

All Rights Reserved By HDM For This Digital Publication
Copyright 1998 Holiness Data Ministry

Duplication of this CD by any means is forbidden, and
copies of individual files must be made in accordance with
the restrictions stated in the B4Ucopy.txt file on this CD.

* * * * *

SANCTIFICATION -- WHAT, WHEN, HOW?

By Otho Schwab

Nazarene Publishing House
2923 Troost Ave.
Kansas City, Mo.

Printed Book: No Date -- No Copyright

* * * * *

Digital Edition 09/15/98
By Holiness Data Ministry

* * * * *

INTRODUCTION

I have found real delight in reading the manuscript on "Sanctification" by Rev. Otho Schwab. First, I am pleased to see another book explaining and advocating this all important doctrine. Second, I am pleased with the method of presentation of this Bible truth.

Simplicity, directness, and clearness characterize the book from beginning to end. It is a small book, but this is one of its commendable features. It is not burdened with excess baggage, nor does it lack any essential. It can be read within a short time, and with real profit both to those who have this grand experience and to those who do not.

My earnest wish is that every child of God who may have the opportunity to buy and read this little book will take advantage of the opportunity, and then pass the book on to someone else who might be led into a glorious experience of full salvation.

The writer deals strictly with essentials, such as, what sanctification is, what it is not, objections to it, when it is received, and how to obtain it. The message is readable, clear, courteous, instructive, and carries a heart appeal. The book is a message, and is not merely a doctrinal discussion. To buy it is to make no mistake.

R. T. Williams

* * * * *

CONTENTS

- 01 -- What is Sanctification?
- 02 -- What Sanctification is Not
- 03 -- Objections Considered
- 04 -- When is it Received?
- 05 -- How May it be Obtained?

* * * * *

01 -- WHAT IS SANCTIFICATION?

It is our purpose in this book to use the words "sanctification" and "holiness" interchangeably. Of course we agree that sanctification refers principally to the work of God in the human heart, and holiness refers to the state of man after sanctification is complete. In fact, sanctification is the act of God whereby men are brought into the state or experience of holiness.

Some people are afraid of the term sanctification. They speak of it as though it were something strange and mysterious, when in reality the word sanctification is used much more often in the Bible than any term that refers to regeneration.

In the discussion of a theme of such vital importance as this, definition is a consideration of the first magnitude. Failure to properly define the meaning of the word sanctification has led to untold misunderstanding and error. It is a fact that there are different shades of meaning in the word sanctification. But it can be easily proved that the primary meaning of the word has to do with personal heart experience. Dr. J. A. Wood, the great Methodist writer, says: "The New Testament meaning of sanctification is mainly that of purification." The Old Testament use of the word sanctification was mainly that of setting apart. But in the New Testament it carries with it not only the idea of dedication but also heart cleansing.

If the term sanctification is properly understood, the plan of God for man stands out in bold relief. Worldly church members do not object to the terms "more power," "a deeper work," "a higher life" and similar expressions, but they do not like the Bible word "sanctification." Much of the preaching along these lines is make-belief. Many an opposer of the real gospel of Bible holiness will preach on sanctification, but so becloud the truth with doubt and ambiguous terms that no one ever comes to the moment of receiving the experience.

Some people have a very superficial idea of the meaning of entire sanctification. They think they are sanctified simply because they have made a consecration. It is true that consecration is necessary in order to receive the experience but there are also other factors that are included. Consecration is merely one of several human elements in receiving this experience. Mere confession does not constitute regeneration, and just so, consecration is not sanctification. The human will brings about consecration, but sanctification is the work of the Holy Spirit in answer to

prayer and faith after consecration is complete. If consecration were all that is necessary then it would be entirely a human work and God would have little to do with it. But Paul prayed, "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly." Again we read, "He that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren." Thus we see the folly of thinking that sanctification is merely an act of consecration on our part.

The word sanctification comes from the two Latin words, s-a-n-c-t-u-s, (meaning "Holy,") and f-i-c-a-r-e, (meaning "to make"). The meaning of the word is "to make holy."

It is very significant that well known dictionaries such as Webster's, Century, Imperial, Worcester and Standard, give a definition of the word sanctification that is in harmony with the Scripture. To these editors the word has a real significance. They are not blinded by petty notions and foolish prejudice. Here we find the facts devoid of pre-conceived ideas. Take for example the definition given in the Standard dictionary. Sanctification: "The gracious work of the Holy Spirit whereby the believer is freed from sin and exalted to holiness of heart and life."

The following four facts are worthy of note in this definition. First. It is the work of the Holy Spirit, not growth in grace, but a divine operation of the Holy Spirit. Paul said, "That the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost."

