

Sanctification: God's Role

1. Consider these examples. What and why does God sanctify?

So Moses said, "I must turn aside now and see this marvelous sight. Why is the bush not burned up?" And Yahweh saw that he turned aside to look, so God called to him from the midst of the bush and said, "Moses, Moses!" And he said, "Here I am." Then He said, "Do not come near here. Remove your sandals from your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground." (Ex 3:3-5, LSB)

I will set the tent of meeting and the altar apart as holy; I will also set Aaron and his sons apart as holy to minister as priests to Me. I will dwell among the sons of Israel and will be their God. (Ex 29:44-45, LSB)

Now Yahweh spoke to Moses after the death of the two sons of Aaron, when they came near the presence of Yahweh and died. And Yahweh said to Moses: "Tell your brother Aaron that he shall not enter at any time into the holy place inside the veil, before the mercy seat which is on the ark, so that he will not die; for I will appear in the cloud over the mercy seat. (Lev 16:1-2, LSB)

2. God is not a capricious or whimsical God. He works within a legal / judicial framework. Carefully examine the provisions that establish the legal basis of sanctification.

"Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish but to fulfill. For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass from the Law until all is accomplished. (Matt 5:17-18, LSB)

"Behold, days are coming," declares Yahweh, "when I will cut a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, not like the covenant which I cut with their fathers in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, but I was a husband to them," declares Yahweh. "But this is the covenant which I will cut with the house of Israel after those days," declares Yahweh: "I will put My law within them, and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. (Jer 31:31-33, LSB)

3. How does God work to sanctify non-Believers?

"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life. For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him. (John 3:16-17, LSB)

Jesus answered and said to them, "This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He has sent." (John 6:29, LSB)

4. How does God work to sanctify Believers?

And for this reason we also thank God without ceasing that when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but for what it really is, the word of God, which also is at work in you who believe. (1 Thes 2:13, LSB)

Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children, and walk in love, just as Christ also loved us and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma. But sexual immorality or any impurity or greed must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints; nor filthiness and foolish talk, or coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks. For this you know with certainty, that no one sexually immoral or impure or greedy, who is an idolater, has an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. (Eph 5:1-5, LSB)

For consider Him who has endured such hostility by sinners against Himself, so that you will not grow weary, fainting in heart. You have not yet resisted to the point of shedding blood in your striving against sin. And you have forgotten the exhortation which is addressed to you as sons,

“My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord,
 Nor faint when you are reprovved by Him;
 For those whom the Lord loves He disciplines,
 And He flogs every son whom He receives.”

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It is for discipline that you endure; God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom his father does not discipline? But if you are without discipline, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate children and not sons. (Heb 12:3-8, LSB)

5. Fill out the Chart and list what you learned.

	God	Jesus Christ	Holy Spirit
Legal Means			
How is the Non-Believer Sanctified?			
How is the Believer Sanctified?			

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Teacher Notes

1. Consider these examples. What and why does God sanctify?

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Teach the student that to "sanctify" is to set something apart and dedicate to God.

Ask the student: can you see what is being set apart and why? Do you see what happens when something unclean comes in contact with something sanctified and holy?

God sanctifies everything before He comes in contact with it. Everything must be morally pure, set apart and devoted to Him before God dwells among His people. Failure to be sanctified properly meant instant death for anyone who came into the presence of the holy God.

2. God is not a capricious or whimsical God. He works within a legal / judicial framework. Carefully examine the provisions that establish the legal basis of sanctification.

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Ask the student: what is the purpose of the Mosaic Covenant? What do you remember about this?

The Law of Moses was intended to teach the nation of Israel of what it meant to "be set apart" by teaching what sin was, how to atone for it to keep God's favor, and how to live as God's people. God repeatedly encourages the Israelites to "be holy, because He is holy."

Ask the student: what is the purpose of the New Covenant? What do you recall?

Because the nation of Israel broke the Law of Moses and failed to set themselves apart as God's own people (Jer 31:32), the New Covenant provided absolute and complete forgiveness of sin, sanctification without human merit or works, and provided the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

3. How does God work to sanctify non-Believers?

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Ask the student: what did God do to enable non-Believers to be sanctified and set apart for God?

God desires to sanctify people so that the Holy God can dwell among them. He made this possible by providing His only Son to die in substitution of a person and pay for their sin. God paid a costly price and extended this offer even to enemies and without distinction other than being His good creation (Gen 1:26-31).

God continues to work to sanctify non-Believers by getting you to “believe in Him whom He has sent.”

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Ask the student: do you recall the benefits of the New Covenant?

Because of the New Covenant, God forgives a Believer's sins and regenerates with the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. When God adopts the Believer as His child, He regenerates and entitles the Believer to inherit the promises made to Abraham.

Ask the student: what do you observe of these verses that tell you how God works to sanctify Believers? Mark up the text! Allow time for discussion.

The word of God works on Believers by teaching God's moral standards. God provides an example of agapē love to imitate. God disciplines those He loves as a son of God.

5. Fill out the Chart and list what you learned.

	God	Jesus Christ	Holy Spirit
Legal Means	Makes Mosaic Covenant Makes New Covenant		
How is the Non-Believer Sanctified?	Provides the possibility and means for sanctification Works to encourage you to place a faith in His Son who died for your sins		
How is the Believer Sanctified?	Forgives sin Regenerates Works through His word the Bible by teaches what sin is and His moral standard Provides an example of agapē love to imitate and motive Believers to be children without fault and pleasing to His sight Disciplines by rebuking and educating the Believer what holy behavior is		