



BELIEVERS CHAPEL

6420 Churchill Way | Dallas, Texas | 75230 | t 972.239.5371 | believerschapeldallas.org

The Sermons of S. Lewis Johnson

Basic Bible Doctrine, Philippians 1:6; 2:12-13

"Sanctification in the Christian Life, Part I"

TRANSCRIPT

[Prayer] Our heavenly Father, we thank Thee and praise Thee for the Trinity; the Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit. The Father who is self-existent, eternal, immutable, infinite, full of grace, full of mercy, full of loving kindness, an infinite loving kindness, and we thank Thee for the Lord Jesus Christ, the second person of the Trinity, who is also very God of very God, and yet took to himself a human nature and has come and has completed the work of redemption, offering a sacrifice that is effective, substitutionary, and penal, satisfying all of the claims of God against us.

We rejoice, Lord, in the contemplation of the fact that our future is secure in the blood that Jesus Christ shed, and we thank Thee for the Holy Spirit who has applied the work of redemption in God's time to us. We thank Thee for the election in ages past which was brought to consummation in our repentance and faith and justification. We praise Thee for the justification by grace that we possess, and we realize that there is nothing in us that has made us acceptable to Thee. We rejoice, Lord, in it. We thank Thee for the privilege of opening the word of God; a wonderful gift to us full of promises to which Thou hast pledged Thyself, Thy faithfulness, Thy very nature and being.

And now we ask, Lord, that the Holy Spirit may continue his work in us by teaching us in this hour. We pray that the things that we learn may help us in our

Christian life to perform those acts of service that have been prepared for us before the foundation of the world. We remember that is what the apostle says, that we should walk in the works prepared for us before the foundation of the world. And so Lord, we pray that may come to pass and we ask that Thou would make us faithful servants of Thine in the preaching of the gospel to those who are lost. We thank Thee for those who preach to us, and we pray that we may respond with the same kind of love and affection for those with whom we come in contact. May we be instruments of their salvation, we do ask. In Jesus' name. Amen.

[Message] Tonight we are coming to the study of sanctification in our series of studies in basic biblical doctrine. What I would like to do for our Scripture reading is to read just a few verses in Paul's letter to the Philippians, because we will be in our series on sanctification referring to some of these texts more than once. The first one is in the 6th verse of the 1st chapter, one of the great verses of Paul's writings; Philippians 1:6. The apostle writes, "Being confident of this very thing, that he who hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."

Now let's turn over to chapter 2 and read verses 12 and 13. The apostle writes, "Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." Remember the apostle is writing this to believers, so he is not suggesting that a person may be saved by what he does. He is talking to believers who already have been saved, and he is exhorting them to produce the salvation that God has implanted within them in their daily lives. And if you wonder about the enablement for that, the next verse gives it. "For it is God who worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." So the willing and the doing are God's enablement for the working out of the divine salvation.

Now let's turn to the 3rd chapter and read beginning in verse 12. Philippians 3, verse 12, the apostle says,

"Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Let us therefore, as many as be perfect."

Incidentally, that is not a contradiction. Verse 15 said, "Let us therefore, as many as be perfect," but in verse 12 Paul had said, "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect."

Now this word in the 12th verse is a word that really is a verbal form and should be rendered perfected. "Not as though I had already attained or were already perfected."

What Paul is saying is he's not reached the stage of final sanctification, but nevertheless, he claims to be a mature believer, and there is such a thing as a mature believer and we ought to know whether we are mature believers or not. So he says, "Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, mature, be thus minded." So the perfect man, the mature believer is not yet perfected, but he has reached maturity. In natural life all of these things are beautifully illustrated, because we have a natural life. We are infants. We are children. We're young people. We become adults, mature, perfect, but that doesn't mean that we stop growing. We just have reached the stage of maturity, but we grow from that time on. We're not perfected yet, even though we may be mature. So that is what Paul means when he says,

"Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, mature, be thus minded: and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you. Nevertheless, as to that which we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule; let us mind the same thing.

Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them who walk even as ye have us for an

example. For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: Whose end is destruction, whose God is their appetite, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things."

So even in the apostle's day, there were people who were claiming to be followers of Christ who were really enemies of the cross of Christ according to the apostle. It's not surprising that in the Christian company then, we should find enemies of the cross of Christ. That may seem strange and there are a lot of people who are sweet, nice individuals and don't read their Bibles enough, and the result is they'd rather think that it's "judging" to say things like this, but the apostle is more interested in truth than in the opinions of the immature.