Second. It is for the believer. Nowhere in the Bible do we find doctrine, provision, call, promise or prayer for the sanctification of any except the justified. Jesus said, "I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter ... whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you."

Third. It frees the believer from sin.

After Paul became a Christian he discovered an enemy to the new life, namely, "The sin that dwelleth in me." This became such a burden to him that he cried out in anguish of soul, "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death." What death was he referring to? He tells us in Romans 8: 6-7. "For to be carnally minded is death ... Because the carnal mind is enmity against God." Paul found deliverance from it for he urges us to "lay aside every weight and THE sin which doth so easily beset us." Thank God, there is deliverance from the carnal mind which is "not subject to the law of God neither indeed can be." "For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh" (Romans 8:3). "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit" (Romans 8:1). And again: "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed."

The Apostle Peter bears out the thought that we can be rid of the carnal mind. In Acts 15:8-9 Peter says that those who received the Holy Spirit were purified. "Giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us ... purifying their hearts by faith." How can a person be pure in heart and still retain the carnal mind which is "enmity against God?" The inevitable result of the infilling of the Spirit is riddance of the carnal nature or purity of heart.

Fourth. It exalts the believer to holiness of heart and life.

Some people wish to make excuses for their sinning religion by saying it is only the flesh that sins. The Bible says: "Christ came to condemn sin in the flesh." Even the dictionary says that sanctification will exalt one to a life of holiness in heart and outward living as well. Hear the promise of God in Luke 1:73,74,75: "The oath which he swore to our father Abraham, that he would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve him without fear, in HOLINESS and righteousness before him, all the days of our life.

Adam Clarke the great Methodist commentator says that sin exists in a twofold manner: (1) In guilt which requires forgiveness or pardon. (2) In pollution which requires cleansing.

Seeing sin exists in a twofold manner, as a corruption of the nature, Psa. 51:5, and as an act, Rom. 3:23, the provision of the gospel is likewise twofold. In view of this John Wesley sang:

"Speak the second time, 'Be clean,'
Take away my inbred sin;

Every stumbling block remove,
Cast it out by perfect love."

Likewise Toplady taught us to sing:

"Be of sin the double cure;
Save from wrath and make me pure."

Leprosy is a Bible type of sin. This awful malady has an outward manifestation and an inward existence. Sin has an outward manifestation in the daily life of the sinner, but the inward existence thereof is not removed in regeneration. We did not commit the sin principle, it is a natural heritage of the fall. We therefore cannot get rid of it when God pardons our transgressions. We are not personally responsible for the carnal nature being in us but we are responsible for getting it out because abundant provision has been made for us to be cleansed.

In regeneration you get something you never had and always needed, namely, the mind of Christ. In sanctification You get rid of something you always had and never needed, namely, the carnal mind.

Careful analysis will show that sanctification is both positive and negative. The negative side is the subtraction or removal of the carnal mind, the positive is the infilling with the Holy Spirit.

A noted Methodist theologian said, "Sanctification is the full eradication of THE SIN itself, which, reigning in the unregenerate, co-exists with the new life in the regenerate, is abolished in the wholly sanctified."

Praise God! He can take out of the heart everything the devil has put in. If we doubt this, reason will force us to take one of two positions. If Christ cannot, He is not as great as we say He is, and if He can and won't He is not as good as we say He is But, reader, He is abundantly able and the Word says: "Faithful is he that calleth You who also will do it."

* * * * *

02 -- WHAT SANCTIFICATION IS NOT

Many false systems have been built upon an erroneous conception of sanctification. Much of the objection to the doctrine comes from those who are misinformed.

It does not mean absolute perfection. Such perfection belongs only to God. I have never heard of anyone who taught that sort of perfection in man. Perfection signifies completeness. Therefore Paul prayed: "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly." It has no reference to size or rank but only to completeness. A raindrop on the end of a blade of grass has the same essential qualities as a body of water large enough to float a steamer.

Someone asks, "Who has attained to such perfection of heart? We find the answer in Hebrews 10:14. "For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified." When God said, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect," He referred to a heart perfection.

It does not preclude the possibility of growth and development. The carnal mind is the greatest enemy of the new life in Christ. It is not subject to the law of God and thus will not be subject to the will of man. It is the greatest impediment to spiritual development; therefore if it is removed by the infilling of the Spirit real growth in grace is made possible. A perfect little apple will be more apt to mature rapidly into a full grown apple than one that is deformed. A person whose heart is purified is in good condition to mature into the fullness of the stature of a man in Christ Jesus.

