



**Topic:**  
**Making My Call and Election Sure**  
*(Understanding the Steps of Salvation)*  
Part 3: Sanctification

*For this is the will of God, even your sanctification...  
That every one of you should know how to possess his  
vessel in sanctification and honour.*  
~ 1 Thessalonians 4:3-4 (NKJV) ~

Dr. K. L. Thompson, Remnant of God Deliverance Ministry, Inc.  
[www.remnantofgoddeliveranceministry.org](http://www.remnantofgoddeliveranceministry.org)

## INTRODUCTION

As we continue our series study, we now move our topic of discussion and sharing to the work of *“sanctification”* in the life of believer. As those who have been justified by faith and are now at peace with God the Father and His Son Jesus, the work of sanctification is the next step in making our call and election sure.

**What is Sanctification?** According to dictionary.com, sanctification is defined as:

- To set apart for a sacred use; consecrate.
- To make holy; purify.
- To give religious sanction to, as with an oath or vow.
- To make productive of holiness or spiritual blessing.

For what purpose are we set apart or sanctified? For what are we made holy? Why do we need religious sanction? What are we to produce unto holiness? Sanctification is that process whereby we become more like Christ in our conduct and in our character. It is the process of being made holy resulting in a changed life-style for the believer. Sanctification is God’s way of transforming us into people who are fit to live with Him and His Son forever in eternity.

Traditionally, sanctification is categorized into three aspects:

- (1) Positional sanctification.** This is that state of holiness imputed to the Christian at the moment of their conversion to Christ. It denotes not so much one’s spiritual condition as one’s spiritual position. This aspect of our sanctification speaks to our being set apart from the world unto God. This is an instantaneous acts of God’s saving grace which takes place at the moment of our conversion or at the moment of embracing, by faith, God’s salvation. At that very moment we are sanctified (set apart unto God for His use). This aspect of our sanctification is by virtue of Christ’s holiness. Positional sanctification is received at the moment of our being justified. It is in this aspect of sanctification that we moved from enemies of the cross through sin to bearers of cross through salvation. We identify with the suffering of Jesus Christ as being on our behalf. As such, our position before God has been changed; we are holy as we are in Christ who is holy.
- (2) Progressive sanctification.** This refers to the process in our daily lives by which we are being conformed to the image of Christ. It is the process of becoming what we are in Christ. This is the

process that involves the putting off of the old habits of conducting ourselves in manner unbecoming of the child of God and putting on the Christ-like qualities (honesty, mercy, and love).

- (3) **Ultimate sanctification.** This is the state of holiness that we will not attain to in this life, but will realize when we are finally in the presence of God in eternity.

The aspect of sanctification that we play a direct role in is that of ***Progressive Sanctification***.

### ***Philippians 2:12-13.***

*This scripture speaks or validates our role in our progressive sanctification. The apostle Paul encourages the people to always be in the mindset of obedience. He tells them to not only be obedient when in his presence but more so in his absence. He tells them and us that we are to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling.*

Progressive sanctification is not optional. He who does not demonstrate growth in sanctification shows himself to be a false professor. Sanctification is not only God's will for His people, it is the desire of His people, who have truly experienced His grace in the gospel, and so endeavor to live in a manner worthy of their calling, to be pleasing to the Lord.

As our topic scripture for Part 3 says, sanctification is what God wills for every born again, justified by faith child of God. It is of the utmost importance that you and I, as children of God, know how to possess our vessel in sanctification and honor. If we are to live our new life in Christ as becoming like Christ, then our sanctification is not an option; it is a mandate. Christ was holy in all manner and conduct and God commands us to be Holy as well.

### ***Leviticus 11:44 (KJV)***

*For I am the Lord your God: ye shall therefore sanctify yourselves, and ye shall be Holy; for I am holy: neither shall ye defile yourselves with any manner of creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.*

In the verses preceding verse 44 Moses, by God's command and instructions, speaks to the children of Israel concerning what foods they are to abstain from (that which God has ordained as unclean) and what foods they were permitted to eat (that which God has ordained as clean). While the object used here is that of food, this portion of scripture sets forth the spiritual ground on which the distinction between clean and unclean is based. ***Ye shall be holy*** – By this God gives the people to understand, that all these cautions about eating or touching these creatures was not for any real uncleanness in them, but only that by the diligent observation of these rules they might learn with greater care to avoid all moral pollutions, and to keep themselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit.

