

Foundations II-5 Sanctification and Glorification

Where we are in this study: OT overview, NT overview, study on Regeneration, Faith and Repentance, Study on Justification and Adoption, now...thinking logically through the Christian life, we come to both sanctification and glorification

'For this is the will of God, even your sanctification' (1 Thess. 4:3).

What is sanctification? Sanctification is the work of God's free grace by which we are renewed throughout in the image of God and are enabled more and more to die to sin and live to righteousness.

Sanctification means making a person holy. It is called a work because, although the believer has made a definite break with his old life in regeneration, his being made actually holy is carried on by degrees. It is a renewal because it restores us so as to be like God made us in the beginning.

Work of God-

Ezekiel 36:27, *"And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules."*

Sanctification is a supernatural thing; it is divinely infused. We are naturally polluted, and to cleanse, God takes to be his prerogative. 'I am the Lord which sanctify you' (Lev. 21:8). Weeds grow of themselves. Flowers are planted. Sanctification is a flower of the Spirit's planting, therefore it is called, 'The sanctification of the Spirit' (1 Pet. 1:2). Sanctification is God's gracious work in the renewed, believing, justified, and adopted soul. Instead of being an act of God done once for all, like justification and adoption, it is a work of God's Spirit carried on gradually and continuously in the believing soul. It is growing; it is compared to seed which grows: first the blade springs up, then the ear, then the ripe corn in the ear; such as are already sanctified may be more sanctified (2 Cor. 7:1).

Thus sanctification is a real, personal work in the soul, by means of which its dispositions and acts are radically changed. This work, more over, is gracious. included in the eternal purposes of electing grace.

Philippians 2:12–13, *"Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, [13] for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure."*

Our Responsibility- Work our out Salvation

Both Catechisms agree in saying that it is the work of God's free grace, in which the believer actively co-operates, as he works out his own salvation, God at the same time working in him both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

Philippians 2:12–13, *"Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, [13] for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure."*

Dying to Sin and Living unto God

Romans 6:4, *"We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life."*

Romans 6:6–8, “*We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin. [7] For one who has died has been set free from sin. [8] Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him.*”

Romans 6:11–14, “*So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, to make you obey its passions. [13] Do not present your members to sin as instruments for unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and your members to God as instruments for righteousness.[14] For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace.*”

The Instrument we use: The word of God.

John 17:17. sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth.

Newton: Two or three years before John Newton's death, when his sight was become so dim that he was no longer able to read, an aged friend and brother in the ministry called on him to breakfast. Family prayers following, the portion of Scripture for the day was read to him. It was taken from 1 Corinthians 15:10, 'By the grace of God I am what I am.' It was Newton's custom on these occasions, to make a short familiar exposition on the passage read. After the reading of this text, he paused for some moments, and then uttered the following affecting soliloquy: 'I am not what I ought to be. Ah! how imperfect and deficient. I am not what I wish to be. I abhor what is evil, and I would cleave to what is good. I am not what I hope to be; soon, soon, I shall put off mortality, and with mortality all sin and imperfection. Yet, though I am not what I ought to be, nor what I wish to be, nor what I hope to be, I can truly say, I am not what I once was—a slave to sin and Satan; and I can heartily join with the apostle, and acknowledge, "By the grace of God, I am what I am." Let us pray.'

The Goal: Being made holy by being renewed in the image of God

Ephesians 4:20–24, “*But that is not the way you learned Christ!—[21] assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him, as the truth is in Jesus, [22] to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, [23] and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, [24] and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.*”

