

THE ROLE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE SANCTIFICATION OF A BELIEVER

by

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Introduction

one of the distinctive qualities that gives the Christian faith uniqueness is the aspect of what we shall be discussing. A religious man can perform all the rituals required to please the gods and in order to fully gain acceptance before the gods such a man must ensure that he does not mingled with what the gods says is an abomination.

For an example in the ATR, immorality and the likes are taboos to the gods. Such a person must keep himself separate from the common.

The article before us is the cruise of the Christian faith, after one is been justified by God in Jesus Christ.

Right from the Old Testament up to the New Testament sanctification is the driving force or an impulse that kept the community of faith in God to be distinct from the gentile communities.

Jesus says that his disciples are to remain in him in order to bear fruit that will last

sanctification is a process by which one's moral condition is brought into conformity with one's legal status (Justification) before God. It is a continuation of what was begun in regeneration, when a newness of life was conferred upon and instilled within the believer. In particular, sanctification is the work of the Holy Spirit's applying to the life of the believer the work done by Jesus Christ. Believers are to conduct themselves accordingly. They are to live lives of purity and goodness. Thus, sanctification is a process requiring an entire lifetime for completion. It is also clear by the way a believer lives his life whether he is more or less sanctified, implying that there are degrees of sanctification. Sanctification is an actual transformation of the character and condition of the person and is equally a subjective work affecting our inner person.

Sanctification is a supernatural work of God

Sanctification is a supernatural **work of God** (1 Thessalonians 5:23; Ephesians 5:2; Titus 2:14; Hebrews 13:20-21); God works in and through us in the power of the Holy Spirit thereby changing our character and behavior in the likeness of Jesus. Sanctification is God's desire for his justified people as the case was from the time Israel was delivered from the Land of bondage. Israel was sanctified (set apart) to show forth God's distinctive character to the nations around her and was called upon to live a life of sanctification or holiness. The Lord said to Moses, "Speak to the entire assembly of Israel and say to them: "Be holy because I, the Lord your God, am holy" (Lev 19:1-3).

The Christian too answered a called to live a holy life. For God did not call us to be impure, but to live a holy life (1 Thessalonians 4:7)

The Holy Spirit is the only power that enables us to live above sin. When the Holy Spirit is being quenched it means one source of divine impartation for a successful living the Christian life is no more, hence carnality will dominate ones' life.

Paul addresses the Corinthians believers (2 Cor.13'8) the needs of man to have a continual process of cleansing unto perfection. sanctification occur at the very beginning of the Christian life, at the point of conversion.

To sanctify and to make holy means the same thing. The word is used to refer to different stages or aspects in the life of the Christian. It is a broad word that is used to refer to the past, present and the future. In other words, we have been sanctified, we are being sanctified, and we shall be sanctified. Sanctification as a past event 1Corinthians 6:11, an on-going process Hebrews 2:11, and a future reality as shall be discussed below (212,217-218).

Sanctification is a divine initiative. Paul says that God made Christ our sanctification, so clearly emphasizing the divine initiative (1 Corinthians 1:30). Christ could be described as our sanctification because he was the only perfectly sanctified person. Sanctification though accomplished by faith in Christ in the sight of God it's still need to be work out in the lives of the

believers (Romans 6:19; 1 Thessalonians 4:3). These scriptural verses show the human side of sanctification, the need for continued commitment to the pursuit of holiness. Sometimes Paul stresses the word sanctification with an eschatological or futuristic meaning. In Romans 6:22 the stress falls on future rather than present, for sanctification is spoken of in terms of reward and it links to its ends, eternal life. Sometimes Paul usage of the verb suggests an accomplished fact, while others suggest a process. For examples of the former are 1 Corinthians 1:2; 6:11 and the examples of the latter are Ephesians 5:26 and 1 Thessalonians 5:23. Paul in three instances linked sanctification with the works of the Holy Spirit, Romans 15:16; 1 Thessalonians 4:7-8; and 2 Thessalonians 2:13. This is to let the believer informed that whatever demands are made on him in this life, he is not left on his own devices. The two works hand in hand, that is, if justification cannot be achieved by human efforts in the same manner sanctification cannot be made possible by human effort. Paul therefore maintains a delicate balance between God's providence and man's responsibility

The Christian life is an ongoing process that is not yet fully realized and perfected completely until Christ who is the perfect comes. For this reason, the Christian has a role to play in the accomplishment of living a blameless life by the inner working power of the Holy Spirit.