It does not bring freedom from temptation. It has been my observation that often Satan's fiercest darts are hurled at the most godly Christians. A really sanctified person is powerful in tearing down the strongholds of Satan. It is therefore easily seen why the devil would launch his most subtle attacks upon a sanctified person.

Immediately after Jesus fasted and prayed forty days and nights Satan drew from his paraphernalia his most horrible lances, temptation, and pounced upon the Son of God and tried to lay Him low. The servant is not above his master therefore we must expect temptation until we join the glorified throng. However victory over temptation is assured in a far greater degree in the sanctified life than when struggling along with carnal propensities.

It does not bring about exemption from mistakes. Here is where serious error creeps in. Mistakes are not sins; and sins are not mistakes. Mistakes emanate from an error in judgment and since human judgment is finite there are bound to follow many mistakes. But sin is a voluntary transgression of a known law. Failure to recognize this distinction has caused many good people to

become prejudiced against the doctrine of sanctification. The Bible says "The Spirit also helpeth our infirmities," but it does not say our sins, as some would have us believe.

Many people want to make no distinction between these two words in order to make way for a theology of sinning religion. But God's Word is the final court of authority, and it says "He that sinneth is of the devil." No one can commit a known sin and at the same time remain a child of God (1 John 3:9). From this we learn that one is not engaged in known sin in any shape, form or fashion, as long as he is in a justified state. Justification settles the matter of the sin business and sanctification settles the question of sinful tendencies.

Some tell us that such a salvation is impossible. They would have us believe that the normal Christian life is a perpetual warfare with sinful tempers and propensities that drive us into acts of sin in word, thought and deed every day. Is this the glorious salvation that was heralded by a long line of prophets, which was introduced by the music of angelic hosts, and required the miracle of the incarnation and the unspeakable agony of the cross? Is this all a mighty God can do for man? A thousand times no! Christ was revealed that He might destroy the works of the devil. Since the carnal state of man is the result of Satan's works, Christ came to destroy every vestige of sin and fit us to be the temple of the Holy Spirit.

* * * * *

03 -- OBJECTIONS CONSIDERED

There can be no objections to this glorious experience when once it is seen in its true light. There will be no objection in the heart of a Christian to that which God wills for His children.

It is my purpose to examine some of the objections that are offered by those who oppose this doctrine and who refuse to seek the experience.

Some say that it leads to fanaticism. Now real fanaticism is a child of Satan. It is one of his master strokes to besmirch real Bible holiness. Someone has aptly said that there is holiness, holy-less and holy-mess. Perhaps to distinguish between the genuine and the spurious, Paul spoke of "true holiness."

Reader, it will take true holiness to get to heaven and you had better make up your mind to seek and possess this experience in spite of all Satan's cunning machinations. The devil has always attempted to counterfeit everything that God does. He has attempted to duplicate every work of grace just like Pharaoh's magicians duplicated nearly everything Moses and Aaron did. There can be no counterfeit without the genuine. The very fact that Satan has fed the fires of fanaticism and urged upon a gullible public counterfeit holiness proves that there is genuine Bible holiness. Bible holiness does not lead to fanaticism. In fact the presence of the Holy Spirit is the real preserver of evangelical faith.

Some base their objections on the false idea that it is something that originated in recent years. It is by no means a twentieth century fad. Even a casual perusal of church history points out

the fact that the noblest and best of God's saints down through the centuries have believed in and possessed this experience.

Another objection that is often felt and sometimes expressed is that this doctrine and those who profess it are generally unpopular. I ask, "Could it be otherwise?" A sinful world was never a friend of the Master's. An unfriendly world spat upon Him and crucified Him.

His doctrine was despised because it condemned hypocrisy. His life of purity was a constant rebuke to those of His age. Likewise a life of holiness shames the man who insists on daily living a life of sin in word, thought and deed. A life of real holiness shows up the flagrant inconsistencies of sinning religion and thus stirs up antagonism in those who do not wish to pay the price and go through with God.

There are others who object to the experience because of the demands that it makes upon them. The religion that demands self-abnegation never will be popular. The flesh shrinks from the Via-Dolorosa or way of suffering. A cheap easy going religion has always had the endorsement of the nominal Christian. But people draw back from an experience that demands the crucifixion of self and the carnal mind. As long as a person can make himself believe he can get to heaven without the experience he will likely take the easier way. But the Master said, "strive (struggle) to enter in at the strait gate." Again He tells us that it will take self-denial to follow Him ! Paul said, "I am crucified," and again "Our old man is crucified" (Romans 6:6). Of course it costs something to go with God but what He gives in exchange the apostle calls the "unsearchable riches of Christ."

