

The Sanctified Life of the Believer

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1 Thessalonians 5:23 – “May the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God that your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Ellen G. White

“Sanctification is not a work of a day or a year, but of a lifetime.”

Testimonies for the Church, 3:325

When we surrender our life to Christ,
when we believe he is our Savior,
we are justified by our faith (trust) in God's word.

At that moment,
our sins are forgiven,
we are imputed with Christ's righteousness,
we are adopted into the family of God, and
we are clothed with Christ's robe of
righteousness.

Then the Holy Spirit begins to transform our life.

As long as, day by day, we continue to desire to serve God and to be a child of God, to dedicate our lives to God, our status of justification and adoption continues.

We are justified imperfect sinners.

What happens next?

How is the Holy Spirit working in our lives?

Confusion in Adventism

We are saved because of what Christ has done for us and will continue to do for us.

or

Jesus forgave our sins at the moment of our conversion, but **after** conversion we will be saved because of our sanctification.

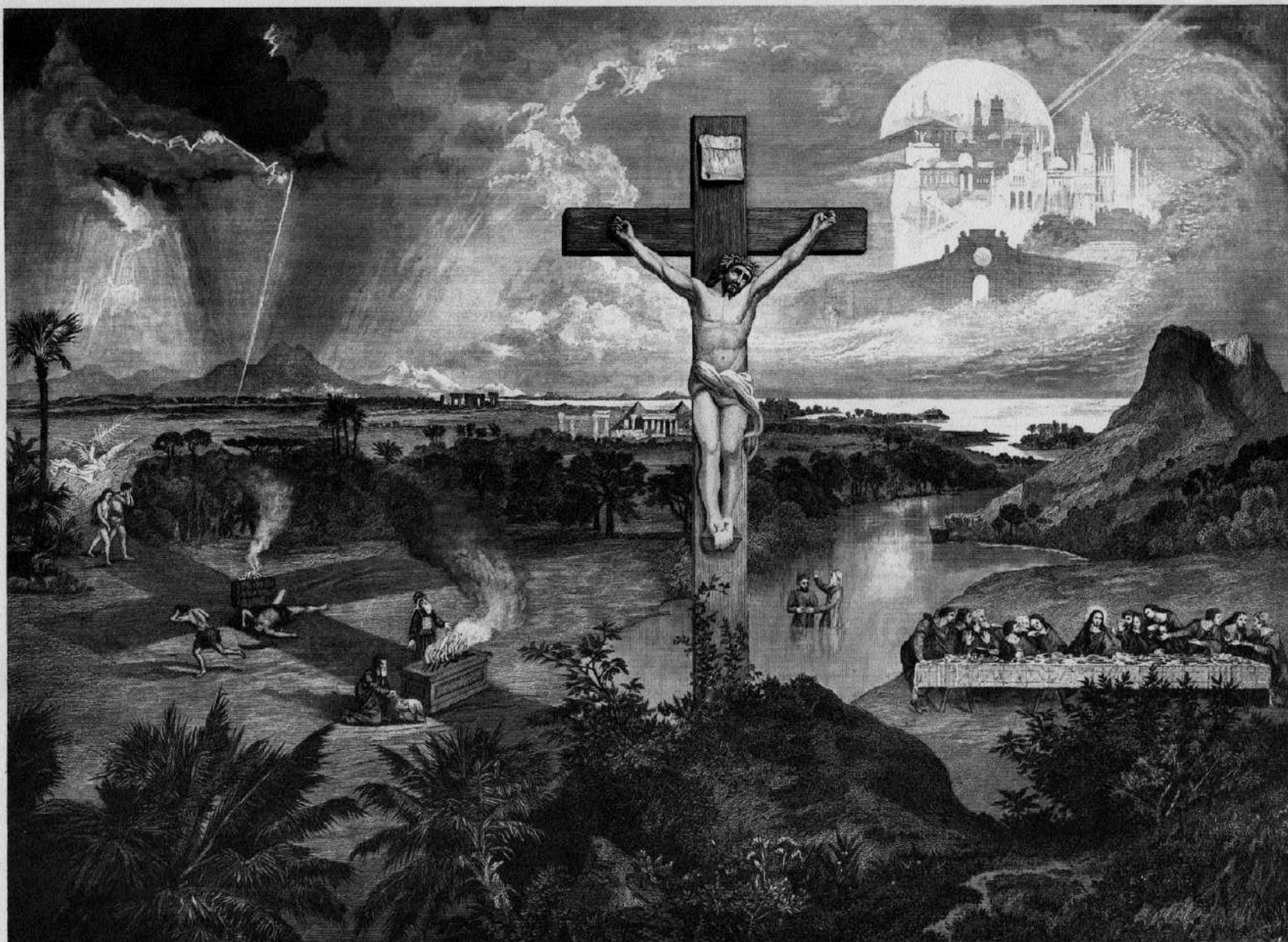
For some Adventists, our salvation is based on our sanctification comes very close to a Roman Catholic understanding of salvation.

