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Santification

Apostle Paul uses an imagery of a woman who is in labour until a fully formed child emerges. And that's how he feels about the believers in his care, about all believers, for that matter. He has birth pain until Christ is formed in them.

This is what sanctification is. It is becoming like Christ.

Christ is in you that is the reality of **redemption** or salvation.

Justification or new birth, being born again. Christ comes and takes up residence in you almost in an undeveloped way, fully present, but not fully manifest through the believer.

Sanctification then is the process by which the believer in whom Christ dwells becomes more like Christ.

Christ begins to shape the believer's life and a fully formed Christ in the life of a believer is then a sanctified believer who manifests,

- the character of Christ,
- thinks the way Christ thinks,
- speaks the way Christ speaks, and

- acts the way Christ acts.
- ✓ Justification is by a righteousness without us,
- ✓ Sanctification is by a holiness formed in us.
- ❖ Justification is by Christ as Priest, and has regard to the penalty of sin
- ❖ Sanctification is by Christ as King, and has regard to the dominion of sin
- Justification cancels its damning power,
- Sanctification delivers from its reigning power.
- ✓ Justification removes the obligation unto punishment
- ✓ Sanctification cleanses from pollution.
- Justification is a judicial act, by which the sinner as pronounced righteous
- Sanctification is a moral work, by which the sinner is made holy

What sanctification?

It is not simply feeling closer to God or experiencing His presence.

It's not a collection of secret insight and personal encouragement from Him to you.

It's not a vague sense of subjective spirituality.

It's not measured, engaged, or informed by your emotions or feelings at all.

True sanctification, according to Scripture, is the process of God's transforming work in your life.

The moment of your salvation, you are declared justified by the Lord through the sacrifice of His Son and freed from the guilt of sin.

Then from there, sanctification frees you from the pollution of sin, helping you destroy sinful patterns and abandon your former life of wickedness.

Sanctification is the fruit of salvation. It's the transforming process by which God's people shed their past sinfulness and grow to reflect His holiness. And if you truly belong to God, you're undergoing the process of sanctification right now.

Sanctification meaning:

The first and the root meaning of the word sanctify (and 'holy' and 'saint', for they all come from the same words in the Hebrew and the Greek), is to set apart to and for a sacred purpose.

Leviticus 21:8, *Therefore you shall consecrate him, for he offers the bread of your God. He shall be holy to you, for I the Lord, who sanctify you, am holy.*

Because He is unique in His person and alone qualified for the whole work of redemption, Jesus sanctified Himself.

In the Old Testament we read of days, places and things being sanctified that is, set apart for a holy and a sacred purpose.

Genesis 2:3, *Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made.*

Exodus 29:43, *And there I will meet with the children of Israel, and the tabernacle shall be sanctified by My glory.*

Exodus 40:10-11, *You shall anoint the altar of the burnt offering and all its utensils, and consecrate the altar. The altar shall be most holy. ¹¹ And you shall anoint the laver and its base, and consecrate it.*

But there is a further meaning in the use of the word sanctify. Because of the presence of sin, of evil, in man and in the world, the word also, when it refers to man, means not only separation TO a sacred and holy purpose, but separation FROM that which is evil, sinful and unclean.

An illustration of this in the Old Testament is found in

2 Chronicles 29:5, and said to them: *“Hear me, Levites! Now sanctify yourselves, sanctify the house of the Lord God of your fathers, and carry out the rubbish from the holy place.*

and in the New Testament in

2 Corinthians 7:1, *Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.*

The word sanctification therefore has in it a two-fold meaning.

- separation FROM sin and defilement, and
- dedication TO God

This brings us to the place where we must consider the use of the word sanctification in relation to believers.

1 Thessalonians 5:23-24, *Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is He who calls you, and He also will bring it to pass.*

The word translated here as sanctify literally means to be set apart—in its noun form it is usually translated as holiness. So, in basic terms, sanctification is the Lord’s process of separating us from sin and setting us apart for holiness. Paul’s prayer is that the Lord would bring about that transformation in the lives of the Thessalonian believers that their lives would reflect a

decreasing frequency of sin and an increasing frequency of holiness.

The Stages of Phases of Sanctification

The Bible speaks of sanctification in three ways and it is important you know the way it is being spoken of in which passage?

