



CAPITOL COMMISSION™

SANCTIFICATION: WHAT IS IT?

FEBRUARY 11, 2015

Jeff Lingerfelt / PO Box 12131, Columbia, SC 29211 / Jeff.Lingerfelt@capitolcom.org / 803-467-7634

The Christian life is a life of Sanctification. It is a process of becoming in practice what you actually are in position. The Apostle Paul at the beginning of chapter 4 of First Thessalonians desired so much for the brethren to take his instruction which was not his but the Lord Jesus and implement the principles in a greater way into their lives—to excel still more.

As long as the Believer is in this body of flesh on earth he will continually have room for improvement. No one has fully arrived as of yet as long as he still breathes the breath of earth! God want us to know His will for our Christian life. Simply, God's will can be summed up this way: God wants us to understand His will far more than we want to understand it. He always makes His will clear to those who seek it with an obedient heart.

Most of the real problem areas in the question of God's will are settled for us in Scripture. The Bible reveals that it is God's will for all of us to be:

Saved ([1 Timothy 2:3-4](#); [2 Peter 3:9](#))

Self-sacrifice ([Romans 12:1-2](#))

Settledness ([Hebrews 10:36](#))

Spirit-filled ([Ephesians 5:17-18](#))

Sanctified ([1 Thessalonians 4:3-7](#))

Submissive ([1 Peter 2:13-15](#))

Suffering ([Philippians 1:29](#); [2 Timothy 3:12](#))

Hagiazo (Holy, Set Apart) primarily conveys the idea of separation from and consecration to the service of deity in secular Greek but to God Almighty in the Biblical context. Believers are to separate themselves from profane things and dedicate themselves wholly to their Holy God. As alluded to in the notes on the verses that use "*hagiazo*," there are 3 aspects of sanctification...

(1) Past (positional) **Sanctification** - This refers to the time of our initial salvation, which was wrought by the atoning work of Christ, at which time we were clothed with His righteousness, we were given a new nature and we were freed from the power of sin and death. This a one time event, never to be repeated.

(2) Present (progressive, experiential) **Sanctification** - This aspect of sanctification proceeds from past sanctification and deals with present Christian living. It is the process in which believers are working out their salvation by the Spirit's power, who sets us more and more apart from the world and more and more conformed to the image of Christ. This is the aspect to which Paul's prayer in [1Thes 5:23](#) relates.

(3) Future (ultimate, perfect) **Sanctification** - Glorification when God makes believers free of even the desire of sin, free of the fallen flesh nature, and joined with our transformed, glorified bodies for all eternity. (http://preceptaustin.org/1thessalonians_523-24.htm#5:23)

In verse 3 of First Thessalonians 4, Paul deals specifically with Sanctification in the area of sexual purity.

Sanctification is the progressive work of God by which He at salvation initiates a holiness positionally set-apart, which continues throughout the Christian life (experiences), setting the Holy ones more and more apart unto Christ-likeness. Ultimately, the believer will eternally be set-apart and freed from the desires of sin, when he see his Savior face to face. It is at that moment we will be like Him for we will see Him and be like Him.

1 John 3:2 NASB "Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is."

BIBLE STUDIES

LEGISLATORS: WEDNESDAY AT 8:30AM, BLATT BUILDING ROOM 317

STAFF: MONDAYS AT 12:00 NOON, BLATT BUILDING ROOM 317

SANCTIFICATION: WHAT IS IT?

The Puritan Thomas Watson stated it this way,

'[Sanctification] is a principle of grace savingly wrought, whereby the heart becomes holy, and is made after God's own heart. A sanctified person bears not only God's name, but His image'
(Body of Divinity [reprint; Grand Rapids: Baker, 1979], 167).¹

In all of Paul's epistles, whenever he moves from doctrinal exposition to practical exhortation (Ed note: E.g., doctrine in Ephesians 1-3; duty in Ephesians 4-6), he has this aspect of sanctification in mind (Experiential sanctification). His passionate prayer for the Thessalonians and for all believers was that through experiential sanctification God would progressively conform them to holiness.¹

Paul's admonition "this is the will of God" was to remind the church at Thessalonica that God's will is that they become set apart and holy in the area of sexual purity. This admonition was a reminder that they were to be distinct from the "gentiles who do not know God."

Peter reminded his readers also of this warning;

1Peter 1:14-16 "As obedient children, do not be conformed to the former lusts which were yours in your ignorance, but like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all your behavior; because it is written, "You shall be holy, for I am holy."

1Peter 2:11-12 "Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers to abstain from fleshly lusts which wage war against the soul. Keep your behavior excellent among the Gentiles, so that in the thing in which they slander you as evildoers, they may be because of your good deeds, as

they observe them, glorify God in the day of visitation."

Knowing what the Will of God is as it relates to moral purity (in verse 3) will be worked out or fleshed out in the application of verses 4-8, the How to's for applying divine instructions.

Through obedience to the Word of God and the empowering of the Holy Spirit, the believer is able to live a life of increasing holiness in conformity to the will of God, becoming more and more like our Lord Jesus Christ.²

Every saved person is involved in a daily conflict—the new creation in Christ doing battle against the flesh—but adequate provision is made for victory through the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit. The struggle nevertheless stays with the believer all through this earthly life and is never completely ended. All claims to the eradication of sin in this life are unscriptural. Eradication of sin is not possible, but the Holy Spirit does provide for victory over sin.³

As Believers in the political arena this becomes paramount in our daily interactions with others in our thoughts, words, and deeds as it relates to our moral purity.

We are called to be sanctified and holy in all our behavior. For God has called you for this purpose and to reject this is to reject God.

¹MacArthur, John: 1 & 2 Thessalonians. Moody Press

²<http://www.gty.org/connect/doctrine>; (John 17:17,19; Romans 6:1-22; 2 Corinthians 3:18; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-4; 5:23).

³(Galatians 5:16-25; Ephesians 4:22-24; Philippians 3:12; Colossians 3:9-10; 1 Peter 1:14-16; 1 John 3:5-9).