

Systematic Theology, Lesson 28: Soteriology: The Doctrine of Salvation, Part 6

1. Review – *Ordo Solutis*: Order of Salvation
 - a. Before time: Election
 - b. In time (one-time event):
 - i. Calling
 - ii. Regeneration
 - iii. Repentance
 - iv. Faith
 - v. Justification
 - vi. Adoption
 - c. In time (on-going process):
 - i. Sanctification
 - ii. Perseverance
 - d. After life: Glorification
2. The Bible refers to salvation in three tenses:
 - a. Past: I was saved. (This is what happens at the “one-time event” from the *ordo solutis*. We are free from the penalty of sin.)
 - b. Present: I am being saved. (This is what is happening during the “on-going process” from the *ordo solutis*. We are free from the power of sin.)
 - c. Future: I will be saved. (This is what will happen in the “after life” from the *ordo solutis*. We are free from the presence of sin.)
 - d. The Bible uses the word “sanctification” in all three tenses:

- i. Past: “definitive sanctification”¹: the _____ of sanctification (i.e., regeneration²) in which we experience and inward moral change.
1. **Acts 20:32**: And now I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build *you* up and to give *you* the inheritance among all those who are sanctified.
 2. **1 Cor 6:11**: Such were some of you; but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God.
 3. **GCBC Statement of Faith** (Under “sanctification,” paragraph 1): We teach that every believer is sanctified (set apart) unto God by justification and is therefore declared to be holy and is therefore identified as a saint. This sanctification is positional and instantaneous and should not be confused with progressive sanctification. This sanctification has to do with the believer's standing, not his present walk or condition.
- ii. Present: “progressive sanctification”: the on-going process of sanctification in which we become holy.
1. **Rom 6:19**: I am speaking in human terms because of the weakness of your flesh. For just as you presented your members as slaves to impurity and to lawlessness, resulting in *further* lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness, resulting in sanctification.
 2. **1 Thess 4:3**: For this is the will of God, your sanctification; *that is*, that you abstain from sexual immorality.
- iii. Future: “prospective sanctification”: the perfect _____ of sanctification at the time of glorification.³
1. **1 Thess 3:13**: so that He may establish your hearts without blame in holiness [i.e., sanctification] before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all His saints.

¹ Sometimes this is referred to as “positional sanctification.”

² For more on the doctrine of regeneration, see: Dan Burrus, “Systematic Theology, Lesson 25: Soteriology, Part 3,” lecture available at gracelakeville.org.

³ More on glorification will be covered in a subsequent lecture.

2. **1 John 3:2:** Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is.

3. Progressive Sanctification

- a. Definition of sanctification (what?): progressive sanctification is the on-going work of God and man in which through repentance/faith and the “means of grace” justified sinners die to sin and become like Christ in their entire human person.
- b. Timing of sanctification (when?): sanctification is an on-going process in this life.
 - i. **Rom 6:12-13:** Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its lusts, and do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin *as* instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your members *as* instruments of righteousness to God.
 - ii. **Phil 3:13-14:** Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of *it* yet; but one thing *I do*: forgetting what *lies* behind and reaching forward to what *lies* ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.
 - iii. Sanctification begins at the time of justification.⁴
 - iv. Sanctification will never be complete or perfect in this life.⁵
- c. Agents of sanctification (who?): sanctification is a work of _____ and _____.
 - i. Work of God
 1. **Phil 2:13:** for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for *His* good pleasure.
 2. **1 Thes 5:23:** Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

⁴ For more on the doctrine of justification and the differences between justification and sanctification, see: Dan Burrus, “Systematic Theology, Lesson 27: Soteriology, Part 5,” lecture available at gracelakeville.org.

⁵ Some Christians believe in “entire sanctification” or “Christian perfectionism” in this life. For an excellent biblical critique of perfectionism, see: Benjamin B. Warfield, *The Works of Benjamin B. Warfield, vols. 7-8, Perfectionism, Part 1 & 2* (Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 1931, 1932).

