

**SYSTEMATIC
THEOLOGY
502
DISTANCE**

SANCTIFICATION

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SANCTIFICATION

Martin Luther described the cross as a twofold work. First it is a work for us (*pro nobis*). This refers to Christ's work on the Cross for us. Second, the cross in us (*in nobis*). As St. Paul said, 'let Christ be formed in you' (Gal 4:8) and in Mark 8:33 we are told to take up our cross and follow Jesus. This second work of the Cross is sanctification. In this view sanctification is understood as what God accomplishes *in nobis* in distinction from justification which is what God accomplishes *pro nobis*.

- Sanctification (ἁγιασμός), or making holy, has been appropriated to the mission of the Spirit in Protestant soteriology. In Scripture it is primarily the Spirit that is given the role of sanctification (Rom 15:16; 1 Cor 6:11; 1 Pet 1:2; 2 Thess 2:13).
 - According to Paul in 1 Cor 2:13–3:3 those who possess the Spirit are “spiritual people” (πνευματικοί) as opposed to those who are “unspiritual” or “natural” (ψυχικοί) or those who are “persons of flesh” (σαρκικοί). Therefore the Christian is one who lives “in the Spirit.”
- ‘The Giver of Life’
 - The Spirit is described as the life-giver or ζωοποιέω in the New Testament (Rom 8:11, 2 Cor 3:6, John 6:63; 1 Pet 3:18).
 - The Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed also describes the Spirit as the “giver of life” (τὸ ζωοποιῶν, *vivificantem*)
 - Not only is natural life ascribed to the Spirit in the Scriptures, but the Christian is one who is born of the Spirit (John 3:5), lives in the Spirit (Rom 7:6, 8:2, 4, 9, 13, 14, 23, 26; Gal 5:25), and the one in whom the Spirit dwells (1 Cor 2:12, 3:16, 6:19; Gal 3:2, 5, 4:6; Rom 5:5, 8:9).
 - The “Spirit of life” (Rom 8:2) is the source of spiritual life with God. As Paul says in Rom 8:9-11:
 - ‘But you are not in the flesh, you are in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Any one who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. But if Christ is in you, although your bodies are dead because of sin, your spirits are alive because of righteousness. If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will give life (ζωοποιήσει) to your mortal bodies also through his Spirit which dwells in you.’ (Rom 8:9-11)



'IN THE SPIRIT'

The significance of the Spirit's sanctification can be seen in the phrases 'in the Spirit' (ἐν πνεύματι) and 'in one Spirit' (ἐν ἑνὶ πνεύματι). While not as significant as the phrase 'in Christ,' the two phrases occur a total of fifty-two times in the New Testament. The Christian can have a variety of experiences 'in the Spirit':

- baptism (Matt 3:11/Mark 1:8/Luke 3:16, John 1:33; Acts 1:5, 11:16; 1 Cor 12:13)
- worship of God (John 4:23-24; Phil 3:3)
- prayer (Eph 6:18; Jude 1:20)
- sanctification (Rom 15:16; 1 Cor 6:11)
- justification; (1 Cor 6:11; 1 Tim 3:16)
- the preaching of the gospel (1 Thess 1:5; 1 Pet 1:12)
- love (Col 1:8)
- being filled (Eph 5:18)
- revelation (Eph 3:5)
- confession of Jesus as Lord (1 Cor 12:3)
- restoration of those in sin (2 Cor 6:1)
- the indwelling of God (Eph 2:22)
- circumcision (Rom 2:29)
- living (8:9)
- blessing (1 Cor 14:16)
- righteousness, peace and joy (Rom 14:17)
- being bound (Acts 20:22)
- resolve (Acts 19:21)
- and visions (Rev 1:10, 4:2, 17:3, 21:10)



INDIVIDUAL SANCTIFICATION

Sanctification brings a new way of life in freedom and growth in holiness toward God.

- The Law of the Spirit

- In the Spirit there is freedom from the Torah and the covenantal obligations of the old epoch no longer hold because God is personally present in the Spirit. Yet, this freedom is not moral autonomy. The freedom of the Spirit is not meant 'as an opportunity for the flesh' but as an opportunity for love (Gal 5:13-14).

