

Unsuccessful struggle against sin and a lack of power in life and ministry frustrate those who have asked Jesus to be their Savior but not their Sanctifier, resulting in a lack of joy in their walk with Christ. At the point when we are born again, we become members of God's family. We believe He paid the price for our sin, and we are *positionally sanctified*, or set apart from those who are not born again, and are seen as holy because of what Christ has done.

### **Christ our Sanctifier *Part One***

"But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God—and righteousness and sanctification and redemption." (1 *Corinthians 1:30*) NKJV

The Bible teaches three tenses of salvation:

- I have been saved: Justification
- I am being saved: Sanctification
- I will be saved: Glorification

### **Sanctification means separation**

- *Separation from sin*: "But just as He who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; for it is written: 'Be holy, because I am holy.'" 1 *Peter 1:15-16*.
- *Separation to God*: "(He) has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve His God and Father..." *Revelation 1:6*.

We read in *John 1:29, 33* that Jesus is

- "the one who is taking away the sin of the world..."
- "the one who is baptizing with the Holy Spirit"

*Two realities two experiences.* All Christians understand the first promise. But many Christians do not understand the experience of the second. It is the experience of Christ's sanctifying work in a believer's life. For those who neither understand nor allow for the Spirit's control in their lives, the results will have profound effect. Ongoing and unsuccessful struggle against sin and a lack of power in life and ministry frustrates the believer. Doubts creep in about the assurance of salvation; there is a lack of joy in the walk with Christ.

### **Pneumatology "101"**

In the context of the following Scriptures, the Greek word for Spirit is *pneuma*.

- Every Christian is indwelt by the Holy Spirit. "If anyone does not have the *Spirit* of Christ, he does not belong to Christ." (*Romans 8:9*).

- Many Christians are not (and never have been) filled with the Holy Spirit. "...be filled with the Spirit." (*Ephesians 5:18*).

*Two realities* → *two experiences*. With the decision to believe Christ is Savior, the One who was sacrificed for the sin of the world, the believer is immediately indwelt by the Holy Spirit. The believer who forsakes the flesh, allowing the Spirit's infilling, experiences victory and deliverance not only from the penalty of sin because Christ's righteousness is *imputed* to him. The Christian who is filled with the Christ's Spirit knows deliverance from the power of sin as Christ's righteousness is *imparted* to him.

Not only does the follower of Christ experience freedom from eternal death because Jesus lives in him but also freedom to live an abundant life in the present because Jesus lives *through* him. With the indwelling of the Holy Spirit he is equipped to fight the temptations of the future.

### **A Sad Reality**

- Most American Christians show little evidence in their lives that they have been separated from sin.
- Most American Christians behave in ways that make it difficult to believe that they have been "set apart" for the service of God.

### **Christ our Sanctifier *Part Two***

According to *John 1:29-33*, Jesus is:

- the one who is taking away the sin of the world
- the one who is baptizing with the Holy Spirit

These two realities offer the believer two experiences. All Christians understand the first but most Christians do not understand or experience the second.

### **Two Realities - Two Experiences**

- Deliverance from penalty of sin
- Deliverance from the power of sin
- Freedom from death
- Freedom to live
- Release from the guilt of the past
- Equips for the temptations of the future
- Christ's righteousness is imputed to us

- Christ's righteousness is manifest in us
- Jesus lives in us
- Jesus lives through us

### True Or False?

According to the New Testament, there are two kinds of Christians.

- *1 Corinthians 3:1-4* — spiritual and worldly (carnal)
- *Romans 7* and *Romans 8* — self-propelled and Spirit driven
- *Ephesians 5:18* — filled and not filled

What does this look like?

- "It's all about purity."
- "It's all about power."
- "It's all about joy."

Jesus tells us in *John 15* that He is the Vine and we are the branches. Because of our relationship with Jesus:

- "we will bear much fruit..." — PURITY
- "we can ask whatever we want..." — POWER
- "our joy will be complete" — JOY

The Steps to a Spirit Filled Life

- Surrender. You cannot make yourself holy any more than you can make yourself saved! (*Rom. 6:11; Rom. 12:1-2*)
- Accept. Christ is your Sanctifier in the same way that He is your Savior! (*Col. 2:6; Gal. 2:20*)
- Abide. Maintain a continuous relationship with Jesus through obedience to his Word. (*John 15:1-11*)

Abiding and the Word of God

- *John 17:17* — "Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth."
- *John 15:3* — "You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you."