Another objection I sometimes hear is, "I can't see through it." Someone once said, "You can't see into it, but you can get the experience and see out." If you had applied the same objection to getting saved you would never have been converted. For it is as impossible to explain the new birth as it is to explain sanctification. The old Scotch lady was right when she said, "It is better felt than tell-t." If you will put God to the test and really come with an open mind and obedient heart you will find God ready to fill you with the Holy Spirit. In many instances this objection is offered merely because of an unwillingness to die out to the opinions of men and pay the price of victory. Others seem to think it is a mark of superior intelligence to stand off like Naaman and Nicodemus and speculate about its merits and the possibility of getting it. In reality this attitude may merely prove a sad lack of spiritual insight as it did in the case of the above named men. The way of the flesh is to stand off and speculate until the soul is enshrouded in darkness. But here is what God says: "If any man will do his will he shall know of the doctrine." His will is for you to be sanctified. Obedience led you into the justified experience and will also lead you into the sanctified experience.

If the children of Israel had waited for a chemical analysis of the heavenly manna they would have perished ! But as soon as it fell they began to gather and eat it. Had they demanded a scientific explanation of the brazen serpent they would have died. Oh, how many Christians are powerless and have lost out because there is no room for the experience of sanctification in their petty theological ideas. Cease offering excuses for not seeking this experience and as the poet said, "Plunge in today and be made complete."

Some people object to publicly seeking the experience. To step out in public and humbly kneel at an altar of prayer sometimes causes a terrific conflict. Carnal pride strenuously objects and if it is allowed to reign one can never get the experience. The will must be brought to an issue and one must die out to the opinions of other people. "The fear of man bringeth a snare." I have never heard of anyone getting saved or sanctified at home who was ashamed to seek God publicly.

A very unreasonable objection is that some who profess holiness do not live the life. Let us carefully investigate this charge. Perhaps the one professing holiness has once had the experience but has now lost out completely. It is indeed difficult to show the fruits of the Spirit when He no longer abides within. The safe thing to do is to fast and pray until the fire of the Holy Ghost burns again on the altar of the heart.

Again, some who profess sanctification have never really received the experience. Perhaps they prayed until they felt better but the crucifixion of the carnal mind never took place. They may make a profession and perhaps even testify but the life of a sanctified person is not in evidence. Such a condition is sad indeed. But the same is true of the justified experience. Too many have merely started doing better but never have tasted the bitter cup of repentance and have never received the new birth. Just as it is impossible to live the justified life without having been born again, so it is impossible to produce the fruits of the Spirit without the abiding presence of the Comforter.

Let us look at the other side of this question. Perhaps the one doing the objecting and criticizing may be at fault. Ofttimes what you see in the life of others is dependent upon your own heart condition. Sam Jones said: "Some people would put on blue goggles and shoot the whitest winged angel that ever came from heaven for a crow."

Judging another person is a very dangerous and unscriptural practice. Jesus was accused of being a wine-bibber and a Sabbath-breaker. The difficulty was not with Jesus but with his blinded, devil-possessed accusers. God said: "Walk before me and be thou perfect." We can never walk perfectly in the sight of all men. The devil and his crowd will keep a whispering and lying campaign going about God's people in order to hinder their usefulness and curtail their influence for good. The best people in the community where I lived as a boy were lied about the most. Because of my own sinful heart I too added to the volume of ridicule. But when I came to my senses and saw my need of God and realized my guilty distance from Him, I was only too glad to have these same people pray for me. Thank God they are my crowd now.

Using the inconsistencies of some who profess holiness as an argument against it is a piece of stupidity that is almost unthinkable. That there are some whose lives do not measure up to the Bible standard we do not deny. Occasionally the sinner uses the same argument when asked why he is not a Christian. Immediately he wants to hide behind the inconsistent life of some hypocrite in the church. In this manner some would offer a similar excuse for not believing the doctrine of sanctification. A sinner using this argument always compares himself with the worst hypocrite in the church and says "I am as good as he." A carnal professor often follows the same procedure. He does not have the courage to look at the holy and blameless lives of thousands who actually have the fruits of the Spirit. But the existence of hypocrisy will not help the sinner in the day of judgment when he is called upon to answer why he neglected "so great salvation." Neither will the

shortcomings of some who profess holiness help the objector when called upon to answer why he did not do the will of God which is to be sanctified. In the final analysis it is not a matter of how a few people have lived, but it is a question of what God has said about holiness and what He demands of us.

* * * * *

04 -- WHEN IS IT RECEIVED?

Practically all churches agree that heart purity or sanctification must be obtained before we can get to heaven. They differ mainly as to the time it is received and the agency by which it is effected. The Bible is so full of this great truth that it is impossible for any individual to ignore it or get around it and still claim to believe God's Book. However the matter of the time and manner in which the experience is received is of vital importance and cannot be passed over lightly.