Sin is any word, thought or action that that falls short of God's perfect character (Romans 3:23; Matthew 5; Romans 14:23).

The three ways in which scripture uses the word in reference to every believer is

Initial Sanctification

1. Every believer is already fully and eternally sanctified because of his faith in and his union with the Lord Jesus Christ.
Hebrews 10:10 and 14

Progressive Sanctification

2. Every believer is to be sanctified.
1 Thessalonians 4:3,
1 Thessalonians 1-12

Ultimate Sanctification

3. End of Sanctification is Glorification

To put it another way: every believer is already positionally sanctified, and nothing can be added to or taken away from this glorious fact. As Christians, saints, we are sanctified.

But, experimentally we are not fully sanctified, this is a progressive work of God in our lives which will, or should go on changing us more and more into the likeness of Christ until we see Him and are then (and only then) “conformed” to His image (Romans 8:29); and “to present you before his glorious presence without fault’ (Jude 24); “without stain or wrinkle, or any other blemish” (Ephesians 5:27).

Sin Nature/Old Man

Christians are new creatures

2 Corinthians 5:21, *For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.*

New creation has been freed from sin.

Romans 6:6-7, *knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin.⁷ For he who has died has been freed from sin.*

The old self put to death when a Christian is put into Christ.

Colossians 3:9-11, *Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds,¹⁰ and have put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him,¹¹ where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcised nor uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave nor free, but Christ is all and in all.*

But our habits and ways of thinking still present problems.

Ephesians 4:22-24, *that you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts,²³ and be renewed in the spirit of your mind,²⁴ and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.*

We still have our body of sin to reckon with!

Galatians 5:16-17, *I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.¹⁷ For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish.*

As a result, the habits of the old self need to be put aside daily as we learn to act consistently with our new identity in Christ.

No Christian is without sin!

1 John 2:2, *And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world.*

James 3:2, *For we all stumble in many things. If anyone does not stumble in word, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle the whole body.*

There is a struggle between the flesh and the Spirit inside every Christian.

Galatians 5:17, *For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish.*

Sometimes Christians lose this struggle and fall into sin.

Galatians 6:1, *Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted.*

If this occurs, other Christians should recognize their own vulnerability to temptation and restore the fallen brother.

Galatians 6:2-3, ²*Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.* ³*For if anyone thinks himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself.*

Christians should not lose heart in this process but continue doing good.

Galatians 6:9-10, *And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart.* ¹⁰*Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith.*

These phases have been described as past, present and future sanctification; initial, progressive and ultimate sanctification.

Perfection

Christians will never reach a sinless state on this side of the grave.

Philippians 3:12-16, *Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. ¹³ Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, ¹⁴ I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.*

¹⁵ *Therefore let us, as many as are mature, have this mind; and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal even this to you. ¹⁶ Nevertheless, to the degree that we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us be of the same mind.*

James 3:2, *Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.*

1 John 1:8-10, *If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. ⁹ If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from*

all unrighteousness.¹⁰ If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us.

1. Sanctification has a definite beginning the moment someone has been regenerated.

Hebrews 10:10, *By that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.*

Hebrews 10:14, *For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified.*

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 Corinthians 6:11, *"And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God."*

2. Sanctification increases as we grow in our Christian life.
Our task as Christians is "to grow more and more in sanctification, just as [we] previously grew more and more in sin."

Numerous passages teach that sanctification is an ongoing process.

Galatians 3:3, *Are you so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are you now being made perfect by the flesh?*

Ephesians 4:15-16, *but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ—¹⁶from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.*

1 Thessalonians 4:1 & 10, *Finally then, brethren, we urge and exhort in the Lord Jesus that you should abound more and more, just as you received from us how you ought to walk and to please God;*

¹⁰*and indeed you do so toward all the brethren who are in all Macedonia. But we urge you, brethren, that you increase more and more;*

2 Peter 1:3-8, *as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue,⁴ by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.⁵ But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge,⁶ to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness,⁷ to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love.⁸ For if these*

things are yours and abound, you will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Romans 6:6-7, 11-14, *knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. ⁷ For he who has died has been freed from sin.*

¹¹ *Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord. ¹² Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts. ¹³ And do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God. ¹⁴ For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace.*

John 17:17-19, *"Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. And for their sake I consecrate myself, that they also may be sanctified in truth."*

1 Peter 1:13-16, *"Therefore, preparing your minds for action, and being sober-minded, set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, since it is written, "You shall be holy, for I am holy."*

Crises that promote growth can and do occur in the life of a Christian.

