

SANCTIFICATION

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When one would hear the profound outline of justification, meaning that we come into agreement and harmony with God through righteousness provided by Christ, we would ask, what more would one need than that? Isn't this all sufficient for our position before God? To this would agree most of the Nominal Christian world—belief in Jesus Christ brings us into a position of being saved and that's the ultimate design of all that God would have for mankind. Unfortunately this view has almost come into our own midst: that belief in the ransom, which is justification in principle, is the main requirement among us as brethren. The Scriptures, however, do not leave us there. Justification only opens the door for us into the privileges of Christ. Justification will not guarantee to any of us a full salvation. Justification will not in any way guarantee to us or assure us that we will be worthy of glory, honor and immortality. We will find through the Scriptures that it is the work of Sanctification which will assure full maturity in Christ. It prompts growth in Christ. The Scriptures have drawn to our attention that there are very definite basic principles pertaining to justification; and we will learn that there are very definite basic principles pertaining to Sanctification; and unless these principles are adhered to we will not be fully sanctified.

The Apostle Paul in 1 Cor. 1, Verse 2, writes to a church that is sanctified in Christ and called to be saints. The Apostle then draws to our attention that there are steps of progression in Christ. This is 1 Cor. 1:30, "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness [or justification]; and sanctification, and redemption." In other words there are progressive steps that are necessary to this attainment. We would like to preface our remarks by reading a single statement in Reprint page 5077, and it reads: "We believe that there is no step more necessary to be clearly seen by God's professed people than this one; and none more necessary to be made plain to others." The article deals with sanctification. Thus there is the suggestion as our lesson unfolds: the degree to which we are sanctified will indicate the degree of our reward. If we are fully sanctified, we will have a full reward. If we're partially sanctified we will have a partial reward. I think the scriptures abound with this testimony. Right now you may consider 2 John 8, "Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward."

We would like to draw your attention, first, to how God pictured sanctification in which we wish to think of it today. Turn with me to Leviticus, 8th chapter—this is in connection with the separation of the priests of Levi for the work of priesthood under the provisions of Moses by God's direction. It is in Vs. 9, 10 and 12 that our particular attention will be turned, and V. 30. "And he put the mitre upon his head; also upon the mitre, even upon his forefront, did he put the golden plate, the holy crown; as the Lord commanded Moses. And Moses took the anointing oil, and anointed the tabernacle and

all that was therein, and sanctified them. And he poured of the anointing oil upon Aaron's head, and anointed him, to sanctify him." Now we have a picture that God's royal priesthood, figured in Aaron, is a separate class; separate because of a particular function that God set into motion to sanctify or separate the priesthood. Prior to this occasion, Aaron and his four sons were part of the Levitical family. They were just the same as the others. When this transaction took place by God under this provision, these now became a separate arrangement under the Levitical program and they were now a part of a priesthood that were separate from the children of Israel. V. 30: "And Moses took of the anointing oil, and of the blood which was upon the altar, and sprinkled it upon Aaron, and upon his garments, and upon his sons, and upon his sons' garments with him; and sanctified Aaron, and his garments, and his sons, and his sons' garments with him." When we think of the holy anointing oil, we recognize our Lord alone was anointed—we share in his anointing; but, now when it came to the process of sanctifying the entire priesthood, head and body, we see the combination of blood and oil was used in this relationship of sanctification. To suggest to us that blood is one part of it but the Holy Spirit has another great function in the process of our work of atonement and our work of sanctification. It is upon this feature of our subject we now draw apart from our so-called great Christian world because they believe acceptance of Christ is the means of salvation, but as we stated, it is only the opening of a door into the privileges that lie before us.

We consider another scripture, a very important one to our subject: "For this is the will of God, even your sanctification." (1 Thess. 4:3) The Apostle Paul writes concerning the will of God and our work. Of course, Paul had in mind the class to whom he addressed his letter: that they were justified in Christ. They had accepted God's High Calling and had come into the Beloved. He was not ignoring the principle of justification, but now he says, brethren, having made this initial step, let me tell you what the will of God concerning you is. The objective of your life, now, is to be fully sanctified. Then the Apostle outlines some of the things they should not do in relationship to their natural lives as would be contrary to the work of sanctification. But making the spiritual application of these wrong-doings, we see that we have a purpose in our life. "For this is the will of God, even your sanctification" that you should abstain from fornication, suggesting illicit relationships that we, as new creatures should not share in relationship of the functions of our activities. The world may have their activities, we have ours; being separated by the reason of the anointing oil and the blood that we have received, we now become a separate class.

