

The Doctrine of Sanctification

An Introduction to Romans 6:12-14

Romans 6:12–14 (NKJV)

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.

Introduction

During the ministry of RC Sproul he wrote, or co-authored 113 books, 112 if you do not include the Geneva Study Bible. He is most noted for 2 books, “Chosen by God” and “The Holiness of God”

But according to his own words, the one book that had the least traction, was the least popular was a book written in released in 1988 “Pleasing God, Discovering the Meaning and Importance of Sanctification”

Pleasing God. Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers. Republished by David C. Cook in 2012. In this book, R.C. Sproul delivers an in-depth

look at God's plan and pathway for spiritual maturity. Clearing away the confusion of religion and dogma, he reveals how every believer can experience authentic, lasting life change through a relationship with God.

This is a sad commentary on one of the major themes of the Bible, i.e. Sanctification.

More and more of the Evangelical Church wants something practical for their marriage, their family life, How to manage your money. But if you write a book or preach a series of sermons on Holiness, or Sanctification, it will be the least attended and listened to or on the bottom of the list of Books sold. To tell the church, to live holy, to mortify the deeds of flesh, to give up the world and all of its affections and desires is foreign to the evangelical mind.

At the same time the American church is meeting less often for Prayer and Bible study the more worldly and sinful than it has ever been. It wasn't too long ago that it was common for churches to meet Sunday morning, Sunday Evening and Wednesday night and then they would meet at other times during the week for outreach and Bible study. There is very little difference between the world and the church now. We might have a tee shirt or a bumper sticker but that is about as far as it goes.

Sanctification is far down the list of our commitments. We tolerate much more sin in our lives, and often wink at it as if it is no big deal. We are so saturated by it that we deem it normal. Its nothing to have full evening of TV full cursing and Blasphemy and retire to bed with little thought or no thought of how much that offends God. Believers toy with sin like a child with a new toy.

There are some disturbing trends among believers today. In my conversations, when I bring up an issue of Sanctification or Holiness, I am often labeled a legalist. All I am usually saying is, not to let corrupt communication precede out our your mouth? Or where were you Sunday? Or do you think it was wise to watch that movie.

Most counseling issues boil down to a Sanctification issue. Holiness or the lack of it. Yielding to the Flesh or not. Submitting to God and his Word or Not. Most Counseling fails not because of the counselor or the pastor but because the counsel from Gods Word is not obeyed.

Another way of saying this is, if we all obeyed the Word 100% of the time there would be a whole lot less problems.

Steve Lawson said it right when he stated that our problem is not that we need more sermons own

how to have a happy job place or how to deal with or angry people or 5 steps to successful living,... We need get close to God. We need more of Him and more of His Word in us so that are RED HOT for God. Get God Right and Submit to His Word and all the other things fall into place.

Yet it is this topic of Sanctification that seems least important to the church is of most importance to God. Large portions of Scripture are dedicated to it. It needs to be studied and preached and taught.

In the first chapter of RC's Book "Pleasing God" he refers to the story give in the Gospel of Mark of the Blind man healed by Jesus. This on is unique in that it was not instantaneous but rather in stages.

Mark 8:22–25 (NKJV)

²² Then He came to Bethsaida; and they brought a blind man to Him, and begged Him to touch him. ²³ So He took the blind man by the hand and led him out of the town. And when He had spit on his eyes and

put His hands on him, He asked him if he saw anything.

²⁴ And he looked up and said, “I see men like trees, walking.”

²⁵ Then He put *His* hands on his eyes again and made him look up. And he was restored and saw everyone clearly.

RC compares this to the stages of Sanctification. When we are regenerated by the Holy Spirit, and born Again we have new life but we see men like trees. Our spiritual vision is not as clear as it can be and will be. We still have the cloudiness of sin in our lives. But the process of sanctification will take the cloudiness away.

This is illustrated by Jesus in John 13

John 13:5–10 (NKJV)

⁵ After that, He poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples’ feet, and to wipe *them* with the towel with which He was girded. ⁶ Then He came to Simon Peter. And *Peter* said to Him, “Lord, are You washing my feet?”

