

Justified and Sanctified?

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Date: 21 March 2022

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[0 : 00] I hope it's been clear throughout this entire course, which started in September, that when it comes to personal holiness, we are commanded to strive.

! That's the command in Scripture. To strive for holiness. And there is no Scripture that ever tells us in this life we're going to arrive.

But that's our goal. We're striving for that goal. One second after we get to heaven, we will have arrived.

But even in the striving, we face what seems to be a Herculean task. Is that how you say that? Like Hercules. So, you know, how can we win the battle against sin? Okay. That's what I want to talk about.

[1 : 15] Because it's crucial in the striving for holiness. Because we've got to deal with personal sin. And how do we win that battle?

And the truth is, we live in a world that's dominated by sin. Just absolutely dominated.

It presses in upon us. It enters our homes through television, movies, even catalogs.

I remember hearing Dr. MacArthur one time saying, they canceled all catalogs. He didn't want a Sears catalog because of some of the pictures that were in there.

Trying to lure us into buying their products. In the middle of preparing this, I saw an advertisement just a few days ago from Zales Jewelry Store that showed a lineup of recently engaged couples showing off their rings.

[2 : 29] They'd bought at Zales. And in the spirit of political correctness, there was a man and a woman showing off their rings.

There were two men showing off their rings. And there were two women showing off their rings. I wonder how long before it'll be a dog and whatever, you know.

Those days are coming. Today the news is or involves a University of Pennsylvania swimmer by the name of Leah Thomas.

She is being proclaimed as the greatest woman swimmer of all time. She breaks records usually whenever she enters the pool.

But there's a problem. Leah Thomas was born Tom Thomas. Until a year or two ago, he was always a male.

[3 : 38] But he's now decided he is a female. And so he is allowed to compete against females. And he's winning almost every time he swims.

Currently, Leah is the number one ranked female swimmer in the world. When he was still swimming as a man, the best ranking he ever had in the world was 462.

So it shows you the difference. All that, of course, being supported by the United States government, by courts. And they've declared that anyone in opposition to this is homophobic and racist.

Talking to Vince Smith. Some of you know Vince. A black fellow who used to be in our church and best friends. And he said, how if you oppose homosexuality, do you become a racist?

You know, I'm offended by that as a black man. You know, how do you make that leap? But all this and a lot more is pressing in on us from all sides.

[4 : 54] The Bible warned about a day when wrong would seem right. And we're there. We're there. This is the world in which our sons and daughters and our grandchildren, and for a few of us in here, great-grandchildren, are being raised.

And I'm looking at some of you young guys in here. I don't know how you do it or how you're going to do it. I pray for you. I think any guys in here my age or a little bit older would tell you we would cancel you any time you come to us, but I honestly don't know.

It's a tough, tough world. In striving for holiness, we are in a death struggle against sin. How are we going to win that battle? That is no small question. Well, let me tell you the first step in the victory.

We turn to God's Word. We open up the Bible. And we examine in depth what God has to say.

[6 : 20] And we're going to look at it in depth because we've got eight more of these sessions before we shut down for the summer.

And now, if I say anything tonight that is repetitious, let me just say to you, it is.

Some of this we've looked at, not perhaps at this level, but it is vitally important for us as we pursue holiness in an unholy world.

And that's been our theme now for quite a while. I want to return. We were here some weeks ago. I want to return to the opening words of Romans chapter 6.

I'm going to read the first seven verses. What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin so that grace may increase?

[7 : 22] May it never be. I'm told that declaration, may it never be, in whatever form in your translation is, that's as strong as it gets in the Greek language.

It's no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no. Paul says, how should we who died to sin still live in it? Or do you not know that all of us have been baptized into Christ Jesus those of us who have been baptized into Christ have been baptized into His death?

Therefore, we have been buried with Him through baptism into death so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.

For if we have become united with Him, in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall also be in the likeness of His resurrection.

Knowing this, that our old self was crucified with Him in order that our body of sin might be done away with so that we would no longer be slaves to sin for He who has died is freed from sin.

[8 : 47] Now skip forward one chapter. This is Romans 7, first six verses. Or do you not know, brothers and sisters?

For I am speaking to those who know the law, that the law has jurisdiction over a person as long as he lives. For the married woman is bound by law to her husband as long as he is alive.

But if her husband dies, she is released from the law concerning the husband. So then, if while her husband is alive, she gives herself to another man, she will be called an adulteress.

But if her husband dies, she is free from the law so that she is not adulterous if she gives herself to another man. Therefore, my brothers and sisters, you also were put to death in regard to the law through the body of Christ so that you might belong to another, to Him who was raised from the dead in order that we might bear fruit for God.

For while we were in the flesh, the sinful passions, which were brought to light by the law, were at work in the parts of our body to bear fruit for death.