What you believe makes a great deal of difference. Ofttimes what one believes determines destiny in that it causes one to seek and try to obtain only what one's theology stands for. William Jennings Bryan said, "The question is not, are you sincere, but are you right." He knew he was right and though ofttimes laughed at, the passing years and subsequent events proved that he was on the right side. Be sure your ideas are in harmony with the blessed Book, then go ahead.

There are six prominent theories regarding sanctification I wish to mention. The first is the belief that it is received in purgatory. Let us scrutinize this theory in the light of the Scripture. Paul prayed thus, "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." Here the experience of sanctification is shown to be possible of attainment in this life, prior to the return of Christ, and not in purgatory. Nowhere in the Bible is any credence given to a theory of purgatorial cleansing. The Bible plainly says: "Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate" (Heb. 13:12). He was made unto us sanctification (1 Cor. 1:30). It was Christ's suffering that made possible full deliverance from sin and not our suffering in purgatory.

Some few people hold to the theory that we are sanctified at death. Nowhere in the Bible are we urged to look upon death as a spiritual benefactor. True, death releases our spirits and death is the gateway through which we pass into blissful immortality, but death was such an enemy that it had to be conquered by Christ. Death is the last enemy to be overcome in reaching our celestial home. Then why should we look to death to give us any spiritual cleansing for fitness to enter heaven. Death came through sin and the devil and we need not expect any assistance from the enemy of human souls.

Another theory occasionally advanced is that we grow into this experience. In the first chapter of this book we quoted many accepted authorities and Scriptures to show that sanctification is the work of the Holy Spirit and the act of God's grace whereby we are made holy. If it is an act of God's grace how could it be a process of growth? Certainly the Christian will grow in grace; but he cannot outgrow the carnal mind. The Holy Spirit fell suddenly upon the disciples at Pentecost. His coming was not gradual but sudden. The worst objection to this idea is

that it is not only unscriptural but it is not true to human experience. The fact is people lose more grace than they gain in the struggle with carnal propensities. Paul said, "Let us lay aside every weight and the sin which doth so easily beset us." The Bible warns us that "a double minded man is unstable in all his ways." In view of this it can readily be seen why this will only produce a life that the poet spoke of "Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it." This does not sound like much progress was being made. Those who believe in growing into it are put in a very embarrassing position when asked to produce a witness who has thus received the experience. They seem to be continually in search of it but never find it. They are always traveling but never arrive. They are always growing but never come to full fruition. In all my ministry throughout the United States and part of Canada I have never once found one who received the experience by growing into it. The Bible says we are "sanctified by faith" (Acts 26:18). An experience that comes by faith is instantaneous. Just as we are instantly pardoned by faith so we are instantly purified by faith.

Another dangerous and unscriptural theory is that of imputed holiness. This is the Keswick or Calvinistic theory of repression and imputed holiness. According to this theory the individual can never really become holy. But the Bible says, "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from All sin." This is not an imputed purity but an imparted holiness. God says, "From all your filthiness will I cleanse you." Again we read in Romans 6:22, "But now being made free from sin, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life." Jesus came that He might destroy the works of the devil, and the carnal mind is a product of Satan's work. Christ did not come to cover it with His holiness but He came to destroy it. As Adam Clarke states it: "To say that man cannot be perfectly saved from all sin would be shocking blasphemy against the infinite power and dignity of the great Creator; to say He will not would be equally such against the infinite benevolence and holiness of His nature.

About the only time these quack doctors ever testify to sanctification is when they are cornered in a holiness meeting and have to make some sort of statement regarding it. The holiness people are about the only ones who ever spontaneously witness to its possession. We believe that sin has never left so deep a stain on the soul but that the blood of Christ can go deeper.

There is another unscriptural theory of widespread acceptance which takes the position that sanctification and regeneration are received at the same time. This is known as Zinzendorfianism. We learn from the writings of the founder of the Methodist church that this doctrine was unknown until a certain Count Zinzendorf began preaching it at about the time that Wesley lived and labored.

The saintly William Bramwell said he foresaw that "this would be the devil's big gun"; and so it has been. Those who hold this position say but very little about sanctification. It seems to be a decidedly unimportant issue with them. In fact one never sees them working to bring anyone into this experience. If they really had it they would testify to it as did Peter on the day of Pentecost when he leaped to his feet and cried "This is that spoken of by the prophet Joel." If it is really possessed one will testify to it and labor to bring others into the experience.