### ***1 Peter 1:13-16 (NLT)***

*So prepare your minds for action and exercise self-control. Look forward to the gracious salvation that will come to you when Jesus Christ is revealed to the world. So you must live as God's obedient children. Don't slip back into your old ways of living to satisfy your own desires. You didn't know any better then. But now you must be holy in everything you do, just as God who chose you is holy. For the Scriptures say, "You must be holy because I am holy."*

In this portion of scripture, the apostle Peter is speaking to the children of God who, through persecution, are scattered throughout as strangers living in lands that are not their own home land. He is writing to encourage them to continue in their pursuit of the things that God had called them unto. Peter lets them know in verse 2 of chapter 1 that they are the elect according to the foreknowledge of God and that their election was through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience. In other words, it is through our obedience that we were separated unto God as we accepted the shed blood of Jesus Christ as atonement for our sins. Peter continues his discourse by letting the people know that we have been made alive by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. We have been blessed with an inheritance that is incorruptible and undefiled, and that will never fade away but instead sits reserved in heaven for us. Regardless of the manifold temptations the people are in, they can rest assured that they will be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation. It's their belief and trust in God that will keep them.

***Prepare your mind for action.*** Further along in this chapter (verse 13), Peter speaks of the importance of us preparing our minds for action (King James Versions says: "gird up the loins of your mind"). The imagery is of the saints in Biblical times who wore loose, flowing robes, so that, in order to run, fight, or apply themselves to any work, it was necessary to bind the garments close around the waist. If we are to get any serious work done in God's vineyard, we must be mentally prepared to get down to business. We must have our minds in constant preparation to discharge the duties, or to endure the trials of life. Let us, therefore, set our minds to the task of holiness.

***Be self-controlled.*** Peter next turns his words of instruction in verse 13 to calling us to exercise self-control (King James says: "be sober"). The need for the child of God to exercise self-control or to be of sober mind is often mentioned in the New Testament:

- **1 Thessalonians 5:6 (KJV).** *Therefore let us not sleep as do others; but let us watch and be sober.*
- **1 Peter 4:7 (KJV).** *But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober and watch unto prayer.*
- **1 Peter 5:8 (KJV).** *Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.*

The word sober means to be free from intoxicants, but is used metaphorically in the New Testament to refer to self control, thinking soberly, and is often used in connection with watchfulness. There are many things that can intoxicate our minds and render us useless in serving God. Such things as pride, self-will, arrogance, greed, revenge, hate, slothfulness, lust, etc. just to name a few. We must constantly be on guard against those things which would weaken our resolve to be faithful, take our minds off the goal or convince us that there is some better or easier way. The way of spiritual self-discipline is not the way of the world, but it is the only way to make it to heaven. Sanctification is the means by which God has ordained that the child of God disciplines himself. It is when the child of God has a made up mind to yield himself to God and let the power of God dwell richly in his being that the work of sanctification receives its greatest glory and yield its greatest reward.

### **OUR STUDY: *The Process of Sanctification***

You have heard us make reference in the past few weeks about God's sanctifying work in the life of the believer through His Holy Word. But what does the process look like? How do we know if the living truth of Scripture is actually at work in our life? How do we know that God's Word has actually taken root in our life?

The process of sanctification has its beginning in the heart of the one who does as Paul alludes to in Romans 10:9 “...if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved”. It is a work of grace that is only effective in the life of a believer. Why is this? Because sanctification represents the separation or being set apart from sin to serve or live for God, there must be a working of the power of God to effect this sin separation. We must understand that man, in all of his best efforts, cannot and never will be able to live delivered from the bonds or captivity of sin unless he or she has surrendered their heart unto the Lord. The best of church goers, no matter how much of their time they give to the church, will never be able to live a sanctified separated life unless it is done through the power of God’s Spirit working in them.

While the process of sanctification begins at the inception of salvation, sanctification and salvation are not the same. They are two distinct works in the life of the believer. As the Bible states we are entirely saved or receive salvation by God’s grace (*cf. Ephesians 2:8-9*). We do nothing to earn it, as if that were even possible. God’s grace received at salvation is reserved for those who make the commitment and effort to follow Him.

***Sanctification is what comes after salvation.*** It is the act of salvation that frees us from sin. It is impossible to be freed from sin without God’s Holy Spirit received at salvation. While God’s Spirit is omnipresent and thus working in the world, he’s not working in us and we’re not in him. Until we are bound together with Christ, sanctification will not happen. We must be in Christ and Christ must be in us.