So there are people who are enemies of the cross of Christ, who nevertheless, fellowship with believers. So be on your guard. Watch those elders. Watch those deacons. Look at those others who are prominent in the church, but most of all watch yourself to be sure that you really are in the faith.

"For our citizenship," Paul concludes, "is in heaven; from where also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change our lowly body, that it may be fashioned like his glorious body, according to the working by which he is able even to subdue all things unto himself."

That's, of course, the last stage of sanctification. Our subject now is, Sanctification in the Christian Life. The work of sanctification is the climactic work of the Holy Spirit in the present life of the believer. We know from the word of God that the Father has designed the plan of redemption. The Son has carried it out by the atoning work. It is the work of the Holy Spirit to apply to the hearts of individuals, the elect, the saving benefits of the work of Jesus Christ.

Now once we have come into the Christian faith, we begin the living of the Christian life. The Christian life, as we shall see, is the life of growth. The reason that we are here so long is because God has a plan for our sanctification. It's rather interesting, is it not? For most of us, we live much longer in our Christian life than we did in our life before we became a Christian, which should give you some idea of the significance and importance of sanctification. It also may suggest to you that it is, humanly speaking, more difficult to sanctify a believer than it is to save one, but that's not true because it all really relates ultimately to the work of God. But he keeps us here because he is sanctifying us. He has a purpose for us. The fact that we are still here is a very optimistic thing. It means that God has some use for us, for each one of us.

There exists a great deal of confusion in the realm of the doctrine of sanctification. It seems strange that that should be so, but nevertheless, it is. There are some competing view points, for example. Romans Catholics have views concerning sanctification, but they are not clearly distinguished from views concerning justification. Justification is for the Roman Catholic an infusion of grace into an individual by means of the sacraments. The sacramental system being the system of baptism, the mass, and the various other of the seven sacraments recognized by the Roman Catholic Church. So that justification is an infusion of grace which becomes ours as we engage ourselves with God through the sacramental system. To have original sin removed, we must be baptized, and so on.

Now so far as sanctification is concerned for the Roman Catholics, there is not a clear distinction between sanctification and justification. Sanctification is for them a process of improvement which enables God to justify man. Now you can see from this that their doctrine of justification is really a doctrine of justification by works. So this infusion of grace by the sacraments is to secure the remission of original sin, and that process is considered to be sanctification.

Now the Bible, as a simple reading of it, I think will indicate, does not support the essence of that system. There is another view point that is widespread in confessing

Christianity and that is, I'll just call this, the Wesleyan View. Now the Wesleyan's view of sanctification is a teaching that is a process of improvement in the life of a believer which may be completed while we are still here in the flesh. In other words, it is possible by the teaching of perfection to arrive at the state of perfection. Now let me hasten to explain that Wesleyan's do not believe that a person ever as long as he's in the flesh reaches the state where he does not have any sin. Perfection is for him not the kind of perfection that you and I think of. That person will still be subject to involuntary transgressions, but these are not called sins.

As a matter of fact, in Wesleyan terminology, sin is not what it is in the terminology of the reformed people or the Calvinists or the Lutherans. So that sin is, so far as by definition, referred to those voluntary transgressions. Involuntary transgressions and transgressions that are minor are not transgressions that can prevent us from reaching the stage of perfection. So just remember this is a rather simple treatment and, of course, they're many things left out and it probably would be unfair to them to say this is all they teach, but nevertheless, just remember that perfectionism does not mean that a person is absolutely perfect. Occasionally, we misunderstand them, and they are very much offended by the fact that we would think that they think they believe that a person can reach the stage of sinlessness. They cannot. They do not believe that we can reach the stage of sinlessness in the common, ordinary sense. But John Wesley did believe in perfectionism, and the Wesleyans do believe that you can reach a state where you are in the position of living in perfect love; not that you will not fall into sin or commit involuntary transgressions, but they do not have the same status before God as the voluntary, willful kinds of sins.

