

## HOLINESS

### A. Words Used to Translate

1. Hebrew: "Qodesh" - English words: "consecrate, dedicate, sanctify, holy."
2. Greek: "Hagios" - holy, sanctify
3. Meaning: To be set apart for God's purpose

### B. Usage of the Concept

1. God: 1 Pet. 1:16 - The idea is that God has set Himself apart for His purpose not the purpose of others or self.
2. People: 1 Pet. 1:16 - We are to be set apart for God's purpose not our own purposes or the purposes of others.
3. Places:
  - a. Mt. 4:5 - The city of Jerusalem is set apart from other cities for God's special purposes.
  - b. Ex. 3:5 - The ground on which Moses stood had been set apart for God's special purposes
4. Things: Lev. 19:24 - This fruit was set apart for God's purpose.
5. Angels: Mt. 25:31 - The angels who return with Christ are set apart for God's purpose.

### C. Phases of Holiness or Sanctification

1. Pre-salvation sanctification
  - a. 1 Pet. 1:2 - Notice prior to salvation, the Holy Spirit sanctifies us or sets us apart so that God may guide us to obey, i.e. trust Christ as Savior and have His shed blood applied to us.
  - b. 2 Thes. 2:13 - Notice that God chose us for salvation through this special sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit and faith in Christ. This does not mean God chose our faith but only that these means were chosen by God for people to receive salvation.
  - c. 1 Cor. 7:14 - The presence of a believing parent in the home assures that the Holy Spirit will be doing this work on the unbelieving parent and on the children.
  - d. This work of the Holy Spirit can obviously be resisted (Acts 7:51) as the word "may" in 1 Pet. 1:2 and the statement in 1 Cor. 7:16 would indicate.
2. Positional Sanctification - This means as to our standing or identity before God. We are set apart for His purpose at the very moment we trust Christ for salvation. This identity, position or standing does not ever change.
  - a. 1 Cor. 1:2 - This phase is ours the moment we are "in Christ" through the baptizing work of the Holy Spirit.
  - b. 1 Cor. 1:30 - Christ is our Sanctification and all we will ever need.
  - c. 1 Cor. 6:11 - This was applied by the Holy Spirit to us the moment we trusted Christ.

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- d. Heb. 10:10,14 - Christ's death sanctified and perfected us for all time as to our position or standing before Him.
- 3. Practical Sanctification - The ongoing process between the time of salvation and either death or Christ's 2nd coming (whichever comes first) in which the Holy Spirit works to set us apart for God's purposes in terms of how we live our lives and to conform us to the likeness of Christ. Both the Holy Spirit and we as believers are involved in this process.
  - a. 1 Pet. 1:14-16
    - (1) Act as God's children who share his nature, and be obedient.
    - (2) Avoid conforming to the desires we had prior to salvation.
    - (3) Be set apart for God's purpose in all our behavior just like God is.
  - b. Rom. 12:1-2 - It requires a decision on our part to surrender control of our bodies to God as a sacrifice (something that costs us something) in living for Him and being set apart for His purposes by avoiding being shaped by the times we live in but rather being changed by His renewing and reworking our thought patterns.
  - c. 1 Thes. 4:3 - One obvious component of this surrendering control of our bodies is to abstain from sexual immorality.
  - d. John 17:17 - God's word is a very important component in accomplishing this.
  - e. 2 Tim. 2:21 - It involves separating ourselves from believers who are not committed to abstaining from sin.
  - f. 2 Cor. 7:1 - It is a continual process which requires the putting away of both outward and inward sin.
  - g. 2 Cor. 3:18 - The ministry of the Holy Spirit changes us from one degree of glory to another conforming us more and more to the image of Christ.
  - h. Hebrews 12:14 – We are commanded to pursue holiness or sanctification. If we fail to do this, those around us will not see God.  
*(Note: The subject of this command is the unwritten understood "you" meaning "you who are believers". "No one" refers to those who observe your life.)*
- 4. Perfect or Permanent Sanctification – At the time Christ returns, the believer will be made like Him and be totally and permanently sanctified (set apart for God's purpose) in both his position and his practice.
  - a. 1 John 3:1-2 – The believer will be made like Christ when Christ appears.
  - b. Jude 1:24-25 - We will stand before God's presence as blameless.
  - c. 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24 – God will be faithful to see that we are completely sanctified and without blame at the coming of Christ.
  - d. Ephesians 5:27 – The entire church will be presented to Christ as holy and blameless.

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### D. The Doctrine of “Entire Sanctification”

1. It is the belief of some Christians that “entire sanctification” or sinless perfection can be achieved in this life. Usually this includes the idea of the eradication of the sin nature.
2. It is based on misunderstandings of the Greek word translated “perfect”. The fact that sinless perfection is not always meant by this word is shown in the following references:
  - a. Hebrews 5:12-14 contrasts the word “perfect” or “mature” with one who is a “babe” showing that the idea of the word is maturity not perfection.
  - b. Ephesians 4:13-15 – Those who are mature or perfect in verse 13 are contrasted with those who are children in verse 14. All are to grow up in all aspects into Christ according to verse 15.
3. The conclusive statements of the weakness of this doctrine of “entire sanctification” are set forth in the fact that the Apostle John as an old man in 1 John 1:8, 10, Paul in Philippians 3:12 and James in James 3:2 all used the word “we” to show that they still had not arrived and had problems with sin. These references show this doctrine to be false.