

Major Bible Themes

52 Vital Doctrines of the Scriptures Simplified and Explained

Adapted from the book *Major Bible Themes*
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Sanctification

- Importance of Correct Interpretation
 - The right understanding of the meaning of sanctification depends upon the consideration of all pertinent Scripture.
 - ✦ A study of the English words “sanctify” and “sanctification” will not suffice.
 - ✦ The Hebrew and Greek root words behind these English words also yield the English words “holy” and “saint”.
 - Sanctification cannot be interpreted by experience.
 - ✦ It is the function of the Bible to interpret experience, rather than the function of experience to interpret the Bible.
 - ✦ Every experience which is truly wrought by God will be found to be according to Scripture.
- The Meaning of Words Related to Sanctification
 - “Sanctify” and “consecrate” in their various forms are found 138 times in the O.T. and 29 times in the N.T. of the NASB and both words mean to be set apart.
 - “Holy” in its various forms is found 462 times in the O.T. and 185 times in the N.T. and refers to the state of being set apart.
 - ✦ The word does not necessarily imply sinless perfection.
 - “Holy apostles” and “holy brethren” are mentioned referring to people who are not sinless.
 - Inanimate objects which have no relation to sin are deemed to be “holy” – “holy oil”, “holy garments”, “holy vessels”, etc.
 - ✦ The word does not necessarily imply finality.
 - “Saint” and “saints” are found 8 times in the O.T. and 61 times in the N.T. and always refer to people with regard to their position before Almighty God.
 - ✦ It is never associated with the quality of their daily life.
 - ✦ The King James Bible incorrectly translates Rom 1:7 and 1 Cor 1:2 as “called to be saints” – the Greek means “called as saints” or “saints by calling”.
 - The KJV translation implies that believers anticipate a time when they will become saints.
 - The correct translation means that all believers are set apart as saints by God at the moment of salvation.

- The Means of Sanctification
 - Because of His infinite holiness, God Himself – Father, Son and Spirit – is eternally sanctified (the most common use of holy in the N.T. is to refer to the Holy Spirit).
 - God – Father, Son and Spirit – are said to sanctify people.
 - ✦ The Father sanctifies (1 Thess 5:23).
 - ✦ The Son sanctifies (Eph 5:26; Heb 2:11; 13:12).
 - ✦ The Spirit sanctifies (Rom 15:16; 2 Thess 2:13).
 - ✦ The Father sanctified the Son (John 10:36).
 - ✦ God sanctified the priests and people of Israel (Ex 29:44; 31:13).
 - Our sanctification is the will of God (1 Thess 4:3).
 - Our sanctification from God is...
 - ✦ by our union with Christ (1 Cor 1:2).
 - ✦ by the Word of God (John 17:17 cp. 1 Tim 4:5).
 - ✦ by the blood of Christ (Heb 13:12).
 - ✦ by the offering of the body of Christ (Heb 10:10).
 - ✦ by faith in Christ (Acts 26:18).
 - ✦ by the work of the Spirit (1 Pet 1:2).
 - ✦ by our own choice (2 Tim 2:21-22).
 - God sanctified days, places and things (Gen 2:3; Ex 29:44).
 - Man may sanctify God (Matt 6:9; 1 Pet 3:15).
 - Man may sanctify himself.
 - ✦ We are commanded to be holy (1 Pet 1:15-16).
 - ✦ We are commanded to come out from among the lawlessness, darkness and idols of this world and be separate (2 Cor 6:17).
 - ✦ We can do these things only by God's power (Rom 12:1; Gal 5:16).
 - ✦ We can do these things only when we have humility and respect for God (2 Cor 7:1).
 - Man may sanctify other people (Ex 19:14; 1 Cor 7:14) and things (2 Chr 29:17).
 - One thing may sanctify another thing (Matt 23:17, 19).
- Three Major Aspects of Sanctification
 - Positional Sanctification
 - ✦ Every believer is set apart by God at the moment of salvation.
 - ✦ This sanctification is eternal and comes through the saving grace of Christ.
 - ✦ It is on this basis and this basis only that we are declared saints before God.
 - We are accepted in the Beloved, not accepted in ourselves.
 - We are made righteous, not righteous in ourselves.
 - We are redeemed in Christ, not redeemed in ourselves.
 - As Christ is set apart, so also is everyone who is in Him.

