

What Is Gospel Holiness, or Sanctification?

by Phoebe Palmer

Gospel holiness is the state of being set apart for holy purposes through faith in the Saviour's merit, resulting in redemption from iniquity and a life of obedience to God.

Scripture: Leviticus 20:7

Topics: "Gospel Holiness", "Christian Sanctification"

Description

Phoebe Palmer preaches on Gospel holiness, emphasizing that believers attain this state through faith in the infinite merit of Jesus Christ, presenting body and soul as a living sacrifice to God. Holiness involves salvation from sin and a redemption from all iniquity, experiencing the all-cleansing efficacy of Jesus' blood and being presented faultless before God. Believers, though saved from sin, continue to strive for sanctification, running in the way of God's commandments with increasing wisdom, power, and love. The terms 'holiness,' 'sanctification,' and 'perfect love' are closely related, signifying the state every believer should aim to achieve.

Transcript

Gospel holiness is that state which is attained by the believer when, through faith in the infinite merit of the Saviour, body and soul, with every ransomed faculty, are ceaselessly presented, a living sacrifice, to God; the purpose of the soul being steadily bent to know nothing among men, save Christ and Him crucified, and the eye of faith fixed on "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." In obedience to the requirement of God, the sacrifice is presented through Christ, and the soul at once proves that "He is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him."

Holiness implies salvation from sin, a redemption from all iniquity. The soul, through faith, being laid upon the altar that sanctifieth the gift, experiences constantly the all-cleansing efficacy of the blood of Jesus. And through this it knows the blessedness of being presented faultless before the throne, and mingles its triumphant ecstasies with the blood-washed company: "Unto Him that loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father, to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen."

Though saved from all sin at present, yet the soul that has been brought into the experience of this state well knows that it is not saved to the uttermost. It finds that, in the entire surrender of the world, it has but "laid aside every weight." And now, with undeviating purpose and unshackled feet, it runs with increasing rapidity and delight in the way of His commandments, gaining new accessions of wisdom, power, and

love, with every other grace, daily.

"Holiness," "sanctification," and "perfect love" are terms intimately related in meaning. The terms holiness and sanctification, being frequently used by Divine inspiration, we may presume to be most significantly expressive of the state to which it is the duty of every believer to attain.

"Sanctification" being a word of much the same prominence as "holiness" in the blessed Word, it may be well to devote a few moments to its investigation, as it will doubtless throw an increase of light on the endeavor to ascertain the nature of the blessing.

As we have frequent occasion to observe in Scripture, the term "sanctify," in its most simple definition, means setting apart for any specified purpose. Thus it was that Moses was commanded to sanctify the children of Israel. "And the Lord said unto Moses, Go unto this people, and sanctify them today and tomorrow, and let them wash their clothes, and be ready against the third day: for the third day the Lord will come down in the sight of all the people upon Mount Sinai" (Exod. xix. 10, 11).

The Israelites also were required to sanctify themselves: "Sanctify yourselves therefore and be ye holy: for I am the Lord your God" (Lev. xx. 7). The Saviour sanctified Himself for the redemption of the world: "And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth" (John xvii. 19). God also is represented as sanctifying His people: "I am the Lord which sanctify you" (Lev. xx. 8). "That ye may know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you" (Exod. xxxi. 13). "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly" (I Thess. v.23). "Even as Christ also loved the Church and gave Himself for it, that He might sanctify and cleanse it" (Eph. v.25, 26,). The Saviour prays that His disciples may be sanctified through the truth: "Sanctify them through Thy truth: Thy word is truth" (John xvii. 17). Peter also speaks of the sanctification of the elect, according to the foreknowledge of God, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus. (I Peter i. 2.) Paul as above speaks of the sanctification of the Church, cleansed with the washing of water by the Word. (Eph. v.26, 27.) The Corinthian brethren are also exhorted to cleanse themselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, by taking hold on the promises. (2 Cor. vii. 1.) The vessels in the Temple were all, by the special appointment of God, set apart for holy purposes; and though a variety of uses was designated, yet they were sanctified exclusive for the holy service of the sanctuary.

Thus it is that the Christian redeemed from all iniquity, not with corruptible things, such as silver and gold, but by the precious blood of Jesus, is, by the most explicit declarations and obligations, required to come out and be separate. "And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God: as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. Wherefore come out from among them and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you" (2 Cor. vi. 16, 17). "Go ye out of the midst of her; be ye clean, that bear the vessels of the Lord" (Isaiah lii, 11). "Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's" (I Cor. vi, 19, 20). "For this is the will of God, even your sanctification" (I Thess. iv. 3, 4). "If ye were of the world, the world would love his own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you" (John xv. 19). Yet "sanctification," as applied to believers, comprehends inconceivably greater blessedness than a mere nominal setting apart of body and soul, with every power, to God. The sacrifice, or service, however well intended, could not for a moment be acceptable without the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost.

And then, in order to be continually washed, cleansed, and renewed after the image of God, the sacrifice must be ceaselessly presented. This is implied in the expression, "a living sacrifice;" it is thus we are made priests unto God. Through Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world; the Way, the Truth, and the Life; the Door by which we enter in; the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world; the sacrifice ascends unto God a sweet savour of Christ. It is thus that the triumphant believer momentarily realizes the blessed fulfillment of the prayer: "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 that calleth you, who also will do it." Amen. Even so, Lord Jesus.

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