Turn to Ezekiel, the 38th chapter. There we find a statement that relates holiness and sanctification together and the deeper we tie these thoughts together, the more meaningful to us will be the picture of sanctification. V. 23: "Thus will I magnify myself, and sanctify myself; and I will be known in the eyes of many nations, and they shall know that I am the Lord." This is the Lord Jehovah God. Here we see God characterized himself to be fully sanctified, to be fully set apart and to be made known to those to

whom he would reveal himself. Ezekiel 39:7: “So will I make my holy name known in the midst of my people Israel; and I will not let them pollute my holy name any more: and the heathen shall know that I am the Lord, the Holy One in Israel.” Here God shows himself to be fully sanctified, fully holy, fully revered as an individual, a personality, a being, that can be recognized to be fully sanctified.

But now we need to have some tools to help us to appreciate the process of sanctification. Since our time is extremely limited for a vast subject like this, we are going to use certain key texts and let you brethren develop them in your personal study. Would you turn with me to 1 Pet. 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.” Here is drawn to our attention an elect beloved class that are sanctified by the Holy Spirit. Now we see the indwelling of God’s spirit in our hearts as one essential function in the process of sanctification. But to have the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, we will learn, is also a process. It has certain definite requirements to allow the Holy Spirit to function in our hearts. One of the things that is evidently the result of sanctification of the spirit is obedience. It was the lack of obedience of Adam that cost him and his children, ourselves, perfect human life and the continuation of life. Adam forfeited life through disobedience. Here the Apostle shows us that through the process of sanctification we may come into relationship whereby we may be obedient to the will of God. Then the Apostle suggests that it requires the third element to complete the process of sanctification: the first being the calling by God, then the work of the Holy Spirit and the third the blood of Christ. The blood of sprinkling no doubt refers to the merit of Christ which we must receive by faith to cover our blemishes or condemnation from Adam.

Could we picture for a moment, to help emphasize our subject in our minds, that each of us is an actor on a stage. We are playing a great drama. We have been called by God to play a single part of a great drama which has lasted for nearly 2,000 years; and on this stage, just like we have here, we have an audience. Your brethren are your audience, your life is viewed by your brethren; but your stage has more than just a small theater setting. It has the shopkeepers, it has the neighbors, it has your relatives, your friends—all see you as an individual and the life that you display to them in relationship to your at-one-ment with God by Christ. This should make us realize that we are separate from the world and the functions of our thinking, our acts, and our deeds and our doings, are separate from the world. But our theater is not limited just to this named audience, as we have a balcony, and in the balcony we have the heavenly hosts; we have the angels that observe your life and my life to see the process of sanctification in its operation. And above that you have the Heavenly Father himself, and you have our Lord. So we are viewed by a vast audience: the text is 1 Cor. 4:9 which states that we are actors upon a stage, suggesting to us that this great drama that we are playing in the process of sanctification is viewed by many.

Now let's come to the definite tools of sanctification. And when we take these tools, brethren, I plead with you, consider them earnestly, since we all desire to have an abundant entrance into the kingdom. We start with no better words than the words of our Master, as he prayed to his Heavenly Father. These words are found in John 17:13-19, "And now come I to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves. I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. 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."

