

What We Believe
Lesson 5
Sanctification

Church of God Declaration of Faith, Article 6:

We believe in **sanctification** subsequent to the new birth, through faith in the blood of Christ, through the Word, and by the Holy Spirit.

As we have studied:

Regeneration has to do with our nature – we are a new creation in Christ Jesus.

Justification has to do with our right standing with God – we are declared righteous before Him.

I. The Meaning of Sanctification

Sanctification is what the Lord does in us where the fruit of His Spirit is evident in our lives, separated from a sinful world and dedicated to God.

There are two thoughts to this definition:

Separation from evil and dedication to God and His service

A. Separation from Evil

2 Chronicles 29:5,16,18 “...sanctify now yourselves, and sanctify the house of the LORD God...and carry forth the filthiness out of the holy place...” And the priests went into the inner part of the house of the LORD, to cleanse it, and brought out all the uncleanness... Then they went in to Hezekiah the king, and said, “We have cleansed all the house of the LORD ...” [NKJV]

1 Thessalonians 4:3 For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that you should abstain from fornication. [KJV]

Exodus 19:20-22 And the LORD came down upon Mount Sinai, on the top of the mountain: and the Lord called Moses to the top of the mountain; and Moses went up. And the LORD said to Moses, “Go down and warn the people, lest they break through to gaze at the Lord, and many of them perish. Also let the priests who come near the LORD consecrate themselves, lest the LORD break out against them.” [KJV]

Leviticus 11:44 “For I am the LORD your God. You shall therefore consecrate yourselves, and you shall be holy; for I am holy. Neither shall you defile yourselves with any creeping thing that creeps on the earth.” [NKJV]

B. Dedication to God and His Service

The concept is that whatever is profane is dedicated to God to become sacred and used for the glory of God.

Leviticus 27:14,16 And when a man dedicates his house to be holy to the LORD, then the priest shall set a value for it, whether it is good or bad; as the priest values it, so it shall stand. If a man dedicates to the Lord part of a field of his possession, then your valuation shall be according to the seed for it. A homer of barley seed shall be valued at fifty shekels of silver. [NKJV]

Numbers 8:17 “For all the firstborn among the children of Israel are Mine, both man and beast; on the day that I struck all the firstborn in the land of Egypt I sanctified them to Myself.” [NKJV]

John 10:36 “do you say of Him whom the Father sanctified and sent into the world, ‘You are blaspheming,’ because I said, ‘I am the Son of God’?” [NKJV]

C. It is used of God

The Lord is removed from all that is sinful and unholy, God being absolutely holy in Himself and the Lord is spoken of as being holy.

Ezekiel 36:23 “And I will sanctify My great name, which has been profaned among the nations, which you have profaned in their midst; and the nations shall know that I am the LORD,” says the Lord God, “when I am hallowed in you before their eyes.” [NKJV]

II. The Time of Sanctification

Sanctification is viewed as **Past – Present – Future**
or **Instantaneous – Progressive – Complete.**

A. Instantaneous Sanctification

1 Corinthians 6:11 And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were **sanctified**, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God. [NKJV]

Hebrews 10:10,14 By that will we have been **sanctified** through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being **sanctified**. [NKJV]

The very moment a person believes in Jesus, they are separated from sin and separated unto God.

According to the New Testament all believers are called “saints.”

1 Corinthians 1:2 To the church of God which is at Corinth, to those who are **sanctified** in Christ Jesus, called to be **saints**, with all who in every place call on the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours: [NKJV]

Romans 1:7 To all who are in Rome, beloved of God, called to be **saints**: [NKJV]

It is said that if a person is not a saint, they are not a Christian; if they are a Christian, they are a saint.

**Sainthood does not happen after a person deceases, as some faiths teach;
we are *now* saints of the Most High God.**

B. Progressive Sanctification

- As believers, we grow in sanctification.

2 Peter 3:18 but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. [NKJV]

- Transformed from one degree of character and glory to the next.

2 Corinthians 3:18 But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, **are being transformed** into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord. [NKJV]

- Sanctification is a progressive growth process in which we are to increase and abound.

1 Thess 3:12 And may the Lord make you increase and abound in love to one another and to all, just as we do to you, [NKJV]

- There is a “perfecting holiness”

2 Corinthians 7:1 Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, **perfecting holiness** in the fear of God. [NKJV]

- God gave the gift of pastors and teachers to the Body of Christ for the purpose of perfecting the saints into the likeness of Christ until, at last, they attain to the fullness of the divine standard, Jesus Christ Himself.

Ephesians 4:11-15 And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ— [NKJV]

Philippians 3:10-15 that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead. Not that I have already attained or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. Therefore, let us, as many as are mature, have this mind; and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal even this to you. [NKJV]

C. Complete and Final Sanctification

1 Thessalonians 5:23 And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. [KJV]

- **Wholly** means complete in every part, perfect in every respect, whether it refers to the church as a whole or to the individual.
- The day will come when the believer will be complete in all ways of Christian character, with no graces missing.
- Complete in spirit – linking us to heaven, complete in body – linking us to earth, complete in soul – being connected to both heaven and earth.
- This completion will occur when Christ returns

1 Thessalonians 3:13 so that He may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints. [NKJV]

- It is when we see Him as He is that we shall be like Him.