Sanctification is an extensive thing: it spreads into the whole man. 'The God of peace sanctify you wholly' (1 Thess. 5:23). As original corruption has depraved all the faculties--'the whole head is sick, the whole heart faint,' no part sound, as if the whole mass of blood were corrupted--so sanctification goes over the whole soul. After the fall, there was ignorance in the mind; but in sanctification, we are 'light in the Lord' (Eph. 5:8). After the fall, the will was depraved; there was not only impotence to good, but obstinacy. In sanctification, there is a blessed pliability in the will; it symbolizes and comports with the will of God. After the fall, the affections were misplaced on wrong objects; in sanctification, they are turned into a sweet order and harmony, the grief placed on sin, the love on God, the joy on heaven. Thus sanctification spreads itself as far as original corruption; it goes over the whole soul: 'the God of peace sanctify you wholly.' He is not a sanctified person who is good only in some part, but who is all over sanctified; therefore, in Scripture, grace is called a 'new man,' not a new eye or a new tongue, but a 'new man' (Col. 3:10). A good Christian, though he be sanctified but in part, yet in every part.

The relationship between sanctification and justification

Sanctification and justification are inseparably joined together, hence all who are justified, they being also regenerated, are under the experience of sanctification, and none others but those who are justified are being sanctified. But they differ in certain important respects.

In justification God **imputes** the righteousness of Christ to the believer; in sanctification the Holy Spirit infuses grace and enables us to the make strides in holiness.

In justification sin is **pardoned**, so that its guilt is removed; in sanctification sin is subdued, so that it no longer exercises its supreme control.

In justification all believers are **equally freed** from the revengeful wrath of God perfectly in this life, so that they never fall into condemnation; but sanctification is not equal in all, but of various degrees; nor is it perfect in any in this life, but growing up unto perfection.

These distinctions, though not expressly stated in the Confession, are yet plainly implied in the exposition it makes of justification and sanctification, respectively.

Counterfeits of sanctification:

(1) The first counterfeit of sanctification is moral virtue. To be just, to be temperate, to be of a fair deportment, not to have one's escutcheon blotted with ignominious scandal is good, but not enough: it is not sanctification. A field-flower differs from a garden-flower. Heathens have attained to morality; as Cato, Socrates, and Aristides. Civility is but nature refined; there is nothing of Christ there, and the heart may be foul and impure. Under these fair leaves of civility the worm of unbelief may be hid. A moral person has a secret antipathy against grace: he hates vice, and he hates grace as much as vice. The snake has a fine colour, but a sting. A person adorned and cultivated with moral virtue, has a secret spleen against sanctity. The Stoics who were the chief of the moralized heathens, were the bitterest enemies Paul had (Acts 17:18).

(2) The second counterfeit of sanctification is superstitious devotion. This abounds in Popery; adorations, images, altars, vestments, and holy water, which I look upon as a religious frenzy, and is far from sanctification. It does not put any intrinsic goodness into a man, it does not make a man better. If the legal purifications and washings, which were of God's own appointing, did not make those who used them more holy; and the priests, who wore holy garments, and had holy oil poured on them, were not more holy without the anointing of the Spirit; then surely those superstitious innovations in religion, which God never appointed, cannot contribute any holiness to men. A superstitious holiness costs no great labour; there is nothing of the heart in it. If to tell over a few beads, or bow to an image, or sprinkle themselves with holy water were sanctification, and all that is required of them that should be saved, then hell would be empty, none would come there.

(3) The third counterfeit of sanctification is hypocrisy; when men make a pretence of that holiness which they have not. As a comet may shine like a star, a lustre may shine from their profession that dazzles the eyes of the beholders. 'Having a form of godliness, but denying the power' (2 Tim. 3:5). These are lamps without oil; whited sepulchres, like the Egyptian temples, which had fair outsides, but within spiders and apes. The apostle speaks of true holiness (Eph. 4:24), implying that there is holiness which is spurious and feigned. 'Thou hast a name to live, but art dead' (Rev. 3:1); like pictures and statues which are destitute of a vital principle. 'Clouds without water' (Jude 12). They pretend to be full of the Spirit, but are empty clouds. This show of sanctification is a self-delusion. He who takes copper instead of gold, wrongs himself; the most counterfeit saint deceives others while he lives, but deceives himself when he dies. To pretend to holiness when there is none is a vain thing. What were the foolish virgins better for their blazing lamps, when they wanted oil? What is the lamp of profession without the oil of saving grace? What comfort will a show of holiness yield at last? Will painted gold enrich? painted wine refresh him that is thirsty? or painted holiness be a cordial at the hour of death? A pretence of sanctification is not to be rested in. Many ships, that have had the name of the Hope, the Safeguard, the Triumph, have been cast away upon rocks; so, many who have had the name of saints, have been cast into hell.

