

1  **May the sanctified become sanctified**

2 THESSALONIANS 2:13-17

2  **2 Thessalonians 2:13-17 (ESV)**

*But we ought always to give thanks to God for you, brothers beloved by the Lord, because God chose you as the firstfruits to be saved, through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth. To this he called you through our gospel, so that you may obtain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. So then, brothers, stand firm and hold to the traditions that you were taught by us, either by our spoken word or by our letter.*

*Now may our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God our Father, who loved us and gave us eternal comfort and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts and establish them in every good work and word.*

3  **Paul is grateful for the Thessalonian Christians**

2 THESSALONIANS 2:13-14

4  **An obligation of thanksgiving (v. 13)**

▶ Paul says that he is “obliged” to give God thanks for the Thessalonian Christians – in other words, he owes God a debt of gratefulness for them

▶ Why? They were loved by the Lord

▶ God loves all mankind – John 3:16

▶ But He enters into a special loving relationship with those who receive Christ as their Savior

▶ God chose the Thessalonian converts

5  **Love causes 2 parties to make a choice!****God chooses us****and****We choose Jesus**6  **I am not attempting to clarify all questions regarding election and free will**

▶ If you want to hear the best sermon on this subject, look for this video on YouTube

▶ <https://tinyurl.com/yjzmvznd> -- *Predestined for Hell? Absolutely not!*

▶

7  **God chooses -- Deuteronomy 4:37**

*And because he loved your ancestors he chose their descendants after them. And he brought you forth from Egypt with his own presence, by his great strength, (LEB)*

8  **God chooses -- Deuteronomy 7:7-8**

*Yahweh loved you and chose you not because of your great number exceeding all other peoples, for you are fewer than all of the peoples, but because of the love of Yahweh for you and because of his keeping of the sworn oath that he swore to your ancestors, Yahweh brought you out with a strong hand and redeemed you from the house of slavery, from the hand of Pharaoh, the king of Egypt. (LEB)*

9  **God chooses -- Deuteronomy 10:15**

*Yet to your ancestors Yahweh was very attached, so as to love them, and so he chose their offspring after them, namely you, from all the peoples, as it is today. (Deuteronomy 10:15, LEB)*

10  **God chooses -- Isaiah 42:1**

*Look! here is my servant; I hold him, my chosen one, in whom my soul delights. I have put my spirit on him; he will bring justice forth to the nations. (LEB)*

11  **God chooses -- Matthew 12:18**

*Behold my servant whom I have chosen, my beloved in whom my soul is well pleased. I will put my Spirit on him, and he will proclaim justice to the Gentiles. (LEB)*

12  **God chooses -- Romans 11:28**

*With respect to the gospel, they are enemies for your sake, but with respect to election, they are dearly loved for the sake of the fathers. (LEB)*

13  **God chooses -- Ephesians 1:4-5**

*...just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before Him in love, having predestined us to adoption through Jesus Christ to himself according to the good pleasure of His will, (Ephesians 1:4-5, LEB)*

14  **God chooses -- Colossians 3:12**

*Therefore, as the chosen of God, holy and dearly loved, put on affection, compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, patience, (Colossians 3:12, LEB)*

15  **Man chooses Jesus – Romans 10:9-10**

*If you declare with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved.*

16  **Man chooses Jesus – John 3:16**

*For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life*

17  **Man chooses Jesus – John 1:12**

*But as many as received him—to those who believe in his name—he gave to them authority to become children of God, (LEB)*

18  **What we know about God's choice**19  **God chose us in eternity past**

- ▶ God chose them for salvation from the beginning (v. 13)
- ▶ God takes the initiative in salvation by sovereignly selecting people to be saved
- ▶ But man must respond to that initiative in the present (our choice must be a willing one...)

20  **God chose us to be "firstfruits"**

- ▶ *because God chose you as firstfruits to be saved through the sanctifying work of the Spirit and through belief in the truth" (2:13b).*
- ▶ Calling them "firstfruits" alludes to the first portion of a harvest or the firstborn of animals, which were consecrated exclusively to God (Exod. 23:19; Num. 15:17-21; Deut. 12:6, 17).

21  **Exodus 23:19**

*The best of the firstfruits of your land you will bring to the house of Yahweh your God. (Exodus 23:19, LEB)*

22  **Numbers 15:17-21**

- ▶ *Yahweh spoke to Moses, saying, "Speak to the Israelites and say to them, 'When you come into the land to which I am about to bring you, whenever you eat from the food of the land, you will lift up a contribution to Yahweh. You must lift up a contribution of the first batch of your ring-shaped dough bread; you must lift it up as a contribution of the threshing floor. You will give to Yahweh a*

*contribution from the first of your dough throughout your generations. (LEB)*

23  **Deuteronomy 12:6**

▶ *And you shall bring there your burnt offerings and your sacrifices and your tithes and your donations and your votive gifts and your freewill offerings and the firstling of your herd and your flock. (LEB)*

24  **Deuteronomy 12:17**

*You are not allowed to eat in your towns the tithe of your grain and your wine and your olive oil and the firstborn of your herd and your flock and all of your votive gifts that you vowed and your freewill offering and your donations. (Deuteronomy 12:17, LEB)*

