

Sanctification (Positional and Progressive)

We teach that every believer is sanctified (set apart) unto God by justification and is therefore declared to be holy and identified as a saint. This sanctification is positional and instantaneous and should not be confused with progressive sanctification. This positional sanctification has to do with the believer's standing before God. We teach that there is also, by the work of the Holy Spirit, a progressive sanctification by which the believer's life (practice, attitude, etc.) grows in obedience to the Word of God. The believer is thereby able to live a life of increasing holiness in conformity to the will of God, becoming more like our Lord Jesus Christ. (John 17:17, 19; Acts 20:32; Romans 6:1-22; 1 Corinthians 1:2, 30; 6:11; 2 Corinthians 3:18; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-4; 5:23; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; Hebrews 2:11; 3:1; 10:10, 14; 13:12; 1 Peter 1:2)

In this respect, we teach that every saved person is involved in a daily conflict – the new creation doing battle against the flesh – but adequate provision is made for victory through the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit. The struggle, nevertheless, stays with the believer all through this earthly life and is never completely ended while on this earth. All claims to the eradication of sin in this life are unscriptural, but the Holy Spirit does provide for victory over sin. Biblical progressive sanctification involves dependence upon God and a disciplined effort towards godliness. Some of the means which the Holy Spirit uses to mature believers are: the Word of God, the people of God, prayer, and trials. (John 17:17; Galatians 5:16-25; Ephesians 4:22-24; Philippians 2:12-13; 3:12; Colossians 1:9-12; 3:9-10; 1 Timothy 4:7-8; Hebrews 10:24-25; 1 Peter 1:14-16; 1 John 3:5-10)