

## **I Believe in Sanctification**

### **Introduction**

Two opposing dynamics struggle within the human heart: “The flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh” (Galatians 5:17, NKJV).<sup>1</sup> Only through the help of the Holy Spirit can the Christian subdue the tyranny of sin and the flesh.

Sanctification is the work of the Spirit in eliminating sin from the life of the believer. The divine purpose in sanctification is to produce Christians who are holy, even as their Heavenly Father is holy (1 Peter 1:16). Sanctification and holiness in the life of the Spirit-filled believer are synonymous.

### **Message**

#### **1. Sanctify in the Old Testament.**

- a. The use of **sanctify**, prior to the outpouring of the Spirit at Pentecost, was primarily to show a ceremonial dedication. A place (temple, tabernacle) was set apart as holy. A thing (the altar) was dedicated exclusively to divine use. A person (a priest, a prophet) was set apart for a special leadership role.
- b. To call the worship auditorium of a church the **sanctuary** is to acknowledge that it has been set apart for a holy purpose.
- c. To call a person a **saint** is to identify him as sanctified in Christ (1 Corinthians 1:2).

#### **2. Holiness at the moment of salvation.**

- a. Man’s fallen nature needs a radical change. “Without [holiness] no man shall see the Lord” (Hebrews 12:14).
- b. Christ is all our righteousness (1 Corinthians 1:30); we stand “complete in him” (Colossians 2:10).

#### **3. Striving for a holy life.**

- a. Although Christ’s holiness is imputed to us at salvation, the quest for holiness begins with salvation. The Christian moves progressively from **self at the center** to **God at the center**.
- b. We must die to self (flesh) daily (1 Corinthians 15:31). The self (inner being) must still live, but selfishness must die. That means self-renunciation without contempt for one’s self as God’s creation.
- c. We must daily reaffirm our identification and union with Christ (Galatians 2:20).

#### **4. The Holy Spirit—our Sanctifier.**

- a. The Holy Spirit initiates and cultivates our sanctification. A surrendered will invites divine enablement for living a holy life. Full obedience leads to full or entire sanctification.
- b. As we continually offer every faculty to the dominion of the Holy Spirit, He helps us overcome the desires and tendencies of self (the flesh). With His help we can mortify the deeds of the body (Romans 8:13), crucify (Romans 6:6) and put off (Ephesians 4:22; Colossians 3:9) the old man.
- c. With the help of the Holy Spirit, the holiness of God is reflected from the life of the sanctified Christian. We will never achieve the sinless perfection of deity; but as reflections of that sinless perfection, we can be counted among the saints or sanctified ones.

### **Conclusion**

The will of God for each one of us is our sanctification (1 Thessalonians 4:3). God solemnly calls us to holiness: “Be ye holy, for I am holy” (1 Peter 1:16).

Sin need not reign in our lives. We have been set free and given the divine power, through the Holy Spirit, to live above the clutches of sin. Have you appropriated His provision of holiness?

Zenas J. Bicket, Springfield, Missouri

### **Endnote**

1. Scripture quotations marked “NKJV” are taken from the New King James Version. Copyright © 1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Used by permission. All rights reserved.