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SANCTIFIED BY FAITH - PART 2

In the book of Romans, the Apostle Paul uses the message of Justification to present the gospel to the Greco-Roman world. His multi-faceted presentation of God's justice began with forgiveness of past sins and culminates with the believer being delivered from the presence of sin in their nature through the power of Jesus' crucifixion. *Romans 6:6-7*. The book of Hebrews, however, reveals the same gospel in terms the Jews, who had trusted in the purification rituals and ordinances of the Law, could relate to. This manner of preaching the gospel presented redemption as a work called Sanctification.

To be sanctified by faith in Christ is neither a second work of grace, nor a progressive work. It is the work Christ accomplished upon the cross for us all and is very essence of salvation itself. When Jesus saved Paul on the road to Damascus and called him into the ministry, he said, *"...I send thee, To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among **them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.**"* *Acts 26:17-18*. The phrase *"sanctified by faith"* is synonymous with being *"saved by faith"* in Christ.

The opening words of several epistles confirm this equating of sanctification to be salvation. Paul opens his first epistle to Corinth, writing, *“Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, **to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus...**”* I Corinthians 1:2. The Apostle Peter writes his first epistle to the *“Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, **through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ...**”* I Peter 1:2. Jude also writes *“...**to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called.**”* Jude 1:1. Each of these epistles were addressed to an entire body of saints, and not only to certain ones who had reached a special spiritual plateau. Paul confirms that sanctification is the work of salvation when he says, *“God hath from the beginning **chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth.**”* II Thessalonians 2:13.

Many people believe you are first “born again” or “regenerated,” then sanctified at a later time. Paul’s words refuted this when he wrote, *“...according to his mercy **he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour.**”* Titus 3:5-6. There is no “regeneration” without “the washing of regeneration.” We are washed from our sin when we are born again of God’s Spirit!

Perhaps the clearest scriptural example of “*sanctified by faith*” is relayed to us by Peter when he spoke of the salvation of Cornelius and those with him. Peter said that God *“...put no difference between us and them, **purifying their***

hearts by faith.” Acts 15: 9. To have your heart purified by faith in Jesus Christ is what it means to be sanctified by faith. This is the work of salvation.

The book of Hebrews gives us the most detailed explanation of what it means to be sanctified. It begins by telling us Jesus Christ is the Son and express image of God who, **“when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.”** Hebrews 1:3. The power of this statement is revealed chapters later when we are told that **“...the worshippers *once purged should have had no more conscience of sins.*”** Hebrews 10:2. Your **“conscience”** speaks of your innermost thoughts and feelings. When a person is sanctified by faith in Christ, sin is washed from their heart, i.e. conscience. This is what Jesus spoke of as cleansing the inside of the cup. Matthew 23:26. When Jesus purges your sin, it no longer dwells in your heart, and so you no longer have **“a conscience of sins.”**

The book of Hebrews presents sanctification as a complete work Christ accomplishes in the believer. Multiple times it uses the word **“perfect,”** which means complete, to describe this work of Christ. It exposes the Law of Moses’s inability to make anything complete because it could only affect the **“outer man,”** or **“the flesh.”** The scripture says, **“For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, *sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh:*** (Can you see that the result of something being sanctified is that it is purified?) **How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, *purge***

your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" Hebrews 9:13-14. Anything that leaves a person with an unclean heart is more like the Law of Moses than it is the gospel of Christ. The sanctifying power of the blood of Christ cleanses a person from sin both inwardly and outwardly.

Our sanctification is the central purpose for which Christ suffered and died on the cross. The Bible says, **"Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate."** Hebrews 13:12. This cleansing power of the blood of Christ will avail for anyone who will simply believe the gospel and trust in Christ. We believe God, and he sanctifies us. This is what it means to be **"sanctified by faith."**