

Effects of Christ's Baptism -- Entire Sanctification

by Dougan Clark

The sermon emphasizes the importance of experiencing the baptism with the Holy Ghost, which results in a complete renovation and transformation of the heart, leading to entire sanctification.

Scripture: Psalm 51:10, Acts 2:1-15, Romans 6:14, Romans 6:22, Galatians 5:22, 1 Thessalonians 5:23, 1 John 3:9

Topics: "Holy Spirit", "Entire Sanctification"

Description

Dougan Clark preaches about the transformative power of the Holy Spirit through the baptism received on the day of Pentecost, emphasizing that the miraculous signs were not the baptism itself but the filling of the believers with the Holy Ghost, resulting in complete sanctification and hearts made perfect in love. The sermon delves into the distinction between justification and sanctification, highlighting that sanctification removes the remains of carnality, creates a clean heart, and renews a right spirit, leading to a life of holiness and obedience to God's will.

Transcript

The sound as of a rushing mighty wind, the appearance of cloven tongues like as of fire, and the speaking in unknown languages, were all miraculous accompaniments of the baptism received on the day of Pentecost; but they were not the baptism itself. The one item of transcendent importance in the whole history is, that then, for the first time, the church of the hundred-and-twenty "were all filled with the Holy Ghost." And, as a consequence of this baptism, a complete renovation and transformation were wrought in their interior, spiritual natures. They were entirely sanctified. Their hearts were made perfect in love.

Some years after this memorable event, a council was called at Jerusalem, to determine whether or not the restrictions and observances of the Mosaic law should be imposed upon the large numbers of Gentile Christians who had been converted by the preaching of Paul and Barnabas. On that occasion, Peter, in rehearsing the transactions in which he had had so large a share at the house of Cornelius, used the following language: "And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as He did unto us; and put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith."

It must be quite evident, from this statement, (1), that just what the Gentiles received when the Holy Ghost fell on them at the preaching of Peter, that same thing the Apostles, and their fellow believers, received on the day of Pentecost; and (2), that, as the former received the purifying of their hearts by faith, so also did

the latter.

But what does the expression, "purifying their hearts," mean? It means the removal of the remains of their carnality. It means the creation of a clean heart, and the renewal of a right spirit. It means the crucifixion of the flesh. It means the destruction of the body of sin. It means the casting out of the strong man, who was only bound in conversion. It means entire sanctification. It means Perfect Love.

Assuredly the eleven Apostles were converted men long before the day of Pentecost. They had, years ago, left all and followed Jesus. He had said to them, "Rejoice, because your names are written in Heaven," "I am the vine, ye are the branches," "I have called you friends." But it was not till the day of Pentecost that they experienced the "purifying of their hearts by faith." It was not till they had received the baptism with the Holy Ghost, that they were wholly cleansed from the stains of their inward corruption, and made truly pure in heart.

Let us for a moment look at the results of this wondrous transformation, as we can trace them in the subsequent history of some of the Apostles. Take the case of Peter. A very strong and earnest love had bound him to his Master from the first. He had been impulsive, and even forward in His service: he had been loud, and, we cannot doubt, sincere in his professions of devotion to Him; he had exhibited the strength, and along with it, the weakness as well, of an ardent, impetuous nature; he had attempted to walk upon the sea, and, through want of faith, had failed; he had boastfully asserted that he would never forsake his Lord, but had fled with the others when he was bidden to put up his sword; he had declared that he would die rather than deny his Saviour, but had been afraid to confess Him in the presence of a servant maid.

But how changed was Peter after his heart had been purified by faith on the day of Pentecost. Still active and energetic in his Master's cause, he was no longer timid and vacillating, but full of holy boldness. He did not hesitate to say to the amazed multitude, after the lame man had been healed, "Ye denied the Holy one and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you; and killed the Prince of Life, whom God hath raised from the dead."

