

"Sanctified In Christ Jesus ..."

"... called to be saints, with all that call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ in every place ..." (1 Cor. 1:2).

Those who were the church of God in Corinth had been sanctified in Christ Jesus. This agrees with all the Holy Scriptures concerning the place of salvation -- in Christ Jesus for Christ is the Savior of his body (Eph. 5:25). The word "*sanctify*" means to "set apart." We are set apart from the guilt of sin in Christ for "*if any man be in Christ Jesus, he is a new creature*" (2 Cor. 5:17). The Corinthians had formerly been fornicators, idolaters, and covetous but they were these things no more; they had been sanctified; they were in Christ. (1 Cor. 6:11). Since one is sanctified in Christ, if one is not in Christ he is not sanctified, saved.

But while Christ is the place where sanctification takes place, there are several things which make possible sanctification; for man to be in Christ. Let us consider some of these.

Jesus prayed, "*Sanctify them through thy truth, thy word is truth*" (Jn. 17:17). The Thessalonians had been "*chosen from the beginning unto salvation in sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth*" (2 Thess. 2:13, cf. 1 Pet. 1:2). The Holy Spirit was God's agent to reveal the gospel of man's salvation to man; hearing that gospel and believing it brought about, ultimately, sanctification.

The blood of Jesus works in man's sanctification. The Hebrew writer wrote of some who had "*counted the blood of the covenant wherewith they had been sanctified an unholy thing*" (Heb. 10:29). The blood of Christ is God's cleansing agent. "*This is the blood of the covenant which is poured out for many unto remission of sins*" said Jesus the eve He instituted the Lord's Supper (Mt. 26:26). John wrote, "*If we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanseth us from all sins*" (1 Jn. 1:7). Without the shedding of blood there is no remission and the blood of bulls and goats cannot take away sins (Heb. 9:22; 10:4).

Then again we are told that Christ loved the church and "*gave himself up for it; that he might sanctify it, having cleansed it by the washing of water with the word*" (Eph, 5:25f). It is Christ's blood which cleanses from sins but it is in baptism that we come in contact with that blood. Paul wrote, "*Are ye ignorant that all we who were baptized into Christ, were baptized into his death?*" (Rom. 6:3f). Baptism not only puts us in contact with Christ's blood;

it also puts us into Christ. "*Ye are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, for as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ*" (Gal. 3:26f). Christ is the place in which we are sanctified; baptism puts us into Christ, thus without baptism there would be no sanctification. The sanctified are "*called to be saints,*" set apart ones. God brings about the sanctification of man from the guilt of his sins; man must also act in his sanctification: he must receive with meekness the implanted word, able to save his soul (James 1:21). When he receives the word, he must let it produce faith in his heart. He must act as he changes his heart regarding his sins; he must submit to baptism as God commanded him. In all these things, he is an active participant in his sanctification, but yielding to baptism is not the end of his participation; he must continue to act. He must sanctify Christ as Lord in his heart (1 Pet. 3:15). He must separate himself from all defilements of the flesh and the spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord (2 Cor. 7:1f). Sanctification is a day by day process and requirement. Let all God's people recognize we are called to be saints and act accordingly.

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