

Sanctification

by D.S. Warner

Sanctification is a result of faith in Christ and the Holy Spirit, and not a result of obedience to the law, and it is a process of becoming pure and holy in spirit, soul, and body.

Scripture: John 17:17, Acts 7:3, Romans 8:2, 2 Corinthians 7:1, 1 Thessalonians 4:4, 1 Thessalonians 5:23, 2 Thessalonians 2:13, Hebrews 13:12, 1 Peter 1:2

Topics: "Christian Sanctification", "Holy Living"

Description

D.S. Warner addresses the question of sanctification, emphasizing the distinction between the actual performance of Christian duty and the spirit of entire loyalty to God. He explains that sanctification is about purity of moral nature and being consecrated to God, achieved through faith in Christ and a willingness to die to sin and self. Warner highlights that perfect holiness is attained through the blood of Christ, the working of the Spirit, and belief in the truth of God's Word, urging believers to seek and expect this purity through faith and complete consecration.

Transcript

[Editor's note: In the Churches of God magazine, The Church Advocate, of August 8, 1877,

a question was asked concerning the doctrine of sanctification.

The query was answered by D. S. Warner in the very next issue, May 30, 1877.]

"Sanctification.

I wish to ask a question through THE ADVOCATE for Brother Warner or some other good brother to answer. It is this: How can any person claim sanctification purely or wholly outside of all the commandments of the Bible? How can a man or a woman be wholly sanctified short of complying with all the commandments in the Bible?

JOHN GROWALL.

Sulphur Springs, O."

In ADVOCATE of May 30, Bro. Growall asks me, or some one else, to answer the following questions:

"How can any person claim sanctification purely or wholly outside of the Bible? How can a man or woman be wholly sanctified short of complying with all the commandments in the Bible?"

I should have attempted an answer to the above sooner had time permitted. But having recently learned of the Spirit and word much on the above subject, I take pleasure in testifying the same for Jesus.

I think the brother meant the same thing in both the above questions; hence, I will take the latter as sufficiently clear and comprehensive.

"How can a man or woman be wholly sanctified short of complying with all the commandments in the Bible?"

I wish for the first thing to distinguish between the actual performance of all Christian duty and the spirit of entire loyalty to God. The former depends upon a knowledge of the whole will of God, which requires time, study and much true teaching.

The latter consists in the subjection of the entire will of God, and may exist without a perfect knowledge of all contained in his will.

Entire sanctification cannot exist without the latter, but may without the former. And as the question clearly relates to the former I will try and show how this may be.

What is meant by the word sanctify? It is derived from hagios, which, in its various forms, occurs 285 times in the New Testament. It is rendered as follows:

Sanctify, 26 times;

sanctification, 5;

holy, holiness, etc., 186 times;

saints, 66 times;

hallowed, 2 times.

Thus it is seen that its primary meaning relates to that purity of moral nature ascribed to God, the Spirit, etc.; 94 times it qualifies the Spirit, i.e., "Holy Spirit;" and when affirmed of the righteous it necessarily ascribes the same moral quality to them.

Until examining more closely into the meaning of the word Sanctify, I held that its primary meaning was Consecrate, set apart; but I find that the lexicons, as well as the Bible, teach otherwise. Robinson defines it,

1. Pure, clear, without blemish, holy; or as a verb, to cleanse, purify, etc.
2. To make sacred or holy, to consecrate.

This agrees with the latest edition of Liddel and Scott's standard lexicon.

A few texts of Scripture will be sufficient to show that hagios means perfect purity, 1 Thes. iv. 4.

That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honor.

This relates to the moral condition in which we should keep ourselves, i.e., in purity. In ver. 7 the apostle uses holiness as the opposite to uncleanness, which is cleanness or purity. No other meaning can be ascribed to Paul's prayer in 1 Thes. v. 23,

"The very God of peace sanctify you wholly, and I pray God your whole spirit, and soul, and body be preserved blameless," etc.

That is, I pray God to make you entirely pure in spirit, soul and body, and keep you such. Notice that this perfection in purity of soul, body and spirit is performed by God himself (1 Thes. v. 23-24; Heb. ii. 11).

The blood of Christ is the procuring cause of this perfect renovation (Heb. xiii. 12; 1 John i. 7).

The spirit is the effectual working cause.

"The law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death" (Romans viii. 2).

"Salvation through sanctification of the spirit and belief of the truth" (2 Thes. ii. 13).

"Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit" (1 Peter i. 2).

The word of God is the instrumental cause, because it points to "the blood," and holds out the promises of God and the conditions.

"Sanctify them through thy truths," etc. (John xvii. 17).

"Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse our selves from all faithlessness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the face of God" (2 Cor. vii. 1).

The condition of its performance is faith (Acts vi. 18); faith in Christ, accompanied by an entire consecration, a willingness to die indeed to sin and self, and all else but God. This will bring the blessing of perfect holiness.

Hoping that God may direct these lines to some precious soul who is longing for perfect heart purity, I exhort you to seek and expect it alone through faith.

1. Believe that God has promised it to you.
2. Believe that he is able to perform what he has promised.
3. Believe that he is able and willing now.
4. Believe that in you he does it now.

Be definite in asking for it. Do not clamor for a blessing simply, nor for "more religion," but for the entire extraction of every root and seed of inbred depravity; the extinction of "the last remains of sin and of the carnal mind." "Glory to the blood that bought me," with hundreds more of God's "little ones." I can testify that thus believing "you shall enter into rest."

I hope, beloved brethren, that you now see how God can wholly sanctify a soul without having obeyed all the word. Holiness does not result from obedience to the law of God, but the reverse is true. It is also

certain that the blessings of entire sanctification, and even justification, cannot be retained when we depart from the known will of God in any particular. But both may be employed and consistently professed through a life of heart loyalty to God, though many commandments unapprehended are not observed.

O may we all enjoy a perfect heart-rest from sin, and "walk before God and be perfect."

I ask Bro. Growall, or some one else, to reverse the above question, and answer how any one can claim entire obedience without holiness.

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