

Sanctification

Jeff Rogers / Lamplighter Bible Study
John 17:17-19

There is a tension that exists for a true believer in Christ. This tension revolves around the doctrine and reality of sanctification in his life. For the believer, he remains in the world of sin, decay, filth, and rot, yet he is called to transformation. **Voddie Baucham:** “*The gospel doesn’t just save us **from** something — it saves us **to** holiness and mission.*”

I. What is Sanctification?

- A. Understand it in the context of its use carefully.
 - 1. Who or what is “sanctified?”
 - a) Used in the context of the Son of God, **John 17:19**, *And for their sake I consecrate myself.*
 - b) Used in the context of the Lord’s disciples (past, present, and future) **John 17:17**, *Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth.*
 - 2. To sanctify – a verb; to make as dedicated to God; either in becoming more distinct, devoted or morally pure.
 - a) Sanctify, first means a separation from everything that contaminates and perverts.
 - b) Sanctify, second means the positive aspect that something or someone is devoted wholly to God and to His use.
 - (1) It is in this second sense that it applies to Jesus as the Son of God.
 - (2) **John 10:36**, *Do you say of him whom the Father consecrated and sent into the world, ‘You are blaspheming,’ because I said, ‘I am the Son of God’?*
- B. Why Does the Lord Pray this for us? Come back to the reality that Christ prayed for you (His disciples) through the night, before the morning of His crucifixion, and how influential this is on our daily lives as we live for Him!
 - 1. It is through His prayer that we are to be kept from the world and from evil, **John 17:15**, *I do not ask that you take them out of the world, but that you keep them from the evil one.*
 - 2. He prays this because of the task He has given to us, **John 17:18**, *As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world.*
 - 3. He prays for our sanctification because the whole object of His going to the death of the cross is that we might be sanctified, **John 17:19**, *And for their sake I consecrate myself, that they also may be sanctified in truth.*
- C. Sanctification is a principle at work in the believer’s life by grace. Through this process the heart becomes holy, and is fashioned after God’s own heart. A sanctified person bears not only God’s name, but His image.
 - 1. Sanctification is a supernatural process: it is divinely infused.
 - a) God is the agent of sanctification (**Leviticus 21:8**, “...for I, the Lord, who sanctify you, am holy.
 - b) Sanctification is the will of God for believers (**1 Thessalonians 4:3**, *For this is the will of God, your sanctification:*
 - 2. Sanctification is a matter of the heart, not the external façade.
 - a) **1 Peter 3:4**, *But let your adorning be the hidden person of the heart with the imperishable beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which in God’s sight is very precious.*
 - b) **Psalms 51:6**, *Behold, you delight in truth in the inward being, and you teach me wisdom in the secret heart.*
 - 3. Sanctification extends to the whole person.
 - a) **1 Thessalonians 5:23**, *Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.*
 - b) Sanctification results in a new walk, **Ephesians 5:8**, *For at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light*
 - 4. Sanctification is a thing of passionate, even fiery devotion.
 - a) **Romans 12:11**, *Do not be slothful in zeal, be fervent in spirit, serve the Lord.*
 - b) **Fervent** – to become emotionally inflamed, conceived of as water boiling

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- c) The example of Apollos (**See Acts 18:24-28**; esp. **Acts 18:25**, *He had been instructed in the way of the Lord. And being fervent in spirit, he spoke and taught accurately the things concerning Jesus, though he knew only the baptism of John.*
 - 5. Sanctification is a progressive, growing thing (2 Corinthians 7:1, *Since we have these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and spirit, bringing holiness to completion in the fear of God.*
 - a) Justification and election are fixed. The same is not true for sanctification; it is increasing.

II. Eat this Word

- A. Three Examples: To “eat the Word” means **letting Scripture shape your thinking, affections, decisions, and obedience**—not merely reading it, liking it, or agreeing with it. It is the difference between knowing *about* the Bible and being **ruled by** the Bible. “The Word must be digested in private before it is declared in public.”
 - 1. **Ezekiel (Ezekiel 2:8, “But you, son of man, hear what I say to you. Be not rebellious like that rebellious house; open your mouth and eat what I give you.” Ezekiel 3:1–3, And he said to me, “Son of man, eat whatever you find here. Eat this scroll, and go, speak to the house of Israel.” 2 So I opened my mouth, and he gave me this scroll to eat. 3 And he said to me, “Son of man, feed your belly with this scroll that I give you and fill your stomach with it.” Then I ate it, and it was in my mouth as sweet as honey.)**
 - 2. **Apostle John - Revelation 10:9–11, So I went to the angel and told him to give me the little scroll. And he said to me, “Take and eat it; it will make your stomach bitter, but in your mouth it will be sweet as honey.” 10 And I took the little scroll from the hand of the angel and ate it. It was sweet as honey in my mouth, but when I had eaten it my stomach was made bitter. 11 And I was told, “You must again prophesy about many peoples and nations and languages and kings.”**
 - 3. **Jeremiah - Jeremiah 1:9, Then the LORD put out his hand and touched my mouth. And the LORD said to me, “Behold, I have put my words in your mouth. Jeremiah 15:16, Your words were found, and I ate them, and your words became to me a joy and the delight of my heart, for I am called by your name, O LORD, God of hosts.**
- B. Application:
 - 1. Eating the Word Is Not the Same as Reading the Word
 - a) Corrects them without resentment
 - b) Restrains them before sin
 - c) Comforts them without denial
 - d) Commands them without negotiation
 - 2. The Word Will Be Sweet — and Costly
 - a) **Sweetness:** It gives clarity in confusion; Peace in suffering; Confidence in God’s character; Joy in belonging to Christ
 - b) **Cost:** Conviction before comfort; Obedience before ease; Separation from ungodly habits; Loss of approval at times
 - 3. Eating the Word Means Accepting Hard Passages
 - a) Don’t avoid: judgment texts; sexual ethics; authority & submission; warnings about false assurance
 - 4. The Word Must Move from Head → Heart → Hands
 - a) Head (Understanding)
 - b) Heart (Affection)
 - c) Hands (Obedience)
 - 5. Eating the Word Prepares You for Hard Conversations
 - a) Speaking truth in family conflict
 - b) Holding convictions at work
 - c) Refusing to affirm sin while still loving people
 - d) Remaining faithful when misunderstood
 - 6. Eating the Word Is a Daily, Not Occasional, Discipline
 - a) Daily reading; Slow meditation; Frequent self-examination

Eating the Word means letting Scripture have the final say in your life — even when it confronts, corrects, or costs you something.