

Eric R Ross / General

Man to Man / Sanctification; Holiness / 1 Thessalonians 5:23

According to Bradford A. Mullen in his "Evangelical dictionary of biblical theology, 1996, 708", 'The generic meaning of sanctification is "the state of proper functioning." To sanctify someone or something is to set that person or thing apart for the use intended by its designer ... In the theological sense, things are sanctified when they are used for the purpose God intends. A human being is sanctified, therefore, when he or she lives according to God's design and purpose.

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# Wholly Sanctified

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So, when we read our theme verse here, which is 1 Thessalonians 5:23

### **1 Thessalonians 5:23 KJV 1900**

<sup>23</sup> And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and *I pray God* your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

We understand that there is an action by God to sanctify us, it is God's intentional plan that we live "wholly" according to God's design and purpose.

We also hear Paul's prayer as the writer of this letter that our "whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless".

If we read the whole context of this letter, we understand that God has taken action to reconcile us to himself through Jesus Christ when He raised Jesus from the dead.

And, God is working by the Holy Spirit to set us in this place where we are fit for purpose and examples to all around us.

What this looks like is that we take action in ourselves as

- we are patient toward all in vs 14
- we follow that which is good in vs 15
- we rejoice evermore in vs 16
- we pray without ceasing in vs 17
- we give thanks in everything in vs 18
- we embrace the moving of the Holy Spirit in vs 19
- we value prophecy in vs 20
- we prove, and hold onto the things that are good in vs 21

Then, we come to this verse, 1 Thessalonians 5:23 which is followed immediately by

**1 Thessalonians 5:24 KJV 1900**

<sup>24</sup> Faithful *is* he that calleth you, who also will do *it*.

God will do it.

God will prepare us and make us ready for the work He has for us just as Jesus did with Peter and Andrew, His disciples.

Jesus said to them in Matthew 4:19

**Matthew 4:19 KJV 1900**

<sup>19</sup> And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.

Jesus was working with them to transform them into the men they needed to be to fulfill his plan.

Let's look at the word used for sanctification in our theme verse, 1 Thessalonians 5:23.

## Sanctified

Sanctification is one of the group of words that includes the root idea of

'separation' or 'restricted use' (HOLINESS).

Our understanding of sanctification begins in Genesis 2:3 where

**Genesis 2:3 KJV 1900**

<sup>3</sup> And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made.

**Holman Treasury of Key Bible Words: 200 Greek and 200 Hebrew Words Defined and Explained Consecrate**

The Lord blessed the seventh day and "consecrated" it, making it holy (Gen. 2:3). This is the first use of the Hebrew verb qadash. Here it indicates that God set aside the seventh day because He rested on it.

This day has a purpose, it is a day for us to rest from our work and to commune with God.

However, Sanctification sometimes denotes the process by which men are made holy; but in the NT it is used also to describe the state into which men pass as they become holy because of that process.

If we look at Acts 26:18, we see the process and the end state

**Acts 26:18 KJV 1900**

<sup>18</sup> To open their eyes, *and* to turn *them* from darkness to light, and *from* the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.

The process is "to open their eyes" and to "turn from darkness", "the power of Satan", to "light", "God".

The state is "forgiven of sin" and an "inheritance"

But let's back up here. What why do we need this sanctification?

## Creation

In the beginning, in Genesis 1:1,

**Genesis 1:1 KJV 1900**

<sup>1</sup> IN the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.

As God created, He also commented that what He had created was good beginning in Genesis 1:4

**Genesis 1:4 KJV 1900**

<sup>4</sup> And God saw the light, that *it was* good: and God divided the light from the darkness.

We won't go through the whole description in Genesis

but finally, God created man in Genesis 1:27-28

**Genesis 1:27–28 KJV 1900**

<sup>27</sup> So God created man in his *own* image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. <sup>28</sup> And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.

And God gave us full dominion, authority.

And, in Genesis 1:31 "God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, *it was* very good."

But God created the heavens and He formed the earth for a purpose.

It says in Isaiah 45:18

**Isaiah 45:18 KJV 1900**

<sup>18</sup> For thus saith the LORD that created the heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it; he hath established it, He created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited: I *am* the LORD; and *there is* none else.