Looking into the faces of the very chief priests and Sanhedrin who had condemned his Master, he said, "Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, WHOM YE CRUCIFIED, whom God raised from the dead, even BY HIM doth this man stand here before you whole." And, when commanded not to speak nor teach in the name of Jesus; he gave utterance (with John) to that sublime aphorism which is ever the guide of the Christian, when his obedience to the civil magistrate comes in conflict with his duty to God, "Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you, more than unto God, judge ye." On another occasion, when Herod was guarding Peter with four quaternions of soldiers, on the night before his intended execution, the angel who came to his rescue, did not find him weakly lamenting his approaching fate, nor striking his head in despair against the wall of his prison, but wrapped in that profound and tranquil slumber, which indicated the peacefulness of a spirit in harmony with God. Only once, in his subsequent history, do we find a little of the old vacillation, when he failed to pursue a strictly straight-forward course towards the Gentile converts at Antioch. But he would seem, even then, to have received the rebuke of his fellow-apostle in humility and meekness, and to have found it a precious oil, which did not break his head, because his heart was purified by faith; and he exhibits a spirit of true Christian magnanimity, by speaking afterwards in his Epistle, of his beloved brother Paul, and his mysterious writings.

And how was it with James and John? Boanerges sons of thunder; full of energy and zeal. They also, like Peter, were earnest and active in their Master's cause. But, mingled with their devotion to Him, there was also much fire that was not of His kindling; much self-seeking; much unholy ambition. They had schemes of personal advancement. They desired the first places, to sit, one on "His right hand, and the other on His left, in His Kingdom." They were ready to call down fire from Heaven to destroy a village that would not receive Him.

Their hearts had not yet been purified by faith. But after the Pentecostal baptism, how marked is the change. James meekly lays down his life under the sword of Herod, the first of the Apostles to seal his testimony with his blood; and John lives to an advanced age, becoming the very embodiment of love, talking about it, preaching about it, writing about it, telling us what it is to be made perfect in love; and in his latter years--if tradition is correct--he would sometimes be carried into the assembly of Christian worshippers, and looking benignly upon them would say, "Little children, love one another." He was not less a son of thunder after Pentecost, but vastly more a son of consolation.

The Apostle Paul, in his first letter to the Church of the Thessalonians, uses the following language: "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." "Faithful is He who calleth you, who also will do it." Now, it would appear, from a comparison of the different Epistles, that these same Thessalonians constituted one of the most healthy and flourishing churches of the Apostolic age. In the first Epistle, the Apostle addresses them as a church whose members had been soundly converted by the power of the Holy Ghost, and whose work of faith and labor of love he could commend. In the words addressed to them, there is little censure and much commendation. He does not say to them, as to the Corinthians, "Every one of you saith, I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas, and I of Christ." He does not say, "Put away from yourselves that wicked person." He does not say, "There is utterly a fault among you, because ye go to law one with another." He does not say, as to the foolish Galatians, "Who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth?"

And yet, even for these Thessalonians, Paul prays that they may obtain something which they have not yet obtained, something which they still needed; and that something was entire sanctification. "The very God of peace sanctify you wholly." They were already walking in the light of justification, and, being justified, they were also partially sanctified; but the Apostle desires nothing less than that they may be wholly sanctified.

When the second Epistle was written, we may well suppose that the Apostle's prayer had been answered, for he says: "We are bound to give thanks for you alway brethren, as it is meet; because your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity (perfect love,) of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth." Surely the church of which this could be said, had been baptized by the Holy Ghost, and received the purifying of their hearts by faith.

Justification and sanctification have often been confounded, both by writers and speakers; some regarding them as identical, and others failing to distinguish between them with sufficient definiteness and accuracy. While the terms undoubtedly express different states of grace, it must be admitted they have much in common. In both justification and sanctification, everything has to be received from Christ; everything has to be received in a spirit of entire submissiveness and self-abnegation on our part; and everything has to be received by faith.

