

2010 Think Tank. Analysis of 5 Views of Sanctification. Joseph Krygier

This presentation is based, for the most part, on an analysis written by Mike Sullivan at [www.xenos.org](http://www.xenos.org). I have interacted with him on some points and have left out portions that are not relevant to the purpose of our meeting. I have added some of my own observations as a conclusion and an addendum at the end of the presentation. The footnotes are in the original.

### **Five Views on Sanctification: Edited by Stanley Gundrey. Counterpoints - Zondervan**

The Wesleyan view - presented by Melvin Dieter

This view derives its name from John Wesley (1703-1791), an English theologian and evangelist. Wesley was a student of the writings of the early church fathers. Their influence set Wesley's beliefs apart from the dominant Reformed tradition of his day.

For Wesley, the ultimate goal of sanctification was "to renew men's and women's hearts in (God's) image."<sup>[2]</sup> Wesley wanted a definition of sanctification that was pragmatic. He believed that true Christian maturity was primarily evidenced by "'a faith that works by divine love' in the crucible of everyday life."<sup>[3]</sup>

Dieter shares Wesley's belief that love is the true measure of sanctification. While acknowledging that the primary meaning of "sanctify" in the Old Testament is to set apart to God, Dieter claims that the New Testament word strongly emphasizes the ethical. Love, he says, is the true test of holiness.

Wesley taught that sanctification begins at conversion, when the Spirit regenerates the heart of the believer. And it's appropriated by faith in the same way salvation is. Sanctification is "faith working by love": not merited but appropriated by faith. When a Christian appeals to God in faith for the power to live a life of Godly love, the Holy Spirit takes away his or her "bent to sin" and replaces it with a "bent to loving obedience."<sup>[4]</sup>

### **Original Sin and Prevenient Grace**

Wesley believed that fallen man was utterly depraved and that any movement toward God could be attributed to prevenient grace - the work of God in drawing all men to himself. The law written on the gentile's hearts is a product of the prevenient grace of God extending itself to man and drawing him

2010 Think Tank. Analysis of 5 Views of Sanctification. Joseph Krygier to God.

Prevenient grace is the initial and necessary agent in the process of salvation. It is "the beginning of the process by which God begins to lighten the darkness of the Fall for all men and women; it will bring those who faithfully receive it to saving grace, sanctifying grace, and grace for the life of love." [5]

From a Calvinistic view we would disagree and from a NCT view we would disagree

Perfection

Can a Christian lead a sinless life? Wesley taught that mature Christians will always be capable of falling into sin but they need not necessarily do so. Christians are free from the dominion of sin and can choose against it. But because we live in a fallen world dominated by sin and its effects, total delivery from the presence of sin will have to wait for the life to come.

Wesley admitted there was always room for a Christian to develop in maturity. But he believed Christians could enjoy greater degree of freedom from sin than Reformed theologians thought possible. He went as far as to assert that Christians could be delivered from willful sin [6] and that this level of sanctification could occur before death [7]. For this reason, Wesley often said that Christians should not be "content with any religion which does not imply the destruction of all the works of the devil, that is of all sin." [8] We can fulfill God's law of love in this life, despite all the failings and imperfections of the world. This is what Wesley calls the "optimism of grace."

Wesley's understanding of sin in the life of a believer is seen most clearly in his doctrine of entire sanctification. Dieter defines entire sanctification as "a personal, definitive work of God's sanctifying grace by which the war within oneself might cease and the heart might be released from rebellion into whole hearted love for God and others." [9] Entire sanctification can occur at the moment of salvation but typically occurs during a crisis point in the life of a Christian sometime after conversion. Those who have experienced entire sanctification are characterized by:

- a wholehearted love for God and neighbor
- having the mind of Christ
- bearing the fruit of the spirit

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- both inward and outward righteousness and true holiness in life
- complete devotion to God
- giving thoughts, words, and actions as a sacrifice of thanksgiving to God
- salvation from all sin [10]

Entire sanctification involves freedom from willful sin, but it is not the final destination of Christian growth. Dieter points out, "the idea of a gradual progression in sanctification is extended beyond the boundaries of this life, even though the basic relationship that nourishes such development is established in the crisis moment of entire sanctification." [11]

Dieter also believes that the Reformation tradition, with its emphasis on imputed righteousness, neglects Paul's teaching that existential deliverance from sin is available in Christ. Since the life of Jesus is being revealed in them, Christians should "not let sin reign in their mortal bodies." [12] They have been "set free from sin and have become slaves to God." [13] For Wesley and his followers, then, any view of sanctification that doesn't hold out the possibility of real, experiential deliverance from sin in this life falls short of the full Gospel.

The law

Wesley taught that Christians who follow the "royal law" of the Sermon on the Mount are fulfilling the ten commandments and the requirements of the law. He believed, "the ten commandments are renewed in the Sermon on the Mount in their sanctifying purity and spirituality and... describe the life of practical Christian holiness, which is the end of faith and the commandments." [14] Wesley also said that faith establishes the practice of the law in the life of the believer. The result of this faith is holiness expressed by love for God and neighbor.

Some teach that Christians are free from their obligation to keep the law. Wesley disagrees. He believed that "freedom", when used in conjunction with the law, was not freedom from obligation to keep it, but rather freedom to love and serve God. The Christian is still under "obligation to fulfill the law on the basis of faith." [15]

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## The Holy Spirit

Wesley tied the ministry of the Holy Spirit to promises throughout the Bible (Duet. 30; Jer. 31; Ezek. 36) that God would give his people the ability to truly love God, to keep his statutes, and to obey Him. As a result of the Spirit's empowering, true believers (the people of God) would be "enabled to live in righteousness and true holiness all their lives." [16] God demands perfection and makes provision for it in the Holy Spirit. We deny enablement as the sole means but believe the Spirit causing us to do it.

## Reaction to the Wesleyan view

Dieter does not directly discuss Wesley's teaching on the sin nature. A first glance, he seems to affirm that the sin nature is still operative within the life of a Christian:

"The presence of Christ and the freedom from the rebellious nature of the old Adam in the Christian's life in the Spirit, however, are not the final release from the presence and threat of sin. Its power and presence threaten and tempt us through our fallen bodies and minds as well as in all that surrounds us in a world that is yet to be redeemed." [17]

But what is the source of the temptation? Dieter and Wesley imply that the temptation to sin doesn't come from within but rather from the fallen world around us:

"After declaring freedom from the dominion and inner presence of sin in the life of the Spirit-filled Christian (Rom. 8:1-17), he (Wesley) nevertheless acknowledges that we still live in a fallen, sinful world..." [18]

Dieter grants that the flesh is a source of temptation (Matt. 26:41) but doesn't have a well developed explanation of the role of the sin nature in the life of the believer. Dieter's essay left me uncertain about the Wesleyan position on this important issue.

In The John Wesley Reader, a compilation of Wesley's sermon notes and journal entries, Wesley translates Rom. 6:6 as "Our old man is crucified with Christ, that the body of sin might be destroyed (katargeo), that henceforth we should not serve sin." He takes katargeo to mean destroyed which

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implies a belief in the removal of the sin nature. This is confirmed by when he adds, "an immediate fruit of this faith... is power over sin... for it purifies the heart from every unholy desire and temper." [19]

So I am left with concluding that if anything, Wesley minimized the role of the sin nature in the life of the believer and the conflict it causes within. This conclusion is also supported by the Wesleyan doctrine of entire sanctification.

Entire sanctification is an important doctrine in Wesleyan theology. It offers the hope that Christians are able to live without sin during their lives on Earth. [20] But this claim doesn't account for numerous New Testament texts which describe a struggle between the flesh and the spirit. How does the doctrine of entire sanctification explain how a statement like this can come from a mature Christian? In Galatians 5:17, Paul describes struggling against the sinful tendencies of our flesh as if it were a normative part of the Christian experience. Some would say the same about In Romans 7:18.

Dieter cites Matt 5:48 to show that it is possible to live free of willful sin. Jesus was telling his listeners that their current standard of righteousness was not good enough to satisfy God. He said, 'you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.' But perfection was not a state Jesus expected his audience to reach in this life. If it was, why did he model a prayer for his disciples in which he said, "forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us?" His prayer clearly implies that Christians can and will sin at times.