2 Corinthians 1:8-11, *For we do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, of our trouble which came to us in Asia: that we were burdened beyond measure, above strength, so that we despaired even of life. ⁹Yes, we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves but in God who raises the dead, ¹⁰who delivered us from so great a death, and does deliver us; in whom we trust that He will still deliver us, ¹¹you also helping together in prayer for us, that thanks may be given by many persons on our behalf for the gift granted to us through many.*

2 Corinthians 12:1-10, *It is doubtless not profitable for me to boast. I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord: ²I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago—whether in the body I do not know, or whether out of the body I do not know, God knows—such a one was caught up to the third heaven. ³And I know such a man—whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows— ⁴how he was caught up into Paradise and heard inexpressible words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter. ⁵Of such a one I will boast; yet of myself I will not boast, except in my infirmities. ⁶For though I might desire to boast, I will not be a fool; for I will speak the truth. But I refrain, lest anyone should think of me above what he sees me to be or hears from me.*

⁷ And lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations, a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I be exalted above measure. ⁸ Concerning this thing I pleaded with the Lord three times that it might depart from me. ⁹ And He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness." Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. ¹⁰ Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

The New Testament teaches nowhere, however, that crises such as surrender (Keswick), entire sanctification (Wesley), or the Baptism of the Holy Spirit are normative experiences that should be sought by all Christians.

Christians are never urged to seek life-defining post-conversion crisis experiences. Instead we hear more about not losing heart, not growing weary (Galatians 6:9-10) and pressing on with the acknowledgment we have not become perfect (Philippians 3:12-16; Galatians 5:16-6:10).

During this process, the new man is transformed into Christ's image.

2 Corinthians 3: 18, "And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same

image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit."

Ephesians 4:23, *and be renewed in the spirit of your mind,*
Colossians 3:10, *and have put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him,*

Resulting in increased victory is won over sin.

Ephesians 4:22-24, *that you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts,²³ and be renewed in the spirit of your mind,²⁴ and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.*

Galatians 5:16-6:5,

1 Thessalonians 4:3-7, *For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you should abstain from sexual immorality;⁴ that each of you should know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honour,⁵ not in passion of lust, like the Gentiles who do not know God;⁶ that no one should take advantage of and defraud his brother in this matter, because the Lord is the avenger of all such, as we also forewarned you and testified.⁷ For God did not call us to uncleanness, but in holiness.*

God's Role and Man's Role

God accomplishes our sanctification.

1 Thessalonians 5:24, *He who calls you is faithful, who also will do it.*

Philippians 1:6, *being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ;*

Hebrews 13:20-21, *Now may the God of peace who brought up our Lord Jesus from the dead, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant,²¹ make you complete in every good work to do His will, working in you what is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.*

Through the agency of the Holy Spirit.

1 Peter 1:2, *elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace be multiplied.*

God causes us to grow and change, and we cooperate.

Philippians 2:12-13, *Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and*

trembling; ¹³ for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure.

We pursue our sanctification!

1 Timothy 6:11, *But you, O man of God, flee these things and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, gentleness.*

Hebrews 12:14, *Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord:*

We trust God that we are free from sin.

Romans 6:11, *Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord*

When we are freed from sin God can renew us.

Colossians 3:1-11,

So that we can participate in the means of grace by learning the Word of God (1 Peter 2:2), participating in fellowship (Ephesians 4:15-16), responding to God's discipline (Hebrews 12:11), praying (Romans 8:26; James 5:16), and giving our lives away to serve others (John 13:17).

Baptism of Holy Spirit

The Baptism of the Holy Spirit occurs at conversion and involves the placement of a new convert into the body of Christ and the receiving of the indwelling presence of the Spirit.

We did a complete study on indwelling in this Basic theology lesson 6.

Role of the Holy Spirit in Sanctification

The Spirit fills believers and empowers Christians for service.

Ephesians 5:18, *And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit,*

Acts 4:8, *Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, "Rulers of the people and elders of Israel:*

Acts 7:55, *But he, being full of the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God.*

The Holy Spirit is responsible for transforming them into conformity with Christ.

Romans 8:4 & 11, *that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.*

¹¹ But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.

