

Our State of Theology – 9e

The Holy Spirit: Spirit Who Sanctifies

1 Thessalonians 4:3 (NKJV)

³For **this is the will of God, your sanctification**: that you should abstain from sexual immorality;

- People often wonder what the will of God is.
- God's will is made known through His Word.
- The will of God is that we be holy: *set apart*, separated for God and His glory.
- We are admonished throughout Scripture to be holy.

1 Peter 1:14–16 (NIV84)

¹⁴As obedient children, do not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance.

¹⁵But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do;

¹⁶for it is written: **“Be holy, because I am holy.”**

2 Peter 3:1–14 (NIV84)

¹Dear friends, this is now my second letter to you. I have written both of them as reminders **to stimulate you to wholesome thinking**.

²I want you to recall the words spoken in the past by the holy prophets and the command given by our Lord and Savior through your apostles.

³First of all, you must understand that in the last days scoffers will come, scoffing and following their own evil desires.

⁴They will say, “Where is this ‘coming’ he promised? Ever since our fathers died, everything goes on as it has since the beginning of creation.”

⁵But they deliberately forget that long ago by God's word the heavens existed and the earth was formed out of water and by water.

⁶By these waters also the world of that time was deluged and destroyed.

⁷By the same word the present heavens and earth are reserved for fire, being kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men.

⁸But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day.

⁹The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

¹⁰But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it

will be laid bare.

¹¹Since everything will be destroyed in this way, **what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives**

¹²as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming. That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat.

¹³But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness.

¹⁴So then, dear friends, since you are looking forward to this, **make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with him.**

- “Since you **know** that all these things will be dissolved, since you **know** that the day of the Lord will come as a thief, since you **know** that the earth, and its works will be burned up, therefore you should live *holy and godly lives*.”

Others may live for things in the world, and lay up their treasures on earth. It would be folly for us to do so. If you know that this earth is about to fall under the fiery judgments of God, will you seek to permanently place your treasures therein?¹

- **Do I identify with the world that is going to be destroyed or does my lifestyle represent God and Heaven?**²

2 Corinthians 6:14–7:1 (NIV84)

¹⁴Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness?

¹⁵What harmony is there between Christ and Belial? What does a believer have in common with an unbeliever?

¹⁶What agreement is there between the temple of God and idols? **For we are the temple of the living God.**

As God has said: “I will live with them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they will be my people.”

¹⁷“Therefore come out from them and be separate, says the Lord. Touch no unclean thing, and I will receive you.”

¹ R. E. Neighbour, *Wells of Living Water: New Testament*, vol. 14, Wells of Living Water (Union Gospel Press, 1940), 34–35.

² Glen Spencer Jr., *Second Peter: Standing True in Ruthless Times*, Expository Pulpit Series (WORDsearch, 2008), 70–71.

^{18c}“I will be a Father to you, and you will be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty.”

¹Since we have these promises, dear friends, let us purify ourselves from everything that contaminates body and spirit, perfecting holiness out of reverence for God.

- **yoked together.** Paul is using a metaphor here based on Deuteronomy 22:10 and Leviticus 19:19, which forbade plowing with an ox and donkey yoked together, or attempting to interbreed animals of different kinds.

- V. 17, Scripture never intended for Christians to completely reject all secular or charitable organizations or friendships (note 1 Corinthians 5:10).

1 Corinthians 5:9-11 (NIV84)

⁹I have written you in my letter not to associate with sexually immoral people--

¹⁰not at all meaning the people of this world who are immoral, or the greedy and swindlers, or idolaters. In that case you would have to leave this world.

¹¹But now I am writing you that you must not associate with anyone who calls himself a brother but is sexually immoral or greedy, an idolater or a slanderer, a drunkard or a swindler. With such a man do not even eat.

- If a relationship places your Christian faith and convictions in jeopardy, or your Christian conduct and influence is endangered, then sever the connection. You can witness to unbelievers without partaking of their beliefs or sinful behavior.

1 Thessalonians 5:22 (KJV)

²²Abstain from all appearance of evil.

- Abstain from anything that gives an appearance of evil.

- A Christian should not go into partnership with one who does not know the Lord.

Secret orders or Fraternities: Avoid those where the name of the Lord Jesus is unwelcome.

Social Life: Never engage in the sinful pleasures or activities of unbelievers in such a way as to lead them to think you're no different than them.

Church: Do not attend a church where unbelievers are knowingly admitted as leaders.

Deuteronomy 5:32–33 (NIV84)

³²So be careful to do what the LORD your God has commanded you; do not turn aside to the right or to the left.

³³Walk in all the way that the LORD your God has commanded you, so that you may live and prosper

and prolong your days in the land that you will possess.