Nor is it unimportant to remember that both these terms are used, in more senses than one, in the Sacred Scriptures. The word justify means, first, and commonly, to account just, i.e., to regard the offender, for the sake of Jesus Christ, as though he had not sinned. This is the same thing as pardon, or forgiveness. "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." But it means, secondly, to approve; as in the texts, "But ye are washed," which means born again," "but ye are sanctified," which means made holy; "but ye are justified," which means, have received God's approval "in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." It will be seen at once, therefore, that this quotation from Paul furnishes no argument whatever in favor of the idea that, sanctification comes before justification, in the ordinary sense of that term.

Again, the term sanctify originally means to set apart for sacred uses; and thus, under the Law, it was applied to things as well as persons, to the furniture of the tabernacle, for example, as well as to the priests who officiated there. It is applied, technically, in the New Testament to all Christians. Even the Church at Corinth, to whom the Apostle writes, "Ye are carnal, and walk as men," are nevertheless addressed, in the beginning of the Epistle, as "sanctified in Christ Jesus." But, secondly, the term signifies to cleanse from all inward pollution; to deliver from indwelling corruption; to save from heart-sin; to make holy. It is in this sense that I employ it in the present work. We are now prepared to understand and to find the points of distinction between justification and sanctification.

First: Justification, while not excluding the present, has reference primarily and chiefly, to the past. If I commit a sin one moment, and am forgiven for it the next, it is, nevertheless, when so forgiven, a past sin. Sanctification, on the other hand, regarding the past as settled and canceled by the blood of Christ, has reference almost exclusively, to the present and the future. A soul seeking justification, inquires, "How may I be forgiven for the sins that are past? A soul seeking sanctification inquires, "How may I be kept from sinning now, and in the future?

Secondly: Justification removes the guilt and condemnation of sin; and sanctification removes from the heart that which brings guilt and condemnation, i.e., sin itself. The term sin is used in the Bible, either in the sense of sin committed an actual transgression, in thought, word, or deed--or sin indwelling, that depravity of heart which leads to all sinful acts; that inward cause, of which sins are the effects; that nature which we have by inheritance from our first parents, in the fall.

In the one sense, sin is a voluntary violation of the divine law; in the other it is an involuntary state of the heart. The one meaning implies guilt, the other, depravity; the former requires pardon or remission, the latter, cleansing or removal. The individual who is groaning under the burden of sins committed, wants to be forgiven; the one who is sensible of his indwelling corruption, wants to be cleansed. One seeks justification, the other sanctification.

Thirdly: Christ, and Christ only, is the efficacious cause, both of justification and sanctification. But Christ is our justification in that He hung upon the cross as our substitute, and bore our sins in His own body on the tree. He endured the penalty of the law instead of us, He gave Himself for us, He tasted death for every man, He trod the winepress alone, He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities. It is quite true that in every case of justification something is done inwardly as well as outwardly, nevertheless, the work in a peculiar sense is done for us, outside of us, instead of us, by our blessed Saviour.

On the other hand, Christ is our sanctification, as He baptizes us, and fills us, and dwells in us by the Comforter, the Holy Ghost, whom He purchased for us with His blood. Sanctification is, therefore, a work performed peculiarly and specially within us.

Fourthly: justification is done once for all; it is a completed work; it blots out for ever all past sins. It may have to be repeated if sin is repeated, but always, when it has taken effect, it is a finished work; it is not in any sense progressive. Sanctification, on the contrary, although it implies at the beginning the removal of that inward depravity which inclines us to evil, is yet always progressive, in degree. Entire sanctification, so far from excluding growth, is itself the best preparation for a healthful, symmetrical, and continuous growth. "There will never, says Upham, "be a period, either in time or eternity, when there may not be an increase of holy love."

In sanctification, the tendencies to sin are removed, but the susceptibilities remain. On these Satan is ever ready to operate with his temptations, and, in the present state of being, it will always be possible for us, as moral agents, to yield to his suggestions. There will always be the liability to sin, but not always the unavoidable necessity to sin. We have a deliverer "mighty to save."

