

Sanctification



Introduction

In our study of the Third Article we learn not only what or who the Holy Spirit is, but also what the Holy Spirit does. There is the Holy Spirit's completed work in us by bringing us to faith and causing our reception of salvation. There is also the Holy Spirit's ongoing work in us by leading us to live out our faith in thankful obedience to God every day.

Opening Prayer: Dear heavenly Father, we pray to you as Jesus did: Through the work of your Spirit, sanctify us by the truth; your Word is truth. Amen.

Define sanctity—

Define sanctify—

Define sanctification—

Lesson Aim: How does the Bible describe the work of the Holy Spirit?

Part One

Read Ephesians 2:1.

1) This passage brings out why we need the Holy Spirit to bring us to faith and to take care of it all for us. Because of sin, what condition are we in spiritually?

2) What are dead people able to do?

From birth we are already sinful and incapable of doing anything to improve our spiritual condition. We are already dead. We can't do anything. We need someone else to help us, someone else to make us alive. The Holy Spirit does that for us by planting and working saving faith in our hearts. The Bible uses terms like "regeneration" or "rebirth" to describe this and teaches that the Holy Spirit's bringing people to faith is like giving people a second birth. What contribution did you make to your first birth? None. So also, when the Holy Spirit takes someone like you who was spiritually dead and makes you alive, you made no contribution to that either. The Bible uses these terms to help us understand the wonderful miracle the Holy Spirit worked in us by bringing us to faith. We study conversion with more detail and extent in Year A Lesson 12.

Read 1 Corinthians 6:11.

3) Sinful and dead is what we were. But then what happened?

4) This passage credits the work of sanctification as the work of whom?

5) To what other works of God does this passage closely connect sanctification?

Read 2 Thessalonians 2:13.

This passage is a good summary of Christian sanctification in the broad sense. The Holy Spirit's work is called sanctification because by bringing us to faith, he washes away all our sins and turns us away from the sinful world to live holy lives along with all other believers. The means the Holy Spirit uses to bring us to faith and sanctify us is the gospel, specifically, in his Word and the sacraments (means of grace).

KEY POINT 1 - The Holy Spirit sanctifies us in the broad sense by making us holy before God through our faith in Jesus.

What I've learned so far:

Part Two

Read Luke 19:1-10.

- 1) Describe Zacchaeus' employment, appearance, and attitude about seeing Jesus.
- 2) What did Zacchaeus attitude about wanting to see Jesus lead him to do?
- 3) How did most people feel about tax collectors in Jesus' day?
- 4) When Jesus saw Zacchaeus up in the tree, what did he say to him?
- 5) What did this show about how Jesus felt about Zacchaeus and what Jesus had done for him?
- 6) How did Zacchaeus show he was thankful for forgiveness? (What did he do after receiving salvation?)
- 7) Verse 8 is Zacchaeus' response to Jesus' love. Did Zacchaeus do those good things to earn anything?

Read Acts 2:42-47.

- 8) Verse 42 lists four things that the early Christians devoted themselves to. What are they?
- 9) How did their devotion to these four things affect their conduct and behavior?
- 10) How often did they meet together to share God's Word and encourage each other?
- 11) How did the Holy Spirit bless their fellowship?

Read Acts 4:32-37.

- 12) Verse 32 mentions a blessing that was worked in these Christians by the Holy Spirit. What was it?
- 13) How else was the Holy Spirit blessing the early Christian Church?
- 14) In particular, how did the believers show their faith?
- 15) Why were they led to do this?
- 16) What sanctification is evident by the nickname that was given to Joseph from Cyprus?

Read Ephesians 3:16.

The Holy Spirit also strengthens our faith continually through God's Word until we enter heaven. The Holy Spirit does this so that the devil, the world, and our sinful nature will not cause us to lose God's blessings.

KEY POINT 1 - The Holy Spirit sanctifies us in the narrow sense by leading us to live out our faith by showing love to God and others.

What I've learned so far:

Part Three

Study pages 195-202 in the Catechism and answer the following questions in your own words.

- 1) What is the work of the Holy Spirit called?
- 2) In what three ways does the Bible describe or picture the Holy Spirit's work of bringing us to faith?
- 3) List and describe the gifts the Holy Spirit enables and allows us to enjoy.
- 4) What enemies try to weaken Christians' faith and hinder sanctification?
- 5) What does the Holy Spirit do about those enemies?

Helpful Passages

Psalm 119:105

How do we know if something is pleasing to God or not?

Romans 8:7

Without the Holy Spirit, describe how we regard God's Word?

1 Corinthians 12:3—Only through the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit can anyone believe in and confess Jesus as their Savior from sin.

2 Corinthians 5:14-15

What do we see when we look at Jesus' life, suffering, death, and resurrection for us?

What does this love lead us to want to do?

Ephesians 2:8-9

What role do good works have in your justification?

What role do good works have in your sanctification?

Philippians 2:13

When we respond to God's Word and works with thankful living, who is it that leads us to do so?

We say that God gets the credit for saving us and for bringing us to faith. Based on this verse, does he also get the credit for the good that we do?

Colossians 3:17

How can we show God that we are thankful for what he has done for us?

1 John 2:15

Define hedonism.

What does this verse say about hedonism?

The devil's cunning, the love of the world, and the desires of our sinful nature are enemies that try to weaken and destroy our faith. Why/how is hedonism a barrier for sanctification?

Main point — The Bible describes the work of the Holy Spirit as sanctifying believers by faith and strengthening them in their faith and in their lives of love.

Final considerations:

- 1) By what means does the Holy Spirit sanctify us with his divine power?
- 2) What is the Holy Spirit's work of bringing us to faith in Christ also called in the Bible?
- 3) Why do many who hear the gospel not believe?
- 4) Whose fault is it when someone does not believe the gospel?
- 5) Whose credit is it when someone does believe the gospel?
- 6) Why do you believe the gospel?
- 7) How much do we contribute to our salvation?
- 8) How much do we contribute to our sanctification?
- 9) What makes a good work good?
- 10) What's more important: repentance or good works?
- 11) Those things which God considers as "good works" are ____ .
 - A. everything that a believer does in fear and love for God.
 - B. clearly specified in the 10 Commandments and done to win salvation.
 - C. all acts of kindness and charity no matter what the motivation.
- 12) In order to keep us in the true faith, the Holy Spirit ____ .
 - A. makes all temptations so unattractive that they are easily resisted.
 - B. leads us to confess and try to make up for them.
 - C. leads us to be in contact with God's Word on a regular basis, whereby God grants us an alert conscience, strengthened faith to flee temptation, a guide of truth, and comfort in his grace.



True or False

- 13) ___ The reason Christians do good works is to give God evidence that we believe and should be saved.
- 14) ___ If a unbeliever does exactly the same good things as a believer, the unbeliever too will be saved.

Keep working on your personal confession of faith creed.

What I've learned:

Commit to Memory:

- The Third Article with Luther's explanation.
 - 1 Corinthians 10:31
 - Sanctification—Romans 8