⁷ Jesus answered and said to him, “**What I am doing you do not understand now, but you will know after this.**”

⁸ Peter said to Him, “You shall never wash my feet!”

Jesus answered him, “If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me.”

⁹ Simon Peter said to Him, “Lord, not my feet only, but also *my* hands and *my* head!”

¹⁰ Jesus said to him, “He who is bathed needs only to wash *his* feet, but is completely clean; and you are clean, but not all of you.”

Lesson

I. The Meaning

II. The Mandate

III. The Means

I. The Meaning of Sanctification

The word *sanctification* is related to the word *saint*; both words have to do with holiness. To “sanctify” something is to set it apart for special use; to “sanctify” a person is to make him holy.

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.....“sanctification” is a translation of the Greek word *hagiasmos*, meaning “holiness” or “a separation.” In the past, God granted us justification, a once-for-all, positional holiness in Christ. Now, God guides us to maturity, a practical, progressive holiness. In the future, God will give us glorification, a permanent, ultimate holiness. These three phases of sanctification separate the believer from the penalty of sin ([justification](#)), the power of sin ([maturity](#)), and the presence of sin ([glorification](#)).
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The Bible refers to Sanctification in 3 ways

1. Positional
2. Progressive
3. Permanent

1. Positional

Philippians 1:1 (NKJV)

1 Paul and Timothy, bondservants of Jesus Christ,

To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, with the bishops and deacons:

Romans 1:7 (NKJV)

⁷ To all who are in Rome, beloved of God, called *to be* saints:

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

1 Corinthians 1:2 (NKJV)

² To the church of God which is at Corinth, to those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called *to be* saints, with all who in every place call on the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours:

Ephesians 1:1 (NKJV)

1 Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God,

To the saints who are in Ephesus, and faithful in Christ Jesus:

Acts 20:32 (NKJV)

³² “So now, brethren, I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified.

1 Corinthians 6:9–11 (NKJV)

⁹ Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, ¹⁰ nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God. ¹¹ And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.

2 Thessalonians 2:13 (NKJV)

¹³ But we are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God from the beginning chose you for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth,

1 Peter 1:2 (NKJV)

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.

2. Progressive

Romans 6:22 (NKJV)

²² But now having been set free from sin, and having become slaves of God, you have your fruit to holiness, and the end, everlasting life.

Titus 2:13–14 (NKJV)

¹³ looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, ¹⁴ who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself *His* own special people, zealous for good works.

3. Permanent

Romans 8:29–30 (NKJV)

²⁹ For whom He foreknew, He also predestined *to be* conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. ³⁰ Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.

Philippians 1:6 (NKJV)

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;

II. The Mandate for Sanctification

1 Thessalonians 4:3 (NKJV)

³ For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you should abstain from sexual immorality;

1 Thessalonians 4:7 (NKJV)

⁷ For God did not call us to uncleanness, but in holiness.

1 Peter 1:13–16 (NKJV)

¹³ Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest *your* hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; ¹⁴ as obedient children, not conforming yourselves to the former lusts, *as* in your ignorance; ¹⁵ but as He who called you *is* holy, you also be holy in all *your* conduct, ¹⁶ because it is written, “*Be holy, for I am holy.*”

1 Thessalonians 2:10–12 (NKJV)

¹⁰ You *are* witnesses, and God *also*, how devoutly and justly and blamelessly we behaved ourselves among you who believe; ¹¹ as you know how we exhorted, and comforted, and charged every one of you, as a father *does* his own children, ¹² that you

would walk worthy of God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory.

2 Corinthians 7:1 (NKJV)

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

Ephesians 5:1 (NKJV)

5 Therefore be imitators of God as dear children.

Philippians 1:27 (NKJV)

²⁷ Only let your conduct be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of your affairs, that you stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel,

Philippians 2:14–15 (NKJV)

¹⁴ Do all things without complaining and disputing,
¹⁵ that you may become blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world,

Titus 3:8 (NKJV)

⁸ This is a faithful saying, and these things I want you to affirm constantly, that those who have believed in God should be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable to men.