The idea of sanctification is Soteriological before it is a moral concept. The idea of 'holiness' is first of all cultic, and secondarily moral. Holiness in the New Testament does not refer to ethical conduct but a condition of ethical innocence. Sanctification is not a synonym for moral growth. For what is holy is dedicated to God or some way belongs to the service of God. Thus, to the Christians, holiness or sanctification is not in the first place on ethical concept although it includes the ethical aspects. It first denotes the Soteriological truth the Christians belong to God. The statement of Paul in 1 Corinthians 1:2, 30 about the Christians in the Corinth been sanctified, in this sense sanctification does not designate growth in ethical conduct but a redemptive truth. Sanctification consists not in a particular moral quality which has been attended but in a particular relationship to God which has been given. Sanctification has an eschatological goal. This goal is that purpose of God that the church should be presented to him finally in splendor (Ephesians 5:27, Colossians 1: 22; 1 Thessalonians 3:13; 5:23). Sanctification of the believers is showing the lifestyle of God's godly character here now and the Christian life shall be consummated in a blameless perfection. Because believers have been sanctified they are called upon to exercise sanctification and shun uncleanness. While sanctification is the work of The Holy Spirit (1 Thessalonians 2:13), it also demands a human response (Romans 6:19; 1 Corinthians 7: 1; 1 Thessalonians 4:7). It is not a term designating the totality of good life as such, but one that denotes the dedication of Christians to God in contrast to the prevailing evils in their society. Though as stated above one aspect of sanctification is a factual past event (indicative); therefore, it is to be experienced here and now (imperative). Since justification brought peace with God according Romans 5:1, and the Christians are being sanctified, the Christians are to live as God's people and shun all that would defile. Salvation must evidence itself in moral living if it is real.

Paul uses sanctify in two ways. Sometime it means set apart; at other times, it means to make holy. Holiness should be the goal of the Christian life. However, in other cases, sanctification or holiness refers to the process of becoming holy in our personal lives. The purpose of our election is holiness (Ephesians 1:4), that our lives should be lives of holiness. Interestingly, holiness is similar to righteousness. The goal of both justification and sanctification is righteousness and holiness been the fundamental harmony between the two. Both are possible because through faith we are in Christ. Jesus' goal is to present the church before the father as blameless as stated above. God will continue to work in the believer's life (Philippians 1:6). The aim of this divine working is likeness to Christ himself (Romans 8:29). Sanctification is the **work of the Holy Spirit** (Galatians 5:16, 22-23, 25). In Romans 8 Paul says much more about the spirit and the Christian (Romans 8: 4, 5, 9, 13, 14, 16, 26-27). It is the spirit who is at work in the believer, bringing him about likeness to Christ. This was God's intention from all eternity. Though it is an

exclusively of God, for this reason the believer is constantly exhorted to work and to grow in the matters pertaining to salvation (Philippians 2:12-13). One major issue over which there has been disagreement throughout church history is whether the process of sanctification is ever completed within the earthly lifetime of a believer. Do we come to the point where we no longer sin? The truth of the matter is one may not say that a believer cannot sin but he does not sin. As the believer rely on the power of the Holy Spirit it means that it is possible not to sin even with the temptation and struggle with the innate tendency towards evil, and that some believers actually do abstain from evil. The ultimate goal of sanctification was "to renew men's and women's hearts in God's image. This is possible only if the believer allows the Holy Spirit to take charge and control of his life. The Holy spirit empowers, guides, directs and enables the believer to live a sanctify life through faith.

Conclusion

the doctrine of sanctification is paramount in the life of a believer. Sanctification is a process of a progressive moment by moment living a set apart life of the believer through faith in Christ and in the enabling inner working power of the Holy Spirit. Though, living a life of perfection on this earth is not possible because of the daily struggle the believer does against sin, however, it is possible to live a sanctify life leading one to be blameless and when Christ comes one shall be fully perfected. Thus, our justification is appropriated by faith likewise sanctification is work out in faith.