

Di223 We Believe

Lesson Di223-19 Progressive Sanctification

What does sanctification mean in our daily lives? Listen to these three stories and decide which one shows the true meaning of being separated from the world and separated to God for his use.

Story #1: A small group of people led by a strong leader separated themselves from all contact with the outside world. They brought in supplies for food, clothing, and basic needs. They do not speak to people outside their community unless it is necessary. They have declared, “We are following Jesus’ command to be separate from the world. We will have nothing to do with sinners.” *Is this the meaning of sanctification?*

Story #2: A person who wishes to remain separate from the world lives in a small desert area. He avoids areas of his country that are very beautiful. In this way he will not be distracted from thinking thoughts only of God. He wears only dark clothes, avoiding anything colorful. He does not laugh much, but always keeps a serious attitude. This shows his desire to avoid all sin and worldly desire. *Is this the meaning of sanctification?*

Story #3: A family decides to separate themselves from the world. They are careful about the entertainment they choose. They do not listen to programs or look at books and magazines that do not agree with Bible teachings. They spend their money wisely and use extra money to help the needy and help spread the gospel. They pray and read their Bibles and witness to unsaved people. They are known for their great love for God and others. *Is this the meaning of sanctification?*

Yes, the third case is true sanctification, which begins with salvation when Christ enters our lives. We are not instantly separated from sin to God. We can still sin and we surely need to become more like Jesus. Like the Apostles, we have not yet arrived at being perfect. The sanctification of the believer continues throughout one’s entire lifetime. Holiness is not a list of all the things we do not do. Instead, it is a description of giving each area of our lives to God for his use.

The apostle Peter is an example of someone who lived out progressive sanctification. Peter witnessed Jesus’ first miracles. After fishing all night and catching nothing, Simon’s boat was miraculously filled with fish at Christ’s word. Simon’s response was, “Go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful man!” (Luke 5:8).

Jesus responded to Peter, “From now on you will catch men” (Luke 5:10).

Jesus renamed Simon and called him Peter. Peter gave the great confession of Christ when Jesus asked, “Who do you say I am?”

Peter’s response was “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.”

Jesus answered, “Blessed are you...for this was not revealed to you by flesh and blood, but by my Father in heaven. And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church” (Matt 16:16-18).

Yet, Peter was rebuked by God the Father from heaven when he suggested on the mount of the Transfiguration that three shelters be built (Matt 17:4-5). Peter also attempted to deter Jesus

from the Cross and was again rebuked. Jesus said to him, “Get behind me, Satan” (Matt 16:23). Peter denied the Lord three times (Mark 14:66-72).

Peter gave the stirring speech at Pentecost (Acts 2). Peter was used by God in the outpourings of the Spirit in Samaria, and in Cornelius’ house. He raised Tabitha from the dead. He was miraculously freed from prison (Acts 12). After the Resurrection, Jesus commissioned Peter to shepherd his flock (John 21:15-23). It’s no wonder that Peter says to believers, “Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” (2Peter 3:18). We do this by allowing the Holy Spirit to control all areas of our lives. The process should be progressive as we walk with God.

God’s part in sanctification is accomplished in three ways.

First, “the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin” (1John 1:7). We are brought back into right relationship with God “if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness” (1John 1:9).

Second, the indwelling presence and power of the Holy Spirit sanctifies and makes us holy before God. “If by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live” (Rom 8:13). The Holy Spirit helps us make right choices and grow in the fruit of the Spirit.

Third, the Word of God sanctifies us. Jesus prayed for the Twelve, “Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth” (John 17:17). There must be a daily washing of our sins, as they are shown to us by the Word of God.

Our part in sanctification is to cooperate with God in the process of sanctification. We can miss the goal of holy living by ignoring the promptings of the Holy Spirit and not obeying God’s Word. We have three ways to purify ourselves. *First*, we must believe and accept the truth that the blood of Jesus provides our sanctification. *Second*, we must obey the Word as the Holy Spirit applies it to our hearts and lives. *Third*, we must yield to the Holy Spirit as he leads us into the truth that sanctifies us.

The ninth *Statement of Faith* says: “We believe sanctification is working with the Holy Spirit to separate ourselves from sin and to dedicate ourselves to God.” Our memory verse is: “I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship” (Rom 12:1).

These stories about Peter are **important** because his life is evidence that sanctifying is a process over time. God’s part is sanctifying us through the blood, growing us through the Holy Spirit, and washing us with his Word daily. Our part is to accept the truth that God sees us as holy, make choices in obedience to the Word of God, and yield to the Holy Spirit as he leads.

The **main truth** of this lesson is that God provides sanctification through Christ’s shed blood on the Cross, through the indwelling Holy Spirit who sanctifies us, and through the Word of God. Our part in sanctification is to believe, obey, and yield to the Holy Spirit.

Let’s **review** this lesson—

1. What word describes the process of sanctification? [Pause.]
 - A. If you answered, “Progressive sanctification,” you are correct.

2. What is God's part in the sanctification process? [Pause.]
 - A. If you answered, "God's part is providing sanctification through Christ's shed blood on the Cross, through the indwelling Holy Spirit, and through his Word," you are right.
3. What is our part in the sanctification process? [Pause.]
 - A. If you answered that our part is to believe, obey, and yield to the Holy Spirit, you are correct.

Your **assignment** is to memorize the ninth *Statement of Faith*: "We believe sanctification is working with the Holy Spirit to separate ourselves from sin and to dedicate ourselves to God." Learn the memory verse: "I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship" (Romans 12:1). Share with a few of your friends, the testimony of progressive sanctification in your own life. Explain to them what God's part is and what a believer's part is in this process.

Review all nine *Statements of Faith* until you can say them from memory:

Statement #1: We believe the Scriptures, both the Old and New Testaments, are verbally inspired of God. They are the revelation of God to man, the unchanging rule of faith and conduct.

Statement #2: We believe the one true God has revealed himself as the eternal Creator of heaven and earth and the Savior of mankind. He has further revealed himself as one being in three persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Statement #3: We believe the Lord Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God, as revealed in the Scriptures by his virgin birth, his sinless life, his miracles, his death on the Cross, his bodily resurrection from the dead, and his position at the right hand of God.

Statement #4: We believe that human beings were created in the image of God for a loving relationship with him. They chose to disobey God, however, and thus experienced physical death and separation from God.

Statement #5: We believe mankind's only hope of salvation is through the shed blood of Jesus, the Son of God. The gift of eternal life is received when we repent of our sins and confess our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Statement #6: We believe water baptism by immersion is commanded of all who repent and believe on Christ as Savior. Water baptism is a witness to the world that we have died to sin and been raised to new life in Christ.

Statement #7: We believe the Lord's Supper is a remembrance of Christ's suffering and death, and a prophecy of his Second Coming. Christ commanded all believers to take Communion until he comes.

Statement #8: We believe the baptism in the Holy Spirit, according to Acts 2:4, is given to empower a believer to witness and to live an overcoming Christian life.

Statement #9: We believe sanctification is working with the Holy Spirit to separate ourselves from sin and to dedicate ourselves to God.