

## SANCTIFICATION

- I. Original Biblical words referring to "sanctification"
  - A. Hebrew words *qados, qodes*
    1. From root word *qds* - "to cut off, to separate, to set apart"
    2. Objects, activities and persons were "set apart" and designated as "holy" by their connection, identification, relation and/or encounter with Holy God.
      - a. temple - Ps. 5:7; Isa. 64:11; Hab. 2:20
      - b. ark - II Chron. 35:3
      - c. bread - Lev. 24:9; I Sam 21:4
      - d. vessels - I Kings 8:4; I Chron. 22:19
      - e. garments - Exod. 28:2
      - f. festivals - Neh. 8:9
      - g. sabbath - Exod. 20:8,11; Isa. 58:13
      - h. tithes - Lev. 27:30-33
      - i. people - Deut. 7:6; 14:2,21
  - B. Greek words *hagios, hagiazo, hagiastos, hagiastes*
    1. Root words
      - a. *hagos* - "object of awe"
      - b. *hagiomai* - "to stand in awe (respect) of the gods"
    2. Meaning became "holy, holiness, sanctification"
    3. The Greek terms are not synonymous with the Hebrew terms
      - a. They do not carry the meaning of "set apart" or "separated"
        - (1) Though used to translate such in Septuagint (LXX)
        - (2) Greek language had other terms for "set apart"
          - (a) *aphorizo* - Matt. 25:32; Rom. 1:1; II Cor. 6:17; Gal. 1:15
          - (b) *chorizo* - Rom. 8:35,39; Heb. 7:26
      - b. They are based on the Holy character of God, and pertain to the expression of that Holy character in the behavior of Christians
- II. Categories of "sanctification" in New Testament usages - (see diagram)
  - A. Objective sanctification - external
    1. Historical - "potential sanctification," "sanctification *de jure*"

Eph. 5:26 - "gave Himself up for her, that He might sanctify her"

II Thess. 2:13 - "God has chosen you from the beginning for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit..."

Heb. 10:10 - "we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all"

Heb. 10:14 - "by one offering He has perfected for all time those who are sanctified"

Heb. 10:29 - "the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified"

Heb. 13:12 - "Jesus, that He might sanctify the people, through His own blood, suffered outside the gate"

I Pet. 1:2 - "chosen by the sanctifying work of the Spirit, that you may...be sprinkled with His blood"
    2. Personal - "positional sanctification," "status sanctification"

Acts 20:32; 26:18 - "the inheritance among all those who are sanctified"

I Cor. 1:2 - "those who have been sanctified, saints by calling"

I Cor. 1:30 - "Christ Jesus became to us righteousness and sanctification"  
I Cor. 6:11 - "you were washed, sanctified, justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ"  
Eph. 1:4 - "that we should be holy and blameless before Him"  
Col. 1:22 - "present you before Him holy and blameless"  
Col. 3:12 - "chosen of God, holy and beloved"  
Heb. 2:11 - "those who are sanctified are all from one Father"

B. Subjective sanctification - internal

1. Spiritual condition - "actual sanctification, sanctification *de facto*"  
(all references in IIA2 might be interpreted in this category)  
Rom. 1:7; 8:27; I Cor. 1:2; Eph. 1:1 - "saints"  
Heb. 3:1 - "holy brethren, partakers of a heavenly calling"  
I Pet. 2:5,9 - "a holy priesthood;" "you are a holy nation"
2. Behavioral expression - "imparted, progressive sanctification"  
Rom. 6:19,22 - "members as slaves to righteousness, resulting in sanctification"  
II Cor. 7:1 - "perfecting holiness in the fear of God"  
I Thess. 4:3 - "this is the will of God, your sanctification"  
I Thess. 4:4 - "know how to possess own vessel in sanctification"  
I Thess. 4:7 - "not called for impurity, but in sanctification"  
I Thess. 5:23 - "God of peace sanctify your entirely, spirit, soul, body"  
Heb. 12:10 - "that we may share His holiness"  
Heb. 12:14 - "pursue the sanctification without which no one will see the Lord"  
I Pet. 1:15,16 - "be holy yourselves in all your behavior; "You shall be holy, for I am holy"  
Rev. 22:11 - "let the one who is holy, still keep himself holy"
3. Future experience - "consummated sanctification"  
Eph. 5:27 - "sanctify her...that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory"  
I Thess. 3:13 - "unblameable in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus"  
I Thess. 5:23 - "sanctify you entirely...preserved complete, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ"