1 John 3:2 Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. [NKJV]

Philippians 3:12-14 Not that I have already attained or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. [NKJV]

III. The Means of Sanctification

What are the means and agencies employed to make people holy and conform them into the likeness of Christ?

It is a divine and human cooperative process with both God and man contributing and cooperating toward the desired end.

A. From the Divine Side: It is the Work of the Triune God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit

1. God the Father

1 Thessalonians 5:23-24 Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He who calls you is faithful, who also will do it. [NKJV]

- There is also the sense that the believer is responsible for progress in the Christian life.

Philippians 3:12-13 Not that I have already attained or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, [NKJV]

- It is still divine grace which works.

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

- We can't purify ourselves, but we can yield to God and purity will come.

John 17:17 Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth. [NKJV]

2. Jesus Christ the Son

- Christ's death for us has separated us from sin and the world, and sets the believer apart as redeemed and dedicated to the service of God.

Hebrews 10:10 By that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. [NKJV]

- The sanctification of the church is also based on the sacrificial death of Christ.

Ephesians 5:25-27 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish. [NKJV]

1 Corinthians 1:30 But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God—and righteousness and sanctification and redemption [NKJV]

Hebrews 13:12 Therefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered outside the gate. [NKJV]

3. The Holy Spirit

1 Peter 1:1-2 To the ... elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: [NKJV]

2 Thessalonians 2:13 But we are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God from the beginning chose you for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth, [NKJV]

- Holy Spirit **seals, attests, and confirms** the work of grace in the soul by producing fruits of righteousness through the believer.
- It is the Spirit of life in Christ who gives us freedom from the law of sin and death.

Romans 8:2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death. [NKJV]

- Holy Spirit is the executive of the Godhead for this very purpose:

The Spirit wars against the flesh enabling us to bring forth fruit unto holiness.

Galatians 5:17-23 For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control... [NKJV]

The secret to the success or failure of the believer lies in cooperating with the power of Holy Spirit to enable you to have victory over your flesh.

B. From the Human Side

1. Through Faith in the Redemptive Work of Jesus Christ

1 Corinthians 1:30 But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God—and righteousness and sanctification and redemption. [NKJV]

- As we appropriate the work of Jesus, we can experience sanctification unto the Lord.
- As we daily appropriate the work Jesus did for us, He produces in us the fruit of the Spirit.

Acts 26:18 “to open their eyes, in order to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me.” [NKJV]

2. Through the Study of the Scriptures and Obedience to Them

John 17:17 Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth. [NKJV]

Ephesians 5:26 that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, [NKJV]

John 15:3 “You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you.” [NKJV]

Our sanctification is limited only by our lack of knowledge of and obedience to the Word of God.

How does the Word of God sanctify us?

- By revealing sin
- By awakening conscience
- By revealing the character of Christ
- By showing the example of Christ
- By offering the influence & power of Holy Spirit
- By setting forth spiritual motives and ideals

The Word of God is complete for detaching the believer from the world, the flesh, and the devil.

C. From Other Agencies

Hebrews 12:14 Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord: [NKJV]

- ***Pursue*** means to follow after or seek out with intense and persistent action

You cannot become a saint of God by being passive, and the lazy Christian cannot be a godly Christian!

Hebrews 12:10-11 For they [earthly fathers] indeed for a few days chastened us as seemed best to them, but He for our profit, that we may be partakers of His holiness. Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it. [NKJV]

Romans 6:19-22 I speak in human terms because of the weakness of your flesh. For just as you presented your members as slaves of uncleanness, and of lawlessness

leading to more lawlessness, **so now present your members as slaves of righteousness for holiness**. For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. What fruit did you have then in the things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death. But now having been set free from sin, and having become slaves of God, you have your fruit to holiness, and the end, everlasting life. [NKJV]

2 Corinthians 6:17 “Therefore Come out from among them and be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, and I will receive you.” [NKJV]

2 Corinthians 7:1 Therefore, having these promises, beloved, **let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit**, perfecting holiness in the fear of God. [NKJV]

Sounds like the need for Personal Responsibility!

Sanctification is accomplished in the believer’s life by the deliberate separation from all that is unclean and unholy and by continually presenting our members of the body as holy instruments to the Lord for His holy purposes.

Romans 6:13-14 Do not then, allow sin to establish any power over your mortal bodies in making you give way to your lusts. Nor hand over your organs to be, as it were, weapons of evil for the devil’s purposes. But, like people rescued from certain death, put yourselves in God’s hands as weapons of good for His own purposes. For sin is not meant to be your master—you are no longer living under the Law, but under grace. [J. B. Phillips New Testament]

***By daily single acts of surrender to holiness,
sanctification becomes the habit of one’s life.***