(4) The fourth counterfeit of sanctification is common grace, which is a slight, transient work of the Spirit, but does not amount to conversion. There is some light in the judgment, but it is not humbling; some checks in the conscience, but they are not awakening. This looks like sanctification, but is not. Men have convictions wrought in them, but they break loose from them again, like the deer, which, being shot, shakes out the arrow. After conviction, men go into the house of mirth, take the harp to drive away the spirit of sadness, and so all dies and comes to nothing.

Glorification

Romans 8:29–30, *“For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. [30] And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.”*

John Murray writes, “Glorification is the final phase of the application of redemption. It is that which brings to completion the process which begins in effectual calling. Indeed it is the completion of the whole process of redemption. For glorification means the attainment of the goal to which the elect of God were predestinated in the eternal purpose of the Father and it involves the consummation of the redemption secured and procured by the vicarious work of Christ” (Redemption: Accomplished and Applied, p. 174).

The Rev. Robert Bruce, the morning before he died, being at breakfast, and having, as he used, eaten an egg, said to his daughter Martha, 'I think I am yet hungry; you may bring me another egg.' But having mused a while, he said, 'Hold, daughter, hold, my Master calls me.' With these words his sight failed him: on which he called for the Bible, and said, 'Turn to the 8th chapter of the Romans, and set my finger on the words—"I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, etc., shall be able to separate me from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus my Lord."' When this was done, he said, 'Now, is my finger upon them?' Being told it was, he added, 'Now, God be with you, my dear children: I have breakfasted with you, and shall sup with my Lord Jesus Christ this night.' And then he expired.

The Bible speaks of this future work taking place at two key points in time:

1. When the Christian dies
2. When Jesus returns

What benefits do believers receive from Christ at death?

The souls of believers are at their death made perfect in holiness and immediately pass into glory; and their bodies, being still united to Christ, rest in their graves until the resurrection.

Made perfect in holiness, Hebrews 12:23, *“and to the assembly of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect,”*

Our souls immediately pass into the presence of God, 2 Corinthians 5:6–8, *“So we are always of good courage. We know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord, [7] for we walk by faith, not by sight. [8] Yes, we are of good courage, and we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord.”*

The souls of both the righteous and the wicked are neither dead nor sleeping during that period. They are conscious and active. The Confession says that the souls of men, both righteous and wicked, do after death return immediately to God who gave them. Hence, the doctrine of the sleep of the soul, or of its semi-conscious state during the period in question, has no favor whatever in the Standards. As the body may not be necessary to consciousness and mental activity, so the soul may be both conscious and active in its disembodied middle state.

Our bodies rest in the grave until Jesus returns, 1 Thessalonians 4:13–14, *“But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. [14] For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep.”*

Our bodies are resurrected when Jesus returns, John 5:28–29, *“Do not marvel at this, for an hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear his voice [29] and come out, those who have done good to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil to the resurrection of judgment.”*

What benefits do believers receive from Christ at the resurrection?

At the resurrection Christ will immediately raise up in glory all believers; he will openly acknowledge and acquit them in the day of judgement, graciously rewarding them according to their works of faith, and they will enter into the full enjoyment of God for all eternity.

1 Thessalonians 4:13–18, “*But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. [14] For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep. [15] For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. [16] For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. [17] Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord. [18] Therefore encourage one another with these words.*”

Those who are alive when the resurrection occurs shall not die, but shall be changed. This change will be some sort of transmutation, by means of which the bodies of those then alive shall be so changed as to fit them for their eternal abode. The change which Enoch and Elijah experienced illustrates this in a measure, and the modification which the body of our Lord underwent prior to or at the time of his ascension was, no doubt, a somewhat similar one. Thus in a moment, by divine power, the living shall be changed, and made to assume those qualities of body which the spiritual conditions of the future state of existence shall require. This change shall be experienced by all then living on the earth, whether good or bad, whether righteous or wicked.

