

Justification is the grounds for our Sanctification

God has laid on my heart to speak on a couple of theological terms. Namely Justification and Sanctification. Both of these are crucial realities. One empowers our walk and the other evidences that walk. Both are a gift of grace. One is a completed work that can never be improved upon, the other is progressive and will not be complete until we see Christ face to face. Without Justification, Sanctification is impossible. We must not confuse the two and we must constantly keep them in their proper order.

"We must rest ourselves upon his power; we must be confident of this, that Christ can make us clean. No guilt is so great but that there is a sufficiency in his righteousness to atone for it; no corruption so strong, but there is a sufficiency in his grace to subdue it." - **Matthew Henry**

"The only sin that you can make any progress in defeating in your behavior is a forgiven sin. If you turn that around and say, 'oh, I want to be forgiven; I need to conquer this sin,' you will be defeated at every turn." - **John Piper**

To consider ourselves dead to sin is to believe the gospel. - **Jerry Bridges**

Justification

We have been pardoned and have received release from the punishment of our crimes. The just wrath of God that should have been poured out on us has been poured out on Jesus instead. We instead of wrath we have received as a free gift through faith the very righteousness of God.

Romans 4:5-8

And to the one who does not work but trusts him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted as righteousness, 6just as David also speaks of the blessing of the one to whom God counts righteousness apart from works:

7"Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven,
and whose sins are covered;
8blessed is the man against whom the Lord will not count his sin."

2 Corinthians 5:21

For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, *so that in him* we might become the *righteousness of God*.

1 Peter 2:24

He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, *that we might die to sin and live to righteousness*. By his wounds you have been healed.

1 Peter 3:18

For Christ also suffered[a] once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made *alive in the spirit*,

Romans 5:16

16And the *free gift* is not like the result of that one man's sin. For the judgment following one trespass brought condemnation, but the *free gift* following many trespasses brought *justification*.

Galatians 2:16

yet we know that a person *is not justified by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ*, so we also have believed in Christ Jesus, in order to be justified by faith in Christ and not by works of the law, because by works of the law no one will be justified.

Galatians 2:20-21

I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. *And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God*, who loved me and gave himself for me. I do not nullify the grace of God, *for if justification[a] were through the law*, then Christ died for no purpose.

Philippians

yet we know that a person *is not justified by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ*, so we also have believed in Christ Jesus, *in order to be justified by faith in Christ* and not by works of the law, because by works of the law no one will be justified.

Our Justification is a “free gift” from the God that “justifies the ungodly”. It is an alien righteousness, that comes from outside of us. Every Christian that has or will ever walk the face of the earth has the same level of Justification. Billy Graham, Mother Teresa and the Apostle Paul share the same level of Justification as the new born Christian. It is instantaneous and complete. The cross of Christ purchased this gift and we dare not try to earn or improve upon it. The main difference between Christianity and all other religions is this one thing. Our God works for us! We don't work for him! We don't earn, Christ has earned for us! If we trust the work of Christ our trust is counted as God's righteousness. This is the best news in the universe. If we could earn are entrance into heaven by our own deeds, then as Galatians 2:21 says. “Christ died for no purpose.”

Sanctification

The process of being set apart by God for service to God. Growing in Christlike attitude and action. The ongoing process whereby we become less like the sinners we are and more like the Christ we love, follow and worship. Sanctification while not instantaneous must be present in all true Christians.

William M. Greathouse, in his book Wholeness in Christ, notes "that while holiness certainly involves separation from uncleanness and sin, it is primarily separation to God"

The success of our struggle with sin begins with our believing deep down in our hearts that regardless of our failures and our struggle, we have died to sin's guilt. We must believe that however often we fail, there is no condemnation for us (Rom. 8:1). - Jerry Bridges

(This is NOT the power of positive thinking!)

1 Peter 2:24

He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed.

Christ bore our sins on the cross that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. His death paid the price to forgive our sins and heal us from our sinful natures.

Romans 5:9

Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, ***much more*** shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God.

Romans 6:6-7

We know that our old self[a] was ***crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin.*** 7For one who has died has been set free[b] from sin.

Romans 6:11

So you also must ***consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.***

Romans 6:14

For ***sin will have no dominion*** over you, since ***you are not under law but under grace.***

Romans 6:19

I am speaking in human terms, because of your natural limitations. For just as you once presented your members as slaves to impurity and to lawlessness leading to more lawlessness, ***so now*** present your members as ***slaves to righteousness leading to sanctification.***

Romans 6:22

But now that you have been ***set free from sin and have become slaves of God,*** the fruit you get leads to ***sanctification*** and its end, eternal life.

Romans 7:4

Likewise, my brothers, you also have died to the law through the body of Christ, so that you may belong to another, to him who has been raised from the dead, ***in order that we may bear fruit for God.(Sanctification)***

Galatians 5:1

For freedom Christ has set us free; stand firm therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery.