Dieter also quotes Colossians 1:28 where Paul expresses his wish to "present every man perfect (teleios) in Christ." Against Dieter's translation of teleios, many commentators take Paul's use of this word in Colossians 1 to mean "mature". [21] Equating sinless perfection with teleios in this passage flies in the face of other verses that teach Christians continue to sin. For example, in 1 John 2:1, John assures his Christian listeners, "I am writing these things to you that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an advocate with the Father..." Instead of achieving sinless perfection now, 1

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Thessalonians 5:23-24 seems to indicate that our perfection is a future event that God will accomplish in us at the second coming of Christ.

Really, I am convinced, that the longer we live in Christ the more deeply we should be aware of how sinful we are and how great grace is.

Wesley's doctrine of entire sanctification leans heavily on his vague definition of sin. He believed that a Christian who had experienced entire sanctification enjoyed freedom from deliberate sins.[23] Sinful behavior could still occur, but these result from living in a fallen world. Wesley called these lapses "mistakes." [24] And today that is a very common substitute word for sin in many contexts. He thought, "because we are imperfect persons in an imperfect world, perfection 'in love' is consistent with a 'thousand mistakes.' But limited as we are by our own and the world's imperfections, we may still enjoy a relationship in which, through the power of the Holy Spirit, we can fulfill the great and final commandment of loving God with our whole heart..." [25]

By creating the categories of willful sin and "mistakes", Wesley erodes a broader definition of sin found in Romans 14:23, "whatever is not from faith is sin." The Bible portrays sin as any action, deed, or thought that falls short of God's perfect character (Rom. 3:23). This is clear from Jesus' repeated "you have heard... but I say to you" contrasts in the Sermon on the Mount. By equating murder and anger, lust and adultery, Jesus is trying to destroy the superficial, shallow view of sin held by his audience. Wesley's attempt to separate "sins" from "mistakes" misses the all-inclusive idea of these and other New Testament passages.

### **The Reformed view - presented by Anthony Hoekema**

Reformed theologians define sanctification as "that gracious operation of the Holy Spirit, involving our responsible participation, by which He delivers us as justified sinners from the pollution of sin, renews our entire nature according to the image of God, and enables us to live lives that are pleasing to Him." [26] When we are justified, our guilt before God is removed. Sanctification is the process of removing the corruption caused by sin polluting our lives. This is consistent with the meaning of the Greek word for sanctify, *hagiazō*. *Hagiazō* literally means to make holy: to be set apart for service

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to God and to abandon practices that displease Him.

How sanctification occurs Hoekema says there are three essential requirements for sanctification. First, sanctification can only occur in the context of a growing union with Christ. We will not grow unless we are identified with Christ. Second, he points out that we are sanctified by the truth. The Bible is "one of the chief means whereby God sanctifies His people." [27] Lastly, faith is the means by which we appropriate our sanctification. Faith helps us to live in union with Christ, accept the fact that we are no longer mastered by sin, and results in the production of fruit in the life of the Christian. Like justification, sanctification comes by faith.

The goal of sanctification

What is the process of sanctification accomplishing in the life of a Christian? Hoekema distinguishes between two end results: the proximate and final goals of sanctification. The final end of our sanctification is the glorification of God. This is implied by Paul's use of the phrase, "to the praise of his Glory" in Ephesians 1:12. The proximate goal of sanctification is our perfection: God's desire that every Christian be conformed to the likeness of Christ (1 John 3:2; 1 Corinthians 15:49; Ephesians 5:27; Hebrews 12:23). As a result of being conformed to His image, Christians share in Christ's glorification and become an eternal testimony to His glory.

God's role and man's role in sanctification

To reach this goal, both man and God play a part. God set our sanctification in motion by electing us for conformity to Him and scripture indicates that all three persons of the trinity are involved. We read, for example, that the Father disciplines us and sanctifies us by the truth (Heb. 12:10; John 17:17), the Son cleanses the church through the word (Eph. 5:25-27) and the Holy Spirit is responsible for our washing, rebirth and renewal (Titus 3:5). The role(s) each member of the Godhead plays in sanctification are not compartmentalized; "sanctification (is) ascribed to the triune God without any designation of persons." [28]

Sanctification is accomplished by God, but it still requires the cooperation of men and women. We must still fight against sin, express gratitude toward God, and offer ourselves fully to him. We also

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should imitate the example of Christ (Phil. 2:5-7; John 13:14-15).

The interplay between man's role and God's role in conforming us to Christ is seen clearly in passages like Philippians 2:12-13: "(you) work out (cultivate) your salvation in fear and trembling.... for it is God at who is a work in you to will and work for his good pleasure..." But Hoekema carefully points out that the relationship between our work and God's work shouldn't be thought of strictly in terms of cooperation. Instead, he follows Murray who said, "God's working in us is not suspended because we work, nor our working suspended because God works... the relation is that because God works we work." [29]

### **Definitive and progressive sanctification**

Reformed theologians claim that scripture speaks about sanctification in two ways: as an ongoing process and as an accomplished event. The latter use can be seen in 1 Corinthians 1:2 and 6:11. In 1 Corinthians 1:2, believers are spoken of as "those who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus." In 1 Corinthians 6:11, Paul says the Corinthians "were sanctified." The Greek word for sanctify in 6:11, *hagiazō*, is used by Paul in the aorist tense to emphasize that the Corinthian's sanctification is a past, completed action. This statement, made to an audience that could hardly be called mature, implies Christians are somehow sanctified in a way that has no bearing on the condition of their day to day life. Hoekema calls this use of *hagiazō* "definitive sanctification".

Romans 6, is the passage that is often regarded as containing the most detail about definitive sanctification. It teaches that Christians have been:

- (1) freed from the power of sin
- (2) enabled to live in newness of life under the reign of grace
- (3) unified with Christ in his resurrection
- (4) made new creatures

Definitive sanctification differs from Wesley's entire sanctification in two important ways. First, definitive sanctification does not produce sinless perfection in the Christian. Hoekema asserts that Christians will always "struggle against sin and sometimes fall into sin." [30] A true believer is



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genuinely a new creature but they are not fully transformed into Christ's image. Second, definitive sanctification does not occur in an experience subsequent to salvation but rather coincides with it.

Other passages describe what Hoekema calls "progressive sanctification." They imply that sin continues to be present to some extent in the life of the believer (1 Kings 8:46; Psalm 19:12; Psalm 143:2; Proverbs 20:9; Isaiah 64:6; James 3:2). According to Paul, sin is dealt with over time by putting to death the deeds of the flesh (see Romans 8:13). Progression in sanctification can also be seen in Colossians 3. Verses 1 and 3 affirm definitive sanctification has occurred ("we have died in Christ and been raised up with him") but in verse 5 Paul advises one must still "consider the members of your earthly body to be dead to sin." Colossians 3:9-10, 2 Corinthians 7:1 and 2 Corinthians 3:18 all convey this same progressive sense of sanctification.

In reflecting on these two types of sanctification, Hoekema concludes, "One could think of definitive sanctification as the beginning of the process and of progressive sanctification as the continual maturing of the new person who was created by definitive sanctification." [31]

Old self and new self

Reformed theologians have differed over the presence of the old and new self in the life of the believer. Standing with Murray, Hoekema believes that Christians are "no longer the old selves they once were. They are not, as has often been taught, both old selves and new selves but are indeed new selves in Christ." [32] He makes his case by citing:

- (1) the crucifixion of the old self in Romans 6:6
- (2) the use of the aorist tense in Colossians 3:9-10 to describe how Christians have taken off their old self and put on their new self
- (3) the New International Version's rendition of Ephesians 4:20-24 which reads as if the old self was put off when we came to know Christ

Christians are new creatures: not sinless, not totally conformed to the image of Christ, but genuinely new people headed in that direction. This is why we are still repeatedly urged in the New Testament to fight sin and the influence of evil in our lives (Ephesians 6:11-13; Galatians 5:16; Hebrews 12:4).

Reformed theology and perfectionism Hoekema advances several reasons why the Wesleyan hope of living a life without sin is flawed:

- (1) The hope of perfection requires weakening the definition of sin (e.g. only deliberate sins).
- (2) The perfection held out is admitted to be less perfect than our eschatological perfection.
- (3) The Bible doesn't encourage believers to seek a 'second experience' that follows conversion like entire sanctification; the emphasis is on pursuing ongoing growth (Rom. 12:2; Col. 3:10; Eph. 4:23; 2 Pet. 3:18).
- (4) Many passages in the Bible indicate that Christians still sin (Matt. 6:12; James 3:2, etc.).
- (5) Gal. 5:16-17 indicates that a struggle exists between our sinful flesh and the Holy Spirit within.