All the dead shall be raised with the same bodies, and none other. The Larger Catechism says that the selfsame bodies of the dead which are laid in the grave, being then again united to their souls forever, shall be raised up by the power of Christ. Both of these statements teach that all that is necessary to preserve bodily identity is preserved in the resurrection body. In some well-defined sense, it shall be the same body which in this life was inhabited by the soul, and was the instrument of all its activities, that shall be raised up at the last day. This sets aside the idea that an entirely new body is to be created, or that in no sense is there to be any relation between the body that is laid in the grave and the resurrection body. It is the same body that dies and is buried which is reanimated and raised. Just as truly as Jesus had the identical body after the resurrection and ascension which he had before, so shall all the dead possess the same body after the resurrection which they had in this earthly life, however much it may be changed so fit is for its eternal home. The main thing to hold fast here is the fact that there is identity in some real sense between the present body and that which shall be ours by the resurrection.

The fact of the resurrection further implies that the soul and body shall be reunited. Death severs the bond between them, and leads to the dissolution of the body. The resurrection not only reanimates the body, but it also reunites the reanimated body to the disembodied soul. By this means the person is again made complete, and the basis of responsibility is fully preserved. Just when and how this union is effected we are not told, and may not be able to say definitely. Whether the body shall be reanimated by having its physical life restored to it prior to its reunion with the soul, or whether the presence of the soul itself in the lifeless gathered elements of the body shall be the cause of the reanimation of the body, we do not venture to assert. The simple fact is before us that the body and soul are reunited, the identity of the body is not destroyed, and the personal identity of those raised up is entirely preserved amid all the changes which take place.

It regard to the just, they shall be raised by the Spirit of Christ unto honor, and be made conformable to his own glorious body. Matthew 25:31–34, “*When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne. [32] Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. [33] And he will place the sheep on his right, but the goats on the left. [34] Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.’”*

The Larger Catechism, to a certain extent, expands this statement when it says that the bodies of the just are raised by the Spirit of Christ, and by virtue of his resurrection as their head, in power, spiritual and incorruptible, and made like unto his glorious body. Herein there are several things to be observed. The agency by which the resurrection of the just is effected is the Spirit of Christ. His Spirit dwelling in the just not only saves the soul, but is the agent by which the resurrection of their bodies is effected. The Larger Catechism signalizes a very important matter when it says that the resurrection of the just is also due to the virtue of the resurrection of Christ, their head. Through their union with Christ, as has been already stated, believers are joined to him both as to their bodies and their souls. Hence, their bodies, after death, are still united to Christ as they lie in their graves. At the resurrection that union supplies an important factor in effecting the resurrection of the just. And, finally, the resurrection of the just is to be a glorious one. It is unto honor, and in power. It is to be a spiritual and incorruptible estate in heaven. Such is the glorious hope which the believer has of life and immortality by the gospel.

In the case of the unjust or finally impenitent, the bodies of the unjust shall, by the power of Christ, be raised to dishonor. Matthew 25:41–46, *“Then he will say to those on his left, ‘Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. [42] For I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink, [43] I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not clothe me, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.’ [44] Then they also will answer, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to you?’ [45] Then he will answer them, saying, ‘Truly, I say to you, as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.’ [46] And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”*

The Larger Catechism, after stating, in general, that all the dead shall be raised by the power of Christ, and the just specially by his Spirit, adds that the bodies of the wicked shall be raised up in dishonor by him as an offended judge. Here it is asserted that Christ, by his power, and not by his Spirit, shall raise the bodies of the wicked. There is no bond of union between Christ and the unjust or unbelieving, as thereby the divine power may effect their resurrection. And as their resurrection is not a benefit of redemption, the unjust are raised up by Christ acting in the capacity of the judge of the quick and the dead, and their resurrection is consequently judicial in its nature, and in order to judgment, as will presently appear. This doctrine, it may be added, is inconsistent with the views of those who teach that the wicked shall not be raised at all, or, if raised, shall be annihilated as a punishment for their sins. Hence, the wicked are raised up by Christ unto dishonor, to be finally judged by him.