Galatians 5:24

And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

Only as justified sinners do we stand a chance in sanctification. No matter how much we grow and fight for holiness know this one thing for sure. Our sanctification does not save us, but it is an evidence that we are saved. Notice that I used the word “fight”. I want to smash the notion right now concerning perfectionism. We are accepted by God because of what Jesus has done on our behalf, not because we kept the rules well enough. In fact as we grow in sanctification we will see ourselves in need of more sanctification. As the Holy Spirit gives us success in one area he will show us other blind spots of sin we have never noticed before. As we grow in grace we see our need for more grace.

Romans 8:32

He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously ***give us all things?(This includes growth in sanctification)***

Part of this gift of “all things” is the gift of sanctification. The main point I want to make today is this. **Christ died to save us from the penalty of sin and the power of sin.** Do you know that Jesus death purchased your forgiveness and your sanctification?

1 Corinthians 1:30

He is the source of your life in Christ Jesus, whom God made our wisdom and our righteousness ***and sanctification*** and redemption.

What do we do?

At this point someone might say. Hallelujah!! Christ has accomplished it all, I can set back and enjoy my sanctification! Well, I hope you don't think that. And if you do, this is the part where I burst your bubble. God in his wisdom has ordained that a “Means's of Grace” be active in our lives to accomplish His goals. God does it(sanctification) but he works through activities we perform. I know this sounds a bit strange at first. Look to the following scripture

Philippians 2:12-13

Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, ***work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.***

Daily Bible Reading

When we spend time in his word, God the Spirit opens our hearts and minds to the beauty of Christ and to the meaning of scripture. One of the key things the Spirit does though the bible is help us see Jesus as more desirable than sin. And in this way we grow in Christ likeness.

John 17:17-19

17Sanctify them[a] in the truth; your word is truth. 18As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. 19And for their sake I consecrate myself,[b] that they also may be ***sanctified[c] in truth.***

Notice that Jesus said that God's word will sanctify his followers! As we read, meditate and memorize the word of God, one of it's effects is sanctification. And notice that Jesus set himself apart that we might be sanctified in truth. Jesus purchased our sanctification through His death.

Daily Prayer

The challenge before us then is not merely to do what God says because He is God, but to desire what God says because he is good. The challenge is not merely to pursue righteousness, but to prefer righteousness. The challenge is to get up in the morning and prayerfully meditate on the Scriptures until we experience joy and peace in believing “the precious and very great promises” of God (Rom. 15:13; 2 Peter 1:4). With this joy set before us the commandments of God will not be burdensome (1 John 5:3) and the compensation of sin will appear too brief and too shallow to lure us. - John Piper

In order to grow in sanctification we must behold the face of Christ daily. To see Christ we must spend time in the Bible. To understand the Bible we must be lead by the Spirit, and to be lead by the Spirit we must spend time in prayer.

Explain what happens if we try to become sanctified without reliance on the Spirit.

- A. Give credit to Driscoll and Piper for this insight.
- B. We fail and give up.
- C. We have some success and become arrogant an legalist. (Pharisee)

I have caused myself much grief trying to grow in holiness with my own strength. When I did this I was dishonoring the sacrifice of Christ and making myself out to be the god of my salvation. This is “self glorifying morality”, not supernatural and not Christianity! At the time I was doing this I would have denied it, but looking back I see clearly that I believed that Jesus had the power to forgive sin, but not the power to change my heart. I thought wrongly that sanctification was something I should take care of all by myself.

God certainly has the right to mold our desires!

2 Thessalonians 2:13

But we ought always to give thanks to God for you, brothers beloved by the Lord, because **God chose you** as the firstfruits[a] to be saved, through **sanctification by the Spirit** and **belief in the truth**.

Notice that Sanctification is brought about by God through the Spirit and belief in the truth. We find the truth in God's word!

1 Peter 1

Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who are elect exiles of the dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, 2according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, **in the sanctification of the Spirit**, for obedience to Jesus Christ and for **sprinkling with his blood**:

Notice how our being sanctified by the Spirit is tied to the sprinkling of the blood of Christ!

13No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide **the way** of escape, that you may be able to endure it. 14**Therefore, my beloved, flee from idolatry.**

“The Way” of escape is finding Jesus Christ more desirable than Sin. Finding more joy and satisfaction in Christ than we do in anything else. The “Way of Escape” provides the grounds for “Therefore my beloved, flee from idolatry”

Final scripture and thoughts.

1 Corinthians 5:7

7Cleanse out the old leaven that you may be a new lump, as you really are unleavened. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed.

This scripture sums up everything I've tried to say today. Because of the sacrifice of Christ we who once were far off have bought with a price, have a new name and nature and now by God's grace we are to live out with fear and trembling who we are in Christ for it is God working powerfully in us. To God be all the Glory.