[10 : 06] But now we have been released from the law, having died to that by which we were bound so that we serve in newness of the Spirit and not in oldness of the letter.

Now, this leads to a vitally important question. Do those inspired words that I just read inspired words of Scripture describe you and I?

And what do I mean by that? So I want you to answer these questions, not out loud, not to your neighbor, but inside you, in your heart.

Answer these questions. Can we say that we are no longer a slave to sin? Can we say that we are marked out by newness of life?

Can we say that sin has lost its mastery in our life? Can we say we are freed from sin? Can we say we no longer operate only in the flesh?

[11 : 18] can we say sinful passions do not dominate us producing in us the fruit of death can we say since we have died to sin we have also died to passion and lust that once bound us up in slavery and that slavery has been broken can we say we have died and have risen to a new master the Lord Jesus Christ and now we are slaves to Christ and are empowered by sovereign authority namely the indwelling Holy Spirit can we say we are now possessors of eternal life and now instead of bringing forth fruit to death we bring forth fruit unto God well what is all that what is all that that is a description of the sanctified man being recreated in the image of Christ so the question this evening for each of us to ask ourselves internally does that describe me?

does that describe you? it does if you've been justified by God now wait a minute how do we jump from sanctification to justification and additionally do you remember from a previous studies a few years ago the definition of justification justification by faith is the declaration that the person justified has been restored to a state of righteousness through belief and trust and trust in the work of Christ rather than on the basis of one's own accomplishments that is described perfectly in 2nd Corinthians 5:21 he made him that is the father made Christ who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf so that we might become the righteousness of God in him now again a truthful answer to these questions in the affirmative means you are a sanctified man and the only way you can be sanctified is by being first justified that's got to come first sanctification is true of every justified believer if you have been justified you are also sanctified the two are inseparable and again when we talk about justification we say that justification is a declaration by God in which he declares that we are righteous it is not that we are righteous that my works finally reached a level of absolute righteousness it is by faith in Christ that he declares us to be righteous God declares that we are righteous by crediting his own righteousness through Christ to us so that we are covered literally with the righteousness of God in Christ that is why we are justified or declared righteous righteous because we have literally been given credit for the perfect righteousness of God in Christ but is it not true that we are being sanctified presently aren't we being sanctified well yes that is true then how can I stand up there and say you've already been sanctified because it is God who makes this declaration so let me describe it to you this way positionally in the mind of God we are sanctified and we are at the same time experiencing in this life progressive sanctification and we'll do so until we depart this life through death or the rapture and you may sit there and say

I can't understand that well God can aren't you glad he's got all that figured out think back to Romans 5 for just a moment in verse 19 for as through the one man's disobedience that's Adam the many were made sinners by the way just so there's no doubt I was one of those many through Adam many were made sinners even so through the obedience of one that's Christ the many will be made righteous that is a very important statement of fact do some business with that this week Romans 5:19 it's very important if you have been declared righteous you've also been made righteous in the mind and heart of God if you have been justified you've also been sanctified in the mind and heart of God made righteous in the Greek language means to make or to constitute it is not that you want to be righteous it is not that you hope to be righteous it's not that you attempt to be righteous but you are now made righteous by something outside of yourself in justification you are declared righteous because the righteousness of God in Christ is credited to you so there's a declaration you're declared in sanctification you are made righteous little hairs there that we can split we are declared in the one and made in the other in other words there is a real transformation and how many times have you ever met

God oh I've been saved yeah I went forward in a church when I was nine years old my mom made me and there's been no change none we are declared in the one made in the other in other words there is this real transformation regeneration new birth conversion we looked at all those things for three years when you were regenerated and given life and you repented and believed you were justified and you were made righteous I want to look three additional verses in Romans chapter 6 6:11 consider yourselves to be dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus verse 17 thanks be to God that though you were slaves of sin you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were committed and having been freed from sin you became slaves of righteousness then in

[19:42] Romans 6:24 when you were slaves of sin you were freed in regard to righteousness therefore what benefit were you then deriving from the things of which you are now shamed for the outcome of those things is death but now having been freed from sin and enslaved to God you derive your benefit resulting in sanctification and the outcome eternal life that's the outcome of all this eternal life with the Lord these verses are all facts and this is all stated as reality and is true of every follower of Christ everyone it is true to say of you you are no longer a slave to sin you've been freed from sin you've died to sin you've been given new life since mastery has been done away you are freed from sin you have died to the passions that drove you no longer bound as a slave to sin but now a slave to righteousness now it's at this point that I'm going to start to meddle a little bit and I'm going to do so with a question does that describe you again talk to yourself not to your neighbor do all those things describe you or does it in fact sound like an overstatement does it in fact sound too extreme does it sound like you wouldn't qualify for all of that that has been described thus far if

you are like me it sounds very extreme very extreme but here is a statement

I want you to hang your hat on because that's where I had to hang mine because I reflected on this a lot this past week here's the statement are you ready whatever it sounds like to you or me is irrelevant now how can I say that because this is how God describes a true believer having been justified you are also sanctified those are God's words not mine so this begs another question are we passive in all this you remember the stump talked about that a lot the last few years are we merely sitting on that stump waiting on God to see if he'll justify us or sanctify us the short answer is no we are not passive