What says Paul? "Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we that are dead to sin live any longer therein?" And again, the words of the Holy Ghost, through that eminent Apostle, come down to the Church in every age with all the force of a positive command: "Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin. but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord;" i.e., reckon yourselves dead to sin and trust in Christ to make the reckoning good. What you reckon, He will make real and true.

We have already spoken of sin as either an act or a state. Now, to be dead to sin as an act, is not to do that act. To be dead to sin as a state, is not to be in that state. Most men are dead to the sin of murder as an act. They do not actually kill, but the Apostle John tells us that "he that hateth his brother is a murderer;" and so, whoever cherishes hatred and malice in his heart is not dead to the sin of murder as a state. The illustration can easily be extended to other sins.

There is a being of sin, back of the doing of sin. There are germ sins in the heart, out of which spring actual sins in the life. Paul distinguishes between the flesh and the works of the flesh. The flesh, used in that sense, is the body of sin; the depraved heart, the aggregate of the evil propensities, dispositions, and tendencies of the carnal nature. Every evil deed in that long, dark, dreadful list enumerated in the Epistle to the Galatians as the works of the flesh, arises out of some tendency in the unregenerate heart, which tendency, under the influence of Satan's temptations, is liable to break forth into the corresponding act of wickedness. Now, in an immense majority of instances, to say the least, these dispositions to evil, which, collectively, are called sin, or the body of sin, or inbred sin, or indwelling sin, or depravity, or the flesh, are not wholly removed at the time of conversion. The Articles of the English Church are entirely correct in saying, "This infection of nature doth remain, yea, in them that are regenerated."

And yet, even in justification and regeneration, sin is brought into subjection. It continues in the heart, but it does not reign there. The promise to all Christians is "Sin shall not have dominion over you." Let no justified believer imagine for a moment that because he is not sanctified, or for any other reason, he has a license to sin. "Whosoever is born of God, sinneth not." "He cannot sin," without thereby incurring condemnation. The tendencies to evil may be strong within him, but the grace of God will be sufficient to keep him from falling into overt acts of sin, to enable him to walk in the light of justification, and even to

grow continually in grace.

Still, however, there must be in such a heart frequent and protracted struggles. The strong man is bound, but not being cast out he makes desperate efforts to burst his bonds and re-assert his supremacy in the household. "The infection of nature" within, responds favorably to the temptations of Satan from without. When the individual would do good, evil is present with him. His will may be firm on God's side, his faith may be strong, and sin may be kept in subjection, but the contest is often so fearful, that the language is truly applicable, "Oh, wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from this body of death?" (margin). And, in point of fact, while we do not for a moment limit or doubt the power of God to keep any of His children from failing, we believe the number to be very small, who, stopping short with the grace of justification, and not seeking and finding that of entire sanctification, do yet wholly escape being brought into captivity to the law of sin and falling into backsliding.

In direct contrast with the "works of the flesh," the Apostle sets before us "the fruits of the Spirit,"--love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance--a blessed group of sweet Christian graces. Now, in Christ's baptism, the Spirit comes into the heart of the believer, that He may abide with him for ever. Such will be the result, if we do not grieve Him by our unbelief and disobedience. And that man in whom the Spirit dwells, will enjoy in his heart, and bring out in his life, the fruits of the Spirit.

Thus the promise addressed by Ezekiel to the scattered, peeled sons of Israel, will be fulfilled in the experience of the consecrated, believing Christian, i.e., "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments and do them." Out of the heart are the issues of life; and the heart, entirely sanctified and renewed, brings forth the fruits of the Spirit, in accordance with its renewed nature; just as the unregenerate heart brings forth the works of the flesh, in accordance with its unrenewed nature.

