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From Where I Sit . . .

“Sanctification – Are You A Saint?”

A Christian is a person who has been born again (**John 3:3-5**). He has the experience of being a new creation that leads to a new life (**2 Corinthians 5:17**). He now belongs to the Lord (**1 Corinthians 6:19-20**). He or she is God’s special child that lives as a pilgrim, who sojourns in this world, living by faith, trusting in the Lord, and being a trustworthy servant (**2 Corinthians 5:6-10**).

Another significant fact about being a Christian involves the concept of “**Sanctification**.” Sometimes critics make statements about Christians that equate our effort to be saints with an effort to be “holier than thou.” In reaction, some “Christians” will say, “Well, I’m no saint!” Well you’d better be, and here’s why. The words “**Sanctify**” and “**Sanctification**” as translated from the Greek means “**to make holy, to set apart for a special purpose**.” Related words include **holiness, consecration, saint**.

As we shall see, this pertains to both our standing before God and our conduct before God. We are considered acceptable and made holy, and we are to live consecrated lives as a result of our being accepted in Him. Thus, a Christian is “consecrated to God.” As we take a closer look at this aspect of being a Christian, it’s important for us to note that all Christians are sanctified. Some understand sanctification as a later on progression. They use the phrase “saved, sanctified, and filled with the Holy Ghost.” The impression is given that after being saved, and once one becomes “sanctified,” one can no longer sin.

The necessary implication of such a doctrine is that some “Christians” are sanctified while others are not. The Biblical evidence suggests otherwise. The church at Corinth was made of people who were “**sanctified in Christ Jesus**” - **1 Corinthians 1:2 (KJV)** ²“**Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours.**” Who had been “sanctified? After listing an assortment of sinful practices, the Apostle Paul adds in **1 Corinthians 6:11 (KJV)** ¹¹ “**And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.**”

Note that Paul speaks of the past tense of their lives, yet many of these people were still “babes in Christ” and “carnal.” **1 Corinthians 3:1-3 (KJV)** ¹ “**And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ.**” ²“**I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able.**” ³“**For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?**” They were filled with envy, strife and divisions. They were acting carnally, as mere men, yet he addresses them as brethren in Christ.

Thus, while Christians may not be perfect, they are still called “saints.” Note the use of the word “saint” in addressing all Christians - **Romans 1:7 (KJV)** ⁷ “**To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.**” Because they had been “set apart” to be “God’s holy people” it was appropriate for them to be called “saints” - **1 Peter 2:9 (KJV)** ⁹ “**But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.**” This pertains to our standing before God. We are blessed to be considered His holy people. When a Christian understands that he or she is born again, now belongs to the Lord, and is living by faith, they should have no trouble accepting the idea that they are also “**Consecrated**” or “**Sanctified**” to God. If we do, then we will take to heart the admonition of Paul: **2 Corinthians 7:1 (KJV)** ¹ “**Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.**” Are we perfecting holiness in the fear of God?

. . . Terry Broome