Life in Christ: Session Eleven

A New Creation

**OVERVIEW:** God brings us into His family, makes us members of the Body of Christ, and gives us gifts through His Word, Baptism, and Holy Communion. How does that change us? How does that change the way we live? How does being forgiven translate into living as forgiven? What does it mean to be a fully devoted follower of Christ?

**Justification and Sanctification**

**Justification**

Justification means that God sees me “just as if” I had never sinned because of the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ. This word is literally a legal term used in a court of law. Justification means being declared “innocent” before God. The absolute reality is that a person who is declared innocent before God has by definition, not only not broken any laws, they have also kept all the laws. Everyone in the courtroom knows we are guilty, including ourselves, but Jesus transfers His righteousness to us in a great declaration of innocence and freedom. Justification is a free gift for us, purchased for you by Christ Himself, and received by faith alone.

Therefore, we give all glory and praise to Christ alone for our justification:

*“Let he who boasts, boast in the Lord!*” (1st Corinthians 1:31)

*“…for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.”* (1st Corinthians 6:20)

*“…knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot. He was foreknown before the foundation of the world but was made manifest in the last times for the sake of you**who through him are believers in God, who raised him from the dead and gave him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God.”* (1st Peter 1:18-21)

*For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God,**not a result of works, so that no one may boast.*(Ephesians 2:8-9)

**Sanctification**

This term is linked to the sacrificial system in the Old Testament. A sacrifice was something that was “set apart” or “holy” for God and His divine use. If something has been sanctified, it had been “set apart” and “holy”. People who are sanctified by the Holy Spirit, have been “set apart” by God for Himself.

Those who have received Christ’s justification by His work are called to live holy lives.

 “*As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance,**but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct,**since it is written, “You shall be holy, for I am holy.”* (1st Peter 1:14-16) Peter also wrote, ‘*you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.****10****Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.”* (1st Peter 2:9-10)

*“You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you.****17****These things I command you, so that you will love one another.”* (John 15:16-17)

*For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.* (Ephesians 2:10)

**What happens when we get these confused?**

We run into a problem when these two terms, and more importantly what they mean, are misunderstood, mixed together or in the wrong order. It can look something like one of these common examples:

* If I can get my act together (sanctification), then God will accept me (justification).
* I can’t go to church where I could receive God’s gifts (justification), because I am not good enough (sanctification).
* Jesus loves me and died for me (justification), so now I must finish the job He began (sanctification).
* I can live however I want (un-sanctification), because I will go to church and hear that I am forgiven (justification).

**We know!**

Justification (God’s work) always comes before sanctification (our work). Remember, NO works are good in God’s eyes unless they are done by faith in Christ and as a response to all that God has done for us first.

*“For whatever does not proceed from faith is sin.”* (Romans 14:23c)

*“In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him.****10****In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.”* (1st John 4:9-10)

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|  | **Justification** | **Sanctification** |
| Galatians 2:16 |  |  |
| Matthew 5:48 |  |  |
| Matthew 13:44 |  |  |
| Matthew 16:16-17 |  |  |
| Luke 6:36 |  |  |
| 1st John 2:6 |  |  |
| 1st John 4:7 & 11 |  |  |
| James 2:14-18 & 26 |  |  |
| Philippians 2:15 |  |  |
| Ephesians 2:8-10 |  |  |

**The Purpose of the Law**

The Holy Scriptures identify 3 uses or purposes of the Law:

1. **A Curb**: a universal moral code
	1. Romans 1:20
	2. 1st Timothy 1:9-10
2. **A Mirror:** a means for revealing our sinfulness and need for a savior
	1. Romans 3:20
	2. Galatians 3:19
	3. Psalm 38:4
3. **A Guide**: instruction for living as a new creation
	1. Philippians 2:15
	2. Romans 12:1-2
	3. 1st Peter 1:3-9

**How Shall We Then Live?**

*But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do[**e**] such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.* (Galatians 5:16-24)

*I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.* (Galatians 2:20)

**Faith**



* Is it the size of your faith that matters?
* Is it the quantity of your faith that matters?
* It is:
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**Live as a Fully Forgiven and Devoted Follower of Jesus Christ!**

* Attend Worship
* Participate in Holy Communion
* Bible Study and Prayer
* Knowing and Using Spiritual Gifts
* Fellowship
* Tithing
* Bringing others to meet Christ