

Sanctified by Faith

by Aaron Hills

Sanctifying grace is received by faith, trusting in God's promise to sanctify us and resting in His power and provision.

Scripture: Matthew 3:11, Matthew 5:3, Luke 11:11, Acts 5:32, Acts 15:8, Acts 26:18, Romans 6:13, Ephesians 5:25, Hebrews 13:12, 1 John 1:7

Topics: "Sanctification", "Holy Spirit"

Description

Aaron Hills preaches on the conditions for receiving the Spirit in sanctifying power, emphasizing the importance of conviction of need, sorrow for past shortcomings, prayer, obedience, hunger for righteousness, consecration, and faith in Jesus. He highlights the authoritative voice of Jesus on matters of grace and the necessity of a second work of grace, specifically sanctification. Hills explains that sanctification is received by faith and refutes common misconceptions about its attainment, emphasizing that it is an instantaneous work of the Holy Spirit, not a gradual process or something obtained at death.

Transcript

"That they may receive remission of sins and an inheritance among all them that are sanctified by faith in me." -- Acts 26:18.

God has through His Word announced many conditions of receiving the Spirit in sanctifying power.

1. -- There is the conviction of need. "Blessed are the poor in spirit" (Matt. 5:3).
2. -- Sorrow for not having received the Spirit before. "Blessed are they that mourn" (Matt. 5:4).
3. -- Praying for the Spirit. Luke 11:11: "How much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?"
4. -- Obedience of a surrendered will. Acts 5:32: "The Holy Spirit given to them that obey him."
5. -- Hunger and thirst for the blessing. Matt. 5:6: "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness."
6. -- Consecration for it. "Present yourselves unto God" (Rom. 6:13 and 22:1).

7. -- Faith. "Sanctified by faith in me" (Acts 26:18). This is naturally and necessarily the last condition. Until the other conditions are met the soul is not on believing ground, not in the place where it can believe. But when all the preliminaries have been complied with, there is nothing left for the soul to do but to BELIEVE AND ENTER IN.

I. -- Jesus speaks authoritatively here of a second work of grace.

If there is any authoritative voice on matters of morals and religion in this world and during all the ages, it is when Jesus speaks. He had dwelt in the bosom of the Father before the world was created, and knew the secrets of eternity. Of all religious teachers He only could say: "I speak that which I do know, and testify that which I have seen."

Notice the doubles of statements in the context: "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest. But arise and stand on thy feet: for to this end have I appeared unto thee (1) to appoint thee a minister (2) and a witness, (1) both of things wherein thou hast seen me, (2) and of the things wherein I shall appear unto thee; (1) delivering thee from the people (Jews) (2) and from the Gentiles, unto whom I send thee, (1) to open their eyes that they may turn from darkness to light (2) and from the power of Satan unto God, (1) THAT THEY MAY RECEIVE REMISSION OF SINS (2) AND AN INHERITANCE AMONG ALL THEM THAT ARE SANCTIFIED BY FAITH THAT IS IN ME. Here are five pairs of statements. If the last pair does not teach two works of grace -- justification and sanctification -- it would be difficult for human speech to do it.

"But," say some, "talk about a second blessing! I have had a hundred blessings." We heard this very thing said with a smile before a large audience of ministers by a doctor of divinity and ex-missionary in the city of Cleveland, Ohio. The dear brother manifestly thought he was making a masterly and irresistible argument against a second work of grace.

Now it is doubtless true that that brother had been stirred by the breath of the Spirit moving upon his heart a hundred, yea, a thousand times. But that distinct epochal Pentecostal experience which the apostolic band received in that upper chamber, which so revolutionized and transformed their lives, is in the language of Wesley, "THE SECOND BLESSING, PROPERLY So CALLED," and no man who has received that blessing will ever speak lightly of it Pentecosts are not obtained So easily. The truth is, that Doctor of Divinity did not know what he was talking about, nor does any other man who speaks flippantly of "The baptism with the Holy Spirit and fire."