- According to Rom 8:2 the Christian lives by the "law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus" (ὁ νόμος τοῦ πνεύματος τῆς ζωῆς ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ) as opposed to "the law of sin and death" (τοῦ νόμου τῆς ἁμαρτίας καὶ τοῦ θανάτου).
- To live by the law of the Spirit is to live "according to the Spirit" (κατὰ πνεῦμα) and to live according to "the fruit of the Spirit" (ὁ καρπὸς τοῦ πνεύματος) as contrasted with life lived according to "the works of the flesh" (ἔργα τῆς σαρκός).
- Life in the Spirit can be stated either in negative terms as a list of prohibitions (Gal 5:19-21; cf. 1 Cor 6:9-11),
- Life in the Spirit can be stated in positive terms as the fruits of the Spirit present in the Christian's life (Gal 5:22-23).

- The Spirit's sanctification is understood as a progressive growth in holiness that increases personal righteousness

- The Christian is to "make holiness perfect" (2 Cor 7:1) and to "grow in grace" (2 Pet 3:18)

- Growth in holiness happens by mortifying the flesh

- 'For just as you once yielded your members to impurity and to greater and greater iniquity, so now yield your members to righteousness for sanctification. When you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. But then what return did you get from the things which you are now ashamed? The end of those things is death. But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the return you get is sanctification and its end, eternal life.' (Rom 6:19 -22)

- As it is possible to give oneself progressively over to sin resulting of increasing iniquity, it is also possible to give oneself progressively over to the Spirit's sanctification resulting in the reward of eternal life.



SANCTIFICATION IN JESUS CHRIST

Sanctification has a christological dimension because one is 'sanctified in Christ Jesus' (ἡγιασμενοὶ ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ) (1 Cor 1:2).

- Paul describes sanctification in Christ as the process of dying and rising with Christ
 - 'Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have been united in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. We know that our old self was crucified with him so that the sinful body might be destroyed, and we might no longer be enslaved to sin. For he who has died is freed from sin. But if we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him. For we know that Christ being raised from the dead will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. The death he died he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives he lives to God. So also you must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.' (Rom 6:1-11)



CHRIST'S WORK IN THE SPIRIT

Through Christ's work in the Spirit the Christian is remade by the Spirit into the εἰκὼν of Christ and the image of God (*Imago Dei*) and likeness of God (*similitudo Dei*) in sanctification. The Christian is "predestined to be conformed to the image (εἰκόνας) of his Son" (Rom 8:29) and as the Christian bears "the image of the man of dust" the Christian will "also bear the εἰκόνα of the man of heaven" (1 Cor 15:49).

- Remade into the image and likeness of God

- As Irenaeus said, "For if the earnest [the Spirit], gathering man into itself, does even now cause him to cry, 'Abba, Father,' what shall the complete grace of the Spirit effect, which shall be given to men by God? It will render us like unto Him, and accomplish the will of the Father; for it shall make man after the image and likeness of God."
- In the Spirit humanity regains the *imago et similitudo Dei* lost in the Fall
- Possession of the Spirit is possession of the image and likeness of God in Christ.
- The Christian is transformed into the very εἰκὼν of Christ.
- This work of Christ in the Spirit's sanctification is summarized in the Pauline phrases "Christ be formed in you" (Gal 4:19) and "put on the Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom 13:14; cf. Gal 3:27).
- Christian life in the Spirit consists in an imitation of Christ (*imitatio Christi*).

- Made for Glory

- As Paul says in 2 Cor 3:8 we "are being changed into his likeness from one degree of glory to another (δόξης εἰς δόξαν); for this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit."
- The Spirit's work of sanctification glorifies Christ in the individual and this glorifies God because according to Heb 1:3 Christ 'reflects the glory (δόξης) of God and bears the very stamp (χαρακτήρ) of his nature (ὑποστάσεως).'
- Christ's work in the Spirit for sanctification glorifies God



THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

Obedience to the Ten Commandments have been traditionally understood as a chief form of sanctification.

- The Ten Commandments (Exod 20:1-17), are also called the Decalogue, coming from the Latin word for ten *decem* (December was the tenth and last month of the Roman Calendar).
- In Anglicanism the Ten Commandments are still in force
 - They are required to be said before every Eucharist in the 1662 BCP
 - Article 7 is explicit that although the ceremonial law of the OT is not required, 'no Christian man whatsoever is free from the obedience of the Commandments which are called moral.'

1. One God
2. No Idols
3. Respect God's Name
4. Keep the Sabbath Holy
5. Honor your Father and Mother
6. Don't Kill
7. Don't commit adultery
8. Don't steal
9. Don't lie
10. Don't covet

- Because Scripture has no official numbering of the commandments, Anglicans collapse the last two commandments and expand the first two (one God, no idols), whereas Roman Catholics and Lutherans collapse the first two commandments and expand the last two, (don't covet neighbors wife, don't covet neighbor's possessions)