Here we have the clear statement of the Master that the truth and the truth alone is the process of full sanctification. We very often hear it stated that after all, the ultimate object of God is love. There is no scripture that suggests that love sanctifies. Love is not the process of sanctification—truth is the process of sanctification. Much of the world has a degree of love. If we reach into the nominal world we find some lovely noble characters. We can find some very sacrificing individuals for the sake of Christ. We can find some individuals that know the scriptures reasonably well and know the promises, and bask in the promises and claim the promises and they claim to have love for their fellowmen. Those that contribute time to the Red Cross, to community efforts, etc., have a love of mankind in their hearts that direct them toward their objective. We are not asked to employ our time in these activities, noble and good as they are for humanity. We have been called to be separate; we are called to be sanctified. What separates us from all of Babylon? It is doctrine, truth. Doctrines have separated us from much of mankind, and therefore, we must recognize, when our Lord pleaded on behalf of his church to the Heavenly Father, "Sanctify them through thy truth, thy word is truth," we realize the deeper, the fuller, the more accurate comprehension, we have of God and his word of truth, the more clearly are we in the process of being sanctified or influenced by the power of the truth. It is for this reason, we believe, that our Lord looked down through the corridor of time, and when he was in the upper room with the brethren that evening, and had the opportunity of manifesting his love on their behalf by washing their feet, including Judas' we believe, he made the statement found in John 13:20. This scripture is not in context with the act or the activity of washing the disciples' feet, and this suggests to our mind that our Lord was pointing to the future—he was pointing to the operation of the church down through the Gospel age. Our Lord knew at the time of his death, there was going to be an interval period before his return and the full establishment of the kingdom. In this interim period, his church would be developed under his own direction. The text reads, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that receiveth whomsoever I send receiveth me; and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me."

We suggest that this was fulfilled during the seven stages of the Christian church. John the Revelator speaks of seven stars held in the right hand of the one like unto the Son of man. Held in the right hand suggests the importance of the messages given by the seven stars—light bearers of the messages of the Son of man for the purpose of performing the work of sanctification. You and I, dear brethren bask in a most favorable privilege of time to have had our returned Lord bring to us what is called “meat in due season,” the power and process of the sanctifying influence of the church at this end of the age; because, remember during the dark ages, with little truth, there was little of the sanctifying necessities on that particular period of time. Now we come to the feet member-period of the church and now we have the full light upon the feet, to do the sanctifying work.

Now may we turn to another text along this line that is helpful to us in this connection. 2 Thess. 2:13: “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.” Notice the point—sanctification of the spirit and belief of the truth. A quotation from the Pastor found on Reprint page 5127 is very fitting—a single sentence: “If we be sanctified to God by the truth, if our wills be dead and the Lord’s will be fully accepted as ours, in thought, word and deed, then we have attained the will of God, and shall win the prize as ‘overcomers’ even if we have never had opportunity to preach, to give to the poor, or to suffer as martyrs for the Truth’s sake.” In other words, if the principles and actions of the truth—the whole panoply of truth, has fully motivated our lives, and if we are in love with the truth, then the process of sanctification is working in us.

Let me ask you a question. If you were Satan, what would you do to deter the development of the church? After all, Satan is not an ignorant individual—he was wise in the days of our Lord; he has had experience for 2,000 years in dealing with the seed of Christ. So, for that reason, what would he do? He would confuse truth. He would remove the process of sanctification, knowing that if he removed the means by which there can be a sanctified class then he would conquer and there would not be a church. So what does he do? He brings the most logical thing that he can think of to confuse—he makes LOVE the test, and not TRUTH: since Truth sanctifies. We do read that “God is love.” So the Christian Science motive is “Love.” Much of the world loves; the nominal church uses this big banner—“let’s swing the banner of love and forget about doctrines. Doctrines divide.” But how wrong this is since love does not sanctify—it is TRUTH that sanctifies—these are our Lord’s own words that are very plain and positive. For this reason, our Lord has given to us nearly 10,000 pages of writings of the Pastor, including the volumes, to declare for us the spirit of the truth that will motivate our lives into a full salvation and into a full sanctification. Thus we come back to these beautiful words of Paul again, “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.” But we ask Paul: Paul, why did you write this statement? What was the previous comment that prompted this particular beautiful statement? Well, Paul would answer, read my previous scripture—I am telling you of a condition that is going to come upon the church class after my death. There is going to be the great mystery of iniquity that will rise. It will be a great power of apostasy, which will so undermine the church, that in a few years the church will be almost no more. Think, just for a moment brethren. The Apostle Paul pleaded with the elders of the church of Ephesus when gathered at Miletus. Remember they wept and cried and they held and kissed Paul because they knew that they were going to see him no more. He knew he was going to Jerusalem. He told them he knew that he was going to be bound and he knew that this was going to be the beginning of his end. Among those elders, we believe was young Timothy. Timothy was an elder of the church of Ephesus. Paul pleaded with the elders of the church of Ephesus. He said, “three years for days and nights I have been with you in tears bringing you the truth. I have not shunned to declare unto you the whole counsel of God.” And there was noble Timothy, thirty years younger than Paul, but possibly living to the time of the death of the Apostle John.

