

MILILANI COMMUNITY CHURCH  
ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASS

WHAT THE BIBLE TEACHES 2004  
Dr. Rick Bartosik, Pastor

LESSON 6: THE ORDER OF SALVATION (Part 3): Sanctification

In Part 1 and Part 2 of our discussion of the Order of Salvation we discussed a number of acts of God that occur at the beginning of our Christian lives: **calling** (the act of God in which he summons us to himself in such a way that we respond in saving faith), **regeneration** (by which God imparts new life to us), **conversion** (in which we repent of our sins and trust in Christ for salvation), **justification** (by which God gives us a right legal standing before him), and **adoption** (in which God makes us members of his family). These all occur at the beginning of our Christian lives.

Now we are going to deal with a part of the application of salvation that is a *progressive* work of God that continues throughout our earthly lives. It is a work in which God and man cooperate. This part of the order of salvation is called **sanctification**.

THE MEANING OF SANCTIFICATION

Sanctification: Greek word *hagios* means "to separate" or "to set apart."

1. A person, place, or thing is separated from its prior owner and "set apart" as the possession of its new owner.
2. The Bible speaks of the sanctification of people, places, days, seasons, objects, the first born of Israel, the Sabbath, etc. All of these were set apart unto God. They were His!
3. The moment a person puts his trust in the finished work of Jesus Christ he is sanctified (Hebrews 10:10). God sets us apart for Himself instantaneously and forever. The guilt of our sins is blotted out forever and condemnation is ended forever (Romans 5:1-2; Romans 8:1).
4. The words holy, holiness, sanctify, sanctification all come from the same root word *hagios*.

THREE STAGES OF SANCTIFICATION

1. Positional Sanctification: Our position of perfect acceptance with God at the moment we place our faith in Christ.
2. Progressive Sanctification: Our growth in Christ-like character and conduct during our life on this earth.
3. Final Sanctification: Our ultimate perfection when we stand in Christ's presence spotless and blameless – forever free from sin.

"The Bible teaching in regard to sanctification, then, is (1) that all believers are *positionally* sanctified in Christ "once for all" at the moment they are saved. This sanctification is as perfect as He is perfect. (2) All believers are *being* sanctified by the power of God through the Word, and this sanctification is as perfect as the believer is perfect. So, also, (3) all believers *will* be sanctified and perfected in glory into the very image of the Son of God. The Bible, therefore, does not teach that any child of God is altogether sanctified experimentally in daily life before that final consummation of all things" (Lewis Sperry Chafer, Systematic Theology, 6:285)

POSITIONAL SANCTIFICATION – I stand "in Christ" complete!

Believers are cleansed from their sins and have been set apart unto God. We are His! There can be no greater joy for a believer than to know that through the work of Christ our standing with God is settled forever! *"Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand"* (Romans 5:1-2).

Illustration of positional sanctification: There was a little girl who had just come out of the candy store having spent her allowance on a lollipop, when she spied her best girl friend coming down the street toward her. Being a properly brought up child she knew that unless she could think of something quickly she would be obliged to offer the lollipop to her little friend. Her dilemma between courtesy and hunger was solved by an action which quickly, certainly, and forever sanctified the lollipop for her own use alone. And that action was simply to lick it all over on both sides before her girl friend was alongside. By licking the lollipop she set it apart for herself; it was not now something the friend would want. This is like positional sanctification. The moment we receive the Lord as Savior, God sets us apart for Himself, instantantly, certainly and forever.

Our standing with God is the position in which God now sees us because of the finished work of Christ. We are justified, holy, children of God. Our **standing** must be distinguished from our **state**. Our standing is perfect, but our state is imperfect. Our standing is how God sees us in Christ! Our state is what we are in ourselves on earth. Someday our standing and state will be the same, but that will be in the future when we are with the Lord. In the meantime we are in the process of learning to become in practice more like God sees us positionally in Christ.

Illustration of standing and state: The moment one places his trust in Christ, his standing is secure. Even as the moment a child is born in the family of a king, he becomes a prince; he may not yet behave in a princely manner, yet his standing is never in doubt because of his royal birth. In the same way, the Christian's standing in Christ is secure through regal birth. At his new birth, the Christian receives a new nature, a new relationship, a new power. The new nature enables him to enter fully into his new relationship with Christ. Out of this vital, living relationship comes the strength to live a godly life.

