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BASIC CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE

A Study of the Articles of Faith



Fort Washington Baptist Church

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BASIC CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE

A Study of the Articles of Faith



SESSION 52

X. Sanctification

We believe that **sanctification** is the process by which, according to the will of God, we are made partakers of his holiness; that it is a progressive work; that it is begun in regeneration; and that it is carried on in the hearts of believers by the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, the Sealer and Comforter, in the continual use of the appointed means, especially the Word of God, self-examination, self-denial, watchfulness, and prayer.¹

According to Article IX:

1. **Baptists believe** that the Scriptures teach that **sanctification is the process** by which, according to the **will of God**, we are made partakers of **His holiness**.
2. **Baptists believe** that the Scriptures teach that **sanctification** is a progressive work; that it is begun in regeneration.
3. **Baptists believe** that the Scriptures teach that **sanctification** is carried on in the hearts of believers by the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, the Sealer and Comforter.
4. **Baptists believe** that the Scriptures teach that **sanctification happens in the life of a believer** in the continual use of the appointed means, especially the Word of God, self-examination, self-denial, watchfulness, and prayer.

¹ [Articles-of-Faith.pdf \(nationalbaptist.com\)](http://nationalbaptist.com)

The Doctrine of Sanctification



First: Baptists believe that the Scriptures teach that **sanctification is the process** by which, according to the **will of God**, we are made partakers of **His holiness**. In this first statement concerning **sanctification**, we learn three things:

- 1) Sanctification is a process,
- 2) Sanctification is the will of God, and
- 3) Sanctification enables us to be made partakers of His holiness.

Sanctification is the will of God



I Thessalonians 4:1-8 reads:

“Finally then, brothers *and sisters*, we request and urge you in the Lord Jesus, that as you received *instruction* from us as to **how you ought to walk and please God** (just as you actually do walk), that you excel *even more*.² For you know what instructions we gave you by *the authority of the Lord Jesus*.”

Point: If we want to please God, walk in sanctification.

³ **For this is the will of God**, your **sanctification**; *that is*, that you abstain from sexual immorality; ⁴ that each of you know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor, ⁵ not in lustful passion, like the Gentiles who do not know God; ⁶ and that no one violate the rights and take advantage of his brother *or sister* in the matter, because the Lord is *the* avenger in all these things, just as we also told you previously and solemnly warned *you*.⁷ For God has not called us for impurity, but in **sanctification**.⁸ Therefore, the one who rejects *this* is not rejecting man, but the God who gives His Holy Spirit to you.”

Point:

Sanctification is God’s will for everyone in Christ Jesus. God’s desire is that all believers walk in purity and not in impurity, that they grow to discern what they’ve received through the death and resurrection of Christ (**1 Cor. 2:6-16**), and that they’re led throughout their life in Christ, by the presence of the Holy Spirit and not by the desires of

the flesh (**Rom. 8:5-17; Gal. 5:16-17**). It is God's will that each believer manifests the fruits of the Spirit in his/her life: Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (**Gal. 5:22-23**). When these things, which are in God's will, become visible in the life of believers, it is then that sanctification is being realized. The indwelling Spirit, through Whom believers grow in sanctification, is proof that God's will is for believers to walk in sanctification - to be progressively transformed morally, spiritually, relationally - wholistically to be more like Christ.

Let's Share



Fill in the blank: The evidence that I am experiencing sanctification in my life – that I am growing morally, spiritually, relationally – wholistically to be more like Christ is:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Sanctification is a Process
Sanctification is the will of God
Sanctification enables us to be made partakers of His holiness



After being delivered from their bondage in Egypt, Israel sang saying, “Who is like Thee among the gods, O Lord? Who is like Thee, majestic in **holiness**, awesome in praises, working wonders?” (**Ex. 15:11**). No one is like God! No one is majestic in holiness, works wonders, and worthy of awesome praises!

There is no one who compares with the Lord. His holiness is unlike any other! He is set apart from all others. No one is so distinct and set apart from all others like the Lord. His holiness is majestic, glorious, great...He is set apart from all...none can compare the Lord.