The reformed interpreters of the Bible, Presbyterians, the Reformed churches, and generally speaking, also the Anglican churches and others sympathetic with them, have taught that sanctification is a process of improvement that is completed only at the death of the believer. That he is justified by faith in Jesus Christ. He begins to live the Christian

life. There is a time of growth that begins then and it continues as long as he is in the flesh. It is not completed till either he dies or he goes into the presence of the Lord at the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now that I think is the biblical teaching. This is the teaching, incidentally, of the Lutherans as well. I think this is the biblical teaching, although it is not really all the teaching, and I'm sure there are many of those Reformed and Lutheran men who would agree. The confusion exists because in evangelicalism there is a confusion of Wesleyanism and Reformed thinking. So we have people who do believe we are sinless already. Then there are some who say the way to be sanctified is to "let go and let God". You often hear people use little formulas like this, and frequently in evangelicalism you will be told that the thing that is necessary for sanctification is that we surrender to the will of God. Others not liking the thought of surrender to the will of God since it's only found in passages that suggest yielding and without some word of explanation gives the wrong impression, like the term "abide" as a term for sanctification.

I was taught when I went to theological seminary that the way to grow in grace was to be filled with the Spirit, and out of the filling of the Spirit would flow a sanctified life, and the way to be filled with the Spirit was to quench not the Spirit, grieve not the Spirit, and walk by the Spirit. Well, all of those were biblical expressions and they sounded very good until you asked, well how can I do that? Because quench not the Spirit, first place, I think that was taken out of context, but quench not the Spirit, grieve not the Spirit, that was in context, walk by the Spirit are certainly biblical injunctions, but anyone who has every tried to do these in his own strength will learn quite soon if he is honest with himself, that they are impossible injunctions to carry out. Then there are some that talk about the "faith rest life". Most of these little formulas are bootstrapping it. They are means by which we sanctify ourselves in the finally analysis because the decision rests upon a free act of the human will. Even the man who many years ago taught me most fully in the realm of sanctification taught, though he did believe in the

doctrine of the bondage of the will, that there was a measure of the freedom of the will in sanctification, and that our sanctification was really traceable to that act of the free will. That, of course, was Semi-Pelagianism in the realm of Christian living.

Well, now in our studies and I think we'll probably have at least two nights on sanctification. I set it up first for three, but I believe perhaps we can cover it in two. I'd like to talk about what the Bible has to say about sanctification and try to clarify some of the things that I think have been misunderstood.

Now always when you talk about biblical things it is helpful to look at the biblical terminology. So we're going to look at the biblical terminology of sanctification first. There are two words. There is one Hebrew word which I've transliterated it *qaddash*. Hebrew, *qaddash*, and then the Greek word, *hagiasmos*, which I've also transliterated there. These are the two words. The Hebrew word being the primary word of the Old Testament, and *hagiasmos*, being the primary word of the New Testament. The Hebrew term *qaddash* originally had the idea of separation or withdrawal, the idea of setting apart for a particular purpose. The idea of separating something from someone else for a specific purpose was often involved. The idea of withdrawing, which also contained the idea of separation is involved in it.

Now we must not think that its basic idea was holiness in the sense of purity. It primarily in its basic idea was a verb of location. A verb of, well, position. Let me show you that it did not have the sense of moral purity in its fundamental meaning by asking you to turn in the Old Testament to a couple of passages that I think will illustrate this. First of all, will you turn to Deuteronomy chapter 23; Deuteronomy chapter 23 and verse 18 and verse 19. Now we read here,

"Thou shalt not bring the hire of a harlot, or the price of a dog, into the house of the Lord thy God for any vow: for even both these are abomination unto the Lord thy God. Thou

shalt not lend upon interest to thy brother; interest of money, interest of victuals, interest of any thing that is lent upon interest."

Notice the expression, I guess I probably should have used verse 17, "There shall not be a harlot of the daughters of Israel, nor a sodomite of the sons of Israel." Verses 17 and 18 are the two key verses. Notice those words translated in the Authorized Version, "harlot, sodomite," and then, "harlot," in verse 18. It's surprising to realize that these words for harlot, for sodomite are words built on the same root as the root *qaddash*. Now for example, the word *qaddash* is the masculine and *qaddasha* is the feminine. One referring to the male prostitute, the other to the female prostitute; the harlot or the sodomite, these two words are from *qaddash*.

Now the reason for that is that frequently in the worship of the heathen religions, involved in the worship of the heathen religions were prostitutes, both male and female who were attached to a particular temple. Since often the gods were fertility gods that the people worshipped, it came to be regarded as an act of worship for an individual to have intercourse with one of the temple prostitutes. It came to be a religious activity, so that they were called *qaddash/qaddasha*. That is they were individuals who were separated to the temple for a particular task, for a religious task, as well as for a sexual task.