In one of the American cities, a minister one day came into a meeting which was being held for the promotion of Christian holiness. He heard persons testifying to the cleansing power of the blood of Christ, and the keeping power of His Spirit, and was filled with wonder. At length he arose and said, "Brethren, I want to understand this thing; I am a minister of the Gospel. As I came to this meeting I passed by the race-course, where the trotting of fast horses is going on. I have a fast horse myself, and I felt a strong inclination to turn in and try him against the others. But I reflected that it would not be seemly for a minister of Christ to be engaged in such amusements with jockeys and gamblers, who were probably racing their horses for money; so I passed on. I wanted to go in very much, but I did not go. Now, tell me, brethren, is that sanctification?" "No, brother," was the reply; "sanctification takes the want-to out of the heart."

And this is true. Every one can see that a man who cherishes evil desires and passions in his heart, however he may restrain them in the outward act, is not a sanctified or holy man. Jesus, when personally on earth, compared the scribes and Pharisees to "whited sepulchers, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness." And yet, these Pharisees were exceedingly scrupulous in their ceremonial observances and religious duties. To be religious is one thing, to be holy is quite another. Every holy man is religious, but not every religious man is holy.

A story illustrating the same point, has come down to us from the heathen mythology. Among the divinities, or semi-divinities, believed in by the Greeks, were the sirens, who dwelt upon an island on the west coast of Italy. They were gifted with wonderfully attractive voices, and sang beautiful songs. These siren songs, as they floated melodiously over the waves, lured the mariners who came within hearing, to their own destruction; for, so enraptured were these unhappy men by the unprecedented sweetness of the sounds which greeted their ears, that, in their infatuation, they would leap overboard in order to get to the songstresses. Thus they were either drowned, or, if they succeeded in reaching the shore, they were put to death by the sirens themselves. In all this we behold an admirable symbol of earthly and sensual pleasure.

On one occasion it happened--as the legend informs us--that Ulysses, the celebrated Grecian general, while performing his protracted and arduous journeyings, after the destruction of Troy, passed near the island of the sirens. Knowing the dangerous character of their deceitful songs, he took the precaution, before coming within hearing, to stop the ears of his men with wax, and to have himself tied fast with ropes to the mast of the ship. When the ravishing sounds reached his ears, he made desperate efforts to free himself from his bonds, that he might leap into the sea; but his self-imposed restraint held him back, and all sailed away in safety. He wanted to go where the pleasant sounds invited him, but he could not.

At another time, the Argonautic expedition, led by Jason, was passing by the same place. Jason felt no necessity for stopping his men's ears with wax, nor for binding himself to the mast. He had on board his vessel the celebrated musician, Orpheus, at the sound of whose lyre--according to Grecian fable--the trees of the forest would bend in ecstasy. Jason had nothing to do, therefore, but just to set Orpheus playing upon his lyre. The sound was so much more entrancing, so much sweeter and lovelier than any that the sirens could produce, that, though their songs were still wafted over the deep, they fell upon heedless ears; there was better music on board. They could have gone to the sirens if they had chosen, but they did not want to go.

"ULYSSES, sailing by the Sirens' isle,

Sealed first his comrades ears, then bade them fast

Bind him with many a fetter to the mast,

Lest those sweet voices should their souls beguile,

And to their ruin flatter them, the while

Their homeward bark was swiftly sailing past;

And thus the peril they behind them cast,

Though chased by those weird voices many a mile.

But yet a nobler cunning Orpheus used:

No fetter he put on, nor stopped his ear,

But ever, as he passed, sang high and clear

The blisses of the gods--their holy joys,

And, with diviner melody, confused

And marred earth's sweetest music to a noise.

(Archbishop Trench).

From various motives, and by various means, both converted and unconverted men may restrain themselves from sinful indulgences which they may, nevertheless, ardently desire to partake of. They may force themselves to observe the right in outward conduct, when they have little love for the right in their inmost hearts. But, is it not possible to be so filled with the Spirit, to have Christ so dwell in the heart by faith, that the tempting attractions of this world, although presented to the perceptions, shall scarcely influence at all the emotions, the desires, or the will? The sanctified believer in Jesus has a music in his own soul, far sweeter than any siren-song of this delusive world. And, true it is; as the author of *The Christian Year* has beautifully written:

"There are, in this loud, stunning tide

Of human care and crime,

With whom the melodies abide

Of the everlasting chime;

Who carry music in their heart

Through dusky lane and wrangling mart;

Plying their daily task with busier feet,

Because their secret souls a holy strain repeat."