Someone says that God does not do a half way work. They say when God does a work He does a perfect work. On the surface this sounds like a reasonable argument, but is it? No one denies that God does a perfect work when He converts the sinner. He does not promise more than that at conversion. But regeneration and sanctification are entirely different experiences.' A sinner

comes to Christ to throw down his arms of rebellion, whereas, a Christian comes to consecrate his ransomed powers. Consecration cannot be made by a sinner for he has nothing to offer but his sinful self. Paul did not call sinners to consecration but said, "I beseech you therefore BRETHREN, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice." The struggle of the sinner is to give up that which is evil but the task of the believer is to consecrate that which is good. Indeed God does a perfect work in regeneration, but the Scriptures prove that the infilling of the Spirit comes only after the work of regeneration is completed.

The outpouring of the Holy Spirit in every Bible case was given only to those who were true disciples and accepted of God. Concerning the gift of the Spirit, Jesus said to his disciples, "Whom the world cannot receive." The unconverted worldly person is not eligible for this experience. We must first be converted before the Spirit will make us His temple.

I shall mention one of many Bible instances where the Holy Spirit was received following regeneration. This clear example is recorded in Acts 8:14-17. In the fourteenth verse it says the people of Samaria were converted or had received the Word of God.

As if to dispel any doubts about their conversion the record says in the sixteenth verse that they had also been baptized. Then Peter and John laid their hands on them and prayed for them, and they received the Holy Ghost (verses 15 and 17) From this we see that the birth of the Spirit and the baptism with the Spirit are two distinctly different experiences. By the very nature of the experience it could not be otherwise.

Regeneration is a quickening and making alive process, Eph. 2:1; while in sanctification a crucifixion of the carnal mind takes place. "Knowing then that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin" (Rom. 6:6). Since these experiences are different in nature and operation they could not take place at the same time.

There is another doctrine I wish to mention and this one is in harmony with the Word of God, which is the final court of authority. Those who are in this class believe that this experience is instantaneously wrought by the Holy Spirit in the hearts of believers subsequent to regeneration, in answer to prayer, consecration and faith.

Following Pentecost Peter arose and addressed the disciples regarding the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the household of the eminently righteous Cornelius, and said: "And God which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us; and put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith" (Acts 15: 8-9).

Jesus did not pray for His disciples to be taken out of the world to be sanctified but that they should have an experience in this life that would keep them from the world (John 17:15-20). When Paul wrote to the Thessalonian church he spoke of their faith, hope and love. In fact this was the most spiritual church of all. But in the tenth verse of the third chapter he says there is something lacking in their faith or experience. He was so concerned about it that he was praying night and day that their hearts might be established unblamable in holiness before God.

There is only one class of people that can lay claim to a perfected heart experience and that is those who are sanctified. "For by one offering he has perfected forever them that are sanctified" (Heb. 10:14). In order that the Thessalonian church might have this holiness of heart and life he tells them "this is the will of God, your sanctification" (1 Thess. 4: 3).

Much of the opposition to this doctrine comes from carnal-minded people who are unwilling to meet conditions and get the experience. In spite of all the opposition of hell and worldly so-called Christians, this experience is a glorious possibility here in this life. It is possible because the Bible teaches it. The Bible is a treatise on holiness. It tells us about a holy bridegroom that is to take a holy bride to a holy heaven. It not only demands that we live holy lives but promises that we "might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life" (Luke 1:73-75).

Holiness is also a possibility because it is God's will that we should be sanctified. He who created worlds and upholds all things by the word of His power can do anything that He wills. If He wills for us to live the sanctified life and have this experience of grace I believe He who is all mighty has power to make it a glorious reality. Why should we thus limit the power of God in our lives by such unbelief when God tells us so plainly what His will is.

Furthermore I believe it is possible for us to have such an experience because Jesus would not have prayed for an impossibility. The seventeenth chapter of St. John is the Lord's prayer for the sanctification of His disciples and also every true Christian that should be converted through the inspired writings of the disciples. That includes every truly converted person from that time on (John 17:20). I cannot believe that Jesus would be praying for something that would be impossible of attainment or possession.

Again it is possible to be wholly sanctified because the Trinity is back of the whole program of the sanctification of every true believer. God the Father is interested, for Jesus prayed, "FATHER, sanctify them." We also see that Christ is vitally connected with this work, being the meritorious cause, for Paul tells us, "CHRIST also loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it" (Eph. 5:25-27). The Holy Spirit has a part in the work of sanctification, seeing He is the efficient cause. Paul assures us "that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the HOLY GHOST" (Romans 15:16).