Verses that speak of our positional sanctification:

Hebrews 10:10, 14  
Romans 5:1-2  
Romans 8:1  
I Corinthians 1:2

The Christians in Corinth had a long way to go before they could be considered "saintly" by outside observers. Yet Paul addresses them as "saints" in I Cor. 1:2.

PROGRESSIVE OR PRACTICAL SANCTIFICATION – the process of growing in Christ-likeness

As a believer I am a "sanctified one." This is why the Bible calls all believers "saints." Since we are saints, God instructs us to live holy lives.

Verses that speak of our practical sanctification:

I Peter 1:15-17

II Corinthians 6:17

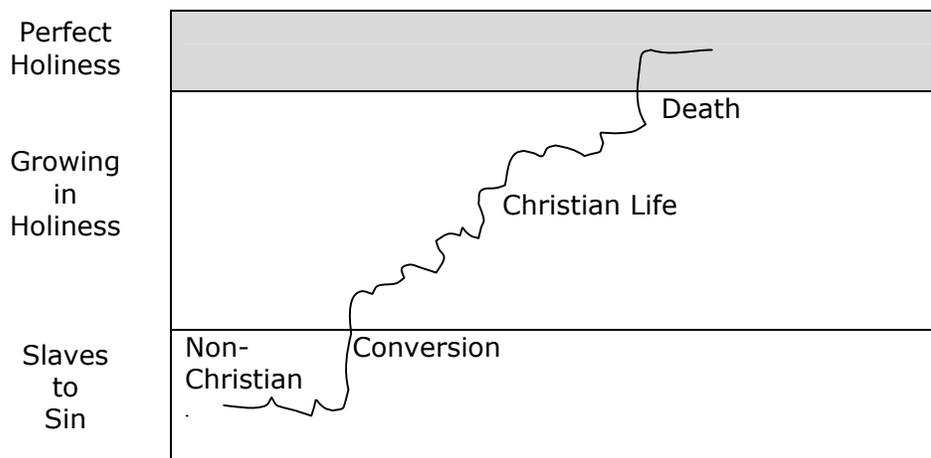
II Corinthians 7:1

II Timothy 2:19, 21

John 17:17

Galatians 5:16-25

DIAGRAM OF THE PROCESS OF SANCTIFICATION (From Wayne Grudem's chapter on sanctification in his Systematic Theology).



#### GOD'S ROLE IN SANCTIFICATION

"In Scripture from beginning to end sanctification is the work of God for human beings rather than their work for Him. It is grounded in the death of Christ, which makes it possible. It is continued in the present ministry of the Holy Spirit in the life of the Christian and is ultimately perfected as the Christian stands in God's presence – forever free from sin, with its guilt and stain. The believer is destined to reflect forever the holiness of God, as an example of what the grace of God can do." (John Walvoord in Five Views on Sanctification, p. 226).

Philippians 2:12-13

I Thessalonians 5:23

Hebrews 12:5-11

## OUR ROLE IN SANCTIFICATION

The role that we play in sanctification is both a passive one in which we depend upon God to sanctify us, and an active one in which we strive to obey God and take steps that will increase our sanctification.

Look up each of these verses and note what they teach about our role, both passive and active in the process of our sanctification

Philippians 2:12-13

Romans 6:11-14

Romans 12:1-2

Romans 8:13

Psalm 119:11

John 15:5

I Peter 2:2

II Timothy 3:16-17

Hebrews 10:24-25

Matthew 6:13

I Corinthians 9:27

## QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION (These questions are adapted from Wayne Grudem, Systematic Theology)

1. As you look back over the last few years of your Christian life, can you see a pattern of definite growth in sanctification?
2. What are some things that you used to delight in which no longer interest you?
3. What are some things that you used to have no interest in that now hold great interest for you?
4. As you have grown to greater maturity and holiness in the Christian life, have you become more conscious of the weight of sin that remains in your heart?
5. Are there areas where you have struggled for years to grow in sanctification, but with no progress at all in your life?
6. How has this study of the doctrine of sanctification encouraged you and given you hope in those areas?

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