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Section: Doctrine of the Holy Spirit (Pneumatology)

Teacher: Rob Barber

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**HANDOUT NOTES**

**Q97. What is progressive sanctification?**

Progressive sanctification is growing in holiness through obedience to the Lordship of Jesus and His word from a right heart. By grace, it is a lifelong process powered by the Holy Spirit to change us to become more like Christ.

**SANCTIFICATION**

1. The act of making holy. In an evangelical sense, the act of God's grace by which the affections of men are purified or alienated from sin and the world, and exalted to a supreme love to God.

*God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation, through* ***sanctification*** *of the Spirit and belief of the truth. (*[*2 Thessalonians 2:13*](http://www.webstersdictionary1828.com/Dictionary/Sanctification)*.*[*1 Peter 1:2*](http://www.webstersdictionary1828.com/Dictionary/Sanctification)*).*

1. The act of consecrating or of setting apart for a sacred purpose; consecration.

**1 Corinthians 6:11** And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.

**1 Corinthians 1:30** And because of him you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption

**Romans 6:1-14**

* **Progressive Sanctification**

**Sinclair Ferguson:** This, then is the foundation of sanctification in Reformed theology. It is rooted, not in humanity and their achievement of holiness or sanctification, but in what God has done in Christ, and for us in union with him. Rather than view Christians first and foremost in the micro-cosmic context of their own progress, the Reformed doctrine first of all sets them in the macrocosm of God’s activity in redemptive history. It is seeing oneself in this context that enables the individual Christian to grow in true holiness.

**1 Corinthians 15:10** But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me was not in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them, though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me.

**Philippians 2:12-13** Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

**Romans 12:1-2** I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

**Romans 11:33-36** Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways! "For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been his counselor?" "Or who has given a gift to him that he might be repaid?" For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen.

**1 Thessalonians 4:3-4, 7-8** For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you abstain from sexual immorality; that each one of you know how to control his own body in holiness and honor …For God has not called us for impurity, but in holiness. Therefore whoever disregards this, disregards not man but God, who gives his Holy Spirit to you.

**1 Peter 1:13-16** Therefore, preparing your minds for action, and being sober-minded, set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, but as he who called you is holy, you also ***be holy in all your conduct***, since it is written, “You shall be holy, for I am holy.”

**Being redeemed, we progressively become more Christ-like:**

Head: Knowledge, Understanding, Wisdom, Worldview

Heart: Attitude, Emotions, Motives, Feelings, Desires

Hands: Actions, Relationships, Service, Sacrifice

It is critical that we remember that by the time we begin working on our sanctification, we have already been justified… not just partly… completely! Progressive Sanctification is not adding to or completing or maintaining any of the benefits that have already been secured for us in Christ.

**AW Pink:** Though absolutely inseparable, yet these two great blessings of Divine grace are quite distinct. In sanctification something is actually imparted to us, in justification it is only imputed. Justification is based entirely upon the work Christ wrought for us, sanctification is principally a work wrought in us. Justification respects its object in a legal sense and terminates in a relative change — a deliverance from punishment, a right to the reward; sanctification regards its object in a moral sense, and terminates in an experimental change both in character and conduct — imparting a love for God, a capacity to worship Him acceptably, and a fitness for Heaven. Justification is by a righteousness without us, sanctification is by a holiness wrought in us. Justification is by Christ as Priest, and has regard to the penalty of sin; sanctification is by Christ as King, and has regard to the dominion of sin: the former cancels its damning power, the latter delivers from its reigning power.

**Ephesians 2:8-10** For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus *for good works*, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

We are sanctified unto good works as we are conformed into the image of Jesus. Growing in our love for God by beholding the beauty of Jesus, makes us want to be more like Him, to be in Him, to experience our oneness with Him, and that leads us to imitate Him by obeying the law of God, not perfectly, but in growing success.

Sanctification should never be seen as the painful process of learning to be obedient, as much as it is the process of fully enjoying the benefits of being one with Christ.

**Q98. What means does the Holy Spirit use to mature Christians?**

In accordance with His sovereign power, the Holy Spirit uses means such as the Bible, prayer, preaching, discipleship, trials, Christian fellowship and accountability in the process of maturing Christians.

**Bible** - Be taught biblically. Read the Bible, hear it, and remember it. Know sound doctrine.

**Prayer** - Pour out our hearts to God in praise, thanksgiving, confession of sin, and express our requests to Him while submitting to His sovereign will.

**Preaching** - The word of God taught rightly in the context of a local church.

**Discipleship** - Follow and learn from more mature Christians and do the work of disciple-making ourselves: call people to saving faith, then train them in sound doctrine and how to live as imitators of Christ.

**Trials** - Suffer the challenges in life with joy, including overcoming our own sin and other realities of an ungodly world.

**Fellowship** - Spend quality time with, invite exhortation from, and be accountable to Christians, giving special honor to elders/pastors.

* **The Bible**

**2 Timothy 3:16-17** All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

**Psalm 119:33-34** Teach me, O Lord, **the way** of your statutes; and I will keep it to the end. Give me understanding, that I may keep your law and observe it with my whole heart.

**Hebrews 4:12** For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two- edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

* **Prayer**

**Psalm 119:169-170** Let my cry come before you, O Lord; give me understanding according to your word! Let my plea come before you; deliver me according to your word.

**James 1:5** If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him.

**Matthew 7:7-11** "Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened. Or which one of you, if his son asks him for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a serpent? If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask him!”

* **Preaching**

**Ephesians 4:11-13** And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ,

* **Discipleship**

**Matthew 28:19-20** Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you…

* **Trials**

**Philippians 1:29** For it has been granted to you that for the sake of Christ you should not only believe in him but also suffer for his sake,

**1 Peter 1:6-7** In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, so that the tested genuineness of your faith—more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

**James 1:2-4** Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

**Romans 5:3-5** Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.

* **Christian Fellowship and Accountability**

**Acts 2:42** And they devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.

**Colossians 3:16** Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.

**Hebrews 3:13** But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called “today,” that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.

**1 Corinthians 15:33** Do not be deceived: "Bad company ruins good morals."

**1 John 1:7** But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another…

**Matthew 18:20** For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them."

**Hebrews 13:17** Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you.