

Basics – Sanctification

Sanctification — Becoming More Like Jesus

What is sanctification?

Sanctification is the ongoing work of God, through the Holy Spirit, in cooperation with the believer, making us more holy and more like Jesus. It begins at salvation, continues throughout our lives, and is completed when we see Christ.

The word “sanctify” means to set apart, make holy, or consecrate for God’s purposes.

Key Theme Verse

“For this is the will of God, your sanctification...” — 1 Thessalonians 4:3 (ESV)

God doesn’t merely save us from sin; He also transforms us into people who increasingly reflect His character.

Three Stages of Sanctification

1. Positional Sanctification (Past)

When we trust Christ, God declares us holy because of Jesus.

Hebrews 10:10; 1 Corinthians 6:11; Hebrews 10:14.

Notice Hebrews 10:14 speaks of believers as both already perfected in Christ and still being sanctified.

2. Progressive Sanctification (Present)

Daily becoming more like Christ. Romans 12:1-2; 2 Corinthians 3:18; Philippians 2:12-13; Galatians 5:16-25. The fruit of the Spirit: Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Goodness, Faithfulness, Gentleness, Self-control.

3. Glorification (Future)

1 John 3:2; Romans 8:29-30. One day we will be like Christ.

Who Does the Sanctifying?

The Father (1 Thess. 5:23), Jesus (Heb. 13:12), and the Holy Spirit (2 Thess. 2:13).

Our Role

Pursue holiness (Heb. 12:14); Put sin to death (Rom. 8:13); Abide in Christ (John 15:4-5); Renew your mind (Rom. 12:2); Walk by the Spirit (Gal. 5:16); Embrace the season and process.

What Does God Use to Sanctify Us?

1. His Word – John 17:17; Psalm 119:9-11.

2. The Holy Spirit – Galatians 5:22-23.

3. Trials & Seasons – James 1:2-4; Romans 5:3-5.

4. The Church – Ephesians 4:11-16; Hebrews 10:24-25.

What Sanctification Is Not

Not salvation by works (Eph. 2:8-9). Sanctification flows from salvation, not toward it.

Not instant perfection (Phil. 3:12-14).

Not legalism. God changes us from the inside out.

Final Thought

God’s purpose for our lives is not happiness, but hearts fully surrendered and moving toward maturity.