

The Order of Salvation: Sanctification

Introduction: The beauty, and drama, of Holiness

“O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness: fear before him, all the earth.”

- Psalm 96:9 (KJV)

What is sanctification?

“To be cleansed from the defilements of sin, whatever they be, to have a heart inclined, disposed, enabled, to fear the Lord always, and to walk in all his ways and statutes accordingly, with an internal habitual conformity of the whole soul unto the law of God, is to be sanctified or to be holy. And all this God promises directly to work in us and to accomplish himself.”

- John Owen¹

1. God: Holy in Himself

“Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory!”

- Isaiah 6:3

Utterly distinct

“I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me.”

- Isaiah 46:9 (45:5-22)

Morally pure

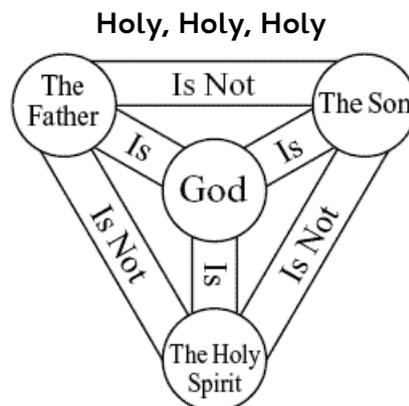
“You who are of purer eyes than to see evil and cannot look at wrong, why do you idly look at traitors and remain silent when the wicked swallows up the man more righteous than he?”

- Habakkuk 1:13

Totally unapproachable by sinners outside of sacrifice

“Indeed, under the law almost everything is purified with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins.”

- Hebrews 9:22



Implication: *Worship: fear: and don't become complacent*

¹ The Works of John Owen, ed. William H. Goold, vol. 3: Pneumatologia: A Discourse Concerning the Holy Spirit (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, n.d.), 382–383.

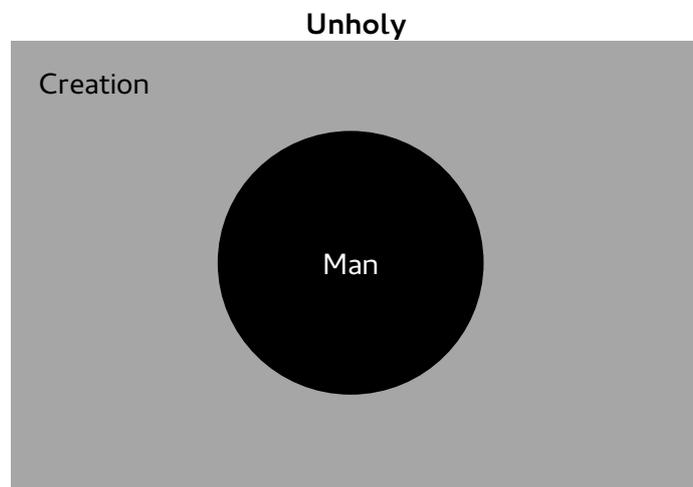
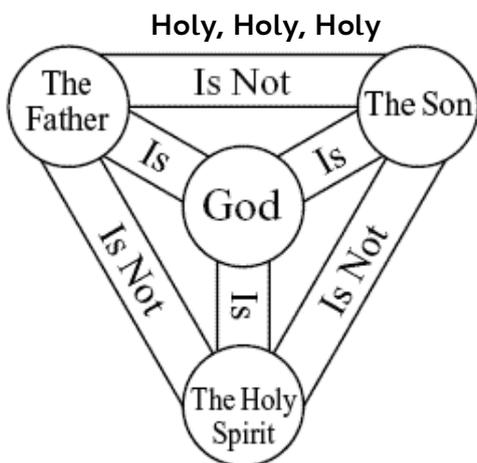
2. Humanity: unholy in ourselves

The reality of unholiness

"And he said, "What comes out of a person is what defiles him. For from within, out of the heart of man, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, coveting, wickedness, deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride, foolishness. All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person."
- Mark 7:20-23

The problem of unholiness

"For I am the Lord your God. Consecrate yourselves therefore, and be holy, for I am holy...For I am the Lord who brought you up out of the land of Egypt to be your God. You shall therefore be holy, for I am holy."
- Leviticus 11:44-45



God's promises to an unholy people

"And I will vindicate the holiness of my great name, which has been profaned among the nations, and which you have profaned among them...I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean from all your uncleannesses, and from all your idols I will cleanse you. And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules."

- Ezekiel 36:23-27(see also Jeremiah 31:31-34)

"Israel's failures...call for both a justifying cleansing and a sanctifying salve."²

