

Sanctification

There are those who claim that God chose us (Christians) through justification (the first work of grace) to sanctification (the second work of grace). In other words, one is justified and then he is sanctified. However, Paul says, "God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth." (II Thess. 2:13). If sanctification comes after justification, then so would belief of the truth.

God says he has from the beginning chosen you to salvation. "Chosen" means to take for oneself, to prefer, to choose. It is important to remember that God chooses those who are **in him**. (Eph. 1:4) "Salvation" is the ultimate goal.

God does this through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth. This modifies "chosen" and shows positively that we have something to do with our salvation, and that our salvation is not simply an arbitrary act of God. Sanctification is not some direct operation of the Holy Spirit, but takes place through the truth (word) of Christ. (Jn. 17:17; Acts 26:18; Eph. 5:26; I Thess. 4:3,4)

The man who is righteous is upright, just. He does what is right in the sight of God: "For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified." (Rom. 2:13) John said, "Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous." (I Jn. 3:7) This verse declares that righteousness is something we do, and that doing (obeying) righteousness is what makes us righteous.

The man who is sanctified is made holy or just, consecrated. He is set aside for holy and dedicated purposes. God has forgiven this person and set him aside for His holy purposes. When we were baptized into Christ, God sanctified and justified us. (I Cor. 6:11)

Actually, being justified or obtaining the forgiveness of sins, and being sanctified is involved in the same process. (Acts 26:18) Just as when one becomes a member of the church, he also becomes a child of God, so when one is forgiven, or justified, one is also set apart for God's service, or sanctified.

How wonderful it is that our sins can be forgiven and that we can be considered a part of the great work of God on earth.