

# LESSON EIGHT

## SANCTIFICATION

### A. THE DEFINITION OF SANCTIFICATION.

Scriptural Reference:

*"For this is the will of God, even your sanctification that ye should abstain from fornication" (I Thessalonians 4:3).*

Sanctification means a separation from evil and a dedication to God and His service. The Scriptures made clear that Sanctification has to do with the turning away from all that is sinful and defiling to both soul and body. However, it means not only a separation from but also a separation unto. In order to be sanctified a person must be separated from sin, but also separated unto holiness. Whatever is set apart from a profane to a sacred use, whatever is devoted exclusively to the service of God is sanctified.

References: II Chronicles 29:5, 15-18; Leviticus 27:14-16; Ezekiel 36:23; Exodus 19:20-22; Numbers 8:17; and Hebrews 9:3.

### B. THE THREE TENSES OF SANCTIFICATION.

Scriptural References:

*"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 and by the Spirit of our God" (I Corinthians 6:11).*

*"For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified" (Hebrews 10:14).*

In these Scriptures we read of sanctification as being already in the past. Notice that in the first of these Scriptures Paul names sanctification before justification. Therefore there is a definite work of sanctification that takes place early in the experience of salvation. Some folks canonize people after they are dead, but the New Testament canonizes them while they are living. Every true believer is a saint and set apart (sanctified) for the service of God; otherwise he is not a Christian.

Sanctification may be viewed as past, present and future, or we may speak of INSTANTANEOUS SANCTIFICATION, PROGRESSIVE SANCTIFICATION AND COMPLETE SANCTIFICATION. A person may experience definite acts of Instantaneous Sanctification in his life. This may take place at Repentance, Water Baptism, or the Baptism of the Holy Ghost. Complete Sanctification will take place at the Rapture, while Progressive Sanctification continues throughout the Christian's Life.

### C. PROGRESSIVE SANCTIFICATION.

Scriptural References:

*"Grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" (II Peter 3:18).*

*"But we...are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of our God" (II Corinthians 3:18).*

Justification differs from sanctification in this manner: Justification is an instantaneous act with no progression; while the latter is a crisis (decisive point) with a view to a process, an act which is instantaneous and at the same time carries with it a growth unto completion.

In II Corinthians 3:18 the tense of the verb is interesting. We are being changed from one degree of character or glory to another.

Since sanctification is progressive we are exhorted to:

1. Increase and abound in love (I Thessalonians 3:12);
2. Increase more and more (I Thessalonians 4:10);
3. Perfect holiness in the fear of God (II Corinthians 7:1).

#### **D. HOW ARE WE SANCTIFIED?**

Scriptural References:

*"... Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it..." (Ephesians 5:25-26).*

*"By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all" (Hebrews 10:10).*

Both God and man contribute and cooperate towards the desired end in the work of sanctification. Man must turn from sin and dedicate himself to God, but it is actually God Himself who does the sanctifying.

We may illustrate this by comparing it to a cold man bringing himself to the fire to be warmed. Man brings himself to the fire, but it is the fire, which does the warming. Likewise it is with God who does the sanctifying although man has the responsibility of bringing himself to God.

#### **E. SOME ERRONEOUS VIEWS ON SANCTIFICATION.**

There are definitely some wrong views on the work of sanctification. We shall mention three of them:

##### **1. ERADICATION.**

Those who believe this, claim that the sinful nature is eradicated, pulled up root and branch, and after this takes place it is impossible for the saint to sin. This view, of course, is very much in the wrong. After he is saved, a man may still sin and by so doing lose his soul.

##### **2. ASCETICISM.**

This is the belief that there is merit and reward in the punishment of one's body in some form. The Bible does allow a place for the right kind of asceticism such as fasting for example. However, there is no merit in perverted asceticism such as celibacy and the doing of penance.

### 3. LEGALISM.

This is being brought under bondage to the law. The child of God obeys the Word of God because he is a child of God. He lives on a plane above the law and is not in bondage. In our zeal for holiness it is easily possible to become legal in our attitude which is not Scriptural.

## LESSON EIGHT

### SELF HELP TEST

- A. Write a complete definition of "sanctification."
- B. Define the following terms:
1. Eradication -
  2. Asceticism -
  3. Legalism -
- C. When will complete sanctification take place in a man's life?
- D. Give one verse of Scripture with reference to prove "progressive sanctification."