God doesn't intend for us to be passive and we're not passive if we're being led by the Holy Spirit what does God have to say about it Romans 6 13 do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin as instruments of unrighteousness!

but present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead and your members as instruments of righteousness how can we do that when we're confronted with sin well you might start by telling the source I belong to another that's absolutely righteous Romans 6 19 I'm speaking in human terms because of the weakness of your flesh for just as you presented your members as slaves to impurity and to lawlessness resulting in further lawlessness so now present your members as slaves to righteousness resulting in sanctification so in both verses 13 and 19 we are commanded not to present ourselves to unrighteousness!

but to present ourselves to righteousness in other words we are not passive we are not sitting on a stump doing nothing sanctification is a reality but we are not passive in that operation Romans 6 22 having been freed from sin and enslaved to God you derive your benefit resulting in sanctification the outcome is eternal life this says that when you become enslaved to God by that we mean the Trinity when you become enslaved to God the benefit is sanctification in other words what God has done leads to our sanctification but back in verse 19 it says at the end of that verse as you present your members as slaves to righteousness it results in sanctification so what

[25 : 24] God does results in sanctification and what we do results in sanctification exactly the same phrase our sanctification is attributed to God the work he is doing and we too are active as we present our members to him sanctification is a fact all of these things are true about you if you have been justified justification is the key it unlocks a door that ushers in sanctification when God credits your account with his righteousness we are no longer in bondage to sin and you are no longer under the threat of the law sentence that's been removed the law ministered death you understand that the law didn't save anybody the law kills but then reality sets in

I look at myself and I say Lord this seems like an overstatement I know me and you know me I'm very aware of the reality of sin in my life so how am I to understand that I am simultaneously righteous but sinful and you may remember two or three years ago we studied that employing a Latin phrase which I'm going to mispronounce because I like this pronunciation better it's simul iustus et peccator at any given moment I am simultaneously just and a sinner in this life how are we to grasp this well it's critical that we do because we need to understand the pathology of our own spirituality so that we can honor God and deal with sin in our life and he's doing that that is a fact but the operation of that process requires our obedience we've been called to be obedient what do you do if you're not obedient that's where you confess and get right with the Lord now you may be struggling with some of this and this is just the first of several lessons on it but if you're struggling you're in good company

I struggle with it but I'm not the good company the apostle Paul struggled with it apostle Paul struggled with it this is the guy we would put forward as the greatest Christian that ever lived after he met Jesus on the road to Damascus not before not before he was busy murdering Christians Paul struggled with this and you need only to read intensely the sixth and seventh chapters of Romans to understand the battle he was waging with sin I'll tell you I can read those and I read them this week I can read those and tear up yesterday I read five six and seven and Romans eight one but we need to read it intently and understand the battle that Paul was in waging this battle with sin and Paul uses some very interesting language in Romans chapter seven wretched man that I am that's his declaration the guy that we said hey he's on the mountaintop he's number one greatest Christian ever left and what does he say to us from that mountaintop wretched man that I am and then he says who will set me free from this body from the body of this death who's going to set me free from this body of death can you feel the angst in Paul's statement again this is the man many would put up as the greatest

Christian ever live following the Damascus encounter in fact some denominations are so upset with the idea that a Christian could utter these words they try and build a scenario well all this is before Paul got saved there's no scriptural evidence to that in my view this is not prior to Paul's conversion I just don't think that'll fly but this is the great apostle Paul author of 13 books of the New Testament missionary founder of churches who provided us with the blueprint of Christian living for the church and he's crying out in terror how he views his life his own life what a wretched man I am who's going to deliver me from this body of death how can

[31 : 30] Paul declare himself to be a wretched man if Paul's a wretched man what am I where's that leave me and what is this body of death clinging to him those are really all good questions they really are and we're going to address every one of them next time so y'all need to be back and bring a friend and bring food we're going to answer every one of those and some more and move deeper in this we're going to culminate this whole section before we shut it down with some very encouraging news

I promise you that let's close in prayer father thank you for your word which is absolutely true without any shade or shadow of untruth or error we thank you lord that in your sovereignty you chose us you gifted us with faith and justification and sanctification and even now you're growing us and you've provided your son to be the propitiation for our sins there's no wrath left father for your children the lord took it all and we thank him in his holy name amen