

THE DOCTRINE OF SANCTIFICATION

CHAPTER 6

After having studied the Doctrines of Sin and Salvation, we now come to the Doctrine of Sanctification. This is an important study for every individual who has experienced the new birth. In the King James Bible the words holy, saints, sanctify, sanctuary and sanctification are all translated from the same root word and means *set apart*. Sanctification is really God working by His Spirit, His Word, and things which He allows to come into our lives to conform us unto the image of His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, Romans 8:28-29.

In John 17:17 the Word of God says, ***“Sanctify them through thy truth: thy Word is truth.”*** Again in Ephesians 5:25-26 we read, ***“Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself for it; That he might sanctify it and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word.”*** Even though we cannot go into great details in this study, we will take time to see what the Bible teaches on this very important subject.

To begin our study we must first learn there are two different types of sanctification taught in the Scriptures. One is positional sanctification. This is God’s part. The other is practical or progressive sanctification and is man’s part.

POSITIONAL SANCTIFICATION, (God’s part)

In positional sanctification, God sets us apart *by Himself, to Himself, and for Himself*. All this takes place instantly when a person is saved by the grace of God. This means that the moment we were saved we were positionally set apart from our old sins and from the world, and were placed into the body of Christ. The Scripture teaches in I Corinthians 12:13, that at that moment the Holy Spirit baptized us into the body of Christ. We read in Colossians 3:3, ***“For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.”*** So, we see from these verses, that when the Lord saved us, God set us apart by Himself, to Himself, and for Himself, placing us in the Lord Jesus Christ. This position that we have in the Lord Jesus Christ is the basis for our Christian victory.

PRACTICAL SANCTIFICATION, (man’s part)

Practical Sanctification is simply the process of us living out in practice what God has given to us positionally in the Lord Jesus Christ. Since God has separated the believer unto Himself and for Himself, we as believers must put into practice the process of this separation in our daily lives. We must realize that we cannot do that which God has already done for us in Christ, but God does expect us to put it into practice in our daily lives. The work of Practical Sanctification is a progressive work. As the child of God grows in the grace and knowledge of God he will become more like the Lord Jesus in his daily life.

Perhaps the greatest study on this subject in the entire Bible is found in Romans 6, 7, and 8. Every Christian needs to spend much time studying these three chapters. I cannot go into a detailed study on them now, but we will briefly look at these three chapters. For a simple outline of these chapters we will use the following three thoughts.

In Romans 6, we see *the Experience of Victory Explained*.

In Romans 7, we see *the Enemy of Victory Exposed*.

In Romans 8, we see *the Enjoyment of Victory Experienced*.

When you first read Romans 6 and 7 you usually finish more confused than you were before you started, but if you will study these chapters until the Holy Spirit gives you insight into the truths taught in them, your Christian life will never be the same again.

In Romans 6, there are four key words. The first is “know” or “knowing” found in verses 3, 6, 9, and 16. What we know will determine how much of this victory we will experience in our Christian life, John 8:32. In these verses we discover the real source of our victory is our identification with the Lord Jesus Christ in His death, burial, resurrection, and ascension. This alone is the source of true Christian victory. We do not work *for* this victory, but *from* this victory. Real victory is only experienced when we recognize that God sees us in Christ.

The lesson of Romans six is this. In God’s sight, when Christ died we died with Him. When Christ was buried, we were buried with Him. When Christ arose from the dead, we arose with Him. When Christ ascended upon high, we ascended with Him. When Christ sat down on the right hand of the Father on high, we also sat down with Him. We as believers are right now seated in the Heavens in Christ Jesus, Ephesians 2:5-6. This is our Positional Sanctification.

The second key word in Romans 6 is the word “reckon” found in verse 11. This word is a mathematical term that means *to calculate or to count*. To use a more modern term, it means to compute. Our victory that God has given us in Christ Jesus is not experienced because of our struggling, trying, or our working. Victory is experienced when we calculate the fact that God sees us in Christ in His death, His burial, His resurrection and His ascension. If I feed all these facts into God’s calculator, the answer that comes out says I have VICTORY IN JESUS. THIS VICTORY IS NOT BASED ON MY FEELINGS, BUT UPON THE FACTS OF THE WORD OF GOD. In I Corinthians 15:57 we read, “***But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.***” Here again we see God sets us apart by Himself, to Himself, and for Himself. He literally lifts us up out of sin and defeat and sets us over into the victory circle that is in the Lord Jesus. Again, I repeat, this is Positional Sanctification.