The above observations make it evident that sinful tendencies still exist in the life of even the most mature Christian. As a result, no one is able to live a life truly free from sin.

#### The law

Reformed theologians believe that the law (the 10 commandments and other precepts given to guide our lives) should be obeyed by Christians. Christians who fail to keep the law do not face God's condemnation (in this sense, they are not "under the law"), but they should express their thankfulness to God by attempting to keep it. This is commonly called the "third and principle use of the law."

Hoekema claims that obedience to the law out of gratitude toward God is taught in the Old and New Testaments. Old Testament examples include Exodus 20:2-17 and Psalm 19:7-8. In the New Testament (Rom. 8:3-4 for example) Paul says the Holy Spirit came in part to empower Christians to fulfill the law (Rom. 8:3-4). Hoekema even goes as far as to equate keeping the law with walking in the Spirit. In addition, James 1:25 and 1 John 2:3-5 prove that law keeping is an avenue through which God sanctifies us and brings us freedom.

#### Reaction to the Reformed view

Hoekema takes an in-depth look at Col. 3:9-11, Eph. 4:22-26, and Rom. 6:6 and concludes that "the person who is in Christ is no longer an old man or old self, but is now a new self"[33] This statement is accurate with regard to our position in Christ but less than accurate when describing our day to day

experience. To be sure, Rom. 6:6 teaches that the old man was crucified. I would also agree that the putting off of the old self is described as a past event in Col. 3:9-10. Paul is clear that at conversion, Christians are freed from the life they used to live under the rule of sin. In this, positional sense, the old self has truly passed away.

Having said this, there are numerous passages that suggest that our old man wants more of us and he needs to be resisted. Paul urges his audience in Romans 6:11, for example, to consider themselves "to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus." In Colossians 3:10, Paul says the new self is going through an ongoing process of renewal. This theme is repeated in Ephesians 4:23 where Paul urges: "be renewed in the spirit of your mind." Verse 23, which Hoekema describes as an ongoing process[34] comes in the middle of a discussion about putting off the old and putting on the new self. If verse 23 describes a process, why should we read verses 22 and 24 any differently? The plain sense of Ephesians 4:20-24 implies that Christians must regularly lay aside the habits associated with the old self and put on the new.

Hoekema believes that Christians are free from the law only in the sense that "we are no longer under condemnation because of our failure to keep the law." [35] "In another sense", he continues, "believers are not free from the law. They should be deeply concerned about keeping God's law as a way of expressing their gratitude to Him for the gift of salvation." [36] But Rom. 7:1-6 says that when someone becomes a Christian, their relationship to the law fundamentally changes. Just as a widow is no longer obligated to her husband, we have died to and been freed from the law.

Some have said we are only free from the ceremonial and civil portion of the law and the law Paul has in mind Romans 7 is the moral law because he says in verse 7: "I would not have known about coveting if the law had not said, 'You shall not covet.'" But Christians are free from the Mosaic Law as law code and part of the Old Covenant.

Having said that, how should we relate to the law? Several passages indicate that law and or principle of law still has a role to play in the life of a Christian: Jesus says he did not come to abolish the law but to fulfill it (Matt 5:17) and Paul admits he is "not without the law but under the law of Christ" (1

Cor. 9:21). But what role does the law play? Here I am recommending that our readers or listeners refer to our think tank video and papers from last year for an in depth discussion of this topic and listen to our roundtable discussion from this years gathering as we discuss Blake White's book, *The Law of Christ: A Theological Proposal*.

Hoekema is right to say we are freed from the condemnation incurred by failing to keep the law. But Paul says we are also free from trying to meet its demands by our own power. Unfortunately, Hoekema takes Rom. 8:3-4 to mean "Spirit-led believers are precisely the ones doing their best to keep God's law." [37] He reduces walking in the Spirit to law keeping and entirely misses the point of the passage: it is the power of the Spirit that enables causes first and enables Christians to be obedient to Christ.

Parting from the traditional Reformed view, Hoekema understands Rom. 7:13-25 to be Paul's recollection of his struggle with sin as a non Christian.

From a Reformed person, I, (Joe Krygier) believe Sinclair Fergusson has a better view:

“The motive, goal and pattern of sanctification in the New Testament have the same basic structure as in the Old, although the content of each is now more fully, or Christocentrically, defined. The goal is the same: the restoration of the divine image (Eph. 4:24; Col. 3:10). The pattern is the same: the indicatives of God's gracious self-revelation give rise to the imperatives of heart and life conformity to him. But now motive, goal and pattern are more sharply focused, in Jesus Christ. What was revealed in an opaque and fragmentary fashion in the old covenant is made plain in the new Salvation is in Jesus Christ, who is the telos of the covenant; sanctification means being restored to the glory-image of God by being made like Jesus Christ.

“In the new covenant, the specific content of the new obedience involves putting off the old and putting on the new man (cf Eph. 4:24; Col. 3:10). The end in view is spelled out in the panoramic statement of Romans 8:29: ‘Those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.’ Christlikeness is the end in view; sanctification is the transformation which produces it. Now ‘I am the Lord who sanctifies you’

becomes 'I am Jesus who by my Spirit will transform you into my likeness'. 'Be holy, because I am holy' means 'You belong to God's family; Jesus Christ is your Elder Brother; his Spirit dwells in you, enabling you to follow in his footsteps; be like him.' Holiness is Christlikeness. As the Spirit of Christ, the Holy Spirit is the agent of this transformation.

"One programmatic statement in the New Testament summarizes the foundation of sanctification. In his 'high-priestly prayer', Jesus says to his Father: 'For them I sanctify myself; that they too may be truly sanctified' (Jn. 17:19). Under the old covenant the high priest, as representative of the people, underwent a rigorous process of ceremonial sanctification in preparation for his role in the ritual of the Day of Atonement. So too the High Priest who is greater than Aaron must sanctify himself for the true sacrificial ministry of atonement.

"Calvin says of Christ that he took both the name and the character of sinners in order to take their place throughout the whole course of his life. By his obedience in life he did what we should have done; by his obedience to the death of the cross he undid the guilt of what we had done in sin. His whole life was sanctified, or devoted to God, to fulfill this ministry.

"In the most fundamental sense, the New Testament views Jesus as the author of sanctification, its pioneer (archegos). Perfect humanity, perfect holiness, is first of all expressed in him. Just as he did not die for himself, but to make the effect of his death as propitiation available for us, neither did he live for himself; but to make available to us, by union with him, the sanctification he had accomplished in our humanity. The human holiness that becomes ours through the Spirit has its origin in the holiness wrought out by Christ throughout the course of the incarnation. He has sanctified himself for our sake, so that through union with the Holy One we might be made holy (Heb. 2:10—12), and through participation in the divine nature (i.e. his holiness) expressed in our humanity we might escape the corruption of the world caused by evil desires (2 Pet. 1:4).

"...the multi-dimensional nature of union with Christ (is) rooted not only in the divine ordination but specifically in the Son's union with us in our humanity... The nature of sanctification is that it is true God-likeness. But true God-likeness in human form is Christ-likeness. Since Christ-likeness is the

full expression of the image of God in man, true sanctification is true humanness.

“The only resources for such sanctification are in Christ. Our sanctification is Christ’s sanctification of himself in our humanity progressively applied to and realized in us through the ministry of the Holy Spirit. It is in this sense that Paul says that ‘Christ Jesus. . . has become for us wisdom from God — that is, our., holiness’ (1 Cor. 1:30). In the words of Hebrews, ‘Both the one who makes men holy and those who are made holy are of the same family’ (ex henos, i.e. ‘are of one’, Heb. 2:11). Sanctification can be ours only by means of the resources of Christ, brought to us through the Holy Spirit as he takes what is Christ’s, reveals it to us, and thus conforms us more and more into his likeness, from one degree of glory to another, as we gaze on the glory of the Lord (2 Cor. 3:18)...we thus see Christ as the author and source and the Spirit as the agent of sanctification...” – Sinclair Ferguson, *The Holy Spirit*, pp. 142-144]

The Pentecostal Perspective - presented by Stanley Horton

Historical development.