Of course, it was not purely religious. It was a means by which they used their religion for sexual gratification, but nevertheless, it illustrates that the word *qaddash* and the word *qaddasha*, are words that refer to sacred persons and show us that this word sanctification has basically the idea of separation positionally. For example, if I were to take this book here and I were to put it over here for use in some purpose, I could say I have sanctified that book. Well, I could say I have sanctified this book for Mr. McCracken to use on Sunday morning when he leads the singing. I would merely mean I have set it apart for a particular relatively secular task.

Now the same thing holds true of the Greek word, *hagiasmos*, in the New Testament. This Greek verb connotes the same fundamental idea of separation, and it may be given the general meaning of "to set apart". It goes not itself, of itself, have any necessary significance of moral purity except in so far as something that is set apart for the Lord God. Well, naturally, since its set apart for him have associated with it the idea of moral purity because God is a being of moral purity.

Well, let's turn over to John chapter 10 and verse 36 and take a look at a couple of places where the Greek word is found, and I think you will see from this that the idea of moral purity is a secondary meaning of the word sanctification. John chapter 10 and verse 36 reads this way, "Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God?" Now it says here that the Father has sanctified Jesus Christ and has sent him into the world. It is clear that this passage cannot here mean "to make holy". The Father did not make the Son holy. The Son was holy.

Now when we turn over to John 17 and verse 19, we'll see the same usage of the term. John 17, verse 19, the Lord Jesus is speaking here in his high priestly intercessory prayer and he prays to the Father, "And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth." Now Jesus Christ does not make himself holy. What he is talking about is going to the cross and accomplishing the work of redemption. So when he says, "For their sakes I set myself apart," he means, for their sakes, that is for their benefit, for their saving benefit, I set myself apart for the work of the cross in order that they might be sanctified through the truth; that they might be set apart for you. Because the only way in which we can be set apart for him is for him to be set apart to be our atoning sacrifice and then the Holy Spirit apply that to us and make us individuals who are set apart for the glory of God. *Hagiasmos* is the verb related to the adjective *hagias*, which is translated in the New Testament, saint.

Now the saints at Philippi, or the saints in Ephesus, or the saints at Corinth were *hagioi*, that is holy ones. They were set apart for the Lord God. They're not yet holy. They're not inherently, morally pure yet for the work of sanctification has just begun, but their position is that of individuals set apart for the Lord God. So when we speak of an individual in the New Testament as a saint, we're not saying that he is morally pure yet, although there is a definitive change that is taking place in him and he is not like people who are unholy. He is not like the world. He is not like the unjust, but nevertheless, he is not yet morally pure. He has been set apart for the purposes of a holy God and a definitive change has taken place in his life.

So moral holiness is a necessary derived force from the sense of the term sanctification, when God is in view, but the word itself doesn't necessarily mean anything more than separated. All right, now let's keep that in mind. It is possible for every believer to be called holy; a holy one. The angels are called holy ones because they are set apart for a purpose. We are called holy ones because we are set apart for a purpose. The Lord Jesus is called the holy one of God because he is set apart for a particular redeeming purpose. It's possible for us to speak of other believers as saints. So in spite of the way that you look and in spite of the way that you sometimes act, if you have believed in Jesus Christ you are saints. So I greet you, you saints, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. You can be Saint Mary or Saint Martha or Saint Louis or Saint Emily and there may be a Saint John or a Saint James, it is possible for men to be saints too. These terms merely mean we are set apart for a particular purpose.

Now let's turn secondly, to the biblical concept of sanctification. I want you to notice here that I have listed four different types of sanctification. What I've called preparatory sanctification, positional sanctification, progressive sanctification, and prospective sanctification. Now isn't that lovely? So beautifully alliterated and it's not good to alliterate if it doesn't make sense, but in this case it makes sense.

Preparatory sanctification, let's begin there. In a moment, I'll show you a diagram which I hope will clarify things a little bit for you. Let's turn to 2 Thessalonians chapter 2 and verse 13. 2 Thessalonians chapter 2, verse 13; this is the text that we looked at not long ago when we were talking about election, but it has other truths that are expressed in it as well. "But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation." Remember we said that we have in this text an indication of the fact that the source of the divine election is the divine sovereign love, because he says, "Brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation," and we pointed out that this text does say that an individual is chosen for salvation. Some individuals, the Arminian brethren, the Arminian saints, some of them, they like to think that because they don't like to think very much about this doctrine of election anyway, but they don't like the reformed doctrine or the Pauline doctrine. Let's use that term. They are synonymous in this case at least; they don't like that doctrine so they say that election is for service not for salvation. Now election is for service, but it's more than just that. You can see that he has "from the beginning chosen you to salvation," but now notice, "through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth."