- ✦ Positional sanctification is as complete for the most immature saint as it for the most mature saint.
 - ✦ The Corinthian believers were unholy in life (1 Cor 3:2-3; 5:1-2; 6:1-8) and yet they are said to be sanctified (1 Cor 1:2; 6:11).
 - ✦ Our positional sanctification qualifies us to be called “holy brethren” and “saints”.
 - ✦ Our positional sanctification includes being a child of God.
 - ✦ Our positional sanctification does not mean that we automatically live a life of holiness, but should be the motivation for us to live a life that is worthy of our position (Eph 4:1; Col 3:1; 1 John 3:3).
- Experiential Sanctification
- ✦ This is the sanctification of our daily walk.
 - ✦ This sanctification may depend upon some degree of...
 - submission to God.
 - separation from sin.
 - spiritual growth.
 - ✦ The believer is set apart when he dedicates his life to God as his spiritual service of worship (Rom 12:1).
 - By doing this a believer is set apart for God by his own choice.
 - This sanctification is a decision, not a feeling or an emotion.
 - ✦ The believer is set apart as a result of separation from sin.
 - There are three divine provisions for the prevention of sin in the life of a believer...
 - the Word of God (Ps 119:11).
 - the present interceding, shepherding ministry of Christ in heaven (Rom 8:34; Heb 7:25 cp. Luke 22:31-32; John 17:1-26).
 - the enabling power of the indwelling Spirit (Gal 5:16; Rom 8:4).
 - If a believer does succumb to sin, God has provided for restoration to a life separated from sin through the grace provision of confession (1 John 1:9).
 - ✦ The believer is set apart through spiritual growth.
 - Believers are commanded to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (2 Pet 3:18).
 - This growth causes us to be transformed into the image of Christ (2 Cor 3:18).
 - This transformation comes through the renewing of the mind and sets us apart from the things of the world (Rom 12:2).
 - The more we mature spiritually, the more sanctified from the ways of the world we will become.
- Ultimate Sanctification
- ✦ This is the final perfection which will be ours in glory.
 - ✦ When we have been set free from this body of sin we will be perfectly conformed to the image of Christ (Rom 8:29).

- ✦ This sanctification will include the transformation of our earthly body into a body prepared for glory (Phil 3:21) as we will bear the image of the heavenly (1 Cor 15:49).
 - ✦ This sanctification does not depend upon our faithfulness, but on God who is faithful and will bring this to pass so that we will be presented blameless at the coming of Christ (1 Thess 5:23-24).
- Questions
 - What is the basic meaning of sanctification?
 - What are the words used for sanctification in Scripture?
 - What are the dangers of interpreting sanctification by experience?
 - To what extent is sanctification mentioned in the Bible?
 - Does sanctification necessarily imply sinless perfection or finality of sanctification?
 - To what extent is sanctification related to the quality of daily life?
 - Why is sainthood not subject to progression?
 - To what extent is God said to sanctify persons?
 - To what extent does God sanctify days places and things?
 - In what sense may a man sanctify God?
 - In what sense may a man sanctify himself?

- In what sense may a man sanctify persons and things?

- How can one thing sanctify another thing?

- What are the three major aspects of sanctification?

- How does positional sanctification come about?

- What is the relationship between positional sanctification and holy living?

- To what extent is positional sanctification immediately complete for every child of God?

- How does experiential sanctification differ from positional sanctification?

- Upon what factors does experiential sanctification depend?

- How does submission to God relate to experiential sanctification?

- How is experiential sanctification related to feeling or emotion?

- How is experiential sanctification related to separation from sin?

- What three divine provisions are made by God for the prevention of sin in the life of the believer?

- How is experiential sanctification related to Christian growth?

- What is the difference between a Christian being “blameless” and being “faultless”?

- Contrast our present experiential sanctification with our ultimate sanctification in heaven.

- Contrast the believer’s present position and state spiritually with his position and state in heaven.