III. New covenant implications of "sanctification"

A. Distinguishing old covenant and new covenant concepts

1. Old covenant: Man's activity to set apart/separate buildings, objects, locations, days, activities, himself for God's holy purposes
  - a. focus/emphasis on "setting apart"
  - b. human activity
2. New covenant: God's presence and activity to express His holy character in man by His grace through His Son, Jesus Christ
  - a. focus/emphasis on God's character
  - b. divine activity

B. Essential elements of new covenant sanctification

1. Holiness is inherent only in the Being/character of God
  - a. God the Father - Jn. 17:11; I Pet. 1:15; Rev. 4:8; 6:10
  - b. God the Son - Lk. 1:35; Jn. 6:69; Acts 3:14; 4:27; I Jn. 2:20; Rev. 3:7
  - c. God the Spirit - "Holy Spirit" - Rom. 1:4

2. Expression of His Holy Being is always made by His divine activity of grace.
  - a. God the Father - I Thess. 5:23
  - b. God the Son - Jn. 17:19; I Cor. 1:30; Heb. 2:11
  - c. God the Spirit - Rom. 15:16; II Thess. 2:13; I Pet. 1:2
3. Holiness can only be applied to man as derived from the ontological dynamic of God's grace.
  - a. Never by meritorious human action
  - b. When the Hebrew concept of *qados* is perverted and interpolated into the Greek word *hagios* there results a misemphasis on "separation" or "setting apart" in the new covenant concept of sanctification
  - c. Whenever there is emphasis in Christian teaching on man's activity to "set apart" something for holy purposes, then misconstrued old covenant concepts have been imposed and superimposed upon the grace empowering of Christian sanctification.
  - d. The Christian's responsibility is to make the choices of faith-receptivity to God's holy character, thus denying/disallowing unholy character expression
  - e. Since only God is wholly Holy, and holiness is not a "state of being" in man, but always derived from the ontological dynamic of God, then the issue of "entire sanctification" is a moot issue.

#### IV. Brief history of Christian interpretation of "sanctification"

- A. Early church fathers (Clement of Rome, Ignatius, Polycarp) - though noting the grace of God, they emphasized a striving toward holiness
- B. Gnosticism - converts are perfect, set apart from the world
- C. Montanism - demanded separatism from unholy body of believers
- D. Clement of Alexandria - necessity for denial of world and bodily needs
- E. Pelagianism - holiness is result of self-willed moral effort
- F. Augustine - sanctification is God's activity; not by human effort
- G. Bernard of Clairvaux - mystical personal piety by imitation of Jesus
- H. Peter Lombard - sanctifying grace by infusion of Spirit in believer
- I. Thomas Aquinas - no distinction between justification and sanctification; just infusion of God's grace in man.
- J. Council of Trent - grace inheres in soul of believer by Holy Spirit, and becomes permanent condition or attribute of believer.
- K. Roman Catholic doctrine - misstated and overstated subjective implications of infused sanctifying grace, providing a boost of human ability toward perfectibility and divinization.
- L. Reformers (Luther, Calvin, *et al*) - justification emphasized and separated from sanctification; insistence on absence of human merit
- M. Protestant doctrine - over-reacted and overstated objective implications of forensic, legal and extrinsic factors of justification and sanctification.
- N. Pietists - reverted to moralistic behavioral standards of holy living, in reaction to epistemological emphasis on doctrine
- O. John Wesley - "entire sanctification," perfect holiness possible in this life; necessity of "second blessing" experience; Holiness Movement
- P. Karl Barth - reemphasized subjective implications of Christocentric and ontological dynamic of holiness. Evangelical Protestants for the most part resisted; Catholic theologians recognized and appreciated.