

Salvation—Sanctification (10th)

(Today we continue studying the *experimental* aspect of sanctification in the life of the believer as he lives on earth. Today's podcast discusses somewhat Romans chapter six and II Thessalonians 2:13-14.)

Many passages can be presented that teach the duty of sanctification of a believer. However, I would like to direct our attention at this time to the sixth chapter of the book of Romans. Obviously, we cannot give a detailed exposition of this chapter in the short space that we strive to limit our podcasts. Chapter five closes with our justification and how it is that “where sin abounded, grace did much more abound,” Romans 5:20. Then chapter six opens (though originally there were no verses or chapter divisions): “What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?” Then it is presented that believers manifest their faith in obedience to the Lord in baptism with the confession that they are striving to walk in obedience to the Lord and “not serve sin,” Romans 6:6. Afterwards, verse twelve gives the injunction: “Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof.” In reality the verb construction is such that in our modern vernacular it might read “stop letting sin reign in your mortal body.” In other words, God commands the believer to live a sanctified life or a life of holiness. The idea that God regenerates a child of grace and leaves it up to him as to whether he walks in holiness is foreign to the Scriptures. (In fact, there is no example of a person in the New Testament living a life sin after his regeneration.) If there is no other place in Holy Writ where sanctification is commanded (though there are many such places), it is clear here. God commands us to live a holy life. But the Scriptures do not leave sanctification as a command that is to be done. The Scriptures go beyond and declare that grace is superior to sin effectual in the life of a Christian. Verse fourteen tells us that because we are under grace that sin “shall not have dominion over” us. Yes, we are commanded to not yield our members to sin but to yield them unto God, verse 13. In other words, our eyes are to be used to behold godly things and not allow them to observe that which is ungodly. This practice is to be followed with all of the members of our body: the mind; ears; mouth; hands; feet; and with all of our other faculties. In reality, we are either a servant to righteousness or a slave of sin. Verse sixteen plainly sets this forth: “Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?” However, because one is under grace and born again by the Holy Spirit, he is “made free from sin” and “became the servants of righteousness,” verse 18. Paul, by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, compounds the strength of holiness in the child of grace in verse twenty-two: “But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.” Yes, grace reigns in the life of one who has been born from above because grace is more effectual than sin. Notice again the divine injunction, “For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace,” Romans 6:14. It did not say that sin *may not* have dominion over you, nor that sin *ought not* have dominion over you, but “sin *shall not* have dominion over you.” (Emphasis mine—JKB.) If this is not enough, notice again verse twenty-two: “But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.” Of this verse, the English Baptist, Robert Haldane wrote the following:

Having concluded his triumphant reply to the objection, that his doctrine concerning justification leads to indulgence in sin, the Apostle here assures those to whom he wrote of the blessed effects of becoming servants to God. In the eighth chapter these are fully developed. But *now, being made free from sin*, — that is, emancipated from a state of slavery to sin. *Fruit unto holiness*. — Fruit, in this verse, denotes conduct, and holiness its specific character or quality. When conduct or works are called fruit, their nature is not expressed; they are merely considered

as the production of the man. Fruit unto holiness is conduct that is holy. *And the end everlasting life.* — Fruit unto holiness, or holy conduct, is the present result of freedom from sin, and of becoming servants to God; eternal life is the final result.

Albert Barnes testified of the same when he affirmed:

Being made free from sin. Being delivered from its dominion, and from bondage; in the same manner as before conversion they were free from righteousness, Romans 6:20.

Ye have your fruit unto holiness. The fruit or result is holiness. This service produces holiness, as the other did sin. It is *implied* here, though not expressly affirmed, that in this service, which leads to holiness, they received important benefits, as in the service of sin they had experienced many evils.

The comments of John Gill are rewarding:

fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life: holiness is a fruit of freedom from the bondage of sin, and of serving God; holiness begun in regeneration, calling, and conversion, is a fruit of the Spirit; a course of living righteously is a fruit of holiness, as a principle implanted; a gradual increase in holiness is carried on by the Spirit of God in a course of righteousness; and a course of righteousness, from a principle of grace, issues in perfect holiness; “without which no man shall see the Lord” Hebrews 12:14: here it seems to design, that holiness is fruit, or that which is gain and profit to persons, in opposition to sin, in which there is no profit: it is not indeed profitable to God in point of merit; yet holiness, as a principle of grace, is profitable to the saints in point of meetness for glory; and holiness, as it denotes an external course of life, is useful and profitable on many accounts; hereby God is glorified, the doctrine of Christ is adorned, religion is honoured and recommended, our own credit, reputation, and peace, are preserved, and our neighbour’s good promoted.

And the end is everlasting life: as sin issues, if grace prevent not, in everlasting death; holiness issues in eternal life, not by way of merit, but of free gift.

Even A. T. Robertson agreeable wrote of this verse, “Freedom from sin and slavery to God bring permanent fruit that leads to sanctification.”

II Thessalonians 2:10-12, speaks about those who will “perish,” will not receive the “love of the truth, that that they might be saved,” will “believe a lie,” “be damned,” and live a life of “pleasure in unrighteousness.” Contrastingly, God tells us in verses thirteen and fourteen that the regenerated child of grace lives a life of sanctification because it is inclusive in salvation that is appointed to the chosen “from the beginning.” Note these verses: “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: Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.” It cannot be more clearly stated than that “from the beginning” we were “chosen” “to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth.” In other words, we are sanctified by the Spirit through “belief of the truth.” Is not this what the Lord Jesus Christ prayed for the elect: “Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth”? Many quotes could be supplied to summarize this glorious passage regarding the various subjects contained in it. However, I will simply quote from the *Matthew Henry Commentary* that this refers mainly to the topic of sanctification. It is as follows:

Therefore were they beloved of the Lord, because God had chosen them from the beginning. He had loved them with an everlasting love. Concerning this election of God we may observe, (1.) The eternal date of it—it is from the beginning; not the beginning of the gospel, but the beginning of the world, before the foundation of the world, Ephesians 1:4. Then, (2.) The end to which they were chosen—salvation, complete and eternal salvation from sin and misery, and the full fruition of all good. (3.) The means in order to obtaining this end—*sanctification of the spirit and belief of the truth*. The decree of election therefore connects the end and the means, and these must not be separated. We are not the elected of God because we were holy, but that we might be holy. Being chosen of God, we must not live as we list; but, if we are chosen to salvation as the end, we must be prepared for it by sanctification as the necessary means to obtain that end, which sanctification is by the operation of the Holy Spirit as the author and by faith on our part. There must be the belief of the truth, without which there can be no true sanctification, nor perseverance in grace, nor obtaining of salvation. Faith and holiness must be joined together, as well as holiness and happiness; therefore our Saviour prayed for Peter that his faith might not fail (Luke 22:32), and for his disciples (John 17:17), *Sanctify them by thy truth; thy word is truth*. (From computer Bible program *Sword Searcher*.)

Again we see that sanctification in the life of a believer is no option. The Lord willing, we shall discuss this fuller in following podcasts, but our time is exhausted for today. Farewell.