

SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY

Video Lecture Series

by Robert D. McCurley, ThM

STUDY GUIDE

Module 5:
**SOTERIOLOGY—
THE DOCTRINE OF SALVATION**

Lecture 8:
**THE DOCTRINE OF
SANCTIFICATION**



The John Knox Institute
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Module 5

Soteriology—the Doctrine of Salvation

1. Introduction to Soteriology
2. The Doctrine of Union with Christ
3. The Doctrines of Effectual Calling & Regeneration
4. The Doctrine of Saving Faith
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6. The Doctrine of Justification
7. The Doctrine of Adoption
- 8. The Doctrine of Sanctification**
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Module 5:

SOTERIOLOGY—THE DOCTRINE OF SALVATION

Lecture 8:

The Doctrine of Sanctification

Introduction

God's people all have the same spiritual lineage. Those who are in Christ are heirs with Christ, and come from the seed of Abraham. It doesn't matter whether you are a Jew or a Gentile, we have a shared history. And yes, each child of God is given a new name—they bear the name of God. These, and many other components come with belonging to God's family or household. But there is more. God works through the gospel to re-create, in each of his children, the family likeness. He sends his Spirit to change believers, so that they become more and more like their elder brother, the Lord Jesus Christ. Well, this process of coming to share in the family likeness is called Sanctification.

Theme: *The doctrine of Sanctification.*

I. Scriptural Basis

"But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."—2 Corinthians 3:18

1. An open face in contrast to a veiled face.
 - a. A veiled face refers to unbelief.
2. The believer is enabled to see the glory of the Lord, in Jesus Christ.
3. The Scriptures mirror the glory of God.
4. The effect is that believers are changed into the likeness of Christ.
5. The Holy Spirit brings about this change.

Questions:

1. What does the veiled face refer to in the Scripture? How does that relate to the believer?

2. What does it mean to say that the believer is enabled to see the glory of God? How is this explained in 2 Corinthians 4:6?

3. In what special place does the believer actually see the glory of God revealed to him? Can you give some examples of this?

4. What effect does seeing the glory of God have on the believer? What is the meaning of the phrase, “from glory to glory”?

5. Can the believer do this on their own? Who brings about this change?

II. Doctrinal Overview

As summarized in *The Westminster Confession of Faith*, chapter 13, paragraph 1:

“They who are effectually called and regenerated, having a new heart and a new spirit created in them, are further sanctified, really and personally, through the virtue of Christ’s death and resurrection, by His Word and Spirit dwelling in them: the dominion of the whole body of sin is destroyed, and the several lusts thereof are more and more weakened and mortified; and they more and more quickened and strengthened in all saving graces, to the practice of true holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.”

1. Sanctification defined as holiness.

a. An ongoing work of God’s Spirit in the believer.

b. The believer is dying more and more to sin.

- c. The believer is becoming more like Christ.
- d. The believer is enabled to perform good works.
- 2. Sanctification in theological context.
 - a. It is a benefit of Union with Christ.
 - b. The purpose of Predestination is Sanctification
 - c. Sanctification flows from Regeneration.
 - d. Justification is a change in status; Sanctification changes the very person.
 - e. Sanctification is incomplete until Glorification at death.
- 3. The nature of Sanctification.
 - a. It is an absolute necessity.
 - b. It is a supernatural work of the Holy Spirit.
 - c. It begins in the inner man and works out into the whole man.
 - d. Two sides of Sanctification: Mortification and Vivification.
- 4. Sanctification through the Means of Grace.
 - a. Through the Word of God and the Spirit.
 - b. Through the Word of God in the sacraments.
 - c. Through prayer.

Questions

1. What is the definition and meaning of the theological term, Sanctification?

2. How is Sanctification related to union with Christ?

3. How is Regeneration related to Sanctification? Which comes first?

4. How can we compare Justification and Sanctification? How are they different?

5. How does Sanctification in this life compare to Glorification at death for the believer?

6. How do the Scriptures reinforce the absolute necessity of Sanctification in the believer?

7. How does Sanctification differ from moral reformation? Can a person sanctify themselves? When does Sanctification begin? When does it end?

8. What are the two sides of Sanctification? Please explain each of them from Scripture.

9. What are the means of grace? How are the means of grace effective for promoting the Sanctification of a Christian believer?

III. Polemical Exposition

Error #1. *Some think they can have Jesus as Savior, without having him as their Lord.*

Error #2. *Some say the believer is purely passive in Sanctification.*

Error #3. *Some believe in perfectionism.*

Questions:

1. Why should we utterly reject the error of thinking you can have Jesus as your Savior but not as your Lord? Why is it utterly unbiblical?

2. How does the Bible teach us that the believer is active in his Sanctification. What language does the Scripture use to illustrate this? What implications are there for us?

3. What is the error of Perfectionism? Is it possible to reach sinless perfection in this life? How should we understand verses like 1 John 3:9 and Matthew 5:48? How do the words in 1 John 1:8-9 answer this problem?

IV. Practical Exposition

1. Believers are absolutely dependent on Christ and the Holy Spirit.
2. A day is coming when believers will be without sin.
3. We must be diligent in using the Means of Grace.
4. God will gather glory to himself in the believer's Sanctification.

Questions:

1. What is the believer's absolute necessity in the process of their Sanctification?

2. How can the believer become discouraged in the process of Sanctification? What is their hope? How does the Word of God instruct us and uphold us in this hope?

3. What practical ways should the believer use the Means of Grace diligently?

4. How is God glorified by the process of the believer's Sanctification?

V. Self-Reflection

Are you a believer in Jesus Christ? What discouragements have you experienced in your own Sanctification? Can you find similar struggles with believers in the Bible? What exhortations do we have in the Word of God about our struggles? Do these experiences make the promises of eternal life in heaven more desirable to you?
