

Sailing With Paul

Simple Papers for Young Christians

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Lectures on Daniel the Prophet; The Only Two Religions;
Notes on the Book of Proverbs; etc. etc.

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Chapter 6

Sanctification

None who sail with Paul need be confused as to the teaching of Scripture on Sanctification, if they will but carefully weigh the many luminous passages in his epistles on the subject.

I can only briefly outline them in this paper, referring any who desire a more exhaustive consideration of it to what I have elsewhere written (See *"Holiness: the False and the True."* Same writer and publisher).

It should be plain to any thoughtful person that the great apostle of the Church never divides believers into two classes, some of whom are "only justified" and the others possessing a "second blessing," or sanctified. On the contrary he addresses all Christians as "**sanctified in Christ Jesus.**" Nor does this mean that they are morally perfect, or sinless. Surely no one could so speak of the Corinthian assembly. All kinds of evils had to be corrected among them. They are called carnal in chapter 3, yet he addresses them as "sanctified" in the 2nd verse of chapter 1, and in verse 30 he writes, "**Of Him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us . . . sanctification.**" They were in CHRIST, so they were sanctified though their ways were far from being all that GOD would have them.

There need be no difficulty here if it be known and held in mind that sanctification means separation to GOD. All believers have been set apart to GOD in CHRIST, and are no longer of the world even as He is not of the world.

In harmony with other New Testament writers Paul presents sanctification as three-fold:

We are sanctified by the HOLY SPIRIT.

"That I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost" (Romans 15:16).

"And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God" (I Corinthians 6:11).

"But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth" (II Thessalonians 2:13).

We are sanctified by the blood of CHRIST, and His one all-sufficient offering upon the Cross:

"For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren . . . But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? . . . By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all . . . For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified . . . Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace? . . . Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate" (Hebrews 2:10, 11; 9:11-14; 10:10, 14, 29; 13:12). - I take it for granted that Paul wrote Hebrews. I see no valid reason for questioning it.

We are sanctified by the Word of GOD:

"Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word" (Ephesians 5:25, 26). Compare this with the words of our Lord JESUS CHRIST in John 17:17-19, "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth. As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth."

The sanctification of the HOLY SPIRIT is the beginning of the work of GOD in one's soul, separating him from the world and follies he once loved, turning his heart to GOD, exercising him about his sinfulness, and leading him to personal faith in CHRIST. To this agree the words

of the apostle Peter in I Peter 1:2, "**Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied.**" Sanctification of the SPIRIT is there shown to be the divine means used to lead the guilty soul to the blood of sprinkling. The work of CHRIST trusted in, henceforth the SPIRIT dwells personally in the believer and it is His blessed work to lead the soul on in the ways that be in CHRIST.

Sanctification by the blood, or the one offering of the Son of GOD, is *positional*. That is, it has to do with the new position into which the saved one is brought. His sins are purged; his conscience is free; he stands before GOD in all the value of the work of His Son. Thus he is forever perfected as to his conscience, and set apart from a world that lies in the wicked one, under the judgment of GOD. The believer can never again become part of that world. The work of CHRIST has come in between his soul and the judgment his sins deserved. Thus in the fullest possible sense he is sanctified by the blood of the everlasting covenant. If the profession be unreal (as contemplated in Hebrews 10:29 above), there is, of course, no abiding sanctification; but where faith is genuine he is sanctified eternally. Note verse 14, also above, of the same chapter.

Sanctification by the Word of GOD is the *practical* outcome of the work of CHRIST and the SPIRIT's work within. Daily the Word is applied to heart and conscience by the Lord Himself, as we saw in a former paper when we discussed John 13. He keeps the feet of His saints, cleansing them from defilement contracted while passing through this polluted scene, with the washing of water by the Word. In this sense no saint is "wholly sanctified" till he no longer needs the Word of GOD for cleansing and instruction. That will only be at the coming of our Lord JESUS CHRIST, as we get it in I Thessalonians 5:23, "**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.**"

Then shall every Christian be presented blameless, his sanctification completed, and nothing for all eternity shall be permitted to come up that will again defile his feet or call for the application of the Word in cleansing.

There is a passage that is often greatly misunderstood, in Hebrews 12:14: "**Follow peace with all men and holiness (or sanctification) without which no man shall see the Lord.**" Observe that in this solemn and important verse "holiness," like "peace with all men," is put as the object before the soul. But no one should presume to say he has attained what he is distinctly directed to follow.

Paul's own experience, as described in Philippians 3:12-14, might well rebuke such a thought. He says, "**Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.**"

Such may well be the settled purpose of each young Christian reading these lines. You have been called unto holiness, and holiness is simply Christ-likeness. If He be ever before you, and you

daily seek to walk as He walked in the SPIRIT's power, guided by the unerring Word of GOD, you shall know the blessedness of being sanctified by the truth. And if the great adversary of our soul taunts you with failure and weakness, look not in or around you, but up into the face of CHRIST JESUS, exalted in glory, and cry in faith, "He is my sanctification. I am in Him, and that forever!"

~ end of chapter 6 ~