### **2 Corinthians 5:17 (NKJV)**

*Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.*

We see from this point forward, our lives are to be lived conducive to our being made a new creation in Christ Jesus. The process of sanctification through God’s Spirit has power over us. Our old or former way of living begins to lose its grip over us. We are no longer slaves to obeying sin that once ruled or lorded over us.

### ***Let’s explore the process of sanctification...***

1. **True sanctification begins with renewing your mind.** How is this different from what we have shared concerning preparing your mind for action? Well, preparing your mind is, to put it simply, having a made up mind to do the work of God in sanctifying yourself. Whereas renewing your mind has to do with what you feed your mind in your process of sanctification. You must know the truth of God’s Word, plain and simple. There’s no premium on ignorance in sanctification. You’re not going to get there through some emotional or mystical experience. Spiritual growth won’t happen by osmosis—it requires the discipline of constantly putting the truth of God’s Word in your mind.

There are no shortcuts in sanctification—a lack of Biblical knowledge will always retard your spiritual growth. Apart from the truth of Scripture, there simply is no mechanism to restrain your sinful flesh. Legalism (just having knowledge of right and wrong) can’t do it. Pragmatism (your logical way of doing things) can’t either. The only certain method for true spiritual growth starts with absorbing God’s eternal truth found in His Holy Word.

- **James 1:21-27.** As we receive, as James calls it “the engrafted word”, we will in turn lay aside all manner of filthiness and sinfulness. Through receiving God’s Word, we will save our souls. By absorbing God’s eternal truth, we are in essence becoming doers of the word and not just hearers who simply deceive themselves. If we remain casual hearers of God’s Word, yes we will see ourselves just as we are; however, we will leave ourselves just as we are. This is what James means when he says a hearer is like a man beholding his natural face in a glass or a man looking at himself in a mirror. He sees the flaws but yet he walks away from the mirror having never corrected the flaws.
2. **Understand sanctification is not the work of a moment, an hour, a day, but of a lifetime.** It is not gained by a happy flight of feelings, but is the result of constantly dying to sin, and constantly living for Christ. Changes in our life and character cannot be righted nor can reformation be wrought in the character by feeble, intermittent efforts. It is only by long, persevering effort, raw discipline, and stern conflict that we shall overcome. So long as Satan reigns in the earth, we shall have self to subdue, besetting sins to overcome, so long as life shall last, there will be no stopping place, no point which we can reach and say, I have fully attained. Sanctification is the result of lifelong obedience.
    - **Psalm 51:5-10.** Since God desires obedience and obedience requires us to embrace truth on the inward parts or in our hearts, we must be ever seeking the Lord in obedience to create in us the heart that remains obedient and true.
    - **1 Thessalonians 5:23-24.** As we commit to this lifelong process of sanctification, the God of peace Himself will do the sanctifying work within us and preserve us complete and without blame when the Lord shall appear.
  3. **Understand sanctification takes a surrendering of myself.** We can’t make ourselves holy any more than we can make ourselves saved—we become holy only by realizing that we haven’t got what it takes to be holy.
    - **Romans 6:11-12.** When we surrender ourselves it is as if we are no longer alive in the body of sin and death. The life we now have acquired through salvation is alive unto Christ our Lord. Through the working of the Holy Spirit in our life, we have power to resist the reign of sin in our mortal body. It is only through the Holy Spirit are we able to overcome the lustful sinful desires of our former or unregenerate man.
    - **Romans 12:1-2.** Here the apostle Paul entreats believers to present their bodies as a living sacrifice, meaning we should use our bodies to serve and obey God. This presenting our bodies as a living sacrifice is more than a contrast with a dead animal sacrifice; it is “newness of life”. Paul reminds us that this giving of ourselves is not an option that we can either choose to perform or choose not to perform. On the contrary, our giving of ourselves unto God is the only rational reaction to all the good gifts God has showered on us. In other words, it’s our reasonable service unto the deliverer and keeper of our soul.
  4. **Understand sanctification takes our wholeheartedly accepting Christ.** Christ is our Sanctifier in the same way that He is our Savior.

