

EQUIP SEMINAR | 12.9.2014

What are the different kinds of sanctification?

Sanctification is a comprehensive term describing multiple layers of salvation determined decisively in the past, experienced partially in the present, and completely future.

Preparatory Sanctification: **Preparatory sanctification is the pre-work of God's Spirit whereby he elects a people—setting them apart—to be saved from sin.** This is commonly referred to as predestination.

Positional Sanctification: **Positional sanctification delivers us from the authority of sin.** This is commonly referred to as justification. God demands perfect holiness in our hearts that is why He gave us His substitute. But God also commands us to pursue holiness in our bodies that is why He gave us His Spirit

Progressive Sanctification: **Progressive sanctification delivers us from the influence of sin.** This is commonly referred to as sanctification.

What is Prospective Sanctification?

Prospective Sanctification: The final stage in the sanctification process is the completion of salvation of the believer. This is fully enjoyed at the last resurrection. The indwelling of the Holy Spirit in the life of a believer is both the promise of and the power for this future perfection. Prospective sanctification completes our salvation in that it brings our position and our practice together. **Prospective sanctification delivers us from the presence of sin.** This is commonly referred to as glorification.

John Piper has said that even though election is UNCONDITIONAL, glorification is conditional. In response to this statement, Kevin DeYoung wrote: “The word “conditional” does not have to carry the sense of merit or uncertainty. A condition is simply a requirement that must be met or a state of affairs that must come to pass if a certain event or outcome is to be realized. To say something is “conditional” is to say nothing about how the condition is met or whether there is any doubt the condition will be fulfilled. I can see how the word “conditional” throws people off, but **we must affirm from Scripture that without certain evidences made manifest in our lives, we will not be glorified.**” (It could be said that glorification is conditional on our positional sanctification—made manifest in our lives.

Hebrews 12.14 ¹⁴ Strive for peace with everyone, and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord.

1Corinthians 6.8-10 ⁸ But you yourselves wrong and defraud—even your own brothers! ⁹ Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? **Do not be**

deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality, ¹⁰ nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. ¹¹ And such were some of you. But you were washed, **you were sanctified, you were justified** in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit

Colossians 1.21-23 ²¹ And you, who once were alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, ²² he has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death, in order to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before him, ²³ **if indeed you continue in the faith**, stable and steadfast, not shifting from the hope of the gospel that you heard, which has been proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, became a minister.

Two different kinds of dangers in calling people to work

As we focus on WHO WE ARE IN CHRIST not ignore these warnings and promises about WHAT WE DO IN CHRIST. **We cannot profess faith in Jesus willfully live like the devil, or as Jesus says “a wicked servant” or “lukewarm Christian”, and expect to meet God.** This is not because God demands a set number of holiness points before we can enter heaven. We are justified by faith alone through grace alone in Christ alone. The same grace that that grants us faith will invariably be a grace that causes us to change and keeps us in the love of God. To ignore the second half of the previous sentence is to prove the first half never happened. There are two dangers in calling people to pursue righteousness or else...

1. The danger of calling people to a pursuit of holiness = legalism/despair/pride
2. The danger of *not* calling people to a pursuit of holiness = license/false security/unfruitful

What is holiness? Even though holiness relates to a concept of moral purity, it begins with the idea of sanctification—**we are set apart and belong to God**. If we know the love of Christ, that love controls us. If we believe in Christ, we have the mind of Christ. The reason we are righteous is because Jesus died FOR us. The reason we can pursue holiness is because Jesus lives IN us. Our pursuit of holiness is not primarily about moral purity. It's primarily about union with God in Christ and sharing more deepening in Christ's holiness. It's secondarily about life in grateful service to God and others.

What are the motivations to pursue righteousness?

Peter does a good job of describing the pursuit of holiness in in 2Peter. He commends us to make every effort to add virtue, knowledge, self-control, steadfastness, godliness, brotherly affection, and love. He tell us the reason we should do this is that we have been saved. Then, he tells us that, if we do not do this, then we will be ineffective and unfruitful. He says that if we do, not only will we not fail, we will have a way richly provided for an entrance into the eternal kingdom. There is more than one motivation for this necessary holiness:

1. The **Love** of God | (Romans 5.8/Ephesians 5.25 – Christ loved the Church)
2. The **Promises** of God | (Ephesians 5.28 – Love wife, love yourself)
3. The **Warnings** of Christ | (1Peter 3.7 – prayers hindered not loving wife)

The warning is especially sobering in Hebrews 10.19-31

⁹Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, ²⁰by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh, ²¹and since we have a great priest over the house of God, ²²let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. ²³Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful. ²⁴And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, ²⁵not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.