Salvation =

Justification (to be declared righteous or forgiven)
+ Sanctification (to be made righteous or perfect).



THE WAY OF LIFE
 FROM PARADISE LOST TO PARADISE RESTORED.



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Christ, the Way of Life

 Center for
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1. The Meaning of Sanctification

Morphology again

In English the words

saint, sanctification, sanctify (Latin root, *sanctus*)

holy, holiness (Anglo-Saxon root, *hālig*)

are from two families of words to translate one word:

Hebrew: *qadoš*

Greek: *hagios*

The biblical meaning of *qadoš* and *hagios* is

Set apart, be separate, belonging to God

- “Holy day” – Isa. 58:13
- “Holy bread” – 1 Sam. 21:4
- “Holy mountain” – Ezek 20:40

The primary reference is to **God** from which other things get their holiness.

- “Holy name of God” – Lev 20:3
- “Holy One of Israel” – Hos. 11:9
- “Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord of Hosts” – Isa 6:3
- “You shall be holy, for I am holy” – Lev 11:44; 19:2; 1 Peter 1:16

Biblical sanctification is both a status we have in Christ and a process of transformation during a believer's lifetime.

- We already have been sanctified in Christ by faith (1 Cor. 1:2)
- We are being sanctified (1 Thess. 5:23)

Sanctification is the **continuing** work of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer, making the person actually holy, separate from the world, more and more dedicated and consecrated to the service of God.

Sanctification is a **process** by which one's life is brought into conformity with one's legal status before God. It is a continuation of what has begun in regeneration, at the moment of justification when our sins are forgiven.

John Wesley – “And at the same time that we are justified, yea, in that very moment sanctification begins. ... From the time of our being ‘born again’ the **gradual work of sanctification** takes place.” (Sermon “The Scripture Way of Salvation”)

John Wesley

“And at the same time that we are justified, yea, in that very moment **sanctification begins**. In that instant we are ‘born again’, ‘born from above’, ‘born of the Spirit’. There is a real as well as a relative change. We are **inwardly renewed** by the power of God. We feel the ‘love of God shed abroad in our heart by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us’, producing **love** to all mankind, and more especially to the children of God; **expelling the love of the world**, the love of pleasure, of ease, of honour, of money; together with pride, anger, self-will, and every other temper—in a word, changing the ‘earthly, sensual, devilish’ mind into ‘the mind which was in Christ Jesus’.”
(Sermon “The Scripture Way of Salvation”)

John Wesley

“From the time of our being ‘born again’ the **gradual work of sanctification** takes place. We are enabled ‘by the Spirit’ to ‘**mortify** the deeds of the body’, of our evil nature. And **as we are more and more dead to sin**, we are more and more alive to God. We go on from grace to grace, while we are careful to ‘abstain from all appearance of evil’, and are ‘zealous of good works’, ‘as we have opportunity, doing good to all men’; while **we walk in all his ordinances blameless**, therein worshipping him in spirit and in truth; while we take up our cross and deny ourselves every pleasure that does not lead to God.” (Sermon “The Scripture Way of Salvation”)

Separation from the world (Hebrew meaning)

1 Peter 2:9 – “But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God.”

Growth in Knowledge and Obedience

John 17:17 – “Sanctify them through your truth: your word is truth.”

Life-long Spiritual Journey

Galatians 5:16, 25 – “But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh. ... If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit.”