25  **So, God called us to sanctification**

1. God initiates our justification by planning in eternity past to offer up His son a sacrifice for sins
2. God called us to salvation before we were born
3. If you are a Christian, it is because you made a freewill choice to RECEIVE Christ as your Savior and you BELIVE He is the Son of God
4. Now God call you to be a firstfruit offering – that which is dedicated, sanctified, and wholly offered to God before all other claims on it

26  **Two kinds of sanctification**

POSITIONAL

VS

PRACTICAL

27  **Two kinds of sanctification**

- ▶ Sanctification is the process of being made holy. There are two aspects of sanctification:
- ▶ Positional sanctification: This is the saint-status that all believers have when they believe in Jesus for everlasting life. It is an immediate, once-for-all act that cannot be repeated.
- ▶ Practical sanctification: This is the continual process that a disciple pursues on his journey toward becoming more holy. It involves the daily struggle against sin and the pursuit of holiness. Practical sanctification prepares us for every good work.

28  **Hebrews 10:10-14**

*And by that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. And every priest stands daily at his service, offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. But when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God, waiting from that time until his enemies should be made a footstool for his feet. For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified. (ESV)*

29  **The position of the priests**

- ▶ Old Testament priests and those at the time of Christ
  - ▶ Stand because their work is not done
  - ▶ They had to KEEP offering sacrifices
  - ▶ Their sacrifices could never take away sin
- ▶ Jesus, after offering Himself on the cross, sat down at the right hand of God the Father because His work was DONE. He took away our sin and its consequences.

30  **Positional sanctification**

- ▶ "Sanctified" is a present participle, which indicates a CHARACTERISTIC
  - ▶ It started one point in time (when we received Jesus) but has a permanent and ongoing result that never ceases

- ▶ I was set apart to Jesus permanently (positional sanctification) and God the Father still sees me as being set apart to Him, forever!

### 31 Positional sanctification (2)

- ▶ Its basis is by the death of Christ (Heb. 10:10, 14)
- ▶ It is brought about by the Spirit (1 Pet. 1:2) — *according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in the sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ and for sprinkling with his blood: May grace and peace be multiplied to you.* (1 Peter 1:2, ESV)
- ▶ It is received by faith (Acts 26:18) — *to open their eyes, so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.* (ESV)

### 32 Practical sanctification

- ▶ *Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. And for their sake I consecrate myself, that they also may be sanctified in truth.* (John 17:17–19, ESV)
- ▶ Christ is praying for His followers to become sanctified in truth (which He repeats twice). He says that He is giving His life for this reason.

### 33 Defining practical sanctification

- ▶ The truth in John 17 is not just a set of doctrinal truths
- ▶ It is Jesus – the Living Truth
- ▶ As we grow in Christ, we love Him better. Our hearts are connected with Jesus, and directed towards Him.
  - ▶ God's Word (the truth) connects our hearts with Christ.
  - ▶ The more this happens, the more we love Him, and the more we will be weaned from the visible, *'the things of time and sense'*.

### 34 Consider the church at Corinth

- ▶ The Corinthian church was carnal
  - ▶ They permitted a case of incest in their church
  - ▶ They bragged about by which pastor or missionary they learned the Gospel and thought themselves superior to others
  - ▶ They argued and went to court before heathen judges
  - ▶ They took marriage lightly and divorce was too convenient
  - ▶ They had perverted the Lord's Supper

### 35 Paul refers to Corinthian Christians as "sanctified"

- ▶ *To the church of God that is in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints together with all those who in every place call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, both their Lord and ours:* (1 Corinthians 1:2, ESV)
- ▶ Paul is clearly not saying that these Christians were demonstrating practical holiness in their daily lives!
  - ▶ If he was, then why did he chastise them throughout this epistle?

### 36 1 Corinthians 6:11

- ▶ *And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.* (ESV)

37  **God calls us to obtain glory with Christ**

- ▶ Called through the gospel to obtain Christ's glory (v. 14)
- ▶ God accomplishes His salvation through sanctifying them, a state differentiated from those who reject the truth of the gospel (2:12).
  - ▶ The process of sanctification begins at conversion (1 Pet. 1:2) but continues throughout the life of the believer (Rom. 15:16; 1 Cor. 6:11; 1 Thess. 5:23)

38  **Romans 5:8-11 – We are BEING saved!**

*But God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God. For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life. More than that, we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation. (ESV)*

39  **1 Peter 2:12**

*...maintaining your good conduct among the Gentiles, so that in the things in which they slander you as evildoers, by seeing your good deeds they may glorify God on the day of visitation. (LEB)*

- ▶ As we are sanctified (to become more like Christ), it changes our behavior and glorifies the Lord
- ▶ Justification + Sanctification -> [leads to] Glorification

40  **Romans 15:16**

*▶ That I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost. (Romans 15:16, KJV 1900)*

41  **1 Corinthians 6:11**

- ▶ *And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God. (KJV)*
- ▶ We were justified when we received Christ
- ▶ We were sanctified (positionally, once for always) or set apart to Christ at that same time

42  **1 Thessalonians 5:23**

- ▶ *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. (KJV)*
- ▶ God's sanctification helps preserve a good reputation for us and for Christ until His coming!

43  **Next time....**

- ▶ We will try to finish this chapter next time
  - ▶ We are called to obtain Christ's glory (v. 14)
  - ▶ We are exhorted to stand firm (v. 15-17)
  - ▶ We must pray for God to comfort and establish other Christians (v. 16-17)