



Question and Answers Series

Progressive Sanctification Experience

Question: I'm saved but my sanctification experience isn't happening instantaneously as the church preaches. What if my sanctification process is gradual?

Thank God for your salvation experience and thank God for your move towards the sanctification experience. We need to understand sanctification doctrinally before we experience it doctrinally. For the benefit of the entire body of Christ in the campus fellowship, this question will be challenged from the **Scriptural** and the **Experiential** points of view.

Scriptures: When Jesus prays for our sanctification, He prays for an experience that is instantaneous. Jesus prays for an experience of oneness with the Trinity. ***"Sanctify them through thy truth, Thy word is truth. ... That they all may be one as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they may be one in Us"*** (John 17: 17; 23). The sanctification that Jesus prays for brings us into oneness with the Trinity. The oneness with the Trinity never happens in a progressive-only experience, because the instance that God answers that prayer of Jesus for us represents the moment that we start experiencing sanctification. Any progressive thing has a starting point, the starting point for sanctification is the instantaneous point that Paul also prayed for. ***"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"*** (1 Thessalonians 4: 23). That is a personal instantaneous experience when God answers that prayer. It is true that there is a progressive aspect of our sanctification experience, related to growing in personal sanctification experience. Those who hold on to progressive-only sanctification do not doctrinally capture how it begins or they never get to be sanctified at all.

We need to doctrinally capture our sanctification experience so we can pray aright for it. Personal instantaneous sanctification experience is a step of grace ahead of the salvation experience. We become ***"new creatures"*** when we are saved (2 Corinthians 5:17), that is why we struggle with our old nature, self, and the world. But at sanctification, we possess the new ***"divine nature"*** (2 Peter 1: 4), which strengthens against the struggles with worldliness – the love of the world. At salvation, we have the presence of God in our hearts, at sanctification, we have the fullness of God. The instantaneous sanctification experience begins when the fullness of the Trinity takes their place in our lives.

Experience: Your experience is conditioned by your doctrine, your belief, your faith, and eventually your prayers. Your prayers determine your reception of the blessing of an instantaneous sanctification experience. Sanctification experience is a miracle of God. The Bible sets out how the experience of sanctification comes to us. We do a part and God does His part. ***"Abstain from all appearance of evil and the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; ..."*** (1 Thessalonians 5: 22-23). Sanctification is seen here as a personal experience following your personal obedience, faith, thirst, longing, and desire for the experience, all packed in one action of ***"abstaining"*** from all appearance of evil. Very soon you will find out that your power to abstain is not sufficient, *and that is the space you are in now that you interpret as progressive sanctification.*

As you properly discern your current condition, it is time you allow God do His part of ***"sanctifying you wholly"***. First, believe that He wants to do it for you instantaneously. Secondly, consecrate all your being (spirit, soul and body) to God. Thirdly, start longing and desiring for the instantaneous experience. Lastly, begin your prayers for the experience. It is the will of God, and you will find it true. The writer of this answer found it true. You may want to pray with these references of Scripture (1 Thessalonians 4:3; Hebrews 13: 12; Mathew 5: 6).

FURTHER DISCUSSION QUESTION:

Do you think you should invest yourself in seeking an instantaneous and personal sanctification experience now?

PRAYERS