God speaks in holiness...what God promises He will do, God does (**Ps. 60:6-8**). No one keeps and fulfill all promises but God! God speaks in holiness, in truthfulness, with integrity, without sin – without lying. God does not lie (**Ps. 89:35; 108:7; Amos 4:2**).

God speaks in holiness...His testimonies, all that He has declared is fully trustworthy, reliable, and believable because of **God's holiness** (**Ps. 93:5**). Scripture not only declares God's holiness, but also, **that holiness** would characterize God's people.

Zacharias, the father of John the Baptist, filled with the Holy Spirit, prophesied saying,

“Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for He has visited us and accomplished redemption for His people and has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of David His servant as He spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from of old...to show mercy toward our fathers, and to remember His holy covenant...to grant us that we, being delivered from the hand of our enemies, might serve His without fear, **in holiness and righteousness before Him all our days**” (**Lk. 1:67-75**).

Through the coming of our Savior Jesus Christ, God’s people have been liberated that they might serve God without fear, in holiness and righteousness before Him all our day. Holiness is to characterize the life of God’s people. **Sanctification**, the indwelling work of the Spirit in the life of the believer, leading and guiding the believer, enable the believer to partake of God’s **holiness**.

The Apostle Paul testified that he and those with him conducted themselves in **holiness** towards the Corinthian believers, that is with godly sincerity, demonstrating that **holiness is not beyond the reach of believers in character and conduct**. Paul wrote,

“For our proud confidence is this: the testimony of our conscience, that in **holiness and godly sincerity**, not in fleshly wisdom but in the grace of God, we have conducted ourselves in the world, and especially toward you” (**2 Cor. 1:12**).

After commanding the Corinthian believers saying,

“Do not be bound together with unbelievers; for what partnership have righteousness and lawlessness, or what fellowship has light with darkness? Or what harmony has Christ with Belial, or what has a believer in common with

an unbeliever? Or what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God...” (**2 Cor. 6:14-16**)

Paul then wrote,

“Therefore, having these promises beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting **holiness in the fear of God**” (**2 Cor. 7:1**).

To realize holiness, in the fear of God and through the power of the Holy Spirit, one must cleanse him/herself from all that defiles the flesh and the spirit. Holiness is realized through intentionally separating oneself from things that defile one outwardly (the flesh) and inwardly (the spirit.) When this “cleansing” occurs in a believer’s life, that believer becomes a partaker of God’s holiness – God’s position of being separated from all that is unclean.

In his first letter to the Saints in Thessalonica, the Apostle Paul again expressed his concern about Saints exhibiting **holiness**, when he wrote,

“Now may our God and Father Himself and Jesus our Lord direct our way to you;¹² and may the Lord cause you to increase and abound in love for one another, and for all people, just as we also *do* for you;¹³ so that He may establish your hearts without blame **in holiness** before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all His saints” (**I Thess. 3:11-13**).

God’s holiness permeates the Scriptures in both Testaments. Holiness is to also characterize those who are God’s people. Paul understood this truth! He not only personally sought holiness, but also urged Saints to walk in holiness.

In the Book of Hebrews, the Apostle explained that God, our heavenly Father, disciplines His children, for the purpose that His children would share His holiness.

“It is for discipline that you endure; God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom *his* father does not discipline?⁸ But if you are without discipline, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate

children and not sons.⁹ Furthermore, we had earthly fathers to discipline us, and we respected them; shall we not much rather be subject to the Father of spirits, and live?¹⁰ For they disciplined us for a short time as seemed best to them, but **He disciplines us for our good, so that we may share His holiness**” (**Heb. 12:7-10**).

Point: God’s manifests His holiness by His integrity, by His faithfulness, by His truthfulness, and by His righteousness. God is unlike any other. He alone is completely trustworthy, unwaveringly faithful, and altogether reliable. He alone keeps every promise He makes. He alone is entirely separate from sin, completely pure, and altogether holy. There is no evil in God, no sin in God, no unrighteousness in God, no dishonesty in God, no wickedness in God. God’s holiness is evident in His truthfulness and His conduct. God desires that His holiness be manifest in His people.

