

# THE LARGER AND SHORTER CATECHISMS.

## WHAT MAN OUGHT TO BELIEVE CONCERNING GOD

### QUESTIONS # 75 & 35.

*(Larger Catechism)*

Q #75. *What is sanctification?*

A. Sanctification is a work of God's grace, whereby they whom God hath, before the foundation of the world, chosen to be holy, are in time, through the powerful operation of his Spirit<sup>1</sup> applying the death and resurrection of Christ unto them,<sup>2</sup> renewed in their whole man after the image of God;<sup>3</sup> having the seeds of repentance unto life, and all other saving graces, put into their hearts,<sup>4</sup> and those graces so stirred up, increased, and strengthened,<sup>5</sup> as that they more and more die unto sin, and rise unto newness of life.<sup>6</sup>

*(Shorter Catechism)*

Q #35. *What is sanctification?*

A. Sanctification is the work of God's free grace,<sup>7</sup> whereby we are renewed in the whole man after the image of God,<sup>8</sup> and are enabled more and more to die unto sin, and live unto righteousness.<sup>9</sup>

---

Question 1—*What is sanctification generally?*

*Answer*—Sanctification imports several things:

*First*, it is a separation, or setting apart to a holy use or service, Ex. 31:13. Thus, Aaron and his sons were sanctified, Lev. 8:30; as was the tabernacle and its furniture, Lev. 8:10. So, too, the elements used in the sacraments are sanctified, or set apart to an holy use, *cf.* 1 Cor. 10:16. So, the sanctification of the Spirit is the Lord's taking one out of the corrupt mass of mankind, lying in wickedness, and setting him apart for himself, Ps. 4:3. Holiness is, therefore, God's mark and seal set on a soul, testifying it to be his in a peculiar manner, Eph. 1:13.

*Second*, it is purification, or taking away of pollution which is why his people are called to sanctify themselves, 1 Thess. 4:7. There is a natural impurity and filthiness that every soul naturally is sunk in, 2 Cor. 7:1. Sanctification is the Spirit's cleansing of the soul from its impurities, breaking the reigning power of sin and working out sin from the heart and life, Phil. 2:12, 13.

*Third*, it is that preparation whereby a thing or person is made fit for use or service, as our food is sanctified by the word and prayer, 1 Tim. 4:4, 5. Naturally we are unfit for God's

---

<sup>1</sup> Eph. 1:4; 1 Cor. 6:11; 2 Thess. 2:13.

<sup>2</sup> Rom. 6:4-6.

<sup>3</sup> Eph. 4:23, 24.

<sup>4</sup> Acts 11:18; 1 John 3:9.

<sup>5</sup> Jude 20; Heb. 6:11, 12; Eph. 3:16-19; Col. 1:10, 11.

<sup>6</sup> Rom. 6:4, 6, 14; Gal. 5:24.

<sup>7</sup> 2 Thess. 2:13.

<sup>8</sup> Eph. 4:23, 24.

<sup>9</sup> Rom. 6:4, 6; 8:1.

service, however, sanctification fits us for it, 2 Tim. 2:11. Likewise, our Saviour, when devoting and applying himself to the work for which he came into the world, is said to be sanctified, John 17:19.

Question 2—*What is the nature of sanctification?*

*Answer—First*, the sanctification of the soul consists in two parts: 1.) That initial sanctification, which is the implanting of the seeds of grace in the soul at first, and which is the same with regeneration, 1 John 3:9. These are those seeds which bring repentance unto life into the heart together with all other saving graces, Acts 11:18. In this initial sanctification, the Spirit of Christ comes into the heart of a man, takes possession of him for God and casts upon the soul a new frame and draws the image of God upon it anew, Eph. 4:23, 24. 2.) That progressive sanctification, whereby the change is carried on more and more, the Spirit continuing that work already begun, so that Satan's image is more defaced and the image of God more perfected in the soul, Acts 20:32. This work lasts through the saint's whole life, and is never perfected until death, Heb. 12:23.

*Second*, the author of sanctification cannot be the sinner himself, or any other creature, for we all lay in our filthiness, until help comes from another quarter, Eph. 2:1. Thus, it must be the working of God, even the whole Trinity, Jude 1; Eph. 5:26; 2 Thess. 2:13. Nonetheless, it is a work which, in a special manner, belongs to the Holy Spirit, 1 Pet. 2:2. This work is performed in those alone who are chosen by God from the foundation of the world, for they are chosen to be holy, or sanctified, Eph. 1:4. Thus, in time, the chosen are called to holiness and conformity with Christ by the operation of the Spirit, 1 Cor. 6:11.

*Third*, this sanctification consists in these two acts of the Spirit of God in the sinner: 1.) Destroying the body of sin, called the old man by putting it away, Col. 2:11. The Spirit of the Lord breaks the dominion of sin in the soul, and turns it off the throne, so that it cannot command the sinner as before, Rom. 6:14. This working of the Spirit weakens and mortifies the several lusts of the body of sin, Rom. 8:13. 2.) Endowing the sinner with grace, even with all the graces of the Spirit, John 1:16. Furthermore, in sanctification, these graces are stirred up, through the Spirit's working, Jude 20; Heb. 6:11, 12. Moreover, these are continually increased and strengthened, Eph. 3:16-19; Col. 1:10, 11. This is the new man which is put on in sanctification, Rom. 8:1.

*Fourth*, this sanctification has two parts: 1.) Mortification, whereby the sinner is enabled more and more to die unto sin, Rom. 6:4, 6. The Spirit applies the virtue of Christ's death to the sinner, mortifying him to sin, blunting the edge of his affection to sin and sinful courses, Rom. 6:4-6. His lusts are upon the cross, nailed through and pierced to the heart, not to come down until they have breathed out their last, Gal. 5:24. 2.) Vivification, whereby the sinner is enabled more and more to live unto righteousness, Rom. 6:4. The sanctified sinner leads a new life, not conforming himself to the sinful courses of the world, but being transformed into the likeness to those of the better world, Rom. 12:2; Phil. 3:20.

*Fifth*, this sanctification is carried on in several ways: 1.) The Spirit implants grace in the soul, putting in new motions and inclinations in the soul, agreeable to the holy law, and contrary to the natural sinful ones, Heb. 8:10. 2.) He preserves the grace implanted, 1 Pet. 1:5. 3.) He excites it and quickens it, to pursue and resist the flesh, Phil. 2:13. The sanctifying Spirit blows it into flame when it sometimes falls under the ashes, Song 4:16. 4.) He strengthens it by new supplies of grace, Isa. 40:31; so that the soul is enabled more and more to hold on the battle, and gets victory over the enemy, 2 Cor. 12:9, 10. 5.) He perfects and brings the new man to its perfect stature, Eph. 4:13.