Let us learn of the correctness of Paul’s prophecy concerning the church of Ephesus. About 100 years later, following this period of time, we read the first account concerning the church of Ephesus in Revelation, chapter two. Our risen Lord told John to write concerning the church of Ephesus, “Because thou hast lost thy first love.” What happened to the truth that they enjoyed so much? Think brethren—only 100 years passed and the beauty of the truth that motivated those brethren at that time and the great strength of Paul were lost. We are approaching nearly 100 years from the return of our Lord, and is it any wonder we see the same condition beginning to prevail amongst us? Vital Harvest Truth is being set aside. It is the power of the truth that sanctifies the New Creation. Love is the object and result that comes from sanctification, as love is directed into channels in which the truth is found.

We have time for another text. May we turn to John 4 and consider these words in relationship to our lesson. This is the story of our Lord going into the land of Samaria, where he met the Samaritan woman at the well of Jacob. There he asked of her that he may have water to drink. She recognized he had no vessel, nor cup, nor bucket to draw the water; and also that he was a Jew. Then our Lord came to the statement found in verses 20 to 24, the woman speaking: “Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship.” Jesus said unto her, “Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. Ye worship ye know not what; we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth; for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit; and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and

in truth.”

If we value the true principle of worship, we will guard the truth and defend it above everything else and its spirit because it is the process of a true worship of God. Picture the end of the Millennial age—there will be no more confusion among mankind concerning their belief and comprehension of the principles of truth.

Sometimes we forget the universal law of God found in Isaiah’s prophecy. I believe it is Isa. 54:13, “All thy children shall be taught of God.” Here we have a great director, a great school master, a great teacher. Could not God teach all his saints, his children, with one common tongue, one common knowledge, one common appreciation of the truth? Of course! To say less than that is to belittle the power of God to influence our lives. We have a statement along this line—it is found on Reprint page 2071. It is in reference to John 4. Bro. Russell states, “Worship in spirit and in truth does not apply simply to prayer, praise, supplication and thanksgiving. It goes deeper than all these and takes hold upon the affections, upon the heart, and hence signifies not an act of worship, but rather a life of worship—a life in which, through the begetting of the spirit and the knowledge of the divine plan, the individual becomes so at-one with God and so in unison with the law of God, and all the features of the plan of God that it is, in the words of our Lord, his meat and his drink to do the Father’s will. This is worship in spirit and in truth.”

When the Heavenly Father gave the summation of his son’s life; when he came to the end in trying to describe the most valuable objective that his son had reached, during the three and one-half years of his ministry; when he characterized all of his events and wished to put into one simple statement what was there about his son that stood above everything else? Was it because he fed the poor? Was it because he patted little children upon their heads? Was it because he loved his mother and so indicated to John when he was upon the cross? Was it because he loved his brethren? What was the greatest achievement that our Heavenly Father held out as the epitome of our Lord’s character? I am sure you know what it is. It is found in Psalm 45, and the Apostle Paul repeated it in Heb. 1:9, “Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.”

It was the love of truth, the love of righteousness, its principles, that motivated our Lord’s life; and also his abhorrence of error, of evil; and unless, dear brethren, our objectives are directed to the same common cause; we will not be fully sanctified.

We are given the most beautiful divine plan of the ages and all of its characteristics. We are given the full pen of the Pastor, the seventh messenger; and therefore, you and I should have a common tongue, a common song, in full agreement with the principles that our Father is able to teach his children in righteousness. This we believe, is one of the processes of sanctification.

“Sanctify them by and with the TRUTH”—it is the only power of sanctification. Let us brethren, hold high God’s standard of truth.