Now I want you to notice sanctification first. That's the word that comes from the same root as this Greek *hagiasmos*. Sanctification, to sanctify, holy, holiness, saint, all of those words in English come from the same Greek root translated sometimes holiness, sometimes sanctification. Notice now, he says he has "chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth," and notice the order. It is sanctification of the Spirit first, and then belief of the truth. In other words, from the order of the words, one might think that the apostle is speaking of sanctification as a work that precedes belief.

Now since repentance and faith are associated with our initiation into salvation, this sanctification must be on the order of the words here, something that precedes the

believer's repentance and faith. What is it that precedes a believer's repentance and faith? Now Arminians say it is the free exercise of the human will; that is our salvation is traced to our free decision. But the Apostle Paul and the New Testament writers trace our decision of the will to the previous working of the Holy Spirit. "No man can come to me except the Father which has sent me draw him," Jesus says. So evidently, the work of the Holy Spirit is the work of the Father in drawing a believer to Christ. It's called sanctification in this instance.

Now someone might say, well now Dr. Johnson that makes sense here. Sanctification precedes belief and certainly sanctification of the Spirit, a setting apart of the Holy Spirit to believe is what we're taught in the Bible as a pre-salvation ministry of the Spirit, but sanctification I always thought that term applied to someone who was already a Christian? Well, of course, I could argue just on this one verse and say, well you must change your idea of what that term means, because if it clearly means that here, we must broaden our sense of the meaning of that term. Fortunately, we have another place where it is used in this same sense, and it's used by a different author of the New Testament. It's in 1 Peter chapter 1 and verse 2. The Apostle Peter writing says, and while you're finding 1 Peter, it is just before 2 Peter,

"Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the sojourners scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ."

Again, notice the order. It is the "elect through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." Unto faith and the application of the blood of Christ which he shed for our sins, so the election is through the setting apart ministry of the Holy Spirit unto the obedience of faith. Again, the sanctification of the Spirit is a

preparatory work. So we can speak of sanctification then, as a work of the Holy Spirit done preparing us for our salvation. That's preparatory sanctification.

Now very few theologians who recognize this, and I want to be very frank with you, very few recognize this particular text as meaning that. What they like to talk about is simply the doctrine of efficacious grace. That's alright. I have no objections to that whatsoever. If I were speaking to you of efficacious grace, that is the work of the Holy Spirit in bringing us to faith, I would say these two texts, 2 Timothy 2:13, 1 Peter chapter 1, verse 2, are texts that refer to the doctrine of efficacious or irresistible grace. All I want you to note is, that the term sanctification is used in a broader sense than simply the work that he does on us as believers. So that's the first thing, preparatory sanctification.

Now let's look secondly at positional sanctification. Positional sanctification and we'll turn to that passage that I listed on our outline, 1 Corinthians chapter 1 and verse 2. This is also a rather interesting passage and I want you to be sure and take a look at it. While you're looking at it, I'll just turn to the Greek text here, which after all, is the inspired text, is it not? 1 Corinthians chapter 1 and verse 2, the apostle in this epistle which has to do with so much of the every day life of local churches writes,

"Paul, called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God, and Sosthenes the brother," (Evidently that article means the well known brother that you know about. You can turn to the Book of Acts and find out who he is.) "To the church of God which is in Corinth, to ones sanctified in Christ Jesus, called saints, with all who call upon the name of our Lord, Jesus Christ."

Now notice they are called saints, called saints or saints by calling; individuals who have been set apart for divine use by calling. What's the calling? Well, that's the Holy Spirit working in efficacious grace. He has called, just as he called Abraham out of Ur of the Chaldees, so he called me out of Birmingham, Alabama; not a whole lot of difference

between the two. They're spelled differently, but the same kind of life in Ur of the Chaldees existed in Birmingham, Alabama and I was called out of Birmingham, Alabama and so are you. You might have been called out of Dallas, Texas or wherever it might be. You are a holy one, a called one, a saint by calling. That's your characteristic. You're a called individual. That's what Paul means when he says, "a called saint." But now he addresses this to those who, now the Authorized Version reads, "To them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus." Now that is a verbal form and literally it means, to those who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus.

