

Subjective Purification

by Daniel Steele

Subjective purification is a definite work of entire sanctification wrought in the consciousness of the believer, leading to a progressive realization of perfection.

Scripture: Romans 8:29, 2 Corinthians 3:18, Philippians 1:6, 1 Thessalonians 5:23, 1 John 4:18

Topics: "Sanctification Process", "Christian Perfection"

Description

Daniel Steele preaches about the ongoing process of sanctification in the life of a believer, emphasizing that while we are justified and made holy through Christ, complete sanctification is a progressive work that continues throughout our earthly life. He discusses the distinction between subjective purification, which is the inner cleansing in the believer's consciousness, and the objective perfection, which is a gradual process dependent on intellectual growth and moral judgment. Steele challenges the idea that involuntary mistakes and defects are proofs of remaining depravity, asserting that God's love infused into believers ensures their sanctification and ultimate perseverance as saints.

Transcript

THE sum and substance of this book is well expressed on page 158:

We are not yet any of us fully saved, and in the largest meaning of the term not yet completely redeemed, not yet made perfectly whole; not yet in the complete or absolute sense entirely sanctified.

If he means by this that the complete inner cleansing finds through all the subsequent earthly life a progressive realization in the conduct and character, he says what all Wesleyans admit. Dr. John Miley, the latest Methodist authority in theology, says: "It is the definite work of entire sanctification to complete the subjective purification." Not all my readers may know Webster's definition of "subjective" -- "Pertaining to or derived from one's own consciousness." Our latest standard theology teaches the definite work of entire sanctification wrought in the consciousness of the believer who appropriates his full heritage in Christ. Then he adds what Wesley always insists upon: "But the perfection or maturity of the Christian graces is not an immediate product of the subjective purification." In other words, the objective or outward perfection depending on intellectual growth is not immediately manifest, but is a progressive work which will continue so long as the moral judgment is capable of improvement. The involuntary mistakes and defects which appear in the meantime, this book alleges, are proofs of remaining depravity. This we stoutly deny, since that term in its established use, as we have seen, denotes "perverseness," "corruptness," "general badness," and "absence of religious feeling and principle."

In attempting to prove "that all who are justified are also sanctified, or made holy, clean, and pure," the author admits that "inferior elements may still have some footing in the soul, so that the total outcome may be more or less marred ; but the divine love, which is the leading, controlling element, is not in itself subject to deterioration or adulteration." This has a Calvinistic aspect, and teaches the final perseverance of the saints. What the author calls divine love is not our love to God, as Alford insists, but his love to us, "a portion of himself infused into our being." In this way, since God's love is always perfect, every newborn babe in Christ has perfect love. But how the author adjusts this doctrine to the contradictory universal consciousness of Christians before they are sanctified wholly does not appear. The testimony to love, weak, imperfect, and vacillating, is constant and painful. Again, we must bear in mind "that the writers of the New Testament call believers 'saints,' without thought of the degree of their Christian life or the worthiness of their conduct. In the Old Testament the priests were holy, whatever might be their conduct." -- Beet. Hence the same persons may be nominally "sanctified in Christ," and really "carnal." Their objective or titular holiness should become subjective, real, personal, and perfect.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/daniel-steele/subjective-purification/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net