

PROGRESSIVE SANCTIFICATION

All true believers who have born again by a supernatural work of God ought to manifest it by growing in holiness and righteousness. The Spirit of God works sanctification in us through love. Sanctification is a long process, and the war for holiness continues until death. Sanctification brings glory to God.

THE NATURE AND NECESSITY OF SANCTIFICATION

1. In **Eph 4:20-24**, Paul tells us that if we have “learned Christ,” we are to “put on the new man.” How does Paul describe this “new man” or “new self”?

Note: The word “sanctification” means “make holy”; it is the work of God’s Spirit, whereby we are renewed in the whole man after the image of God, and are enabled more and more to die to sin and live to righteousness.

2. How does **Eph 4:20-24** describe the “old self” that is to be “put off”?

3. Read **Rom 6:5-14**. What has Christ’s death done to the old man in **vv6-7**?

4. What act of Christ gives us the ability to live to God in **vv9-14**?

5. According to **Rom 12:1-2**, how should we respond to God’s mercy?

6. In **John 17:17**, Jesus asks the Father to sanctify his people by what?

➤ The Word of God is crucial in the Spirit’s work of sanctification. Sinful desires still reside in the believer, but he can put them to death in Christ. Then he freely lives for God’s sake in righteousness and holiness, like Christ.

THE SPIRIT OF LOVE AT WORK IN US

While all three persons of the Godhead are active in our sanctification (e.g., 1 Thess 5:23; Tit 2:14), the Holy Spirit in particular sanctifies believers by working love in them.

1. How do we know God loves us according to **Rom 5:5**? Who is doing this?

Note: The Spirit assures the believer of God’s love, freeing him from the shackles of guilt and condemnation to approach and serve God.

2. Name three things from **Gal 5:4-6** set against justification by works.

3. What is the first fruit of the Spirit in **Gal 5:22-23**? (cf. Col 3:12-14)

4. What kind of a spirit has God given us, according to **2 Tim 1:7**?

Note: The Spirit works in true believers a holy love for God and Christ.

5. What did the Spirit work in the believers of Colossae in **Col 1:8**?

6. By what does Paul appeal to the believers to pray for him in **Rom 15:30**?

➤ The Holy Spirit sanctifies us by confirming God's love for us, by working in us love for God first and foremost, and by working charity for others for God's sake. Through this divinely-given love we resist sin and live for God.

THE EXTENT AND STRUGGLE OF SANCTIFICATION

God's sanctification of a person is total, but the struggle lasts his entire life.

1. According to **1 Thess 5:23-24**, what does God want to sanctify?

Note: Sanctification affects the whole man. Our bodies are sanctified when, as consecrated, we from the heart do holy works with our bodies (our tongues, eyes, ears, etc). Both our loves and our actions should be holy.

2. Does Paul's self-portrait in **Rom 7:18-23** show him to be completely sanctified? What does he call that source of his desires to do evil?

3. In **Rom 7:23**, what does the "other law" do? (cf. Matt 26:41)

4. In **Gal 5:16-17**, what two things are opposed to each other?

5. What do the passions of the flesh do our soul in **1 Pet 2:11**?

6. In **Rom 6:14** what is sin's relationship to those under grace?

7. What phrase in **2 Pet 3:18** describes the believer's spiritual improvement?

8. In **1 Cor 6:19-20** and **John 15:8**, what is the final goal of sanctification?

➤ Though sanctification affects the entire believer, it is never completed in this life (1 Jo 1:8). All believers have a daily struggle against sinful desires. Sinless perfection does not happen until we see Christ. We must continually fight against sin by the Word of God and the grace of the Holy Spirit. As God sanctifies us, he brings glory to himself.