- The admonitions from God to be holy is not intended to restrict your joy. God's admonitions are expressions of his love for you as shown in this Scripture.
- We are instructed throughout Scripture to be holy. How can we do that, when we are so weak in our natural selves?

Ezekiel 36:26–27 (NIV84)

²⁶I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh.

²⁷And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws.

- *Move you:* This is a promise that God would put His Holy Spirit in the believer enabling them to follow His decrees and keep His laws.
- God gives *saving faith* through grace to the elect and gives *enabling grace* to the same believers to enable them to live a life pleasing to God.
 - Grace refers to God's divine enablement through the power of His Spirit.³
- The outpouring of the Holy Spirit is a divine gift of God's mercy and love, not something that his people have earned the right to receive through their obedience.⁴

1 Peter 1:1–2 (NIV84)

¹Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, To God's elect, strangers in the world, scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia, ²who have been chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through the sanctifying work of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ and sprinkling by his blood: Grace and peace be yours in abundance.

- *God's elect* are the regenerated saints or believers that God has chosen before the foundation of the world.

Ephesians 1:4-5 (NIV84)

⁴For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love ⁵he predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will--

- Regeneration is the beginning of *sanctification*, or of

³ Jerry Bridges, *The Discipline of Grace: God's Role and Our Role in the Pursuit of Holiness* (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 2006), 162.

⁴ J. V. Fesko, *Galatians*, ed. Jon D. Payne, The Lectio Continua Expository Commentary on the New Testament (Powder Springs, GA: Tolle Lege Press, 2012), 45.

transformation as used in 2 Corinthians 3:18.

Sanctification is the carrying out of regeneration to its intended end. What is the intended end?

▪ **2 Corinthians 3:18 (NIV84)**

¹⁸And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.

When you are being sanctified, you're being transformed.

- **Romans 12:2 (NIV84)**

²Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is--his good, pleasing and perfect will. (Who is this speaking to? Christians!)

Do Not Conform = mē (μη) sun-schēmatizō συν-σχηματίζω = (schēmatizō) = the act of an individual assuming an outward expression that does not come from within him, nor is it representative of his inner heart life. (*Sun*) = assuming an expression that is patterned after some definite thing.⁵

▪ “Stop assuming an outward expression which is patterned after this world, an expression which does not come from, nor is it representative of what you are in your inner being as a regenerated child of God.”

▪ One could translate, “*Stop masquerading in the garments of this world, its mannerisms, speech expressions, styles, habits.*”⁶

Transformed = metamorphoōμαι μεταμορφοομαι = the act of a person changing his outward expression from that which he has to a different one, an expression which comes from and is representative of his inner being.⁷

- William Plumer, a nineteenth-century Presbyterian minister, wrote,

“Regeneration is an act of God’s Spirit.

Sanctification is a work of God’s Spirit, following regeneration.... In regeneration we become ‘new-born babes;’ in sanctification we grow into the stature of full-grown men in Christ Jesus.”

Justification is an act of God completed all at once and forever. Sanctification is a work of God through the Holy Spirit begun in regeneration,

⁵ Kenneth S. Wuest, *Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament: For the English Reader*, vol. 2 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 206.

⁶ Kenneth S. Wuest, *Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament: For the English Reader*, vol. 2 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 206–207.

⁷ Kenneth S. Wuest, *Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament: For the English Reader*, vol. 2 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 207.

conducted through life and completed at death.

The former (*regeneration*) is equal and complete in all; the latter (*sanctification*) is not equal nor complete in any till they die.

▪ We are all *equally* and *completely* saved.

▪ We are not all *equally* nor *completely* holy.

In justification God imputes [that is, *credits*] to us the righteousness of Christ; in sanctification he [imparts] grace, and enables us to exercise it.⁸

Ephesians 3:16–17a (NIV84)

¹⁶I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being,

^{17a}so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith.

- Paul prayed that we be strengthened with power through the Holy Spirit.

- Not the power to work miracles, but the power to live for and to please the Lord Jesus Christ; *holy living*.

- *Strengthened with power* = *enabling grace* through the Holy Spirit to live a holy life.

1 Timothy 1:12–14 (NIV84)

¹²I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has given me strength (*enabled* me, NKJV), that he considered me faithful, appointing me to his service.

¹³Even though I was once a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent man, I was shown mercy because I acted in ignorance and unbelief.

¹⁴The grace of our Lord was poured out on me abundantly, along with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus.

- *Has given strength* = *enabled* (NKJV) = ἐνδυναμώω *endunamōō* to cause someone to have the ability to do or to experience something—‘to make someone able, to give capability to, to enable, to strengthen, to empower.’⁹

- The Apostle Paul was given strength (*enabled*) or *given grace* to be an apostle for Jesus Christ.

