

A SATISFYING **SANCTIFICATION**

By Willer Jun Manares

Sanctification is a great Bible word, and as such is worthy of an honest and prayerful effort on our part to understand its meaning. It is an important member of a family of words, such as saints, sanctify, holy and holiness, all of which have something vital to say about Christian life and experience.

I wonder if this phrase of Christian experience in these modern days is receiving the attention of and emphasis that it deserves. Many say that it is not, and that it is more necessary just now to get the members of our churches into the experience of full salvation than it is to get sinners converted. I think we need both.

The work of saving sinners and the sanctification of believers should and would go on together in a spirit-filled church. It is one of the hopeful signs of the times that there is so much interest among Christian people in the deeper experiences of the Christian life.

Some are dissatisfied with much that passed in our churches for religion, and they are asking how may we enter into a full Christian experience? But while there is a good deal of interests, there is not a little confusion in the minds of many as to what sanctification, scriptural holiness, even perfect love, mean. They are asking, is sanctification something God does for us, or is it something we do for ourselves. What is the difference between sanctification and growth in grace?

We all have a secret conviction that no subject is more vital to the Christian believer that his own personal holiness of life, for our real happiness depends upon our holiness of heart that than anything else in this world. Our real usefulness in the church and the world ultimately depends upon our being good men and women. Our real growth in grace always depends upon our hearts being cleansed by the blood of Christ. It is all to the good that there are many anxious inquiries about the deeper experiences of grace.

The root meaning of sanctification and the family of words of which it is an important member is separation. The sanctified person is one who is set apart from all common use to a special service. It has often helped me to think of the real experience of sanctification is a crisis, then a process, and from the beginning to end, it is a gift of God.

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Sanctification is a crisis in the Christian life that has both a human and a Divine side. It is something we do, and something God does for us and in us. What are we to do? We are to hand ourselves completely to the Lord, and to make a full dedication of ourselves to Christ; to give Him the keys of our hearts and every room in our complex personalities. We are to be absolutely honest and put away wrong things; and put them right, and to present our bodies as a living sacrifice.

We dedicate and He consecrates, and the testimony of many of those who have entered into the real experience of sanctification is that it is more radical, more spiritual and more blessed than all other Christian experiences.

Sanctification is much more than a crisis, it is a process and a growth in grace. It is something the Holy Spirit does in us and keeps on doing in us all the days of our lives. It is an experience of the grace of God that will never end, but will grow deeper and fuller as the days go by. The experience by which we are transformed by the renewing of our minds; that we may prove what is that good, acceptable, and perfect will of God.

How much confusion of thought we should have been saved had we remembered that when the work is done as a crisis it is begun as a process, and will go on as long as we live in this world. There is no finality in our growth in grace and in the foreknowledge of Jesus Christ our Lord.

We must also bear in mind that sanctification is more than a crisis or a process, it is a very real sense of the gift of God.

If Christ dwells in our hearts only by faith we have salvation to the uttermost, for with Him we have pardon, purity, peace and power, and all there is of grace and glory.

Sanctification in the sense of our personal separation from sin and dedication to Christ is a crisis, and can be, and often is, instantaneous. In the sense of a personal transformation of character, it is a process and as such is gradual and continuous; but as a present, personal blessing, it is the gift of God and is all of grace and only by faith.

Do you see it now? May the Holy Spirit lead us all into the real experience of sanctification.

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