Contrast

Justification is an **instantaneous** occurrence,
complete in a moment,

whereas

Sanctification is a **process** requiring an
entire lifetime for completion.

Justification is a forensic declaration of forgiveness and imputation of Christ's righteousness,

Whereas

Sanctification is an actual lifelong transformation of the character of the person through the impartation of Christ's righteousness and character.

Justification is an objective work affecting
our standing before God,

whereas

Sanctification is a subjective work of the
Holy Spirit transforming our inner person.

The sanctified life is a life-long spiritual journey under the influence of the Holy Spirit.

2. The Lingering Presence of Sin

The regenerated Christian continues to live with a sinful nature that is the source of temptations until Christ changes our nature into his likeness. Before the second coming of Christ the Holy Spirit transforms our life to give us the victory but we still remain sinners.

Three passages of the epistles of Paul speak of the sanctifying influence of the Holy Spirit on a Christian's life:

- Galatians 5:16-25
- Colossians 3:1-17
- Ephesians 4:17 – 5:21

Contrast the works of the flesh (old man) with the new life in the Spirit (in Christ).

What happens to the old life when one follows the Spirit? How is sanctification happening?

Galatians 5:16-25

Contrast

- deeds of the flesh [επιθυμιαν σαρκος]
- fruit [καρπος] of the Spirit

Strong invitation [imperative] to follow the leading influence of the Holy Spirit:

- Walk by the Spirit (5:16)
- Live and walk by the Spirit (5:25)

Galatians 5:16, 25 – “But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh. ... If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit.”

The transformation operated by the Holy Spirit over time will be evident.

The absence of the work of the Holy Spirit is evident in the “works of the flesh” and the evidence of the influence of the Holy Spirit is in the “fruit of the Spirit.”

Ellen G. White

The regenerated person:

“Wrongs cannot be righted, nor can reformations in conduct be made by a few feeble, intermittent efforts. Character building is the work, not of a day, nor of a year, but of a lifetime. The struggle for conquest over self, for holiness and heaven, is a lifelong struggle. Without continual effort and constant activity, there can be no advancement in the divine life, no attainment of the victor's crown.” (*Ministry of Healing*, 452)

“If the heart has been renewed by the Spirit of God, the life will bear witness to the fact. While we cannot do anything to change our hearts or to bring ourselves into harmony with God; while we must not trust at all to ourselves or our good works, our lives will reveal whether the grace of God is dwelling within us. A change will be seen in the character, the habits, the pursuits. The contrast will be clear and decided between what they have been and what they are. The character is revealed, not by occasional good deeds and occasional misdeeds, but by the tendency of the habitual words and acts. (*Steps to Christ*, pp. 57-58)

“The religious services, the prayers, the praise, the penitent confession of sin ascend from true believers . . . to the heavenly sanctuary. . . . But passing through the corrupt channels of humanity, they are so defiled that unless purified by blood, they can never be of value with God.” (Manuscript 50, 1900, in *Selected Messages*, 1:344)

Why does this matter?

Unfortunate consequences:

Fear of God

Emphasis on personal efforts
(sanctification)

Little or no assurance of salvation

Living with guilt

Justification does something **for** us:

- Sins are forgiven
- Imputation of Christ's righteousness
- Restoration to divine favor
- New status in the eyes of God

As we continue to walk with God, every day the **justifying grace** of God

- Continues to cover us with Christ's robe of righteousness,
- Forgives sins – as the Holy Spirit continues to convince us of sin in our lives, and
- We stand before God as if we had never sinned.

Sanctification does something **in** us

- Beginning of a new life in Christ
- Beginning of restoration of the image of God
- Inward power is given to overcome temptations and the lingering presence of sin
- Impartation of Christ's righteousness

The inclination to sin we have inherited, with which we struggle, remains in the hearts of believers in Christ,

But, its power is no longer controlling believers. A new power is given in the new birth.

The fruits of this regeneration are evidence of the work of the Holy Spirit.

- Love of God and love of neighbor (Luke 10:26-27)
- Obedience to the commandments of God (1 John 5:3)

John 15:4-5 – “Abide in me, and I will abide in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.”