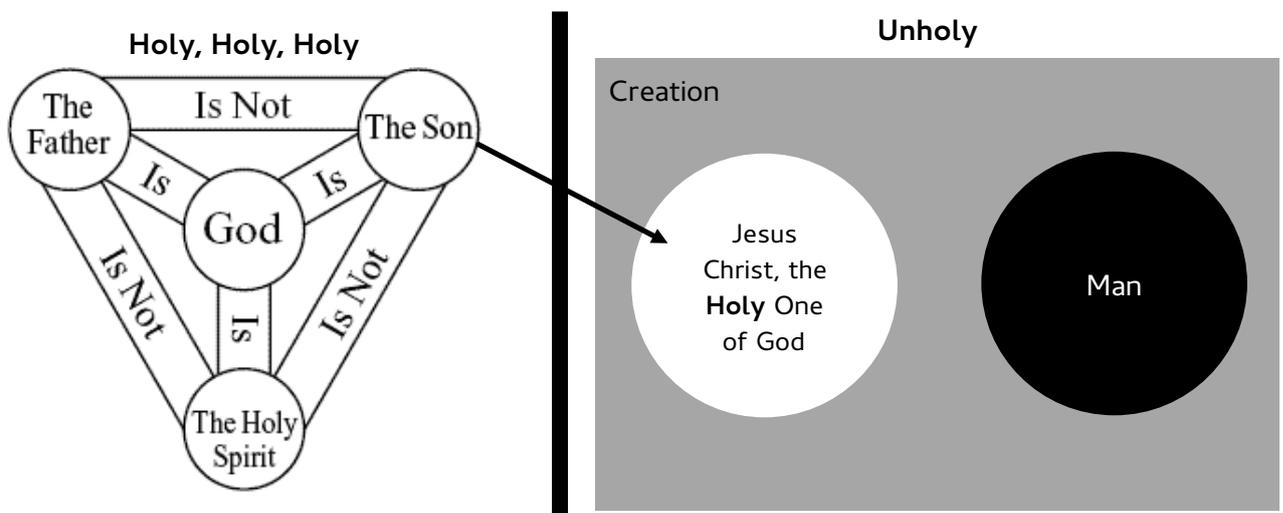
Implication: We must be sanctified: we cannot sanctify ourselves

² Michael Allen, *Sanctification* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2017), 180.

3. Jesus Christ: God steps in

“What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are—the Holy One of God.” - Mark 1:24

“For your Maker is your husband, the Lord of hosts is his name; and the Holy One of Israel is your Redeemer, the God of the whole earth he is called.” - Isaiah 54:5



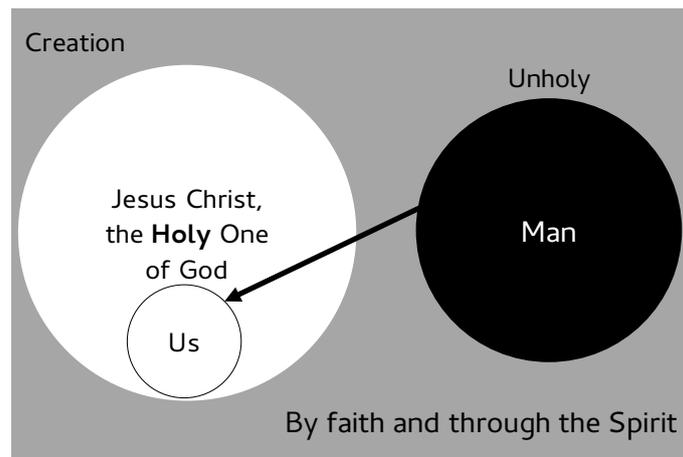
4. The New Humanity: Made holy in Christ alone

Made holy definitively in Jesus

“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.” - 1 Corinthians 6:11

“And by that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.” - Hebrews 10:10

“And because of him you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption...” - 1 Corinthians 1:30



Sanctification in Christ: present identity, future reality, and ongoing necessity and battle

Present identity

- In Christ

"Do you not know that all of us who ***have been baptised*** into Christ Jesus were baptised into his death? We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall ***certainly*** be united with him in a resurrection like his. ***We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin.***"

- Romans 6:3-6

- Saints, not sinners

"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."

- 1 Corinthians 1:2

- A holy people

"But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession."

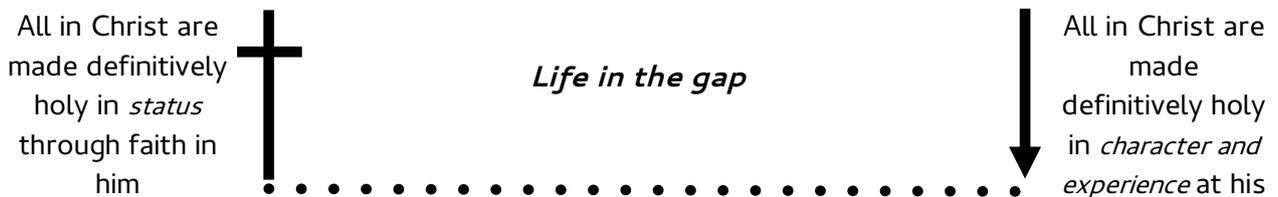
- 1 Peter 2:9

Implication: Don't seek holiness anywhere other than in Jesus Christ

Future reality

“Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is. And everyone who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure.” - 1 John 3:2-3

“When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I gave up childish ways. For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I have been fully known.” - 1 Corinthians 13:11-12



Implications for life now: Ongoing necessity and battle

“For this is the will of God, your sanctification...” - 1 Thessalonians 4:3

“For just as you once presented your members as slaves to impurity and to lawlessness leading to more lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness leading to sanctification.” - Romans 6:19

Ongoing sanctification: being made more like Jesus by the Spirit through the word

Since we have such a hope, we are very bold, not like Moses, who would put a veil over his face so that the Israelites might not gaze at the outcome of what was being brought to an end... And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit. - 2 Corinthians 3:12-18

Pictures of the ongoing Christian life

The athlete

"Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one receives the prize? So run that you may obtain it. Every athlete exercises self-control in all things. They do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable. So I do not run aimlessly; I do not box as one beating the air. But I discipline my body and keep it under control, lest after preaching to others I myself should be disqualified."

- 1 Corinthians 9:24-27

The warrior

"Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, to make you obey its passions. Do not present your members to sin as instruments for unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and your members to God as instruments for righteousness. For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace."

- Romans 6:13-14

The executioner

"Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry."

- Colossians 3:5 (see also Romans 8:12-14)

Closing implications

So then, brothers, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, "Abba! Father!" The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him.

- Romans 8:12-17

- Make every effort, in the power of the Spirit, to cultivate love for God

- Make every effort, in the power of the Spirit, to cultivate love for neighbour