²⁶For if we go on sinning deliberately after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, ²⁷but a fearful expectation of judgment, and a fury of fire that will consume the adversaries. ²⁸Anyone who has set aside the law of Moses dies without mercy on the evidence of two or three witnesses. ²⁹How much worse punishment, do you think, will be deserved by the one who has trampled underfoot the Son of God, and has profaned the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and has outraged the Spirit of grace? ³⁰For we know him who said, “Vengeance is mine; I will repay.” And again, “The Lord will judge his people.” ³¹It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

Or again in 1Corinthians 10. 1-14:

For I do not want you to be unaware, brothers, that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, ²and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, ³and all ate the same spiritual food, ⁴and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank from the spiritual Rock that followed them, and the Rock was Christ. ⁵Nevertheless, with most of them God was not pleased, for they were overthrown in the wilderness.

⁶Now these things took place as examples for us, that we might not desire evil as they did. ⁷Do not be idolaters as some of them were; as it is written, “The people sat down to eat and drink and rose up to play.” ⁸We must not indulge in sexual immorality as some of them did, and twenty-three thousand fell in a single day. ⁹We must not put Christ to the test, as some of them did and were destroyed by serpents, ¹⁰nor grumble, as some of them did and were destroyed by the Destroyer. ¹¹Now these things happened to them as an example, but they were written down for our instruction, on whom the end of the ages has come. ¹²Therefore let anyone who thinks that he stands take heed lest he fall. ¹³No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it. ¹⁴Therefore, my beloved, flee from idolatry.

How can I know if I am a Christian? – Test yourself

2Corinthians 13.5-6 ⁵ Examine yourselves, to see whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Or do you not realize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?—unless indeed you fail to meet the test! ⁶ I hope you will find out that we have not failed the test.

1. Test yourself by the **Spirit** | Do you love God? We can be confess but not believe.
2. Test yourself by the **Word** | Do you love God's Word? We can be ignorant.
3. Test yourself by the **Church** | Do you love God's people? We can be self-deceived.

There is a tension between assurance and overconfidence. An examination is not to create unnecessary uncertainty, but necessary certainty or uncertainty. We must be honest about the parable of the soils, taught by Jesus, who describes the kinds of soil there are, not the kinds we need to be. **Matthew 13.18-23** ¹⁸ “Hear then the parable of the sower: ¹⁹ When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what has been sown in his heart. This is what was sown along the path. ²⁰ As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy, ²¹ yet he has no root in himself, but endures for a while, and when tribulation or persecution arises on account of the word, immediately he falls away. ²² As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and it proves unfruitful. ²³ As for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it. He indeed bears fruit and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty.”

There are three categories of people in the world:

1. UNREGENERATE NEVER TO BE SAVED – not a fruit tree
2. UNREGENERATE TO BE SAVED – dormant fruit tree
3. REGENERATED ARE SAVED - fruitful fruit tree

Those who are saved will persevere

What does it mean to persevere? Perseverance of the saints is the teaching that the work of God the Holy Spirit will never cease in the Christian, and all who are truly regenerated will never stop believing and trusting in Christ, and they will never lose their salvation, and they will persevere to the end because God has promised to never leave them or forsake them (Chain of Romans 8.28-30 cannot be broken)...**those whom he justified he also glorified.**

This doctrine **does not mean** that everyone who professes to be a Christian will persevere because there can be those who are false converts and are not truly regenerated (made

alive). **In other words, there are people who appear to be saved but who are not—even pastors of churches:**

Some of those false converts profess, and do many good works, but for the wrong reasons-themselves. ²¹ “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. ²² On that day many will say to me, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?’ ²³ And then will I declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.’ Matthew 7.21-23

Some of the false converts walk away from the faith so that they can indulge themselves. ¹⁸ Children, it is the last hour, and as you have heard that antichrist is coming, so now many antichrists have come. Therefore we know that it is the last hour. ¹⁹ They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us. But they went out, that it might become plain that they all are not of us. ²⁰ But you have been anointed by the Holy One, and you all have knowledge 1John 2.18-20

Also, perseverance of the saints does not mean that those who are truly saved will not backslide or have strong doubts about their faith. It means that ultimately, they will remain in the faith because it is God who is keeping them and not themselves. We cannot see heart.

John 10.28-29 ²⁸ I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. ²⁹ My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father’s hand. (Also Phil. 1.6; John 6.39-40).

Those who are saved will make gospel-motivated, spirit-empower, faith-effort to pursue righteousness.

- *We will put off the old self and put on the new self (Ephesians 4.22-24)*
- *We will put to death the deeds of the body (Romans 8.13)*
- *We will put on character qualities of Christ (Colossians 3.12-14)*
- *We will abstain from passions of flesh which wage war against the soul (1Peter 2.11)*
- *We will make every effort to grow up in Christ – supplement our faith and make their election sure (2Peter 1ff)*

We will not reach perfection in this life

Everything was done by Jesus, not so that you could do nothing, but so that you would desire and be able to do something by His Spirit. **Effort for the purpose of meriting favor is condemned. But effort that is driven by the gospel is a commanded.**

An old Puritan saying is: For every look at your sanctification, take two looks at your justification. Author Jerry Bridges reminds us: **Your worst days are never so bad that you are beyond the reach of God’s grace. And your best days are never so good that you are beyond the need of God’s grace. – Jerry Bridges**