

What Makes Us Holy?



Foundations (Day 47)
by Derek Prince

The last three days we have studied the process of cleansing through God's Word. Let us now go on to consider the further process of sanctification.

First we must consider briefly the meaning of this word sanctification. The ending of the word – ification – occurs in many English words and always denotes an active process of doing or making something. For example, clarification means "making clear"; rectification means "making right or straight"; purification means "making pure," and so on. The first part of the word sanctification is directly connected with the word saint – in fact, it is simply another way of writing the same word. Saint in turn is simply an alternative way of translating the word which is more normally translated "holy." Thus, the simple, literal meaning of sanctification is "making saintly," or "making holy."

The New Testament mentions five distinct agents in connection with sanctification: 1) the Spirit of God, 2) the Word of God, 3) the altar, 4) the blood of Christ, 5) our faith. Following are the main passages which mention these various agents of sanctification:

> "God from the beginning chose you for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth." (2 Thess. 2:13)

Peter tells Christians that they are elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ (1 Pet. 1:2).

Thus, both Paul and Peter mention "sanctification of [or by] the Holy Spirit" as an element of Christian experience. Sanctification through the Word of God was referred to by Christ Himself when He prayed to the Father for His disciples.

> "Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth." (John 17:17)

Here we see that sanctification comes through the truth of God's Word. Sanctification through the altar is likewise referred to by Christ. He told the Pharisees:

> "Fools and blind! For which is greater, the gift or the altar that sanctifies the gift?" (Matt. 23:19)

Here Christ endorses that which had already been taught in the Old Testament – that the gift which was offered in sacrifice to God was sanctified, made holy, set apart, by being placed upon God's altar. In the New Testament, as we shall see, the nature of the gift and of the altar is changed, but the principle still remains true that it is "the altar that sanctifies the gift."

Sanctification through the blood of Christ is referred to in Hebrews 10:29. Here the author considers the case of the apostate – the person who has known all the blessings of salvation but has deliberately and openly rejected the Saviour. Concerning such a person he asks:

> "Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace?"

This passage shows that the true believer who continues in the faith is sanctified by the blood of the new covenant which he has accepted – that is, by Christ's own blood.

Sanctification through faith is referred to by Christ Himself, as quoted by Paul as he related the commission which he received from Christ to preach the gospel to the Gentiles.

> "To open their eyes and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me." (Acts 26:18)

Here we see that sanctification is through faith in Christ.

Devotional

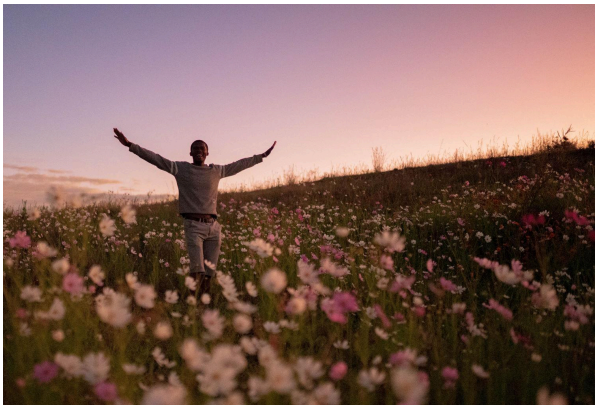
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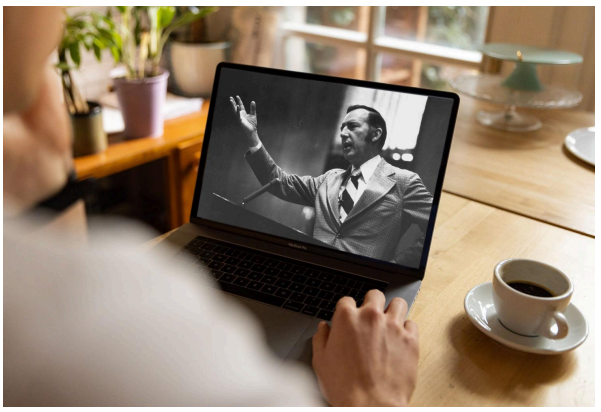
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