The other two key words in Romans 6 are “yield” found in verse 13, and “obey” found in verses 16-17. These two words deal with our Practical or Progressive Sanctification. This is our part in sanctification. It is practical because it deals with our practice or behavior and it is progressive because it is not something that is accomplished in our lives immediately. It is a process through which God works in our lives over a period of many years. God sets us free from the dominion of sin, Romans 6:14, and puts us back in control of our lives. He then tells us in verse 12 and 13 that we believers are to take the control of our life from the dominion of sin and yield the members of our bodies as instruments of righteousness unto God instead of yielding them as instruments of unrighteousness to sin.

In verse 16 and the following verses we are taught to “obey” the teachings of God. Before we were saved we obeyed the law of sin so much that we were servants of sin. Now since we have been set free from the law of sin, we are to obey the laws of God as servants of righteousness. The Word of God says in Philippians 2:12-13, “...*work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure.*” God works it in us; we must work it out. Again, this is our part, this is Practical Sanctification.

As we study the word of God and pray, we will grow in the grace and in the knowledge of Christ, II Timothy 2:15, I Peter 2:2, and II Peter 3:18. The more we grow as a Christian, the more we become separated from the world. The more you know about the Lord Jesus Christ, the more you love Him. The more you love the Lord, the more you will hate sin. The more you hate sin, the more you will want to separate yourself from sin and the things of the world. God does not work against your will in sanctification. He first works on your will until you begin to will the will of God. He will work through your will so that you willingly accomplish His will in your life.

Sanctification is not accomplished by laws, but by love. Many preachers have tried to accomplish sanctification in the lives of their people by adopting a set of rules or laws. This does not produce sanctification, but rather, it produces the attitude of the Pharisees. Laws only produce rebellion; love produces submission. The only way we can accomplish real Biblical sanctification is to diligently study the Word of God, to pray faithfully and fervently, and to cooperate with the Holy Spirit as He leads us onward in our Christian life. You will not have to worry about separation from the world very much if you really get right with the Lord and fall deeply in love with Him; the world will separate itself from you.

It is so important for us to understand that the Scriptures always deal with our position before it deals with our practice. Not only is this true in Romans chapter 6, but if you study the book of Romans as a whole, chapters 1-8 deal basically with our position, and chapters 12-16 deal with our practice. The same is true in the book of Ephesians. In chapters 1-3, God deals with our position and in chapters 4-6 he deals with our practice. In chapters 1-3 of Ephesians, he deals with the believer’s wealth. In chapters 4 and 5, He deals with the believer’s walk. In chapter 6, he deals with the believer’s warfare. It is only when we learn where we sit in Ephesians 2:6 that we can really know how to walk (Ephesians 4 and 5); and how to stand (Ephesians 6:13-14.)

In Romans 7, we see the same principle given. In verses 1-6, we first discover our position. We have died to the law of sin, to which we had been married, and God has raised us up and given us the privilege to be married to another, even Christ. This is our position, but throughout the rest of chapter 7 we find ourselves battling with our old nature, trying to bring it into subjection to the laws of God. This is Practical Sanctification. In Romans 7 Paul is not dealing with a sinner, but a carnal saved person who is battling with his old sinful nature, as he desires to do God’s will. As Christians we are a saved being living in an unsaved body.

When we come to Romans 8, we see the spiritual man resting in his position that he has in the Lord Jesus Christ. Notice in Romans 8:1, “*There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are IN CHRIST JESUS, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.*” In this chapter we see the believer who is living out the victorious Christian life. He is resting in the position he has in Christ and by the help of the Holy Spirit he is living a life that is filled with practical Christianity.

When we learn the real truth of our position it will not cause us to be loose in our practice, but rather the exact opposite will happen. When we really learn what we have in Christ positionally we will be humbled so much that we will devote our daily life to practice the position that we have in the Lord Jesus Christ. Such verses as Romans 12:1-2, II Corinthians 6:14-18, II Corinthians 7:1, Galatians 5:16, Ephesians 5:11, Hebrews 12:1, and other verses which teach practical sanctification will not be a burden to us, but a blessing.

May we always remember that we are the Children of God through the new birth and God does not want His children to act like, talk like, or to look like the children of the Devil. This is why God wants us to be separated from the world. We must be sure that we are separated unto Him and from the world. Separation from the world without separation unto Christ will make you a Pharisee.

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Did you read every passage of Scripture that's mentioned in this chapter? If you did not, do so right now.
2. What does the word Sanctification mean?
3. What are the two kinds of Sanctification?
 - a.
 - b.
4. What is meant by Positional Sanctification?
5. What is meant by Practical Sanctification?

6. What are the four key words in Romans 6?

a.

b.

c.

d.

7. What are the basic truths taught in Romans 6 that we should know?

a.

b.

c.

8. Explain what is meant by the word *reckon*.

9. In Romans 6, what is the real source of our victory?

10. The Scriptures always deals with our _____ before it deals with our _____ .

Be sure to study these questions until you know them well before you go to the next chapter.