—“Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.”) Even in the life that now is, the more completely we are sanctified the clearer is our perception of God.

(5) Acts 20:32—“And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you *an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.*”

Acts 26:18—“To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and *inheritance among them which are sanctified* by faith that is in me.”

*FIFTH PROPOSITION: Sanctification secures an inheritance.*

Sanctification by God’s Spirit makes us joint heirs with God’s Son.

Rom. 8:2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 12, 13, 14, 16–18—“For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin,

condemned sin in the flesh: That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.... Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh, for if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the Sons of God.... The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Torrey, R. A. (1898). *What the Bible teaches a thorough and comprehensive study of what the Bible has to say concerning the great doctrines of which it treats* (347–351). New York, Chicago: Fleming H. Revell Company.