Philippians 2:12–13 (AMP)

¹²Therefore, my dear ones, as you have always obeyed [my suggestions], so now, not only [with the enthusiasm you would show] in my presence but much more because I am absent, *work out* (cultivate, carry out to the goal, and fully complete) *your own*

⁸ Jerry Bridges, *The Discipline of Grace: God's Role and Our Role in the Pursuit of Holiness* (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 2006), 98-99.

⁹ Johannes P. Louw and Eugene Albert Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains* (NY: United Bible Societies, 1996), 675.

salvation with reverence and awe and trembling (self-distrust, with serious caution, tenderness of conscience, watchfulness against temptation, timidly shrinking from whatever might offend God and discredit the name of Christ).

¹³[Not in your own strength] for it is God Who is all the while effectually at work in you [energizing and creating in you the power and desire], both to will and to work for His good pleasure and satisfaction and delight.

- V. 12 The Philippians are exhorted to carry their salvation to its ultimate conclusion, namely, Christlikeness.

The salvation spoken of here is not justification, but sanctification, victory over sin and the living of a life pleasing to the Lord Jesus.

They are to see to it that they make progress in their Christian lives. They are to do this with fear and trembling. This is not a slavish terror, but a wholesome caution. “This fear is self-distrust; it is tenderness of conscience; it is vigilance against temptation. It is taking heed lest we fall; it is a constant apprehension of the deceitfulness of the heart, and of the insidiousness and power of inward corruption. It is the caution and circumspection which timidly shrinks from whatever would offend and dishonor God and the Saviour” (Vincent, quoting Wardlaw *On Proverbs*). This is human responsibility.¹⁰

- V. 13 We have divine enablement. The saints are to carry their salvation which God has given them and which thus belongs to them, to its ultimate goal, always remembering and depending upon the fact that it is God who is working in them both to will and to do of His good pleasure.

The word “worketh” in the Greek means “to energize, to work effectively.” Our words “energy” and “energize” come from it.

The words “to will” are the translation of a Greek word meaning “to desire,” and refer to a desire that comes from one’s emotions rather than from one’s reason. It is this desire to do the good pleasure of God that is produced by divine energy in the heart of the saint as he definitely subjects himself to the Holy Spirit’s ministry.

It is God the Holy Spirit who energizes the saint, making him not only willing, but actively desirous of doing God’s sweet will.

God does not merely leave the saint with the desire

to do His will. He provides the necessary power to do it.

The Greek construction implies habit, the habitual doing of God’s will.

- In verse twelve, we have *human responsibility*, in verse thirteen, *divine enablement*, a perfect balance which must be kept if the Christian life is to be lived at its best.

It is not a “let go and let God” affair.

It is a “take hold with God” business.

It is a mutual co-operation with the Holy Spirit in an interest and an activity in the things of God.

- Holy Spirit is our παράκλητος *paráklētos para* means “alongside or beside” and the verb *kletos* means “to call.” So the paraclete was someone you called to come alongside you and help you in your defense.¹¹ (Jn. 14:16)

- The saint must not merely rest in the Holy Spirit for victory over sin and the production of a holy life.

He must in addition to this dependence upon the Spirit, say a positive NO to sin and exert himself to the doing of the right.¹²

Titus 2:11-12 (NIV84)

¹¹For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men.

¹²It teaches us to say “No” to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age,

- Christians experience a lot of frustration, when they attempt sanctification in their own strength and will power.
 - On your own strength, you will fail.
- Many Christians emphasize holiness and their attempt to please God based on their ability to keep God’s rules. “Don’t, don’t, don’t...”
 - This is called legalism.

Colossians 2:13–23 (NIV84)

¹³When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your sinful nature, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins,

¹⁴having canceled the written code, with its regulations, that was against us and that stood opposed to us; he took it away, nailing it to the cross.

¹⁵And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.

¹⁰ Kenneth S. Wuest, *Wuest’s Word Studies from the Greek New Testament: For the English Reader*, vol. 5 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 73–74.

¹¹ R. C. Sproul, *John*, St. Andrew’s Expository Commentary (Lake Mary, FL: Reformation Trust Publishing, 2009), 271.

¹² Kenneth S. Wuest, *Wuest’s Word Studies from the Greek New Testament: For the English Reader*, vol. 5 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 74–75.

¹⁶Therefore do not let anyone judge you by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a religious festival, a New Moon celebration or a Sabbath day.

¹⁷These are a shadow of the things that were to come; the reality, however, is found in Christ.

