

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY ABOUT SANCTIFICATION?

What is sanctification?

Sanctification is the process by which God's Spirit changes the heart, mind and soul of a Christian to conform to His will in joyful obedience to and imitation of the holiness of God.

- Romans 6:19-22 “For just as you once presented your members as slaves to impurity and to lawlessness leading to more lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness leading to sanctification. For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. 21 But what fruit were you getting at that time from the things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death. 22 But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the fruit you get leads to sanctification and its end, eternal life.”
- Acts 26:18 “to open their eyes, so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.”
- 1 Thessalonians 4:3 “For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you abstain from sexual immorality;”

How does sanctification happen?

- Acts 26:18 “sanctified by faith”
- 1 Corinthians 11:1 “Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ.”
- Philippians 3:17 “Brothers, join in imitating me, and keep your eyes on those who walk according to the example you have in us.”
- Philippians 4:9 “What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me—practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.”
- 2 Thessalonians 2:13 “God chose you as the first fruits to be saved, through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth.”
- Colossians 4:12 “Epaphras, who is one of you, a servant of Christ Jesus, greets you, always struggling on your behalf in his prayers, that you may stand mature and fully assured in all the will of God.”

What speeds & impedes sanctification?

- New Self VS. Old Self – Colossians 3 & Ephesians 4
- Ephesians 4:30 “And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.”
- 1 Thessalonians 5:19 “Do not quench the Spirit.”

What is God's role and my responsibility?

- Passive VS. Active
- 1 Peter 1:22 “Having purified your souls by your obedience to the truth for a sincere brotherly love, love one another earnestly from a pure heart”
- John 17:17,19 “Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. ... And for their sake I consecrate myself, that they also may be sanctified in truth.”
- Galatians 3:3 “Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh?”
- Romans 15:16 “sanctified by the Holy Spirit”, 1 Peter 1:2 “sanctification of the Spirit”
- 1 Corinthians 1:30 “And because of him you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption”
- Hebrews 13:12 “So Jesus also suffered outside the gate in order to sanctify the people through his own blood.”

What about “Carnal Christians”?

Although there are varying degrees of maturity and fruitfulness among believers, there is no such category of Christians who do not bear fruit of God's Spirit.

- 1 Corinthians 3:1-4 “But I, brothers, could not address you as spiritual people, but as people of the flesh, as infants in Christ. 2 I fed you with milk, not solid food, for you were not ready for it. And even now you are not yet ready, 3 for you are still of the flesh. For while there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not of the flesh and behaving only in a human way? 4 For when one says, “I follow Paul,” and another, “I follow Apollos,” are you not being merely human?”
- 1 John 3:6 “No one who abides in him keeps on sinning; no one who keeps on sinning has either seen him or known him.”
- James 2:26 “faith without works is dead”

Can we be “perfected” (i.e. “entire sanctification” or “sinless perfection”)?

No, "perfection" does not happen as Christians will continue to struggle with sin while on earth.

"Glorification" describes the guarantee of true believers receiving their resurrection bodies when they enter into Heaven.

- Romans 8:30 "And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified."
- Hebrews 10:14 “For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified.”
- Romans 7:14-24 v.15 “For I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate.”

Why is it so important?

- 1 Thessalonians 5:23 "Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ"
- 1 Peter 1:14-19 “As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, 15 but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, 16 since it is written, “You shall be holy, for I am holy.” 17 And if you call on him as Father who judges impartially according to each one's deeds, conduct yourselves with fear throughout the time of your exile, 18 knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, 19 but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot.”