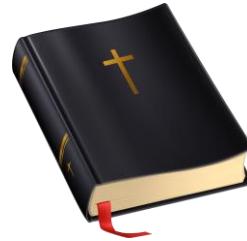
Sanctification, the work of the Holy Spirit in the life of each believer, is so that they may partake in His holiness...that every believer be trustworthy as God is, faithful, righteous, honest, not evil, and separated from sin in word and deed just as God is. **Sanctification**, being transformed to morally, spiritually, relationally, personally – wholistically to become like God and Christ is viewed as essential if anyone ever expects to see the Lord. The Apostle writes, “**Pursue peace with all men, and the sanctification without which no one will see the Lord**” (**Heb. 12:14**).

Let’s Share

Fill in the blank: To be transformed so that I can share in the holiness of God, I believe I must...

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Sanctification occurs in the heart through the Holy Spirit



Baptists believe that the Scriptures teach that **sanctification** is a progressive work; that it is begun in regeneration and is carried on in the hearts of believers by the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, the Sealer and Comforter.

There are numerous passages of Scripture which enable believers to see the ongoing work of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of believers. In this study, we've looked at some of those passages (**Romans 8; 1 Corinthians 2; Galatians 5**). In the third chapter of Paul's letter to Titus, observe what Paul teaches concerning the Holy Spirit.

“Remind them to be subject to rulers, to authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good deed,² to malign no one, to be peaceable, gentle, showing every consideration for all men.³ For we also once were foolish ourselves, disobedient, deceived, enslaved to various lusts and pleasures, spending our life in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another.

⁴ But when the kindness of God our Savior and *His* love for mankind appeared,⁵ **He saved us**, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, **by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit**,⁶ whom He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior,⁷ so that being justified by His grace we would be made heirs according to *the* hope of eternal life.

Key points to observe:

1. The kindness and love of God **Who appeared** for humanity is Jesus Christ.

2. When Jesus Christ appeared, God saved us, according to **His mercy**, not on the basis of deeds we have done in righteousness, but by **the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit**.
3. The **washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit** is a one-time event, in the life of those who are saved.

Through the work of the Holy Spirit, those who are saved, have the guilt of sin is **washed away** (*remember water Baptism and Spirit baptism – washing away of the guilt of sin*) (**Matt. 3:1-17**). The noun translated “**regeneration**,” is understood to mean “new birth, recreation, or rebirth” (New Testament Greek Lexicon). The born-again experience, through the Holy Spirit, occurs just once (**Jn. 3:1-8**). Those who are saved are made new one time. Paul explained saying, “Therefore if any man/person is in Christ, *that one* is a new creature; the old things have passed away; behold, new things have come (**2 Cor. 5:17**).

The noun translated “**renewing**,” is understood to mean “a renewal, a renovation, a complete change for the better” (New Testament Greek Lexicon). Those who are saved experience **regeneration** (new-birth) and **a renewing** (a complete change for the better) through the Holy Spirit - One Time. **Regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit** begins the process of Sanctification.

A life of putting the death the desires of the flesh and growing to understand all that God has accomplished through Christ, is a daily, ongoing, progressive work of the Spirit in the believer (**Romans 8; I Corinthians 2; Galatians 5**). **Regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit** begins the process of Sanctification. Sanctification begins with first being born again, completely changed for the better through the Holy Spirit, and continues throughout one’s life in Christ.

Let's Share



Question: Can you remember the day you regeneration, the day you were born-again and the process of sanctification began in your life? How do you know you were born-again?

How does one grow in Sanctification?



Baptists believe that the Scriptures teach that **sanctification**
happens in the life of a believer

in the continual use of the appointed means,
especially the Word of God,
self-examination,
self-denial,
watchfulness,
and prayer.