¹⁸Do not let anyone who delights in false humility and the worship of angels disqualify you for the prize. Such a person goes into great detail about what he has seen, and his unspiritual mind puffs him up with idle notions.

¹⁹He has lost connection with the Head, from whom the whole body, supported and held together by its ligaments and sinews, grows as God causes it to grow.

²⁰Since you died with Christ to the basic principles of this world, why, as though you still belonged to it, do you submit to its rules:

²¹“Do not handle! Do not taste! Do not touch!”?

²²These are all destined to perish with use, because they are based on human commands and teachings.

²³Such regulations indeed have an appearance of wisdom, with their self-imposed worship, their false humility and their harsh treatment of the body, but they lack any value in restraining sensual indulgence.

- When God made us alive with Christ (*regeneration*), he canceled *the written code* or all the laws that stood opposed to us.

Those laws showed man what sin was. The law defined *right* and *wrong*.

They were *opposed to us*, because we, in the flesh, were not able to keep them and ultimately be free from the wrath of God.

We did not have the ability to please God through the keeping of the law.

- God took those requirements away, when Jesus Christ kept every one of them and had them nailed to the cross by His crucifixion.
- Jesus Christ disarmed Satan and his cohorts, who held the power of death, so that we do not have to fear death or the consequences of not being able to keep the law.

That’s why vss. 16-23 tell us to not let the legalists judge you because you don’t regard a certain day as holy.

- Vss. 20-21 asks the Christian, “Why are you following all these legalistic rules, if through Jesus Christ you died to them?”

V.23, The keeping of all these legalistic rules have an *appearance* of wisdom, with all its external harsh treatment of the body, but they do not change you on the inside.

You are *conformed* to a legalistic righteousness on the outside, but on the inside your sensual desires have not been squelched.

John 1:16–17 (NIV84)

¹⁶From the fullness of his grace we have all received one blessing after another.

¹⁷For the law was given through Moses; **grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.**

- *The law*, which listed all the “do’s and don’ts” for holy living came through Moses; *grace* (God’s enabling power from the Holy Spirit) and *truth* came through Jesus Christ.

Enabling grace enables us to live for God day by day. (*Tabletalk Magazine, May 1993*)

- Christianity is not an uptight, tense, *rule-keeping* lifestyle. Christianity is a life *resting* and *believing* in the fact that God’s *grace in me* will enable me to live for Jesus Christ in peace.

Galatians 3:1–5 (NIV84)

¹You foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you? Before your very eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed as crucified.

²I would like to learn just one thing from you: **Did you receive the Spirit by observing the law, or by believing what you heard?**

³Are you so foolish? **After beginning with the Spirit, are you now trying to attain your goal by human effort?**

⁴Have you suffered so much for nothing—if it really was for nothing?

⁵**Does God give you his Spirit and work miracles among you because you observe the law, or because you believe what you heard?**

- The Judaizers added to the gospel requirements for salvation that obscured and denied the all-sufficiency of Christ.

The idea that there must be additional requirements to perfect the gospel was the root of their error. This error corrupted the way of salvation.

The heresy was “Unless you are circumcised, according to the custom taught by Moses, you cannot be saved.” (Acts 15:1)

- We were saved (*justified*) *only* by faith through the grace of God; not with any *added works*.
- We are also sanctified (process of being made holy) by that same faith in the grace of God.
- *What is justification?*

Justification is an *act* of God’s free grace, wherein

he pardoneth all our sins, and accepteth us as righteous in his sight, only for the righteousness of Christ imputed to us, and received by faith alone. (Westminster Shorter Catechism 33)

- *What is sanctification?*

Sanctification is the *work* of God’s free grace, whereby we are renewed in the whole man after the image of God, and are **enabled more and more to die unto sin, and live unto righteousness.**

(Westminster Shorter Catechism 35)

- Justification and sanctification are equally of “God’s free grace.”

Justification is an *act*, a once-and-for-all event, whereas sanctification is a *work* of ongoing renovation.

Nothing can possibly add to the completed act of our justification, but we remain “*works in progress*” in terms of our sanctification.¹³

- Justification and sanctification are accomplished by grace through faith alone in Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit.

We are neither justified nor sanctified by our good works.¹⁴

- Is sanctification or the process of being made holy really that important?

Next Week!!! (The Lord willing.)

¹³ J. V. Fesko, [Galatians](#), ed. Jon D. Payne, The Lectio Continua Expository Commentary on the New Testament (Powder Springs, GA: Tolle Lege Press, 2012), 42–43.

¹⁴ J. V. Fesko, [Galatians](#), ed. Jon D. Payne, The Lectio Continua Expository Commentary on the New Testament (Powder Springs, GA: Tolle Lege Press, 2012), 46.