In the first part of his essay, Horton traces the historical development of the doctrine of sanctification now taught in the Assemblies of God.

At the turn of the 20th century when their movement started, Pentecostals disagreed over the how sanctification occurred in the life of a believer. Holiness Pentecostals asserted that before one can receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit[38] they must first undergo the crisis experience of entire sanctification. This sanctification was seen as a definitive work of God's grace that a believer receives much in the same way they receive salvation.

Other Pentecostals (like those who later formed the Assemblies of God) believed that putting one's faith in Christ's forgiveness was the only precondition for receiving the baptism of the Holy Spirit. They downplayed the importance of a second (or third work) of grace where Christians were entirely sanctified and instead saw sanctification as process.

Further refinement of the Pentecostal understanding of sanctification grew out of disagreements over the nature of the trinity. In 1916, trinitarian disputes compelled the Assemblies of God to clearly

delineate their beliefs in the form of a 16-point statement of faith. This document touched on sanctification, but leaders soon recognized that the definition provided was vague and poorly formulated. Over time, however, the definition of sanctification was fleshed out. Instead of entire sanctification, they thought in terms of instantaneous sanctification (see 1 Cor. 6:11-12) and progressive sanctification (2 Cor. 3:15). Christians are positionally sanctified at conversion but then are progressively sanctified over the course of their lives. The distinction between instantaneous and progressive sanctification, promoted by the Assemblies of God, moved away from the belief in entire sanctification espoused by the Holiness wing of the Pentecostal movement.

The bulk of Horton's essay explains the view of sanctification being taught today in the Assemblies of God and focuses on the meaning of instantaneous, progressive, and entire sanctification.

### **Instantaneous/ positional sanctification**

Instantaneous or positional sanctification is similar to the Reformed notion of definitive sanctification. This type of sanctification:

- occurs at the moment of belief
- involves the believer being set apart from the world to follow Christ
- is symbolized by baptism (Col. 2:11-12)
- occurs because we are united with Christ and given new life (1 Cor. 1:30)
- puts us in perfect relationship with God
- sets Christians free to do God's will
- is based on the finished work of Christ

### **Progressive sanctification**

Horton cites a number of verses to show that Christians don't always measure up to their positional sanctification. He points out that the Corinthians, despite being called sanctified in 1 Cor. 6:11, were still addressed as "infants" in 1 Cor. 3:1. Other passages indicate that self control needs to be learned (1 Thes. 4:3-4) and that old habits like lying need to be renounced (Col. 3:5-10).

While Wesleyans claim they have been released from willful sin through entire sanctification, Horton believes these claims result in "making God out to be a liar." [39] He also holds that the blood of Christ cleanses us from our sin in an ongoing way. This is in contrast to those who say there is no need for Christians to repeatedly seek to be cleansed from their sins.

What does progressive sanctification look like? According to Horton, Christians moving forward in this process regularly put God's will into practice, demonstrate the fruits of obedience, and exhibit a selfless willingness to do whatever God asks them to do

### **Entire sanctification**

Pentecostals in the Assemblies of God reject Holiness claims to be able to reach a state of sinless perfection in this life. They contend that the old nature is still active in a Christian and claims of perfection depend on a weakened definition of sin. Despite these objections, however, they still use the term "entire sanctification". Instead of abandoning the term, they redefined it as:

(1) following the purposes and desires of God to the best of one's ability

or

(2) an event that occurs when Christ comes back and gives our glorified bodies.

So the term entire sanctification is being used here in a way that is entirely different than Wesley's usage.

### **The Spirit's Work in sanctification**

Pentecostals, mindful that the work of the Holy Spirit is often neglected by other theological schools, are quick to point out the role the Spirit plays in sanctification.

Horton believes of all the works of the Spirit, the New Testament highlights sanctification foremost.

"The Holy Spirit here is the agent, and His work is the most important means of our progressive sanctification." [40] To underscore his point he cites numerous verses that teach the central role of the Holy Spirit plays in our growth (1 Peter 1:2; 1 Cor. 6:11; 2 Thes. 2:13; Rom. 15:16; 1 Peter 1:1-2).



One of the most important ways that the Holy Spirit helps sanctify Christians is in helping them to understand and benefit from the Word of God. The Word itself is the Spirit's primary tool in accomplishing our growth and maturity. The Spirit teaches us the Word, guides us to the truth (John 14:17,26; 15:26; 16:12-13; 1 John 4:6) and uses the Word to "give us a clear vision of Jesus and inspire us with a deep desire to be like him." [41] Of course, Christians must cooperate with the Spirit's work in their lives by depending on his Word for guidance and being willing to obey it.

### Baptism of the Holy Spirit

Perhaps the most unique feature of Pentecostal theology and the one that distinguishes it from other views on sanctification is the emphasis placed on the baptism of the Holy Spirit. This event occurs in the life of a Christian after their salvation and "empowers (them) through the filling of the Spirit." [42] Those who receive this baptism initially speak in tongues (Acts 10:46) and go on to lead lives of service "marked by gifts of the Spirit that bring power and wisdom for the spread of the Gospel and the growth of the church." [43]

Hoekema is quick to dispel misconceptions about the baptism of the Holy Spirit. He agrees that it is not necessary for salvation and that those who receive it may never have a continuing ministry of speaking tongues in the church. But he warns that "rejection of the Pentecostal position and the evidence of other tongues often leads to a downward trend that ends in the neglect of the Spirit's work in the believer's life." In other words, it is hard to experience the full life we were meant to have as Christians without undergoing this baptism.

Having said that, Horton admits that being baptized in the Holy Spirit is not a sanctifying experience in and of itself. It doesn't elevate one to a higher level of sanctification like Wesley's entire sanctification. Christians still need to deepen in maturity and grow as they become more involved in selfless ministry to other people.

Horton studiously avoids the overemphasis on tongues often associated with the baptism of the Holy Spirit. He says that Christians should strive for the "greater gifts" mentioned in 1 Cor. 12:31, and believes gifts in general are most likely to be discovered in the context of active service to Him.

Horton also points out that love is "necessary to make (spiritual) gifts effective to the highest degree and to bring the proper reward." [44]

### **Summary**

Holiness and Assemblies of God Pentecostals agree that justification and positional sanctification occur at the same time. They also agree that both man and God play a role in Christian growth. They differ as to the definition of entire sanctification and whether it is possible to live a life free from sin.

The Assemblies of God maintain that sin is not entirely removed in the life of a believer and that sanctification is a long process of growth and change. Holiness Pentecostals tend to view sanctification as a defining, post conversion event in the life of a Christian.

### **Reaction to the Pentecostal view**

Horton believes that Christians are indwelt by the Spirit when they are converted. In addition to the Spirit's indwelling, Horton says that Christians receive a second blessing called the baptism of the Holy Spirit. The baptism of the Holy Spirit is a post-conversion [45] experience where a Christian enjoys the true fullness of the Spirit. It results in a higher level of devotion and increased ability to evangelize and worship. This life defining event is evidenced by tongue speaking by the recipient and enables believers "to respond to the full working of the Spirit." [46]

I find no biblical basis for the existence of an additional work of the Spirit as described by Horton. His belief that such an experience exists relies on (1) his interpretation of 1 Cor. 12:13 and (2) a distinction he makes between baptism by the Spirit and baptism in the Holy Spirit.

### **1 Cor. 12:13**

The first part of 1 Cor. 12:13 says Christians are baptized by the Spirit and put into Christ (13a). The second part says Christians are made to drink of one Spirit. Horton teaches the baptism and the drinking describe two distinct events; being baptized into Christ occurs at conversion and drinking of the Spirit (baptism of the Holy Spirit) happens later. Against this claim, Hoekema says, "the second clause of (1 Cor. 12:13) is clearly parallel to the first clause, since both clauses stress the oneness of all believers." In other words, the second clause does not describe a new event, but provides more

information about what is being discussed. Verse 13 describes two aspects of one event: when we were baptized by the Spirit we were (1) put in the body of Christ and (2) indwelt by the Holy Spirit. This interpretation is preferable because it takes into account Paul's repeated use of "one" throughout the verse.