- ii. Work of man
 1. **Phil 2:12:** So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your salvation with fear and trembling.
 2. **Heb 12:14:** Pursue peace with all men, and the sanctification without which no one will see the Lord.
 3. In a sense, all the commands in the New Testament show our needed responsible participation in sanctification.
- iii. Sanctification is thus a “dependent responsibility/effort.” God “works *in us* and *with us*, not *against us* or *without us*.”⁶
- iv. Any model of sanctification that eliminates or downplays the full 100% work of God and/or full 100% work of man is in error.
- d. Means of sanctification (how?): sanctification is primarily accomplished through repentance and faith as we attend to the “means of grace.”
 - i. Internal means of sanctification: repentance and faith.⁷
 1. Repentance and faith are not only necessary for beginning the Christian life but for continuing in the Christian life.
 2. **Gal 2:20:** I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.
 3. **Rom 6:12:** Even so consider [by faith] yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus.
 - ii. External means of sanctification: “means of grace.”⁸
 1. Means of grace in general:

⁶ John Owen, *The Works of John Owen, vol. 6, Sin and Temptation* (Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth, 1967), 20.

⁷ For more on the nature of repentance and faith, see: Dan Burrus, “Systematic Theology, Lesson 26: Soteriology, Part 4,” lecture available at gracelakeville.org.

⁸ The means of grace are also sometimes referred to as “spiritual disciplines.” For more on the means of grace, see: Dan Burrus, “More on How to Kill Sin,” lecture available at GCBCsermonaudio.com webpage.

- a. The means of grace are _____ for Christian growth. We cannot grow without them.
- b. But the means of grace are only _____ God has provided for Christian growth. “[The] ‘means of grace’ are not what you do to attain holiness; they are what bring you into a deeper fellowship with Christ who makes you more holy.”⁹ Therefore, don’t make the means of grace an end in themselves.

2. Means of grace specifically:

- a. Bible (both private reading and public preaching)
 - i. **Ps 19:9-11:** The law of the LORD is perfect, restoring the soul; The testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple. The precepts of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; The commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes. The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever; The judgments of the LORD are true; they are righteous altogether.
 - ii. **2 Tim 3:16-17:** All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.
 - iii. Reading the Bible alone doesn’t make you holy, you must *meditate* on the Bible (i.e., internalize it) and *practice* it (**Jam 1:22-25**).
- b. Prayer (both private prayer and public prayer)
 - i. **Ps 119:9-11:** How can a young man keep his way pure? By keeping *it* according to Your word. With all my heart I have sought You; Do not let me wander from Your commandments. Your word I have treasured in my heart, That I may not sin against You.

⁹ Walter Marshall, *The Gospel Mystery of Sanctification: Growing in Holiness by Living in Union with Christ*, translated by Bruce H. McRae (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2005), 191, f.n. 1.

- ii. **Phil 1:9-11:** And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in real knowledge and all discernment, so that you may approve the things that are excellent, in order to be sincere and blameless until the day of Christ; having been filled with the fruit of righteousness which *comes* through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.
- c. Lord's Supper¹⁰
- i. **1 Cor 10:16:** Is not the cup of blessing which we bless a sharing in the blood of Christ? Is not the bread which we break a sharing in the body of Christ?
 - ii. **1 Cor 11:29-30:** For he who eats and drinks, eats and drinks judgment to himself if he does not judge the body rightly. For this reason many among you are weak and sick, and a number sleep.
- d. Fellowship¹¹
- i. **Plmn 6:** *and I pray* that the fellowship of your faith may become effective through the knowledge of every good thing which is in you for Christ's sake.
 - ii. **Heb 10:24-25:** and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging *one another*; and all the more as you see the day drawing near.
- e. Discipline (both private discipline and public discipline [i.e., church discipline¹²])
- i. **Heb 12:10:** For they disciplined us for a short time as seemed best to them, but He [God the Father]

¹⁰ For more on the Lord's Supper as a means of grace, see: Dan Burrus, "Picturing the Gospel," sermon available at GCBC sermonaudio.com webpage. More on the Lord's Supper will be covered in a subsequent lecture.