- *John 15:7* — “If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish and it will be given you.”
- Additional Scriptures to read: *Ephesians 5:18*, and *Colossians 3:16*.

### **Christ our Sanctifier *Part Three***

As we move forward in our understanding of Jesus as our Sanctifier, let’s review our position in Christ and find out how we can live a Spirit-filled life.

*The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! This is the one I meant when I said, 'A man who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me.' I myself did not know him, but the reason I came baptizing with water was that he might be revealed to Israel." Then John gave this testimony: "I saw the Spirit come down from heaven as a dove and remain on him. I would not have known him, except that the one who sent me to baptize with water told me, 'The man on whom you see the Spirit come down and remain is he who will baptize with the Holy Spirit.'* (John 1:29-33)

Jesus is:

1. “...the one who is taking away the sin of the world...”
2. “...the one who is baptizing with the Holy Spirit...”

### **Two Realities - Two Experiences**

All Christians understand the first reality, grateful and confident that Christ’s blood has atoned for their sins. They no longer need to fear eternal separation from God.

But most Christians do not understand or experience the second reality—the full reality of the Holy Spirit in their lives. Because many Christians have been badly taught, or because they have chosen to disregard the clear teaching of the New Testament regarding sanctification, they are missing much of what God has made available to every believer in Christ.

### **Two Kinds of Christians**

The New Testament clearly teaches that there are two kinds of Christians. In *1 Corinthians 3:1-4*, Paul talks about Christians who are “spiritual” and contrasts them with those who are “worldly” or “carnal.” In Romans chapters 7 and 8, the comparison is between those believers who are self propelled and those who are Spirit driven. In *Ephesians 5:18* he implies that some are “filled” and some are “not filled.”

### **Steps To A Spirit-Filled Life**

The opportunity to **experience** the **two realities** of sanctification is available to every believer. The path to the Spirit-filled life involves faith-filled risks that always involve change.

- **Surrender:** You cannot make yourself holy any more than you can make yourself saved. *Romans 6:11; Romans 12:1-2*
- **Accept:** Christ is your Sanctifier in the same way that He is your Savior! *Colossians 2:6; Galatians 2:20*
- **Abide:** Maintain a continuous relationship with Jesus through obedience to His Word. *John 15:1-11*

## Frequently Asked Questions

### Why do so few Christians experience the second reality of sanctification?

- Ignorance — *Acts 19:3*
- Sin — *Ephesians 4:30*
- Fear — *I Thessalonians 5:19*
- Lack of Desire — *Matthew 5:6*

### Is there a difference between the baptism and filling?

The major problem here is that the New Testament does not clearly distinguish between several different words used to describe the dealings of the Holy Spirit with God's people. Some of these words are listed below.

- "baptized"
- "filled"
- "anointed"
- "sealed"
- "earnest"

While the language the Bible uses to describe the experience may be ambiguous, the possibility of living a spirit-filled life is a Clear Reality

### Is this a one time experience?

While the initial filling of the Holy Spirit usually comes as an experience subsequent to conversion, it is important to understand that:

- Sanctification is also a "progressive" experience. *Philippians 2:12-13; Philippians 3:12-14; Colossians 2:6*
- It is also important to recognize that we need to be filled again and again because we leak!

## **Two Great Errors**

1. Avoiding the Holy Spirit out of fear: Many Christians run from God because of sin or preconceived notions of inability or worthiness. When we remember to live Jesus' words from *John 15*, "Apart from Me you can do nothing," we realize that our daily sanctification is dependent on our willingness to surrender to Him.
2. Seeking an experience or feeling as the evidence that we have been filled: Experiences are temporary and feelings are fleeting. God's Word is true and everlasting. We cannot put our faith in experience or feeling but only in His eternal Word.

## **A Final Thought**

If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to you children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him! (*Luke 11:13*)

## **YOU GOTTAWANNA!**

Jesus said, "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled." (*Matthew 5:6*)

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