

Doctrine for Life: Sanctification and Godliness

1. Introduction: The Bible uses the word “sanctification”¹ in three tenses:
 - a. Past: “definitive sanctification”: the _____ of sanctification (i.e., regeneration²) in which we experience an inward moral change (**Acts 20:32; 1 Cor 6:11**).
 - b. Present: “progressive sanctification”: the on-going _____ in which we become holy (or godly) (**Rom 6:19; 1 Thess 4:3**).
 - c. Future: “future sanctification”: the perfect _____ of sanctification at the time of glorification³ (**1 Thess 3:13; 1 John 3:2**).

2. Definitive Sanctification
 - a. Timing: Definitive sanctification occurs _____ prior to repentance/faith.⁴ We know this because definitive sanctification is an immediate result of the effectual calling.⁵
 - i. **Rom 1:7**: to all who are beloved of God in Rome, called as saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - ii. **1 Cor 1:2a**: To the church of God which is at Corinth, to those who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus, saints by calling, . . .
 - b. Nature:
 - i. Definitive sanctification is a once for all event.
 1. **Acts 20:32**: And now I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build *you* up and to give *you* the inheritance among all those who are sanctified.

¹ For more on the doctrine of sanctification, see Dan Burrus, “Systematic Theology, Lesson 28: Soteriology, Part 6,” lecture available at gracelakeville.org.

² For more on the doctrine of regeneration, see: Dan Burrus, “Systematic Theology, Lesson 25: Soteriology, Part 3,” lecture available at gracelakeville.org.

³ For more on the doctrine of glorification, see: Dan Burrus, “Systematic Theology, Lesson 29: Soteriology, Part 7,” lecture available at gracelakeville.org.

⁴ For more on the doctrine of repentance/faith, see Dan Burrus, “Systematic Theology, Lesson 26: Soteriology, Part 4,” lecture available at gracelakeville.org.

⁵ For more on the doctrine of effectual calling, see: Dan Burrus, “Systematic Theology, Lesson 25: Soteriology, Part 3,” lecture available at gracelakeville.org.

2. **1 Cor 6:11** Such were some of you; but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God.
3. John Murray states: Definitive sanctification “is a fact too frequently overlooked that in the New Testament the most characteristic terms that refer to sanctification are used, not of a process, but of a once-for all definitive act.”⁶
 - ii. Definitive sanctification entails a _____ from the power, domination, and love of sin.
 1. **Rom 6:4**: Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.
 2. **Rom 6:11-14**:¹¹ Even so consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus.¹² Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its lusts,¹³ and do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin *as* instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your members *as* instruments of righteousness to God.¹⁴ For sin shall not be master [=domination] over you, for you are not under law but under grace.
 - iii. Definitive sanctification is a _____ of union with Christ.⁷
 1. **1 Cor 1:30**: But by His doing you are in Christ Jesus [=union with Christ], who became [past tense] to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption, . . .
 2. **Eph 1:4**: just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy [=sanctified] and blameless before Him.

c. Implications:

⁶ John Murray, *Collected Writings of John Murray, vol. 2: Systematic Theology* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1977), 277.

⁷ For more on the doctrine of union with Christ, see: Dan Burrus, “Systematic Theology, Lesson 23: Soteriology, Part 1,” lecture available at gracelakeville.org.

- i. In one sense, we will never be completely free from sin because we are not glorified. In other words, we are not completely free from the _____ of sin. In another sense, we are completely free from sin because we have been definitively sanctified. In other words, we are completely free from the _____ of sin.
- ii. Sometimes definitive sanctification is referred to as “positional sanctification.” But positional sanctification implies that we have not been actually changed. “Definitive sanctification” is a better term because it means that a once for all break from the power of sin has occurred in our lives by virtue of our union with the life, death/resurrection, and ascension of Christ. God sees you as godly because you really are! A real change has taken place!

3. Application questions:

- a. How does the gospel relate to godliness?
- b. Given your current sin struggle [what is this right now for you?], how does seeing your definitive sanctification help you to grow in godliness?
- c. What are your personal hindrances to growth in godliness? (Think theologically and practically.)
- d. Based on the uses of the word “godliness” in 1 Timothy, write down five observations and/or characteristics of godliness (on the next page).
 - i. **1 Tim 2:2:** for kings and all who are in authority, so that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity.
 - ii. **1 Tim 2:10:** but rather by means of good works, as is proper for women making a claim to godliness.
 - iii. **1 Tim 3:16:** By common confession, great is the mystery of godliness: He who was revealed in the flesh, Was vindicated in the Spirit, Seen by angels, Proclaimed among the nations, Believed on in the world, Taken up in glory.
 - iv. **1 Tim 4:7:** But have nothing to do with worldly fables fit only for old women. On the other hand, discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness;

- v. **1 Tim 4:8:** for bodily discipline is only of little profit, but godliness is profitable for all things, since it holds promise for the present life and *also* for the *life* to come.
- vi. **1 Tim 5:4:** but if any widow has children or grandchildren, they must first learn to practice piety [=godliness] in regard to their own family and to make some return to their parents; for this is acceptable in the sight of God.
- vii. **1 Tim 6:3:** If anyone advocates a different doctrine and does not agree with sound words, those of our Lord Jesus Christ, and with the doctrine conforming to godliness,
- viii. **1 Tim 6:5-6:** and constant friction between men of depraved mind and deprived of the truth, who suppose that godliness is a means of gain. But godliness *actually* is a means of great gain when accompanied by contentment.
- ix. **1 Tim 6:11:** But flee from these things, you man of God, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, perseverance *and* gentleness.