

Sanctification and the Lord's Supper

As we take the Lord's Supper today, I want to do something a little different with the sermon. First, I want to speak about the difference between justification and sanctification. Second, through responsive reading, I want to remind us of all the benefits that come down to those who are saved (those who are justified and sanctified). Third, I want us to read our covenant as we consider practically what it looks like to live as one who is being sanctified.

1. Justification and Sanctification Distinguished. In 1 Cor. 6:11 Paul writes: “**And such were some of you. 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.**” Both justification and sanctification belong to the one who is saved. Both truths are in reference to sin, the penalty of sin, the power of sin, and one day, even the presence of sin. In other words, the person who is both justified and sanctified has a different relationship to sin. If you are in Christ today, if you are Christian, Christ has paid the penalty for your sins. You are justified in the heavenly courtroom. Also, you are sanctified. You have been set apart by God as a special “holy” people. AND because of the power of the Holy Spirit, you are becoming more and more godly in this life.

One of the best ways to illustrate the difference is by comparing Baptism with the Lord's Supper. Baptism pictures justification. Why? Baptism is a one-time experience. It comes at the beginning, or the starting point of salvation. Justification is the one-time act of God where He declares the believer to be righteous, not guilty, based upon the death of Christ. Christ has fulfilled the law on behalf sinners. Those who trust Christ are justified. That is why Paul can say, “**There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus**” (Rom. 8:1).

The Lord's Supper pictures sanctification. As Christians we began our life in the church by taking the Lord's Supper. And, as God's people, we continue taking the Lord's Supper. As Jesus says, “*Til he comes back.*” Taking the Lord's Supper continues in this life. Sanctification is growth in holiness that follows conversion. It is one of the benefits Christ purchased on the cross, our sanctification. Hebrews 10:14 says, “**For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified.**” This means the believer's sanctification is an ongoing process where the Holy Spirit works powerfully to produce more and more godliness in this life.

I think of Peter's words in 2 Pet. 1:3: “**His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness . . .**” Today, as we take the Lord's Supper, in Christ, we have been given EVERYTHING we need for life and godliness. In justification we have been given the righteousness of Christ. In sanctification we are set apart. And through the power of the Holy Spirit (which has also been given to us), we are being sanctified. His person and work is the basis, not only for our justification, but for our continued renewal and godliness in the Christian life. As bread and wine nourish our bodies with physical renewal, so Christ nourishes our souls and renews us daily. He is our nourishment! He is our sustenance! He is our refreshment! He is our source of life!

2. In Christ we have everything we need for life and godliness. This is what it really means to be sanctified. Turn with me to Eph. 1. In v. 8 Paul says that according to the riches of his grace, “*in Christ*” God has “*lavished upon us*” all the beauties of salvation in Christ. So, for just a few minutes I want us to consider some of these blessings in Eph. 1:3-14.

In Christ, we are chosen. And because we are chosen, we live in godliness.

Pastor: “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with ever spiritual blessing in the heavenly places . . .” (Eph. 1:3)

Congregation: “even as he chose us in him before the foundation fo the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him.” (Eph. 1:4)

Pastor: “For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.” (Eph. 2:10)

Congregation: “You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide . . .” (John 15:16)

In Christ, we are adopted. In Christ, we are now the children of God.

Pastor: “He predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will . . .” (Eph. 1:5).

Congregation: “For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, “Abba! Father!” (Rom. 8:14-15)

Pastor: “The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him.” (vv. 16-17)

Congregation: “But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons.” (Ga. 4:4-5)

Pastor: “And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, “Abba! Father!” So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God.” (vv. 6-7)

In Christ we are redeemed and our sins are forgiven.

Pastor: “In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth.” (Eph. 1:7-10).

Congregation: “He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.” (Col. 1:13-14)

Pastor: “For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.” (Tit. 2:11-14)

Congregation: “But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin. If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” (1 John 1:7-9)

In Christ we have an inheritance.

Pastor: “In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will, so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory.” (Eph. 1:11-12)

Congregation: “And now I commend you to God and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified.” (Acts 20:32)

Pastor: “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who by God’s power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.” (1 Pet. 1:3-5)

Congregation: “We give thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in light. He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.” (Col. 1:12-14)

In Christ (New Covenant Christians) we are sealed with the Holy Spirit.

Pastor: “In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.”

Congregation: “And it is God who establishes us with you in Christ, and has anointed us, and who has also put his seal on us and given us his Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee.” (2 Cor. 1:21-22)

Pastor: “And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you.” (John 14:16-17)

Congregation: “Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us—for it is written, “Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree”— so that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we might receive the promised Spirit through faith.” (Gal. 3:13-14)

In these verses, we only see “some” of the great blessings that come down to us in Christ. There are so many benefits that come to us as Christians in our sanctification. I will only mention a few. We have assurance that in Christ, God loves us and has saved us. In Christ, God has given us peace. In Christ, we have joy. In Christ we will grow in grace. We also have the great truth of perseverance, knowing that He who began a good work in us will also carry it on to completion. Today, in Christ, we have everything we need for life and godliness.

3. What does sanctification look like for us. Now, by way of application, I would like for us to read our covenant together. Then, we will conclude with the Lord’s Supper as I read from 1 Cor. 11.