Seeing that the Trinity is interested in your getting this experience I beseech you for the sake of your own soul to press on quickly and possess your inheritance "among them which are sanctified by faith that is in God." Don't delay another moment but become an earnest seeker for the experience now. Instead of struggling along with carnal propensities you too can be sanctified right here in this life as were those to whom the book of Jude was written (Jude 1). Instead of looking across Jordan with a wistful eye, why not cross over into the Canaan land experience where you can sing:

"He abides, He abides,
Hallelujah, He abides with me,
I'm rejoicing night and day
As I walk the narrow way,

For the Comforter abides with me."

* * * * *

05 -- HOW MAY IT BE OBTAINED?

Here is an important question that is asked by those who earnestly seek to enter into this experience. While each person has his individual problems to meet and one may have more light and understanding than others, yet the steps to victory are essentially the same and the way is clearly outlined. Satan will sidetrack you if he can. But if you will obey the Spirit implicitly and follow the instructions of the Word of God you will find your way into the fullness of the blessing of entire sanctification.

The Bible is filled with many definite promises that God has made. But each promise has some specific condition attached to it that must be met before God will bring it to pass. There are likewise certain conditions which must be met before one can receive the infilling of the Spirit. This experience is not just a luxury that can be overlooked. It is God's greatest gift to the church. It is infinitely worthy of our most careful heart preparation.

There must first be a clear consciousness that you are a child of God. If you have any reason to doubt your justified experience do not attempt to get sanctified until you are certain regarding your present standing with God. This is very important for if you fail here confusion will result.

Again I say to the seeker after holiness, be sure that you believe this to be a Bible doctrine. Do not look upon it as merely a theory of men. It is not a product of the mind of man. It is not a creed set up by certain groups or churches. It is the plan and choice of God for us from before the foundation of the world (Eph. 1:4).

Abandon any plans you have of your own as to how you will act when God sanctifies you. This caused me more difficulty when I got sanctified than all else. I had certain preconceived ideas regarding how I would feel, consequently it was impossible for God to give me victory. I said, "When I feel a certain way, then I will know I have the experience and it will be safe to believe it and profess it." This is the mistake many good people make in instructing others. They think that because they got it a certain way and made certain manifestations of it that others must do the same thing or they don't have it. This very thing unfortunately has caused much grief among people everywhere. If God entrusts someone with a special gift or answer to prayer they often immediately unChristianize everyone else who does not measure up to their standard. The manifestation of the Spirit's coming will be different even though the work accomplished is the same.

Satan will attempt to get you to seek someone else's experience. But that is setting your plan and will over against God's prerogative. God will give you just the experience you need and that best fits your case. Many times the one seeking to shout will have to take it quite calmly. Others who are unwilling at first to have it any way but in quietness will often do the most shouting. If you merely seek a certain feeling you will finally shake your head in sadness and say,

"I have done all this and I don't feel like I expected to." This is the wrong approach and God cannot bless you till you have learned the lesson of faith and submission to His will.

There must be a deep sense of the vital importance of this experience. Is it not important that you be cleansed from all carnal tempers and propensities? Look at your past up-and-down experience. Think what has happened in your Christian life all because you were double-minded and possessed this rebel against heaven. On the day of Pentecost Peter was delivered from his cowardice. Thomas is no longer a man of unbelief and doubt. James and John are no longer possessed with unholy ambition. The rest of the disciples are cured of wavering and jealousy. Oh, friend, you must feel the importance of getting this experience. When the carnal mind is really seen in its true light you will gladly do anything to get rid of it.

Many people fail to get sanctified because they do not seek persistently. Too many people have made a few feeble efforts to get victory and because they did not get through immediately they take it for granted that their duty has been completely fulfilled. Indolent half-hearted seeking will not bring the experience. When you get to the place where you would rather die than forego getting sanctified you are not far from victory.

The tarrying at Jerusalem was an earnest, prayerful waiting upon the Lord in continued supplication. Do not let anything sidetrack you or get you to put it off until some future time. A holy desperation and hunger must possess you. I never saw anyone get victory who was half-hearted in seeking. Since this is the Bible prerequisite for entrance into heaven, set yourself at the task of getting through at all hazards. Just about the time you are resigned to going to the altar at every call until you get the blessing, then God will answer prayer and fill you with the Spirit. Much of this lukewarm seeking will only bring condemnation and darkness. So press your claim vigorously and in spite of the opposition from hell and carnality you will be abundantly rewarded.

The Bible tells us we must pray for the Holy Spirit. "The Holy Spirit to them that ask" (Luke 11:13). It takes prayer and faith to be filled with the Spirit. That's why but few people pray through away from a prayer service or altar service. Some half-hearted seekers object to the praying that goes on around an altar service, but I've noticed when people get in earnest they are always glad to have all the assistance they can get. Thank God that I ever came across a congregation that had the old-fashioned mourners' bench. In such an atmosphere of victory and encouragement it is easy to pray the prayer that brings victory.

Full consecration is a vital part of human preparation to receive the Spirit. It is said that the word consecration in the original means, "to place in the hand."

"Here I give myself to thee,
Friends and time and earthly store;
Soul and body thine to be,
wholly thine forevermore."

We are admonished to "present ourselves a living sacrifice." The following poem illustrates complete consecration:

Take my life, and let it be
Consecrated, Lord, to Thee.

Take my hands, and let them move
At the impulse of Thy love.

Take my feet, and let them be
Swift and beautiful for Thee.

Take my voice, and let me sing
Always, only, for my King.

Take my silver and my gold;
Not a mite would I withhold.

Take my will and make it Thine;
It shall be no longer mine.

Take my love; my Lord, I pour
At Thy feet its treasure store.

Take myself, and I will be
Ever, only, all for Thee.

The self will has merged into His will and the lesson of obedience has been learned when one can pray thus:

"I am willing
To receive what Thou givest,
To lack what Thou withholdest,
To relinquish what Thou takest,
To suffer what Thou inflictest,
To be what Thou requirest,
To do what Thou commandest. Amen."

Real consecration is impossible when a sinner is getting converted. In regeneration we surrender the things that are evil, such as sinful practices and depraved habits. Before we can be sanctified we consecrate the things that are good. When we get saved we come to God, quit our meanness, throw down the arms of rebellion and the sins we have committed are forgiven by faith in God. In sanctification we bring our ransomed powers, our redeemed lives in full consecration and by faith we become "the temple of the Holy Ghost."

It may take but a short time to count the cost and decide to make a complete consecration, and blessed is that man who realizes that consecration is "our reasonable service." We are to give the consent of our will for God to use that which belongs to Him. God has a right to our time,

talent, money, etc. It is reasonable for us to do this and God will not ask us to do that which is impossible or unreasonable.

"Is your all on the altar of sacrifice laid,
Your heart does the Spirit control,
You can only be blessed
And have peace and sweet rest
As you yield Him your body and soul."

Happy is the man who can say: "I am all on the altar." The Bible tells us that "the altar sanctifieth the gift." Christ Jesus is our altar and if our faith will stand unwaveringly on this promise we will be the happy recipients of definite victory.

Closely associated with the thought contained in the last paragraph is this admonition: Don't get discouraged! Satan will use every diabolical scheme at his command to get you discouraged if possible. The apostles were instructed to tarry until they were endued with power from on high.

Abraham once brought an offering which at first was seemingly unnoticed by Jehovah God. At length the vultures began to circle around his offering and were manifestly intent on devouring it. Did he give up in despair? Not this man of faith. He stood them off single-handed until God sent the fire to consume his sacrifice. So you too might have to fight off the devils of doubt and despair until your faith claims the promise of the Father.

Sometimes there is no delay at all and you can enter right into the experience as did the household of Cornelius. The preacher had hardly taken his text before the Holy Spirit was given to the entire group. If there is any delay it is because we have not met every condition.

So look over your consecration and see if you are willing to hear the reproach, see if you are willing to die out to self, and be sure that you have not held back a single thing. If your consecration is complete you can now say with the poet:

"Fill me now-fill me now,
Jesus, come and fill me now;
Fill me with Thy hallowed presence,
Come, O come, and fill me now."

We now come to the last step in obtaining this experience. We are told that "without faith it is impossible to please him." Again Paul tells us that we are "sanctified by faith." So we see that the final condition is a step of living faith.

Here is the great danger point. The devil makes this the last battleground. Here many stop and perish. Don't give up when you are so near to victory. Summon all the courage you possess and let your faith scale the battlements of heaven. A little praying and a few tears after consecration will make you feel a little better, but, friend, don't stop there!

The powerless empty lives of many who profess holiness bear strong testimony to the fact that they stopped too soon and fell short of the goal.

Bear in mind that consecration is not sanctification, in the New Testament sense of the word. Consecration is merely one of the preparatory stages. After that there must be a step of living faith that brings the blessed Holy Spirit to take full possession of our hearts and lives.

Rev. Beverly Carradine clearly stated it thus: "The instant we add a perfect faith to a perfect consecration the work is done and the blessing descends."

As we are justified by faith so are we sanctified by faith. Simple childlike faith in God and His promises plus a complete consecration will bring the refining fire and the witness of the Spirit.

"The cleansing stream I see, I see,
I plunge (faith) and oh it cleanses me."

* * * * *

THE END