"by" and "in"

According to Horton, the phrase "baptized by the Spirit" (1 Cor. 12:13a) refers to our being placed in Christ at conversion; the phrase "baptized in the Spirit" refers to the second blessing of the baptism of the Holy Spirit. This second baptism, he claims, is described in several passages like Luke 24:49, Acts 1:8, and Acts 2:4.

Remarkably, however, none of these passages contain the phrase "baptism in the Spirit."

Finally, a word could be said about the notion that the tongues must accompany the baptism of the Holy Spirit. This assertion is flawed for several reasons:

*[Note: I have left out a large piece of Mike Williams interaction on this view, especially concerning tongues and the Baptism of the Holy Spirit because it was not contextually needed for this presentation.] Again, please refer to his entire paper at [www.xenos.org](http://www.xenos.org)*

In this summary point I agree with Mike Sullivan.

(3) In 1 Corinthians 12:30, Paul asks, "all do not speak with tongues, do they?" The required answer is: "No, they don't." Yet despite this verse, Horton maintains that everyone should receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit and upon receiving it, they will speak in tongues. How is this possible when Paul clearly says not every Christian can speak in tongues?[49]

**The Keswick Perspective** - presented by J. Robertson McQuilkin

According to J. Robertson McQuilkin, and those who hold the Keswick view, the normal Christian life should be one of progress and victory: victory over temptation, growth in obedience, improving self-control, and increasing joy. Unfortunately, the average Christian experience is far from normal.

Church goers are adept at moving through the routines of the Christian life but something is missing. They show no excitement or evidence that anything supernatural is going on. The Victorious Christian Life is the goal in sanctification.

What can Christians do to break out of this malaise? The Keswick view offers a message of hope to defeated and backslidden Christians, which is a debatable term see the phrase is never used in the context of New Covenant believers and is only used to describe Israel as a nation under the Old Covenant. Since 1875, proponents of this view have offered four and five-day conferences focusing on the spiritual renewal of those who attend. These conferences expose those attending to the depth of their sin, teach them a way to live a victorious life, and challenge them to fully commit their lives to God and to His service. A typical conference schedule includes:

Day 1: Sin - understanding the gravity of our shortcomings before God.

Day 2: Victorious Christian living - the power of the Holy Spirit and the finished work of Christ to bring "consistent success in resisting the temptation to violate deliberately the known will of God." [50]

Day 3: Consecration - the full surrender of one's life to God to be used by Him.

Day 4: Life in the Spirit - Being filled with the Spirit - the key to effectiveness in our life and service for God.

Day 5: Service - Missions, the great commission and other ways to outwardly serve God.

#### Keswick theology

Since Keswick organizers and attenders have come from a variety of theological persuasions, the Keswick view has no official or well-defined statement on sanctification. Despite this, the core values and emphases of the Keswick movement are well summarized in the following quote from Steven Barabas:

"From the beginning until the very present it has taught that a life of faith and victory, of peace and rest, are the rightful heritage of every child of God, and that he may step into it ..., 'not by long prayers and laborious effort, but by a deliberate and decisive act of faith.' It teaches that 'the normal

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experience of the child of God should be one of victory instead of constant defeat, one of liberty instead of grinding bondage, one of 'perfect peace' instead of restless worry.'"[51]

### The Keswick view and perfectionism

The Keswick movement has no clear stance on perfectionism. McQuilkin says that the Spirit makes it possible for Christians to consistently avoid deliberate violations of God's will. And, like the Wesleyans, McQuilkin believes there is a biblical basis for making a distinction between willful, deliberate sin and unwitting sin. He claims a distinction is clearly made in the Old Testament (see Exod. 21:12-14; Num. 15:27-31) and is implied in several New Testament passages (see 1 John 1:8-10 and 1 John 3:6,8-10). In day to day life, however, McQuilkin concedes that distinguishing between volitional and involuntary sin is difficult. Parting from the Wesleyan view, he concludes that a definition of sin should include all types (deliberate and accidental) and expectations of perfection in this life are more frustrating for sincere Christians than helpful.

Even though McQuilkin believes everyone has sin (1 John 1:8-10), he takes a dim view of Christians who continue in a pattern sinful activity. He suggests they are probably not Christians (1 John 3:6;8-10). In other words, everyone sins unintentionally but ongoing deliberate sin is evidence that someone is not genuinely converted. He goes as far as to say, "(Christians) need never - and should never - deliberately violate the known will of God." [52] He never says it directly, but one gets the impression that if a pattern of sin is established in the life of a Christian, part of the healing process is reconsidering the original validity of one's own conversion experience.

Having said all that, McQuilkin concedes that believers still have a tendency to sin and must constantly rely on the Holy Spirit to lean against this tendency. He attributes this attraction to sin to the "old nature" and affirms that our old nature remains in conflict with the indwelling Holy Spirit even after conversion. It is because of their old nature that committed Christians still commit unintentional sins. Growth in the Christian life, then, is focused on minimizing the damage caused by the sin nature in the area of involuntary sin. As McQuilkin puts it, "... much of our behavior falls short of Christ likeness involuntarily and even unconsciously. It is in this area that the normal Christian grows steadily to reflect more and more accurately the likeness of Christ." [53]

### **The Keswick definition of sanctification**

Like most of the theologians in Five Views of Sanctification, McQuilkin defines sanctification as a setting apart for service to God. And, like the others, he says a moral dimension is involved: those who are sanctified are set apart from sin and consecrated to God.

McQuilkin then breaks sanctification down into three main types: positional, experiential, and permanent sanctification. Positional sanctification occurs at conversion and results in our forgiveness, justification in God's eyes and regeneration. The new life of the Spirit indwells the new believer and makes it possible for good to prevail over sin in their lives. This is the sanctification spoken of in Heb. 10:10, Eph. 4:24, and 1 Cor. 1:2; 6:11.

Experiential sanctification is very similar to the reformed idea of progressive sanctification.

McQuilkin defines it as "the outworking of one's official position in daily life."<sup>[54]</sup> When we are given our new bodies and transformed to be like Christ, permanent sanctification occurs. It results in the complete removal of sin..

In parts of his essay, McQuilkin describes sanctification as a process of growth that occurs over time in the life of a Christian (2 Cor. 3:18, Col. 3:10, Eph. 4:15,16, 1 Thes. 4:1,10)<sup>[55]</sup> . But he also believes the process is aided by a crisis experience in which a Christian is profoundly struck by the depth of their sin, made aware of God's provision for victorious living, challenged to commit their whole person to Him, and taught to serve out of the fullness of the Holy Spirit. McQuilkin says, for the backslidden Christian "reentry into normal, supernatural Christian living is through the gate of surrender."<sup>[56]</sup> And he adds, "for such a person, a normal, successful Christian experience is not the product of a gradual process of spiritual development, let alone automatic progress. A decisive turning point is needed."<sup>[57]</sup>

Like the other four views of sanctification, McQuilkin believes sanctification brings about changes in the way we act (1 Cor. 6:9-10) and the way we think (Rom. 12:1,2). The overall effect is that our lives more and more approximates the likeness of Christ.

Ignorance and unbelief: the cause of spiritual failure

More than other the other views we have studied so far, the Keswick view of sanctification seeks to

address the problem of the stumbling or back sliding Christian. According to McQuilkin, spiritual failure results from two main causes: ignorance and unbelief.

Some Christians are ignorant of their ability to live victorious lives. They are not aware of the provisions God has made to enable them to conduct a vibrant walk with Him. Usually, though, struggling Christians are set back by unbelief. According to McQuilkin, unbelief is the root cause of disobedience and lack of faith. Disobedient Christians, for example, often are afraid to trust God because they do not believe what He says. For some, this leads to outward rebellion but most drift away from God through sins of omission and a failure to pursue Him. Christians who lack faith are reluctant to depend on God's power for ministry. Their fundamental unbelief and distrust of God leads them to rely on self in an attempt to attain godliness in their own power.

#### The cure for spiritual failure

Whatever the cause, McQuilkin's solution to a subnormal Christian experience is faith. "Simple faith is the secret."<sup>[58]</sup> Faith is the ultimate answer to the question of sin in the life of the believer. No one can bring about their own sanctification. It is only as we place our faith in God and His resources that a victorious Christian life can result.