Now the striking thing about that is that this is a perfect tense, therefore, it refers ordinarily to an action that took place in the past time, the results of which continued to the time referred to in the context. So when he said that these believers are individuals who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus, he means there was a time when they were set apart and they now may be called sanctified individuals. That's startling, isn't it? We are sanctified, he says. We've actually been sanctified and the results continue.

Now the fact that we're called saints supports that, but what does Paul mean when he calls us "those who have been sanctified"? Well, obviously, we are not yet what he is making us, because by the preaching and teaching of the word of God, by the reading of the word of God, by the seeking to carry out the word of God in our lives, we are growing. The ministry of the Holy Spirit is working in our lives to conform us to the likeness of Christ. We're not yet there. In case you have any doubts about it, ask your wife, men. Ask your husbands, ladies. Ask your parents, children. Ask your children, parents. They know you. They know you're not sanctified yet, and if you don't have any of those, just ask some of the other believers. They will tell you, and that's a good thing to do every now and then too, because we can get kind of cocky. We really, really think that we've been making great progress when perhaps; we haven't been making as much progress as we think. But the Bible does say that we are sanctified.

Now in what sense can we be said to have been sanctified and yet at the same time to be being sanctified in our life? Well, we must make some distinction then. That's why, incidentally, theology is necessary. Otherwise, we have to confusion. People say, well, don't preach theology just preach the Bible. My dear friend, if you preach the Bible, you preach theology. If you don't make distinctions, you leave people in confusion. If you read these things and you don't know how to distinguish them, if you're reading at all and trying to understand you'll be confused.

So what we say then, is there is such a thing as positional sanctification. That is our status before the Lord God. The moment that we believe, we before him because of the merits of Christ are reckoned to us, we stand already in the position of individuals who have been sanctified.

Now that's a rather interesting use of the word that I'm going to compare it with justification, because we've been talking a lot about justification recently, not only here, not only on Sunday morning, but even in this Lord's Supper meetings when individuals have gotten up and they want to say their word about it too. That's perfectly alright. Sanctification refers to our holy status or condition before the Lord God.

Now when we talk about justification, we say a person by faith in Jesus Christ is justified, we mean he is declared righteous before the Lord God, and thus, he can stand before God as the Judge of the universe and stand before him righteously, acquitted of any sins of omission or commission by virtue of the imputation to him of the merits of Jesus Christ and the forgiveness of his sins of omission or commission.

Now this positional sanctification is a different figure of the same thing. Just as in justification we stand in the presence of a Judge who declares us righteous, so by positional sanctification we are declared by God to be fit for worship in the temple of God. It's a term that has to do with worship in the temple of God. And so, we are saints, therefore, able to approach God in worship. We are justified ones or just ones, and therefore, we can stand before God knowing we have the righteousness of Jesus Christ.

Now I did say I was going to let you look at my diagram. Just look at it for a minute. This one is an old one that is not too good as far as art is concerned. So I apologize for that. [Laughter] I did that hastily, but there is a lot revealed here. Now here is the cross, this is primary or preparatory justifications. You see, I could have used another P, primary sanctification. That's number one. That's the work of the Holy Spirit in bringing us to the cross. The moment that we believe in Jesus Christ we are reckoned to have one hundred percent holiness. So we stand here at the cross receiving the forgiveness of sins and as we do we are reckoned by God to have been not only been justified but sanctified so positionally we stand here with one hundred percent holiness. We've been brought by the Holy Spirit to the cross and now we stand saints of God with one hundred percent holiness.

Now those are the two aspects of sanctification that we have looked at so far. Our time is up. We'll have to stop at this point. Next time we will continue at this point and discuss further features of the doctrine of sanctification. Let's close in a word of prayer.

[Prayer] Father, we are grateful to Thee for the privilege of the study of the Scriptures. We thank Thee for the way in which Thou hast spoken to us concerning the Christian life in the word of God, and we know, Lord, it is not difficult to understand what the Bible has say about sanctification. It's only difficult to us with the sin principle still dwelling within us to be subordinated to the ministry of the Holy Spirit. Oh, God, deliver us from sin, enable us to put off the old man and put on the new and glorify Thee because of the great work of grace which Thou hast accomplished in our lives.

And Father, if there should be someone here who has not yet believed, who has not yet come to the cross, in whom perhaps the Holy Spirit is working right now in preparatory sanctification, oh, complete that work. Bring them to the knowledge of him who has died for sins that they too might become saints and begin to grow in holiness. For Jesus' sake. Amen.