II. -- Notice it is received by faith.

On this matter there is a jargon of conflicting voices:

1. -- Some tell us that we get all the saving grace there is for us at conversion. There is nothing, they say, beyond regeneration and justification, but a lifelong struggle with inbred sin and continuous development in spiritual life. (a) It is a sufficient answer to this to point to Pentecost. The disciples there received a blessing they had never had before, which continued with them through all their eventful lives. (b) Christians, but never sinners, are often exhorted and commanded to seek and obtain this experience of sanctification. (c) Uncounted multitudes through all the Christian centuries, after being regenerated, have sought and obtained this sanctifying grace.

2. -- Others say we get it BY GROWTH. But this cleansing by growth is nowhere taught in Scripture, and there is no recorded example of it in the Bible or out of it. The hearts of the one hundred and twenty in the

upper chamber were cleansed in the twinkling of an eye by the Holy Ghost.

3. -- Others still tell us that we get the deliverance from inward sin AT DEATH, or by death. Now all instructed teachers will admit that the grace of God may be given at death to all justified souls, otherwise prepared for heaven, who have not knowingly and willfully rejected sanctification. The light may then break on longing eyes that have never been purposely closed to it.

But death itself has no essential relation to the blessing. God may bestow it an hour, or a day, or a year, or fifty years before death, as easily as in the moment of transition from this world to the next, if the soul is only willing and prepared to receive it. It is nothing but a theological fiction that "SIN IS A NECESSITY," and that we must be cursed by it "daily" as long as we live. Nothing can possibly be more unreasonable or more contradictory to the holy Word.

4. -- The Roman Catholic Church puts the blessing further away, and teaches that we are sanctified BY PURGATORY. That is not the teaching of the Bible.

God said under oath that "we should serve Him IN HOLINESS AND RIGHTEOUSNESS ALL OUR DAYS" (Luke 1:73-75). Jesus says in our text that we are sanctified BY FAITH instantaneously. It is not theory with Christ. He knows.

III. -- What is the nature of sanctifying faith?

1. -- It is a clear intellectual apprehension of a great truth. There is indeed a great truth as the basis of all rational faith on any subject; for rational faith is not credulity. On this particular subject there must be an apprehension of the fall of man and the consequent depravity of the race, from which every son and daughter of Adam needs to be cleansed. Evolutionists flatly deny all this; but the whole Bible states or assumes this fact, and bases the whole plan of salvation upon it. This truth must be known and accepted.

2. -- It must be accepted as true that Christ's baptism with the Holy Spirit is the remedy for us by the atonement. This is why we are told that "the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John 1:7). "Wherefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people through his own blood, suffered without the gate" (Heb. 13:12 and 10:10, and .Eph. 5:25).

But we are as plainly told that the work is accomplished by the baptism with the Holy Ghost and fire (Matt. 3:11; Mal. 3:3). "Giving them the Holy Ghost . . . cleansing their hearts by faith" (Acts 15:8, 9).

3. -- It is a heart-faith. Not only the intellect but the whole moral nature is involved in it, intellect, sensibility and will. Moody said: "Saving faith involves assent, consent, and laying hold." Dr. Whedon says: "Saving faith is that belief of the intellect, consent of the affections and act of the will by which the soul places itself in the keeping of Christ as its Ruler and Savior."

4. -- Saving faith involves a ceasing from labor. Our own efforts end. In rescuing a drowning man, an experienced swimmer waits till the man ceases to struggle. Faith is a self-committal of the whole matter of salvation to God, a sinking of self down into Him and resting there.

When Blondin, the famous tight-rope gymnast, proposed to wheel a man in a wheelbarrow across Niagara Falls, he asked Blondin what he should do. "Do?" said Blondin, "do nothing but lie in the barrow like a dead man. I will take you over." And Blondin did it. So when a soul seeks sanctification, it complies with all the preliminary conditions which precede faith. Then faith CONFIDENTLY TRUSTS, WITHOUT ANY

EVIDENCE OF FEELING, THAT GOD KEEPS HIS PROMISE AND SANCTIFIES. God never fails such a believing heart. He does it.

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