

THE STORY OF SALVATION: JUSTIFIED, SANCTIFIED, GLORIFIED

Ephesians 4:17–32 • Brian Brodersen

Introduction: As we come back to the story of salvation, we are going to look once again to the apostle Paul in his Epistles for understanding and instruction on our salvation and the full implications of that salvation for living out our faith.

When Paul wrote to the church in Rome, he said he was eager to come and preach the gospel to them. From that statement, it is obvious that Paul's idea of preaching the gospel included more than stating certain historical facts about the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ to the unconverted. For Paul, preaching the gospel (which he says he is eager to do among Christians) also includes explaining to the believers the full implication of those facts, how our salvation is more than just deliverance from judgment. It is multifaceted and includes justification, reconciliation, regeneration, sanctification, and ultimately, glorification.

As we are deep diving into a fuller understanding of our salvation, we are engaging in what theologians call *soteriology*. Two Greek words: *sodzo*, *soter*, *sotiera* (save, Savior, salvation); *logos* (word or words)—words about salvation. *Soteriology*, the study of salvation. *Theology*, words about God, or the study of God.

Today we are going to look at sanctification and glorification, but we need to go back and look briefly at justification.

- I. **Justification.** To declare righteous. Based on faith alone in what Jesus did through his death and resurrection, we are justified. We are irreversibly declared righteous, placed in Christ, seated in the heavens, fully accepted in the Beloved, and sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise unto the day of redemption.
 - A. Completely objective—what God has done for us. Whether you feel it or not, this is your reality if you have trusted Christ. This is what God has done *for* you.
 - B. Salvation consists of more than just justification. There is also the subjective—what God has done to you. He has regenerated you, caused you to be born anew, made you spiritually alive by placing his Holy Spirit in you. And, as I said last time, regeneration is the beginning of transformation, and the process of transformation is called sanctification (to be made holy).
- II. **Sanctification.** The Greek word translated ***holy*** (*hagios*), is the root of the word ***Sanctify***. I think the best way to understand sanctification is that we are being conformed to the image of Jesus Christ. A process that will last our entire lives, often prove to be slower than expected, and will not be fully accomplished this side of glory (heaven).
 - A. Unlike justification (that is solely the work of God), sanctification is a cooperative effort between the Holy Spirit and the believer and requires knowing the truth and applying the truth in obedience through the power of the Holy Spirit.
 - B. In Ephesians, Paul having spent the first half of the letter telling us all that God has done for us, then turns in 4:17–32, and lays out what we are to now do in response.

READ: Ephesians 4:17

- C. Old Self to New Self
- D. Notice Paul is appealing based on the fact that we are new in Christ, and as new creations in Christ, we are no longer to live the way we used to live.

III. **How we are sanctified.** We must know and believe so we can act. Romans 6:5–6, 11–14

“For if we have been united in Christ in a death like his, we will certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body ruled by sin might be done away with (put out of business), that we should no longer be slaves to sin—because anyone who has died has been set free from sin ... In the same way count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus. Do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires. Do not offer any part of yourself to sin as an instrument of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer every part of yourself to him as an instrument of righteousness. For sin shall no longer be your master, for you are not under the law, but under grace.”

- A. The Holy Spirit empowers us to live in the Spirit: “Walk in the Spirit and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.” Galatians 5:16
- B. Spiritual disciplines lead to spiritual formation (conformity to the image of Christ).
 - 1. Sanctification requires discipline. You will not automatically, without any effort on your part, become sanctified. Remember, it is a cooperative effort. The Scriptures play a huge role in our sanctification. Jesus prayed, “Father, sanctify them by your truth, your word is truth.” John 17:17
- C. As we read and meditate and are taught the Word of God, we are reminded over and over again of who Jesus is and what it is to follow and please him. As we pray and fast and engage with the family of God, as we worship and serve the Lord, as we make Christ and his kingdom the center of our lives, our sanctification will progress.
 - 1. We will be transformed—changed. Ultimately conformed to the image of the Son of God.

IV. **Glorified!** Being made like Jesus and being present with Jesus in the new creation forever and ever.

- A. Peter described it like this: “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to his abundant mercy, caused us to be born again to a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. To an *inheritance incorruptible*, and *undefiled* and does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith for *salvation* ready to be revealed in the last time ... Receiving the end of your faith—the **salvation** of your souls.” 1 Peter 1:3–5
- B. Paul says it like this: “For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son ... And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified.” Roman 8:29
- C. **What’s missing?** Sanctification. Why? Our glorification is not dependent on our sanctification. How could it be? How sanctified would one have to be to be glorified? How would the person who dies suddenly after receiving Christ fare in comparison to the person who has traveled the sanctification path for years? In one sense, one has been beautifully sanctified through long years of obediently following Christ, the other has not been sanctified at all. How sanctified was the criminal next to Jesus on the cross who, after mocking Jesus, turned and said, “Lord, when you come into your kingdom, remember me,” to whom Jesus replied, “today you will be with me in paradise”?

V. **The glorious truth.** Christ is also our sanctification. Listen to what Paul says to the Corinthians, a lot of whom were moving quite slowly along the path of sanctification: “Of God you are *in Christ Jesus*, who became for us wisdom from God—and righteousness (justification) and *sanctification* and redemption.”

Close

Thank God that no part of our salvation is left up to us. Were it, we'd never know a day of peace. But in him—in Christ—all is secure. And for that, we give thanks!

Eucharist