

APOLOGIA

QUESTION: What does the word "sanctify" mean?

ANSWER: Throughout the centuries certain words used by early Christians later began to be used by certain religious groups with at least a slightly different meaning. For example, speaking with tongues originally meant to speak in an unlearned language. Bishop originally referred to the same man as an elder, not one in an ecclesiastical hierarchy.

We find the word 'sanctified' used in 1 Corinthians 1:2, "*Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints.*" The word 'sanctified' is thought of by some to refer to those who tend to display a highly emotional religious behavior. Such may hinder our use of a lovely and most meaningful word.

After describing those who shall not inherit the kingdom of God, Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 6:11, "*And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and by the Spirit of our God.*" Note the opposites: Washed, as opposed to being unclean; Justified, as opposed to being guilty; Sanctified - in contrast to what one used to be, now purified and made holy.

This condition of being sanctified is described by the writer of Hebrews as being set apart and dedicated. "*Wherefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered without the gate*" (13:12). The epistle of Jude begins, "*Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ, the brother to James, to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus, and called.*" 'Sanctified' is used in relation to 'preserved' and 'called'. "*If a man therefore purify himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honor, sanctified, and meet for the Master's use, and prepared unto every good work*" (2 Tim. 2:21). Being sanctified is a glowing characteristic of true children of the heavenly Father.

Sanctification is not only something we are; it is something we do. "*Sanctify the Lord Jesus in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer...*" (1 Pet. 3:15). This is the same root word "ayia" as found in Hebrews 8:1-2 and 13:11 as 'sanctuary', the meaning of which is a place set aside as holy, for worship of God.

Our hearts are spoken of by Peter as just such a place. The heart is to serve as God's sanctuary, a holy place where He is worshipped. Do we recognize that God's presence is with us in

every thought we have? Wherever we go? Whoever we are with? In every word we speak?

Alarmingly, we can lose that treasured relationship. This is sadly shown in Peter's denial of Jesus (Mat. 26:31-35, 56, 69-75). Do we really believe God exists? Do our lives show it by our character? Do we have firm convictions about truth and righteousness? What is evident in our lives to demonstrate it: Our attitude and disposition? The way we dress and present ourselves? The places we frequent? The companions with whom we associate? Will we stand even when it is more convenient to compromise? Will we permit family ties to interfere with what we know is right? Will we surrender to social pressures when we know that we should stand?

Paul admonished, *"Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall"* (1 Cor. 10:12). So often we surrender to Satan's lure which takes place gradually and comes upon us without our fully realizing we are drifting. Take note of several examples of sanctification demonstrated among early Christians and in which are expressed an attitude of commitment.

"And this they did, not as we hoped, but first gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God...For if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not." (2 Cor. 8:5, 12)

"Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are" (1 Cor. 3:16-17).

"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me" (Gal. 2:20).

Have we truly sanctified the Lord God in our hearts? Does Christ live in us - and can others see it?

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COMING TO THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE TRUTH (THROUGH EVALUATION V)

Continuing with a thought from 2 Tim 3:7, let's go a little deeper into the fourth step in the "coming to the knowledge" process - evaluation. In the last article we studied the example

of two old men that had chosen different mental paths through life and both came to the end of their lives in different states. Let us see how they might evaluate different time periods of their lives and how this might affect their remaining days.

Evaluation of Their Past

In Romans 6:21 when Paul reminded the Romans of things they once did, the memories of those things brought them shame. I can identify with this, can't you? How might this have worked in our two old men? The grumpy one probably looked back at good times past and gone, wondering why he can't get some of those fun-filled, but sinful, feelings again. The good old man may look back and feel like the Romans. He'd like to forget some of the things in his past, and thankfully, after praying to God for forgiveness, he can. He doesn't want to forget entirely, though. Why? Because every time he looks back and evaluates his past shameful deeds, he is made aware again of what Jesus saved him from. Instead of feeling sorry that those things will not happen again, he is feeling joy that they won't, and especially joyful that he won't have to give account for them again at the Judgment!

Evaluation of Their Present

The principle of 1 Corinthians 10:13 is awesome. *"There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it."* How well does God know us? Well enough to know how much temptation we can stand. And what does He do when we near our temptation limit and just before we tip over into sin? He makes a way of escape! And why does He allow us to be tempted and have to bear it in the first place? So that we will develop His strength (2 Cor. 12:9) instead of our own.

How does this affect the grumpy old man? Probably not much, because at his age and mental condition he probably doesn't evaluate sin around him much anymore. It's all just the "same old, same old" to him. And why does he need Christ's strength? Life has dealt him such a bad hand that he gave up long ago. On the other hand, the good old man looks around him at all his temptations (yes, even an old man has temptations) and evaluates them against Christ's strength, not his own strength. And he knows that Christ's strength is sufficient for him, and the way of escape is always near. What a feeling to know God knows our limits and will rescue us from present temptations! No wonder

the grumpy old man is grumpy and the good old man is happy.

Evaluation of Their Future

It gets really good now that we're going to look toward the future, not from the standpoint of what we are to avoid (temptation and sin), but what we are going to gain. Peter tells us (2 Pet. 3:13, 14) that we can look for new heavens and a new earth. That is a wonderful gift in itself. It really gives us a bright goal for our future. This future vision also inspires us to live better now, to evaluate ourselves and make sure that we will be found "in peace, without spot, and blameless."