- **1 Corinthians 1:30.** It was God’s choice to place the weight of our salvation and of our sanctification upon His Son Jesus. To accept Christ is to accept the wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption that was wrought through Christ being made a sacrifice for us.
  - **Hebrews 13:12.** Jesus suffered the reproach and disgrace of sin on our behalf. To be outside the gate was considered a disgrace to Jews because it meant being separated from the community. Jesus’ death on the cross, the shedding of His blood, provided eternal sanctification for those who believe and accept the provision.
5. **Understand sanctification is God’s Path to Godliness (Righteousness).** Sanctification is God’s way of conforming us in thought, motive, word, and deed to the image or likeness of His Son, Jesus. It is the only path to godliness and God expects every one of His children to follow it to the end. In fact, sanctification is so vital to God’s plan for securing the good of all, that should we choose to forsake this path and return to the willful and continued practice of our old sinful ways, we put our soul’s salvation in jeopardy. If we are to secure our sanctification which in essence secures our salvation, we must be submissive to God.
- **James 4:7-8.** James warns us to submit ourselves to God and in doing so we will resist the devil. He tells us that we are to draw near to God and He will draw near to us. This drawing near on the part of both God and us leads us down the path to godliness and righteousness.
  - **John 14:15.** Here Jesus tells the disciples that their true love for Him is the thing that should cause them to keep His commandments. The same is true for you and I. If we say we love the Lord with all of our heart, with all of our soul, and with all of our might, then the evidence will be a life lived in total obedience to the commands of God. God’s command to be ye holy just as He is holy will be a realization in all we do and say.

## CONCLUSION

As we close Part 3 of our series study, let us be mindful in recognizing the necessity of sanctification for the Christian. The message of the gospel calls for a transformation of life. This transformation begins with the call to repentance—to change. Acceptance of God’s provision of righteousness in Christ demands the outworking of this righteousness in our lives and the putting away of sin. The great blemish on the testimony of Christianity has been the lives of those who have failed to realize that the gospel calls for radical change. This change is not one in which we initiate, but it one in which we co-operate. When we yield ourselves under the power of God to operate in our lives, we in essence co-operate with him as we, through His Holy Spirit, undertake the work of sanctification in our life.

Remember, as we work out our soul salvation that God has given us all things that pertain to life and godliness which comes through our ever increasing knowledge of Christ who has called us unto this glorious life. (*cf. 2 Peter 1:3*). Contained within this promise of all things is given unto us such great promises that we can become partakers of God’s divine nature and in this nature comes the power to escape the corruption that is in the world through lust. In other words, we have been given all we need to live our lives holy and separated unto God’s good work and purpose ordained for our life.

While there is so much more for us to learn concerning the process of sanctification, we have attempted to highlight the basics of what sanctification means and how vital it is to us becoming in the image of Christ. All who have ever been in my presence for any length of time and heard me teach concerning God’s plan

of salvation have heard me share one of my favorite passages of scriptures concerning God’s grace or unmerited favor poured upon undeserving man. Titus 2:11-14 *“For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works (NKJV) .* This scripture resounds with God’s plan and purpose of purifying or sanctifying all who believe in Him. It is by God’s grace that we are saved and it is by God’s grace that he has made provisions for us to be transformed into the image of his Son through sanctification wrought through His Son’s sacrifice on our behalf.

As we close our Part 3 of our series *“Making My Call and Election Sure (Understanding the Steps of Salvation)”*, I encourage you my brother and my sister to purge yourself from all filthiness of the flesh and sin that only leads to death and separation from the God of your salvation. Seek to be a vessel of honor, sanctified, and meet for the master’s use and prepared for every good work of the kingdom of God. In doing so, you will be ready to receive the gift of the baptism of the Holy Spirit which is the coming promise of the Father.

***God’s peace and blessing be upon you....***

---

Scripture quotation marked (NKJV) are taken from the New King James Version®. Copyright © 1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Scripture quotation marked (KJV) are taken from the King James Version and are used by permission. Copyright notice not required.

Scripture quotation marked (NLT) are taken from the New Living Translation ©. Copyright 1996, 2004, 2007, 2013 by Tyndale House Foundation. Used by permission of Tyndale House Publishers Inc., Carol Stream, Illinois 60188. All rights reserved.

© 2014 Remnant of God Deliverance Ministry, Inc. All rights reserved.  
This Bible Study Series may be reproduced and distributed for non-profit use for educational purposes only.  
[www.remnantofgoddeliveranceministry.org](http://www.remnantofgoddeliveranceministry.org)