¹¹ For more on biblical fellowship and what it entails, see Dan Burrus, "Biblical Fellowship," eight part series available at GCBC sermonaudio.com webpage.

¹² More on church discipline will be covered in a subsequent lecture.

disciplines us for our good, so that we may share His holiness.

- ii. **Gal 6:1:** Brethren, even if anyone is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; *each one* looking to yourself, so that you too will not be tempted.
- iii. We often think of discipline as negative, but disciple has both a positive (formative discipline) and a negative (corrective discipline) component.
- f. All of the above means of grace have a corporate/public component; only some have an individual/private component. The corporate gatherings of the church are very important for our sanctification! Furthermore, we are not only sanctified as individuals but as the church.
- g. Note: God uses other means to sanctify Christians (e.g., trials, singing, fasting, etc.), but the above are the _____ and _____ means God uses.
- e. Goal of sanctification (why?): sanctification is dying to the sin¹³ and becoming like Christ.
 - i. Negative: dying to sin
 - 1. **Rom 6:12-13, 15:** Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its lusts, and do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin *as* instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your members *as* instruments of righteousness to God. . . . What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? May it never be!
 - 2. **Rom 8:13:** for if you are living according to the flesh, you must die; but if by the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live.
 - ii. Positive: becoming like Christ

¹³ Sanctification addresses the corruption of sin we receive due to original sin. For more on original sin and corruption, see: Dan Burrus, "Systematic Theology, Lesson 17: Anthropology, Part 2," lecture available at gracelakeville.org.

1. We are created in the image of God (**Gen 1:26-27**).
 2. The Fall marred the image of God in man.¹⁴
 3. Christ is the perfect image of God (**John 14:8-9; 2 Cor 4:4; Col 1:15; Heb 1:3**).
 4. Sanctification is about renewing the image marred at the Fall.
 - a. **Rom 8:29**: For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined *to become* conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren.
 - b. **2 Cor 3:18**: But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit.
- f. Extent of sanctification (where?): sanctification is a change of our _____ human being.¹⁵
- i. Mind: **Col 3:10**: and have put on the new self who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him.
 - ii. Affections: **1 John 2:15**: Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.
 - iii. Will: **Phil 2:13**: for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for *His* good pleasure.
 - iv. Body and Spirit: **2 Cor 7:1 (ESV)**: Since we have these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and spirit, bringing holiness [= sanctification] to completion in the fear of God.
- g. Implications of sanctification
- i. Importance. Sanctification is an extremely important doctrine. Why?

¹⁴ See: Dan Burrus, "Systematic Theology, Lesson 16: Anthropology, Part 1," lecture available at gracelakeville.org.

¹⁵ For more on sanctification as a change of our entire being, see: Dan Burrus, "A Model for Christian Growth," sermon available at gracelakeville.org.

1. Our Christian life begins in a split moment of time. Our Christian life ends in a split moment in time. The remainder of our lives, all but two seconds, is lived in sanctification.
 2. The churches ministry to believers is entirely in the realm of sanctification.
- ii. Time. Sanctification is a slow (mainly steady) process, which requires effort over time.

h. **GCBC Statement of Faith** on sanctification:

We teach that there is also by the work of the Holy Spirit a progressive sanctification by which the state of the believer is brought closer to the standing the believer positionally enjoys through justification. Through obedience to the Word of God and the empowering of the Holy Spirit, the believer is able to live a life of increasing holiness in conformity to the will of God, becoming more and more like our Lord Jesus Christ.

In this respect, we teach that every saved person is involved in a daily conflict the new creation in Christ doing battle against the flesh but adequate provision is made for victory through the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit. The struggle nevertheless stays with the believer all through this earthly life and is never completely ended. All claims to the eradication of sin in this life are unscriptural. Eradication of sin is not possible, but the Holy Spirit does provide for victory over sin.