And as sanctification takes away the "want to" that inclines us to evil, so it puts in the "want to" that inclines us to good. God writes His law in the heart so that it may be loved.

His service then becomes love service, not task work. The language of the heart purified by faith is, "Here am I, send me." It meets every intimation of God's will with a may I, rather than a must I. You may require your child to do your bidding, and secure his obedience; but his reluctance is so great, his brow so clouded, his step so tardy and unwilling, that the act of obedience gives you little pleasure. He does what you command him from duty or compulsion, but not with the joyful acquiescence of a loving heart. You feel that if you could get into his heart and make him want to do what you require, you would possess the secret of success in governing him. "I wish," said a thoughtful little boy, "that I could obey God as my dog obeys me. He just loves to do what I tell him." The language of the Psalmist is, "I delight to do Thy will, O, my God;" and that of the blessed Saviour, "My meat is to do the will of Him that sent me, and to finish His work." In a like spirit should willing service be rendered by every devoted child of God. May it be the experience of every Christian who reads this book, to leave the position of a servant and take joyously that of a son.

Remarks

1. Justification is the beginning, and entire sanctification the completion, of the work of inward holiness. But there may be an indefinite growth in holiness.
2. Justification is "that act of God's grace in which He pardons our sins and accepts us as righteous in His sight, for the sake of Christ." The believer who has been thus pardoned and accepted is in a justified state.
3. Sanctification is that act of divine grace whereby we are made holy. The believer in whom this act of grace has been performed is in a sanctified state.
4. Sanctification is the result of Christ's baptism "with the Holy Ghost and with fire."
5. Sanctification, as a state of grace, "implies the whole heart and life devoted to God."
6. "Holiness is sanctification in perpetuity."
7. The natural appetites, propensities, and affections were not originally sinful, but became so when man fell. Sanctification does not abolish these sensibilities of our nature, but takes the sin out of them, so that they may be exercised rightly and properly and to the glory of God. This is what it is to keep under the body and bring it into subjection. Our Heavenly Father does not require us to eradicate our natural propensities, but to control them. He does not require us to cease to be men, but He does require us to be holy men.
8. The appetites, propensities, and affections are readily susceptible of a wrong action, either in kind or degree. Satan, by his temptations, is ever ready to induce in them such wrong action, and thus to pervert them from their original purpose. It is here, chiefly, that the susceptibilities to sin remain, even in the sanctified believer. If he fails to watch and to pray and to abide in Christ, Satan will be on the alert to inject sin again into that heart which has been purified from its inward corruption, even as he beguiled Eve by his subtilty.
9. "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin." The justified believer, though not wholly delivered from the remains of carnality, may be kept by faith in Christ from falling into outward sin. On the other hand, the sanctified believer may be tempted, and may fall. Nevertheless, to have the heart purified by faith certainly does not involve any peculiar danger of falling, but quite the reverse. It would be preposterous to maintain that where there is more holiness there is less safety.

AARON

Holiness on the head,

Light and perfections on the breast,

Harmonious bells below, raising the dead

To lead them unto life and rest:

Thus are true Aarons dressed.

Profaneness in my head,

Defects and darkness in my breast,

A noise of passions ringing me for dead
Unto a place where is no rest:
Poor priest thus am I dressed.
Only another head
I have, another heart and breast,
Another music, making live not dead,
Without whom I could have no rest:
In him I am well dressed.
Christ is my only head,
My alone only heart and breast,
My only music, striking me even dead;
That to the old man I may rest,
And be in him new dressed.
So holy in my head,
Perfect and light in my dear breast,
My doctrine tuned by Christ (who is not dead,
But lives in me while I do rest)
Come, people, Aaron's dressed.
(George Herbert)

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/dougan-clark/effects-of-christs-baptism-entire-sanctification/>

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