McQuilkin defines his simple faith as "a choice to commit all of oneself unconditionally to the person of God, who is revealed in the Bible and witnessed to by the Holy Spirit."<sup>[59]</sup> This is in contrast to "false faith" which occurs when the object of faith is someone or something other than God or when faith is not a commitment of the whole person. The commitment inherent in sanctifying faith is demonstrated by a willingness to step out in obedience to the truth to do God's will. This commitment to do God's will, is, according to McQuilkin, "the most important evidence of faith."<sup>[60]</sup>

Those who continue in deliberate violation of God's will are not exercising faith and for them, no growth is possible. They must first surrender to God and obey him. The need for surrender often results in a crisis in the life of a Christian. Accustomed to living as they see fit, they are forced to decide if they will abandon rebellion and make a decision to wholly commit to Him. This crisis does not arise in the life of every Christian, but from McQuilkin's experience it does more often than not.

## Filling of the Spirit

When someone becomes a Christian, Christ gives them the indwelling presence of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. As a result, a process of change is initiated with a view to the renewal of the person in the image of God. Now, for the first time, they have the ability to choose against sin. With God's power they are able to follow Him. This new power, mediated through the Spirit, is available to Christians through a process called "filling." McQuilkin explores the meaning of the phrase "filling of the Spirit" and advances a definition centered around the concept control:

"Filled with the Spirit is a figurative, poetic expression that refers primarily to the relationship between two persons in which one is in charge." [61]

"(filled with the Spirit) means that the Holy Spirit dominates, has full control, possesses... though the dominion (is) gracious, by invitation only, and does not... override one's personal choice." [62]

McQuilkin is not clear in his essay as to the duration of this experience. He says that the expression filled with the Spirit refers to a "state or condition" and that "we are commanded to be filled continually." [63]

McQuilkin concludes that being filled with the Spirit is the key to living an effective and victorious Christian life. Additionally there may be times of special empowering that go above and beyond normal filling. These special empowerings enable Christians to serve effectively in more challenging situations.

## The means of growth

According to the Keswick view, sanctification is facilitated by the means of growth: prayer, learning the scripture, fellowship and suffering. Each of these avenues are used by God to bring us into conformity with Him. In the midst of suffering, for example, Christians are presented with an opportunity to look to God for the good he can perform and to grow in dependence on Him. McQuilkin also points out that the means of growth should be pursued aggressively and with the realization that God is the one bringing about change.

The impact of the means of growth on individuals varies widely. As a result, Christians should resist



the temptation to measure their own growth in comparison with others and should instead keep before them the example of Christ.

### Summary

Over the years, the Keswick movement has drawn inspiration from leaders of a variety of theological perspectives. For this reason, McQuilkin sees the Keswick view as a mediating position on sanctification that avoids the extremes of some views. He concludes it has a balanced perspective on the Biblical data and much to contribute to the discussion on sanctification.

### Reaction to the Keswick view

Like Wesley, McQuilkin muddies the definition of sin by introducing a distinction between sins that are deliberate those that are "unconscious" or "unwitting". In my reaction to the Wesleyan view, I argued that the New Testament does not make such a distinction.

Assuming a distinction can be made between deliberate and unwitting sin, McQuilkin asserts that sanctification is only concerned with the latter area. He says,

"Growth into more Christlike behavior is in areas of unconscious sin or sins of omission, falling short of Godlike qualities. In deliberate sin, there is no pattern of gradual growth." [65]

For McQuilkin, Christian growth is restricted to improving on godlike qualities that are yet to be fully developed. Christians don't sin less; they become more Godly.

Christlike qualities are an important part of sanctification.

These qualities are the fruit of the spirit.. But the renewal of our new man into Christ's image (Col. 3:10) is not enough. Our old man must also be put off (Eph. 4:22). While character is being developed, sin must also be dealt with. In Gal. 5:16-6:10 Paul portrays Christians engaged in a struggle between the flesh and the Spirit (5:17). Sometimes they lose this struggle and fall into sin (6:1). If this occurs, members of the body should recognize their own vulnerability to temptation and restore the fallen brother (6:2,3). Christians should not lose heart in this war over the flesh; they

should strive to continue doing good (6:9,10). We don't know the nature of the trespass mentioned in verse 1. We are not told whether the act was deliberate or unconscious, ongoing or isolated. We are not given information about the severity of the sin or the nature of the consequences. We are simply told that sinning Christians need to be restored and that everyone should strive to continue doing good. Christian growth is not limited in this passage to the developing Godly qualities. Sin is a reality that must be faced and overcome in the life of a Christian.

Instead of taking the redemptive approach suggested by Paul, McQuilkin says that real Christians "need never - and should never - deliberately violate the known will of God." For McQuilkin, the issue is settled by passages like 1 John 3:4-10. In verse 9, John says, "no one who is born of God practices sin." The implication is that if someone sins deliberately, their salvation should be called into question. I believe this is a misunderstanding of what John is trying to say. Earlier in the same letter (1:8-10), John tells those who say they don't sin that they deceive themselves. In the next chapter (2:1,2), he implies that Christians can and do sin and affirms that Jesus' death covers their sins. John also says those who focus on the hope of their future conformity to Christ "purify themselves" (1 John 3:3).

Using the word purify assumes there is sin in the life of a Christian to be purified from.

What then is the meaning of 1 John 3:4-10? We've seen above that Christians sin, but John seems to rule out the possibility of sin in chapter 3. The problem is resolved when we consider the language John uses and the situation he is addressing.

Language: The present tense of the verbs for sin and repeated use of "practice" in 1 John 3:4,8a, 9a suggest that an ongoing lifestyle of sin is in view..

Situation: Many commentators agree that John's readers faced an early form of Gnostic teaching that promoted throwing off moral restraints. John's warning in 1 John 3:8, "let no one deceive you; the one who practices righteousness is righteous", indicates that he has these teachers primarily in mind. Whether or not Gnosticism, is in view is a discussion for a different time.

When we understand the language and the situation, John becomes clear: false teachers who set themselves up to be Christians betray their true identity by their ongoing sin and disregard for God's will. John is not saying, however, that someone who sins deliberately is not a Christian. That interpretation adds a distinction to the definition of sin that John never makes and it also completely contradicts the tone of 1 John 2:2.

Christian growth, therefore, is a mixture of laying aside our old sinful habits and embracing the positive character qualities God wants to bring about in our lives. The Keswick view misses this balance.

McQuilkin's describes being filled with the Spirit. I agree that this is important for living an effective Christian life but McQuilkin could have said more about how this filling is obtained.

I also found it difficult to determine the importance and nature of a crisis experience that McQuilkin discussed on page 171. He suggests there comes a point in the life of most Christians where they must decisively surrender their own self will and place themselves under the authority of Christ. This crisis experience is a turning point their life and very important to their growth. But we don't hear whether the experience is a one time event or repeated at regular intervals. A single, definitive event seems to be in view.

Certainly, the New Testament narrates important crises in the life of Christians that play a major role in their sanctification. Paul, for example, indicates that on at least two occasions adverse circumstances helped him to gain deeper insight into God. In 2 Cor. 1:8,9 he says, "we had the sentence of death within ourselves in order that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God who raises the dead". And when suffering from his famous "thorn in the flesh", God was able to teach him, "my grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness. (2 Cor. 12)" The call for total surrender to God in passages like Rom. 12:1,2 has no doubt produced a crisis in the life of many Christians. But the New Testament does not urge Christians to seek or to expect life-defining post conversion crisis experiences. These times may come for some, but our challenge is instead to "not lose heart", to "not growing weary" (Gal. 6:9-10) and to "press on" (Phil. 3:12,14) knowing all the

while we are far from perfect (Phil. 3:12-14). Hoekema adds, "I agree... that some, possibly many, Christians need to surrender their wills in total commitment to the Lord sometime after their conversion... I disagree, however that a specific post-conversion crisis experience needs to be programmed into the lives of most Christians"[67]

### **The Augustinian-Dispensational View**

According to John Walvoord, differences in the various approaches to sanctification center mainly on the degree to which a person is transformed after becoming a Christian. Some say at conversion people become a totally new persons. Others argue that vestiges of their old life remain. At the center of the debate is the term "nature" and more specifically "sin nature". Walvoord thinks that differences of opinion could be resolved if these terms were more carefully defined.