The filling of the Holy Spirit is not a temporary experience that Christians must repeatedly seek. Through this filling, the Holy Spirit empowers Christians to serve God more effectively.

Acts 4:31, *And when they had prayed, the place where they were assembled together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness.*

Acts 6:3, *Therefore, brethren, seek out from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business;*

Acts 6:5, *And the saying pleased the whole multitude. And they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit, and Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas, a proselyte from Antioch,*

Acts 9:17, *And Ananias went his way and entered the house; and laying his hands on him he said, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you came, has sent me that you may receive your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit."*

Acts 11:24, *For he was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith. And a great many people were added to the Lord.*

The Spirit also helps Christians to understand the meaning of scripture.

1 Corinthians 2:12, *Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God.*

1 John 2:27, *But the anointing which you have received from Him abides in you, and you do not need that anyone teach you; but as the same anointing teaches you concerning all things, and is true, and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, you will abide in Him.*

Holy Spirit assures believers they are God's children.

Romans 8:16, *The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God,*

Holy Spirit distributes gifts to help Christians serve more effectively.

1 Corinthians 12:7, *But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all*

1 Peter 4:10, *As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.*

Maturity

The Bible does make distinctions between the maturity level of different Christians.

Hebrews 5:11-14, *of whom we have much to say, and hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing.*

¹²For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food. ¹³For everyone who partakes only of milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. ¹⁴But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.

Galatians 5:13-15, *For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. ¹⁴For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: "You shall love your neighbour as yourself." ¹⁵But if you bite and devour one another, beware lest you be consumed by one another!*

1 Corinthians 2:6, *However, we speak wisdom among those who are mature, yet not the wisdom of this age, nor of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing.*

But this distinction is based on knowledge of the Word of God, not on whether or not someone has had an experience such as entire sanctification.

3. Sanctification is never complete in this life.

Sanctification of our souls is complete at death.

Sin stays with the Christian through life, the "hangover" of our fallenness.

1 John 1:8, *"If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us."*

Yet, at death our souls are instantly in heaven with "the spirits of the righteous [people] made perfect" (Hebrews 12:23).

Our souls are fully sanctified in the presence of God since nothing unclean (not even mostly clean) can ever stand before Him (see Revelation 21:27).

Sanctification of our bodies takes place at the Lord's Return.

Philippians 3:20-21, "But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself."

At His coming, every Christian will be given their resurrection body that shall fully "bear the image of the man of heaven".

1 Corinthians 15:49, *And as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly Man.*

How we are progressively Sanctified?

1. He sanctifies us as we deliberately cleanse ourselves from sinful and doubtful things. The ground of all cleansing is the blood of Christ.

1 John 1:7,

In the matter of practical and experimental cleansing (or sanctification) we are called upon to act.

Illustrated in 2 Chronicles 29:5,12,15-17;

2 Corinthians 6:14,15,17 & 7:1;

Colossians 3:5-10 and

2 Timothy 2:19-22.

2. He sanctifies us as we unreservedly yield ourselves to Him.

Compare Romans 12:1 and Romans 6:13, our "bodies" are made up of many "members". 1 Corinthians 12:12.

3. He sanctifies us as we cultivate a life of communion with God in prayer.

Luke 11:1;

Philippians 4:6;

1 Thessalonians 5:17 and

2 Peter 3:18.

He sanctifies us as we live in daily obedience to His Word and to His Spirit.

John 15:3; 17:17;

Ephesians 5:18;

Colossians 3:16;

1 Peter 1:22;

2 Corinthians 3:18.

4. He sanctifies us as we keep short accounts with God. That is, as we confess all sin immediately we are conscious of having committed it.

Proverbs 28:13

1 John 1:9.

5. He sanctifies us as we trust Him in life's disciplines.

Hebrews 12:10,

Job 23:10;

James 1:2-4

1 Peter 1:7

Romans 8:28-29.

6. He sanctifies us as we live in the light of His coming.

James 5:7-9;

2 Peter 3:11-14;

1 John 2:28 and 3:1-3.

Conclusion

You are already sanctified positionally due to your union with the Lord Jesus as your Saviour – Hebrews 10:10 and 14.

You are to be sanctified experimentally and progressively, and this gracious transformation will take place as you give heed to the “means” mentioned above! 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24.