Would the grumpy old man benefit from evaluating himself now in view of the future? Sure, but he probably won't because all he can see is himself and his problems, and his solutions are limited to what he can fix himself. And that's very little, especially with little inspiration to try. One of the reasons the good old man is happy is because he does see the future and evaluates his condition. And what a desire he has to do better! Not only does he evaluate where he is, but he is motivated to get where he wants to be.

Now that we are talking about motivation, let's leave the two old men and really look at ourselves. Let's evaluate our belief in three passages for the proper motivation to make the changes in life that we need to make.

Limits on Our Own Belief

John 3:16 may be the most recognizable verse in the world. There's a reason for it. In this one verse God's love for us is revealed by the giving of His only Son that we should have the gift of eternal life. But it depends on how much we believe. How much do you believe? I'm sure all the Dear Readers believe, but how much? God's plan involved the sacrifice of something most humans can relate to, the love of parents for their only child. And if He loved us enough to give up His only begotten Son, then imagine how great the gift called eternal life in heaven must be and how much God wants us to have it! If we could realize exactly what this is that God has done for us, then think of how wonderful we should feel each day! If we don't feel like we are about to burst with joy each day, maybe we need to re-evaluate just how much we let ourselves believe in God's promise.

Our Belief that God is in Control

If we do not appreciate the previous idea, then we're probably not filled with joy by this one, either. Romans 8:26-28 simply states that God is in control. If we are His children then

whatever happens to us will turn out to be for our good, even if it doesn't seem like it at the time. If you think you are in control, wait for a physical illness to show you just how fragile you are. If you think you are in control, experience a fire that destroys most or all of your possessions and see how humble it leaves you. Not only look at major things, but also evaluate the thousand small things that happen to us every day that lets us live from one day to the next. It's hopeless to try and count all our blessings. But what a blessing it is to know there is Someone who knows what is best for us and will make sure we get it if we are one of His children!

Our Belief that our Problems are God's "Polish"

2 Corinthians 12:7-10 gives the classic practical example of the previous idea. Paul said he had a physical problem that he asked God three times to remove. Nothing happened. Then Christ told Paul He was not going to remove the "thorn in the flesh" because that was what made Paul look to His power for strength and comfort. Then something happened. Paul had a complete change of attitude toward this and said from then on he took pleasure in his infirmities, reproaches, necessities, etc. for he knew now that they made him strong.

What a lesson for us, and what a test of our ability to evaluate ourselves in our present situation and how we fit into God's plan. If we give ourselves wholly to God as a living sacrifice, then rest assured He will bend, knead, mold, squeeze, straighten, and flatten us until He shapes us into the work tools He needs. The next time you feel like you are being squeezed in a vise, just smile and be glad the Lord considers you worth improving.

Parting Thoughts

We began our thoughts with the two old men of the last article, trying to show how their differing evaluation systems may have led them to live two different life styles - one pessimistic and one optimistic. Then we focused on ourselves and tried to evaluate how our own belief system could be limiting our own potential. Please consider all these ideas as one package that will not only show you where improvements may be made, but also provide the inspiration to make the needed changes. Then you will truly be "coming to the knowledge of the truth."

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GOSPEL MEETINGS

<u>DATES</u>	<u>PLACE</u>	<u>SPEAKER</u>
October 5 - 8	Noble Noble, GA	James McDonald (Woodbury, TN)
October 6 - 10	Junction City Junction City, KY	Joe Hill (Hager Hill, KY) & Emery McCallister
October 10 - 12	Mount Carmel Road Gay, GA	Kevin Mills (Newnan, GA)
October 10 - 12	Hokes Bluff Hokes Bluff, AL	Chad Prince, Brad Prince, David Carter & Ben McManus
October 13 - 17	Oak Grove Eubank, KY	James McDonald (Woodbury, TN)
October 16 - 19	Marrowbone Marrowbone, KY	Wilbur Bass (Auburn, AL)
October 17 - 19	West Broad Street Wedowee, AL	Ron Scott (Bloomington, IN)
October 23 - 26	Goochtown Eubank, KY	Joe Hill (Hager Hill, KY)
October 24 - 26	Barnes Ridge Livingston, TN	Harry Cobb (Wedowee, AL)
October 31 - Nov 2	Ephesus Ephesus, GA	James McDonald (Woodbury, TN)

SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

1. How many of Jacob's descendants originally went to Egypt?
2. According to the book of Joshua, when instructions were given for setting out for the new land, how far away were the people supposed to stay from the ark of the covenant?
3. In Psalms 14, what has the fool said in his heart?
4. Which disciples accompanied Jesus to the top of the mountain where the transfiguration occurred?
5. According to Romans, Paul said that God shows mercy to some people and to others what does he do?

ANSWERS NEXT MONTH . . .
and remember last month's questions?

1. What were the first things in creation God saw as "good?"
NIGHT AND DAY (Gen. 1:4,5)
2. After Ishbosheth's death David was anointed king. How old does the Bible say he was at this time? THIRTY YEARS (II Sam. 5:4)
3. According to Ezekiel who did God say would possess the houses which formerly belonged to the Jews? THE WORST OF THE GENTILES (Eze 7:24)
4. Which two Old Testament figures appeared with Jesus after his transfiguration on the mountain? ELIJAH AND MOSES (Mat. 17:3)
5. If a woman exercises faith, love, and holiness with self-control, what will be her reward? SHE WILL HAVE SAFETY IN CHILDBEARING (1 Tim. 2:15)