Debate: Where do Christians go after 1 Thess 4:17? Heaven or Earth?

What about the Rapture? Were Christians not to be taken away from Earth before the return of Jesus?

Answer: Not at all. In fact, the word "rapture" does not appear anywhere in the Scripture, nor does the Scripture teach the removal of believers before the return of Christ.

Rev 21:1-3 “Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. 2 I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. 3 And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Look! God’s dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God.”

Seems Jesus will descend, our bodies will ascend and meet him in the air, then come to earth. The practice of kings in those days when they returned from war in victory, was to have the people march out and meet him outside the city to join in the triumphal procession to the city.

Surely that is what is happening here!

Foundations II-5 Sanctification and Glorification

Sanctification *'For this is the will of God, even your sanctification'* (1 Thess. 4:3).

What is sanctification? Sanctification is the work of God's free grace by which we are renewed throughout in the image of God and are enabled more and more to die to sin and live to righteousness.

Work of God- Ezekiel 36:27

Our Responsibility- Work our out Salvation- Philippians 2:12–13

Dying to Sin and Living unto God- Romans 6:4, Romans 6:6–8, Romans 6:11–14

The Instrument we use: The word of God- John 17:17

The Goal: Being made holy by being renewed in the image of God- Ephesians 4:20–24

The relationship between sanctification and justification

In justification God **imputes** the righteousness of Christ to the believer; in sanctification the Holy Spirit infuses grace and enables us to make strides in holiness.

In justification sin is **pardoned**, so that its guilt is removed; in sanctification sin is subdued, so that it no longer exercises its supreme control.

In justification all believers are **equally freed** from the revengeful wrath of God perfectly in this life, so that they never fall into condemnation; but sanctification is not equal in all, but of various degrees; nor is it perfect in any in this life, but growing up unto perfection.

Counterfeits of sanctification:

(1) Moral virtue.

(2) Superstitious devotion.

(3) Hypocrisy

(4) Common grace

Glorification

Romans 8:29–30, *“For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. [30] And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.”*

John Murray writes, “Glorification is the final phase of the application of redemption. It is that which brings to completion the process which begins in effectual calling. Indeed it is the completion of the whole process of redemption. For glorification means the attainment of the goal to which the elect of God were predestinated in the eternal purpose of the Father and it involves the consummation of the redemption secured and procured by the vicarious work of Christ” (Redemption: Accomplished and Applied, p. 174).

What benefits do believers receive from Christ at death?

The souls of believers are at their death made perfect in holiness and immediately pass into glory; and their bodies, being still united to Christ, rest in their graves until the resurrection.

Made perfect in holiness, Hebrews 12:23

Our souls immediately pass into the presence of God, 2 Corinthians 5:6–8

Our bodies rest in the grave until Jesus returns, 1 Thessalonians 4:13–14

Our bodies are resurrected when Jesus returns, John 5:28–29

What benefits do believers receive from Christ at the resurrection?

At the resurrection Christ will immediately raise up in glory all believers; he will openly acknowledge and acquit them in the day of judgement, graciously rewarding them according to their works of faith, and they will enter into the full enjoyment of God for all eternity.

1 Thessalonians 4:13–18

Those who are alive when the resurrection occurs shall not die, but shall be changed.

All the dead shall be raised with the same bodies, and none other.

The fact of the resurrection further implies that the soul and body shall be reunited.

It regard to the just, they shall be raised by the Spirit of Christ unto honor, and be made conformable to his own glorious body. Matthew 25:31–34

In the case of the unjust or finally impenitent, the bodies of the unjust shall, by the power of Christ, be raised to dishonor. Matthew 25:41–46

Debate: Where do Christians go after 1 Thess 4:17? Heaven or Earth?