In contrast to a substantive use of the word nature[68] , Walvoord's definition of "sin nature" focuses more on a Christian's capacity for or inclination towards sin. This can be seen in Walvoord's definition: "The concept of a sin nature can probably best be summarized as a complex of human attributes that demonstrate a desire and predisposition to sin (*italics mine*)."[69]

Walvoord also discusses the relationship between the sin nature and the terms "flesh" and "old man/new man". He believes that Augustine's concept of the flesh is synonymous with the Biblical use of sin nature. Here the flesh is seen as that which remains in a person following their conversion. Walvoord takes a different approach with old man/new man language used in Colossians 3 and Ephesians 4. He says these terms shouldn't be confused with the sinful and new natures inside a Christian. Old man/new man instead refers to the change of lifestyle that occurs when someone is saved; Christians lay aside their old manner of life and put on the new. Sin nature and new nature, by contrast, refer a state of being and not just a lifestyle. Walvoord points out:

"Once a person is saved, the spiritual state of that person includes a new nature and an old nature... The believer still has an old nature - a complex of attributes with an inclination and disposition to sin; and the new nature... a complex of attributes... (that) incline and dispose the Christian to a new manner of life, one that is holy in the sight of God."[70]

Like proponents of the Reformed view, Augustinian-Dispensationalists affirm a sin nature or sinful tendency exists in the life of every Christian (see Rom. 7:14-25 and Gal. 5:16-17). Because Walvoord maintains that an old nature is still present, he believes that Christians may progress in their sanctification, but they will never be free from sin in this life.

#### Regeneration and the baptism of the Holy Spirit

Walvoord says that two things occur when someone is converted: regeneration and the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Regeneration occurs at the point of conversion, involves the granting of eternal life and the new nature, and moves a Christian from spiritual death to life. It does not, as some suggest, "bring perfection of character or freedom from a sin nature."<sup>[71]</sup> The baptism of the Holy Spirit, spoken of in 1 Corinthians 12:13, is the placement, at the moment of conversion, of someone into the body of Christ. When we are identified with Christ in this way we share in his death, burial, and resurrection (Rom. 6:1-4; Col. 2:12). As a result we can tap into God's power and guidance for our lives. This experience was inaugurated on the day of Pentecost and occurs to anyone the moment they repent and turn to Christ.

#### The indwelling and filling of the Holy Spirit

All Christians, at the point of conversion, are indwelt by the Holy Spirit. The Spirit's indwelling is God's first phase in His plan to conform us to His image. It is also the basis for our sanctification because through the Spirit we receive spiritual gifts and the power to live effective Christian lives. This indwelling ministry of the Holy Spirit is unique to the church age (the period of time following the day of Pentecost) and is qualitatively different than the pre-Pentecost ministry of the Spirit (see John 7:37-39).

While all Christians can be said to be indwelt by the Holy Spirit, not all have been filled by the Spirit. Walvoord defines the filling of the Spirit as "the unhindered ministry of the Holy Spirit in the life of a Christian."<sup>[72]</sup> Unlike baptism of the Holy Spirit, which is a one time event that permanently places us in Christ, filling is a temporary state, an experience that Christians should regularly seek to have. This is implied by the present continuous tense of Ephesians 5:18: "Don't be

drunk with wine, for that is dissipation but be filled (or, "go on being filled") with the Holy Spirit."

When someone is filled with the Spirit they are empowered to carry out the will of God. This is evident from numerous passages that describe the Spirit's filling (examples include Acts 2:4; 4:8,31; 6:3,5; 7:55; 9:17; 11:24). Much like the way alcohol permeates our body and effects the way we act, when someone is filled with the Spirit, the Spirit is in control. Walvoord says being filled by the Spirit "brings for the time being a control of a believer's life by the Holy Spirit and the infusion of spiritual power, enabling a Christian to do far more than he or she could do naturally." [73]

Becoming filled by the Holy Spirit is a matter of yielding oneself wholly over to God. This yielding must occur both in the area of God's revealed will and in accepting the life circumstances that God has placed us in. According to Paul in Romans 6, believers have a choice whether they want to yield themselves to God or to sin. When someone fully places their life under God's control (e.g. Rom. 12:1-2) the Spirit is given free reign to empower them. A good example of this attitude can be seen in Philippians 2:5-11 where Jesus completely submits in obedience to God and places all trust in Him.

When Christians stumble and sin, the indwelling Spirit is grieved (Ephesians 4:30) and is hindered in His ability to minister to them. But there is no danger of loss of salvation; the person still remains indwelt by the Spirit. Instead Christians should confess their sins to God and appropriate the forgiveness that Jesus obtained for them on the cross.

According to Walvoord, living an effective Christian life hinges on cultivating an attitude of continuous dependence on the power of the Spirit to energize us and make us effective for service. When we turn from God and continue in sin, we won't be filled with the Spirit. Instead of power we will experience God's corrective discipline (1 Cor. 11:31-32; Heb. 12:5-6). But if we yield our selves fully to him, he will fill us with the Holy Spirit, and do things through us we could never do on our own.

The resulting experience of progressive sanctification

Christians who put their full trust in God and walk in dependence on the Spirit's power may never attain to God's standard of perfection in this life, but they can expect to steadily grow in

sanctification. The Holy Spirit makes this possible by giving us increasing assurance of our salvation, providing insight into God's will for our lives, helping us to worship and pray, and using us as a channel of His life in our service others. The fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22-23) is evidence that this process is occurring and the result is that "a mighty work for God can be accomplished"[74] in the life of the believer.

#### God and man's role in sanctification

Walvoord maintains that some Calvinists have overemphasized God's sovereignty, not just in relation to conversion but also in their view of sanctification. He claims that this imbalance has had detrimental effect, making some Calvinists reluctant to carry out the great commission. This reluctance, Walvoord says, stems from thinking that minimizes human responsibility (e.g. "If God has elected some to salvation, they will surely be saved regardless of our efforts.")[75] Being a Calvinist himself, Walvoord feels the need to balance an emphasis on God's sovereignty with the awareness that human choices have a critical impact on Christian growth. Walvoord says, "God is the sanctifier... however... people are responsible for responding to the truth of God and to the work of the Holy Spirit. (*italics mine*)"[76]

#### Ultimate perfection

Walvoord says we are destined to eventually be conformed to the image of Christ and perfectly sanctified, regardless of our present shortcomings.

Sanctification in this life is shaped by our choices and will never be complete,

but scripture promises the full removal of sin and imperfection from our lives when we stand before God (Eph. 5:25-27; 1 John 3:2). In light of this, Walvoord concludes that "sanctification is the work of God for human beings rather than our work for him." In the future, we will be conformed to the image of Christ and reflect his Glory. Then all of the credit will go to God.

#### Reaction to the Augustinian-Dispensational view

I agree with Sullivan when he says, I thought his description of how to be filled with the Spirit,

however, focused too narrowly on submission and obedience. Walvoord suggests that total surrender to Christ and avoiding actions that might grieve that spirit are the keys to being filled by the Spirit.

**Some things to consider in developing a view of sanctification.**

*NOTE: I would suggest that from the human responsibility side of sanctification, not walking in the fullness of the Spirit is a Christian quality of life issue.*

Conditional blessings in the temporal realm are affected by how we live for Christ.

Anything that is providentially granted by God's grace as unconditional concerning our sanctification as well as any other aspect of our Christian life can in no way be changed, altered or affected, even by our willful disobedience.

Some practical considerations concerning crisis vs progress-transformation-maturing

1 'Fullness.' The use of the word 'fullness' and 'fully' in connection with this subject is legitimate in reference to a Christian's heritage in Christ. But it is misleading if applied to a man's practical experience. Experience has shown, times without number, that the excesses of those who make claim to 'full sanctification' may be far more dishonoring to Christ than the lack of attainment which they condemn in others.

2 Sinlessness. Christ alone was without sin. Scripture lends no support either to the Roman claim for the sinlessness of the Lord's Mother or to the claim to 'sinless perfection' made by some Christians. 'if we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.' But this is vastly different from saying that the Christian cannot know 'freedom from sin,' both as regards its penalty and its unlawful thralldom in our innermost being. The Christian may, and should, know freedom from 'the habitual practice of sin,' and he can, and should experience victory over besetting sins and over his sinful desires. Constant victory, yes; but inability to sin again, no. Victory over conscious sin is a blessed possibility, but even then there remain 'the secret faults' of which the Psalmist speaks (Ps. xix. 12). The Christian should walk humbly and warily always.