Hebrews 12:14 (NKJV)

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

1 Peter 2:11–12 (NKJV)

¹¹ Beloved, I beg *you* as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul, ¹² having your conduct honorable among the Gentiles, that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may, by *your* good works which they observe, glorify God in the day of visitation.

1 Peter 3:15–17 (NKJV)

¹⁵ But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always *be* ready to *give* a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear; ¹⁶ having a good conscience, that when they defame you as evildoers, those who revile your good conduct in Christ may be ashamed. ¹⁷ For *it is* better, if it is the will of God, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil.

Hebrews 13:5 (NKJV)

⁵ Let your conduct *be* without covetousness; *be* content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, “*I will never leave you nor forsake you.*”

2 Peter 3:11–14 (NKJV)

¹¹ Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner *of persons* ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, ¹² looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat? ¹³ Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.

¹⁴ Therefore, beloved, looking forward to these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, without spot and blameless;

III. The Means of Sanctification

God Does the Work

1 Thessalonians 5:23–24 (NKJV)

²³ Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. ²⁴ He who calls you *is* faithful, who also will do *it*.

1 Peter 2:9 (NKJV)

⁹ But you *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;

1 Peter 5:10 (NKJV)

¹⁰ But may the God of all grace, who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle *you*.

Romans 8:28–30 (NKJV)

²⁸ And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to *His* purpose. ²⁹ For whom He foreknew, He also predestined *to be* conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. ³⁰ Moreover whom He

predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.

Philippians 2:12–13 (NKJV)

¹² 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.

The Means God Uses

1.The Truth

John 17:17–19 (NKJV)

¹⁷ Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth. ¹⁸ As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world. ¹⁹ And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also may be sanctified by the truth.

John 8:31–32 (NKJV)

³¹ Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, “If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. ³² And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”

Ephesians 5:25–27 (NKJV)

²⁵ Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, ²⁶ that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, ²⁷ that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.

2. The Holy Spirit**John 16:13 (NKJV)**

¹³ However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own *authority*, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come.

1 Corinthians 2:10–11 (NKJV)

¹⁰ But God has revealed *them* to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God. ¹¹ For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God.

Ephesians 5:18 (NKJV)

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

3. The Church

a. Assembly

Hebrews 10:24–25 (NKJV)

²⁴ And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, ²⁵ not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as *is* the manner of some, but exhorting *one another*, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.

b. Teaching

Ephesians 4:11–13 (NKJV)

¹¹ And He Himself gave some *to be* apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, ¹² for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, ¹³ till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ;

c. Communion

1 Corinthians 11:27–32 (NKJV)

²⁷ Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks *this* cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. ²⁸ But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup. ²⁹ For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. ³⁰ For this reason many *are* weak and sick among you, and many sleep. ³¹ For if we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged. ³² But when we are judged, we are chastened by the Lord, that we may not be condemned with the world.

d. Discipline in the Church

Matthew 18:15–18 (NKJV)

¹⁵ “Moreover if your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he hears you, you have gained your brother. ¹⁶ But if he will not hear, take with you one or two more, that ‘*by the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.*’ ¹⁷ And if he refuses to hear

them, tell *it* to the church. But if he refuses even to hear the church, let him be to you like a heathen and a tax collector.

¹⁸ “Assuredly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.

1 Corinthians 5:1–6 (NKJV)

5 It is actually reported *that there is* sexual immorality among you, and such sexual immorality as is not even named among the Gentiles—that a man has his father’s wife! ² And you are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he who has done this deed might be taken away from among you.

³ For I indeed, as absent in body but present in spirit, have already judged (as though I were present) him who has so done this deed. ⁴ In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when you are gathered together, along with my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, ⁵ deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.

⁶ Your glorying *is* not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump?

4. Discipline of the Body

Philippians 3:14 (NKJV)

¹⁴ I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

2 Timothy 4:7 (NKJV)

⁷ I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.

1 Corinthians 9:24–27 (NKJV)

²⁴ Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain *it*. ²⁵ And everyone who competes *for the prize* is temperate in all things. Now they *do it* to obtain a perishable crown, but we *for* an imperishable *crown*. ²⁶ Therefore I run thus: not with uncertainty. Thus I fight: not as *one who* beats the air. ²⁷ But I discipline my body and bring *it* into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified.