

Holy Spirit Series Part 8: Sanctification in the Holy Spirit

“According to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in the sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ and for sprinkling with his blood: May grace and peace be multiplied to you.” 1 Peter 1:2

Sanctification definition:

1. to make holy; set apart as sacred; consecrate.
2. to purify or free from sin:
3. to impart religious sanction to; render legitimate or binding
4. to entitle to reverence or respect.
5. to make productive of or conducive to spiritual blessing.

In the bible:

The generic meaning of sanctification is "the state of proper functioning." To sanctify someone or something is to set that person or thing apart for the use intended by its designer. A pen is "sanctified" when used to write. Eyeglasses are "sanctified" when used to improve sight. In the theological sense, things are sanctified when they are used for the purpose God intends. A human being is sanctified, therefore, when he or she lives according to God's design and purpose.

Sanctification in the Holy Spirit

The word “sanctification” typically renders images of fire, struggle, pain, and toil in many people when asked about “sanctification”. It makes them think of their own sin and wonder how they could ever be transformed into a sanctified child of God. I believe sanctification is one of those words commonly used within the church but often misunderstood. We might understand the definition of sanctification (the process of being made or becoming holy), but I don’t know if we have fully grasped God’s plan for the process. I don’t know if we’ve been taught on sanctification in light of God’s grace.

1 Peter 1 gives us wonderful insight into God’s heart for the process of sanctification:

Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ,

To those who are elect exiles of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in the sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ and for sprinkling with his blood: May grace and peace be multiplied to you.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, so that the tested genuineness of your faith—more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ. Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls. 1 Peter 1:1-9.

The first thing we see in *1 Peter 1:2* is that sanctification is *“of the Spirit.”* Sanctification comes from God working in us, not from our own strength. In fact, Scripture is clear that righteousness is ours as the result of the life, death, and resurrection of Christ. *1 Corinthians 6:11* says, *“You were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.”* And *2 Peter 1:3* says, *“His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence.”* Sanctification comes from God's work and power. In our own strength, we can't produce anything like sanctification because we have no holiness within ourselves. But in the Holy Spirit we have access to a vast, deep well of righteousness and godliness. Through Christ we've been made clean, and through the work of the Holy Spirit we are growing up into a life of holiness.

1 Peter 1 is most definitely clear that sanctification is a tough process. Dealing with our sin will never be easy. But it is a process full of the work of our merciful God (*1 Peter 1:3*), and it always results in rejoicing (*1 Peter 1:8*).

If you desire holiness, righteousness, and godliness, seek out relationship with the Holy Spirit. Open your heart and mind to his work. Allow him to reveal to you the dark places of your heart that have yet to be touched by the capable, loving hands of the God who formed you and knows you. Allow him to heal the wounds and brokenness that have tied you to the world, which you've been set free from through the death and resurrection of Jesus. Sanctification is ours by God's grace and mercy. Spend time in prayer allowing God to deal with your sin and lead you to a life of rejoicing and joy where only sin and sorrow dwelled before.

“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” 1 John 1:9

“Whoever conceals his transgressions will not prosper, but he who confesses and forsakes them will obtain mercy.” Proverbs 28:13

“He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed.” 1 Peter 2:24

May you experience the joy and freedom that comes from receiving God's forgiveness and healing. When we give our sins over to him and receive his forgiveness, the chains that entangled us to the cares of the world are shattered. Our portion in God is love, peace, and joy. Jesus died to set us free from the burden of sin. May you be a child of God marked by the holiness of your heavenly Father that is available in the Holy Spirit who dwells within you.