3 'De Congruo.' The mediaeval doctrine with regard to 'meritorious works' has presented itself again in several subtle modern forms. Originally, it was dependent on the view that the essential loss at the Fall was of a supernatural gift and that man's natural powers still enabled him to approach God and to invite grace. That is to say, if a man wills to use his natural powers properly he may become a receptacle for divine grace. The addressing of himself to the task of doing right in itself invites grace (meritum de congruo), and if he uses his will aright he can acquire an habitual gift of grace which may result in merit of a further and higher kind based on divine justice (meritum de condigno). The effect is to make it a consequence that God will eventually justify the man so meriting grace. The Roman Church similarly contends for the value of works anterior to justification. One modern form of this doctrine is widespread. It is argued that it is a man's manner of life and morality which count and not his beliefs. In other words, the criterion is one of conduct and not of faith in Christ. It is even stated in a more positive form: 'Those who do not pretend to religion often live better and more honorable lives than those who habitually go to church.' It is implied that God, therefore, thinks more highly of the former and will overlook their lack of belief. It is forgotten that God's original and chief quarrel with man was, and is, the wrong use of his will rather than his method of living. A first-class morality, to assume for a moment the impossible, if proceeding from rebellious self-will, which refuses to acknowledge God and to receive Christ, can have little intrinsic value to God. To live righteously is what a man ought to do—merely his duty. Motive, as well as the actual mode of life itself, must be taken into consideration.

Some scripture to help us do the work.

#### Definition

- Sanctify comes from the Greek word hagiadzo which means to be set apart or made fit for service (2 Thes. 2:19-22).
- Sanctification has an ethical/moral dimension (1 Thes. 4:3-7). It involves turning away from immorality and towards God (Eph. 4:22-24; Gal. 5:16-6:5)
- Sanctification is spoken of as an accomplished event (1 Cor. 1:30,31; 1 Cor. 6:11; Col. 3:9-10) and as an ongoing process (Eph. 4:15-16,23). We are sanctified in our position in Christ but our condition is

far from perfect. We still sin and won't be perfected until Jesus returns (1 Thes. 5:23-24).

### Sin

- Sin is anything that falls short of glorifying God. (Rom. 3:23; Matt. 5; Rom. 14:23). It is anything, that misrepresents the attributes of who God is. Distinctions between "deliberate" and "unconscious" sins or "willful sins" and "mistakes" are not made in the New Testament.
- No Christian is without sin (1 John 2:2; James 3:2; Phil. 3).
- There is a struggle inside every Christian between the flesh and the Spirit (Gal. 5:17). Sometimes Christians lose this struggle and fall into sin (Gal. 6:1). If this occurs, other Christians should recognize their own vulnerability to temptation and restore the fallen brother (Gal. 6:2,3). Christians should not lose heart in this process, but continue doing good (Gal. 6:9,10).

### Sin nature/ old man

- Christians are new creatures (2 Cor. 5:21) who have been freed from the bondage and the mastery of sin (Rom. 6:6-7).
- The old self is put away when we are put into Christ (Col. 3:9-11; Rom. 6:6), but our habits and ways of thinking still present problems.

We still have our body of sin to reckon with (Eph. 4:22-24; Gal. 5:16-17).

- As a result, in an ongoing way, the present habits of the old self need to be put aside as we learn to act consistently with our new identity in Christ (Eph. 4:22-24).

### Perfection

- Christians will never reach a sinless state on this side of the grave (Phil. 3:12-16; James 3:2; 1 John 1:8-10).

### Process/ Crisis

- Numerous passages teach that sanctification is an ongoing a process (Gal. 3:3; Eph. 4:15-16; 1 Thes. 4:1,10; 2 Peter 1:3-8). During this process the new man is constantly being transformed into Christ's image (2 Cor. 3:18; Eph. 4:23; Col. 3:10) and an increasing understanding of our sinfulness

and the greatness of God's grace is made known. (Eph. 4:22-24; Gal. 5:16-6:5; 1 Thes. 4:3-7).

- Crises that promote growth can and do occur in the life of a Christian (2 Cor. 1:8-11; 2 Cor. 12:1-10). The New Testament nowhere teaches, however, that crises such as surrender (Keswick), entire sanctification (Wesley), or the Baptism of the Holy Spirit are normative experiences that should be sought by Christians. Christians are never urged to seek life-defining post conversion crisis experiences.

- Instead we hear more about not losing heart, not growing weary (Gal. 6:9-10) and pressing on with the acknowledgment we have not become perfect (Phil. 3:12-16; Gal. 5:16-6:10).

#### God's role and Man's role

- God accomplishes our sanctification (1 Thes. 5:24; Phil. 1:6; Hebrews 13:20-21) through the agency of the Holy Spirit (1 Peter 1:2). He causes us to grow and change and we cooperate (Phil. 2:12-13). We pursue our sanctification (1 Tim. 6:11; Heb. 12:14), trust God that we are free from sin (Rom. 6:11) and that he can renew us (Col. 3:1-11), and give ourselves over to the means of grace like : learning the Word of God (1 Peter 2:2), participating in fellowship (Eph. 4:15-16), responding to God's discipline (Heb. 12:11), praying (Rom. 8:26; James 5:16), and giving our lives away to serve others (John 13:17).

#### Maturity

- The Bible does make distinctions between the maturity level of different Christians (Heb. 5:11-14; Gal. 5:13-15; 1 Cor. 2:6). But this distinction is based on knowledge of the Word of God, not on whether or not someone has had an experience such as entire sanctification. We grow in the grace and knowledge of our Christ and the primary means for this is by our study of the Word of God with the Spirit's instruction.

End of Analysis.

**Addendum:**

Understanding the Role of the Holy Spirit in sanctification is a necessity and we will be discussing that throughout our conference.

In attempting to find a more desirable understanding of sanctification from a New Covenant perspective I think it is clear that none of the typical five views as a whole can adequately represent what it is.

There are elements from some of the views that are compatible with a NCT hermeneutic.

My own basic summary of sanctification would be simply stated as:

We are sanctified positionally and transformationally (progressively) not first for service, but for the Glory of God. The church exists to be a display of the glory of God in the present age. All else in the process follows purpose.

The members that make up the body of Christ are caused by the Spirit to do that and because of this we are empowerd/enabled to be what we should be which results in doing what we should do to Glorify Christ.

By various means we can quench the work of the Holy Spirit, temporarily. That can affect our Christian quality of life.

Our service is according to the works that God has ordained for us.

We will be, by the Spirit's work in us, the perfect bride of Christ when he receives us to glory.

The Three Views Concerning Practical Sanctification

Although the book I have used presents 5 Views of Sanctification it seems that in the end there are three views represented that are distinct.

I. Eradication. Some hold that the evil principle of sin is eradicated by the Holy Spirit. Both Scripture and common experience are against this view.

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2. Suppression. Others go to the other extreme and leave man to fight a long and hopeless battle for the mastery of the law of sin. This view does scant justice to the power and function of the Holy Spirit. It is inadequate to account for the claims of some of the New Testament passages (e.g., Rom.vi-viii).

3. Counteraction. The view which seems to be most in accord with Scripture is that through the 'work of the Spirit' sin is no longer inevitable, and the Christian has no legitimate excuse for the habitual practice of sin. He should not make allowance for it, but if he should fall there is a Helper to plead his cause. 'I write unto you that ye sin not, and if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father' (I Jn.2:1).

One purpose of this conference is to address this very issue of the role of the Holy Spirit in the New Covenant Community and once we are done, I am sure that the body of work presented will be helpful for us in our pursuit of a clearer understanding of New Covenant Sanctification.

I would also say that after the hard work of biblical exegesis that there are some writings that can have value for helping to build a foundation for this work.

**Primary Sources for consideration, not necessarily all points.**

Walter Marshall's- Mystery of Gospel Sanctification

David Peterson's Possessed by God

Secondary Sources.

Recent writings by Jerry Bridges who seems to be reworking some of these issues and his previous positions.

The same could be said for Elsyie Fitzpatrick. In her Nouthetic Counseling books she has moved away from the third use of the law and has stressed more of the indicative/imperative relationship found in Scripture.

Articles by John Piper, Doug Moo and D.A. Carson and Shane Becker including his dialogue with Greg Gibson on motivation and obedience which is posted at the website with this and the videos.