God did this for "it to be inhabited"

God did this in Malachi 2:15

**Malachi 2:15 KJV 1900**

<sup>15</sup> And did not he make one? Yet had he the residue of the spirit. And wherefore one? That he might seek a godly seed. Therefore take heed to your spirit, And let none deal treacherously against the wife of his youth.

If we read the context, in vs 14 this "did not he make one" refers to a man marrying and living with the "wife of his youth" to raise a godly seed.

God did this in 1 Timothy 2:2-3 where it says we are to pray for those who are leaders

**1 Timothy 2:2–4 KJV 1900**

<sup>2</sup> For kings, and *for* all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. <sup>3</sup> For this *is* good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; <sup>4</sup> Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.

This is so we can lead quiet and peaceful lives

It is also that "all men" have an opportunity to be saved.

We could expound more on the goodness of God demonstrated in creation and our relationship with Him

Lets look though at the last reason God created the earth, and I believe His driving purpose found in Ephesians 3:9-11

### **Ephesians 3:9–11 KJV 1900**

<sup>9</sup> And to make all *men* see what *is* the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: <sup>10</sup> To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly *places* might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, <sup>11</sup> According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord:

God did it to demonstrate His wisdom to principalities and powers "by the church".

By creating man and giving us free will, we can choose to follow God who is love and peace and joy.

Or, we can choose to follow the devil who is the accuser, the liar, the deceiver.

The problem is that a liar or deceiver cannot be known until the result of their actions are fully manifested.

The deceiver will fail to deliver what he has promised and all that follow him will fall with him.

## Sin

While the main focus in this message is not on sin, it is necessary to understand that the world is caught, and the dominion God gave to man at creation was given over to the devil by sin.

The entrance to sin into the world is found in Romans 5:12

**Romans 5:12 KJV 1900**

<sup>12</sup> Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:

By sin, we were cut off from God and dead to Him

It says in Ephesians 2:12

**Ephesians 2:12 KJV 1900**

<sup>12</sup> That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world:

That we were aliens, strangers, having no hope.

## Salvation

But salvation came to us through Jesus Christ in Ephesians 2:13

**Ephesians 2:13 KJV 1900**

<sup>13</sup> But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.

We are no longer separated from God by sin.

It says in 1 Corinthians 6:20

**1 Corinthians 6:20 KJV 1900**

<sup>20</sup> For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.

We were purchased back by God.

We can be confident that our eternal life is secure with Him.

## Wholly Sanctified

There is though, a process of "Sanctification" for us to go through.

This process is for us to come fully into the plan and purpose God has for us.

Sin, and the ways of sin,

- undermined us
- corrupted us
- blinded us to the ways God wanted to use us

| The focus of sanctification is the healing of the dysfunctionality of sin.

| Sanctification has an initial, progressive, and final phase.

| We “are being transformed” as it says in 2 Cor 3:18

### **2 Corinthians 3:18 KJV 1900**

<sup>18</sup> 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.

We are “changed ... from glory to glory” as we turn from sin in every area of our lives

Paul said it this way in Acts 20:32

### **Acts 20:32 KJV 1900**

<sup>32</sup> And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.

God’s word working in us is transforming us into the image of Christ.

There is a point where we have stepped into the plan and purpose God has for us and we are living a sanctified life.

| And, the sanctified life is victorious

As it says in Romans 8:37

### **Romans 8:37 KJV 1900**

<sup>37</sup> Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.

## Our Prayer

We need revelation, wisdom, insight, to move away from the dysfunction of

sin and to wholly embrace holiness

What areas are there in our lives where we need to make a change?

What is the perfect will of God for us?

Where are we living only in the good or acceptable will of God?

We are admonished to present ourselves for God's plans in Romans 12:1-2

**Romans 12:1-2 KJV 1900**

<sup>1</sup> I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, *which is* your reasonable service. <sup>2</sup> And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

We may know we are saved.

We may be doing our routine in support of our local Church.

But are we fulfilling all of God's perfect will for our lives?

Lets pray.