

We are concentrating our study on sanctification on living out holiness in our lives on a personal and practical level, day by day. But sanctification is a broader reality. Lived out in life it is but a product of the whole. So we need to know something of the whole. It will deepen our appreciation for the fullness of what the Lord has done for us.

In this study, I am leaning heavily on A. W. Pink in his book *The Doctrine of Sanctification: Discerning Real and False Notions of Holiness*.

The ground of all salvation-related sanctification is the sacrifice of Christ. Hb. 10:10 – "we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." Clearly part of sanctification is not ongoing but has already taken place.

1. Sanctification is an act of God by which he sets a people apart for himself—for his use, for his glory, for his delight.

Sanctified (set apart) for belonging to God and for his use.

God set apart for himself places and times and objects. For example, he spoke to Moses at the burning bush. He told Moses to remove his sandals from his feet because the ground on which he was standing was holy. It was set apart from all other ground for God's special use and purpose because at this location God was manifesting his glory to Moses. The Israelites were given the command to keep the Sabbath holy. It was a day to be set aside from the other 6 each week for God's special purpose—rest. Other Sabbaths were proclaimed through the year. The temple and its utensils and furnishings and even the garments worn by the priests are examples of holy objects (Ex 40:9-11).

In like manner, God set apart for himself people. The nation of Israel was a holy people set apart for God's unique possession and use. They were distinguished from all other people (Ex 19:5-6). Within Israel God also set apart the priests for service in the tabernacle and later the temple (Exodus 40:12-15).

Sanctified (set apart) for God's glory.

You are my servant, Israel, in whom I will be glorified (Isaiah 49:3).

I made the whole house of Israel and the whole house of Judah cling to me, declares the Lord, that they might be for me a people, a name, a praise, and a glory. (Jeremiah 13:11)

Sanctified (set apart) for God's delight.

Zephaniah 3:16-17 – On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem:

“Fear not, O Zion; let not your hands grow weak.

17 The Lord your God is in your midst, a mighty one who will save; he will rejoice over you with gladness; he will quiet you by his love; he will exult over you with loud singing.

Isaiah 62:1-5 – For Zion's sake I will not keep silent,
and for Jerusalem's sake I will not be quiet,
until her righteousness goes forth as brightness,
and her salvation as a burning torch.
2 The nations shall see your righteousness,
and all the kings your glory,
and you shall be called by a new name
that the mouth of the Lord will give.
3 You shall be a crown of beauty in the hand of the Lord,
and a royal diadem in the hand of your God.
4 You shall no more be termed Forsaken,
and your land shall no more be termed Desolate,
but you shall be called My Delight Is in Her,
and your land Married; for the Lord delights in you,
and your land shall be married.
5 For as a young man marries a young woman,
so shall your sons marry you,
and as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride,
so shall your God rejoice over you.

New Testament Believers are thus sanctified

Peter speaks to NT believers and says of them (1 Peter 2:9), “But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a HOLY NATION, a people for God's own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.” Think. The sanctification of people refers in part then to God's setting apart unto himself a people to belong to him in a special way to serve his purpose, to radiate his glory, to proclaim his excellencies, and to be delighted in by God himself.

Application

If you are a follower of Christ, you have been sanctified unto God for his use, his glory,

and his delight. Acknowledge that you belong to God. You are not your own. And how wonderful this is! In this world you belong to somebody—either the prince of the power of the air or to the God of the universe. How sweet to “know that the LORD has set apart the godly for himself” (Psalm 4:3). You have purpose. Everyone wants purpose. There is no greater purpose than to belong to the God of the universe and be set aside for his use and glory and delight. Serve him and pursue holiness in that light.

2. Sanctification is a cleansing of those devoted to God’s use.

Cleansing is as urgent before holy God as is forgiveness. Pink notes that the double provision made by divine grace to meet the need of God’s guilty and defiled people is seen in the ‘blood and water’ which proceeded from the pierced side of the Saviour” (John 19:34). (82) This two fold need and provision were typified through the tabernacle furniture. Pink states, “the laver to wash at was as indispensable as the altar for sacrifice. Cleansing is as urgent as forgiveness. For those who believe in Christ, sanctification involves cleansing also designated as purification.

Titus 2:14 – [Jesus Christ] gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works. Note that it is out of purification that a zeal for good works arises.

Hebrews 9:13-14 – For if the blood of goats and bulls, and the sprinkling of defiled persons with the ashes of a heifer, sanctify for the purification of the flesh, 14 how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living God.

Under the OT system, the sprinkling of blood sanctified through purification. That is precisely how the blood of Christ works in an entirely greater way. His blood applied to human hearts purifies the conscience. It brings cleansing so that the conscience is purified in order obey and please God.

Pink: “It is abundantly plain that the purpose of the Savior in all that he did and suffered, was not only to deliver his people from the *penal* consequences of their sins, but also to cleanse them from the *pollution* of sin, to free them from its enslaving power, to rectify their moral nature.” (82)

1 Peter 2:24 – He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we [being dead] to sin [might] live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed.

Pink: "It is greatly to be regretted that so many when thinking or speaking of the 'salvation' which Christ has purchased for his people, attach to it no further idea than deliverance from condemnation. They seem to forget that deliverance from *sin* – the cause of condemnation – is an equally important blessing comprehended in it. 'Assuredly it is just as necessary for fallen creatures to be freed from the pollution and moral impotency which they have contracted, as it is to be exempted from the penalties which they have incurred; so that when re-instated in the favour of God, they may at the same time be more capable of loving, serving, and enjoying him forever.'"(82-83)

Exemplified in the OT – Exodus 19:10; 40:12-15 – consecration by washing

The cleansing procured by Christ's suffering is brought to bear upon our hearts. Titus 3:5 – "He saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit.

The cleansing of the heart sets apart God's people to obey from the heart. Romans 6:17 – "But thanks be to God, that you who were once slaves of sin have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to which you were committed,"

The heart must be made good before a person can obey from the heart. There is a renewing of the mind that approves what is good and acceptable (Romans 12:2) and embraces God's will from the heart.

Romans 5:5 – "God's love has been poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit who has been given to us." We love God by the work of the Holy Spirit and we also love what God loves.

Application

Earnestly pursue holiness of life; God has cleansed your heart for that purpose.

3. Sanctification is an adorning or beautifying of those whom God cleanses and sets apart unto himself.

Isaiah 61:1-3 – The Spirit of the Lord is upon me because the Lord has anointed me to bring good news to the poor; he has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, . . . to grant to those who mourn in Zion—to give them a beautiful headdress instead of ashes, . . . the garment of praise instead of a faint spirit. . . . that he may be glorified."

Isaiah 61:10 – I will greatly rejoice in the Lord; my soul shall exult in my God, for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation; he has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself like a priest with a beautiful headdress, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.

Ephesians 5:25-27 – Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, 26 that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, 27 so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish.

Conclusion

The point of looking at these aspects elements of sanctification is to see that they bear an indisputable connection with the aspect of sanctification with which we will primarily be concerned in the remainder of this study. Pink calls it “the ultimate aspect of the nature of our sanctification,” which is “that holy walk, or course of outward conduct, which makes manifest and is the effect of our inward sanctification by the Spirit” (87).

Each of these as aspects of sanctification are foundational to holy living. Because of the work of sanctification purchased by Christ and applied through the Spirit, believers have:
the heart to be holy (desire)

the power to be holy (the means to defeat sin)

the motive to be holy (stay pure in life as I have become in heart)

the incentive to be holy (the delight and glory of God)