

The Versus Series - Part 4

Consecration Vs. Sanctification

“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice (consecration), holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world (consecration), but be transformed by the renewing of your mind (sanctification), that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. —Romans 12:1-2

Consecration and sanctification are closely related synonyms, and are often used interchangeably in Scripture, but there is a subtle difference that is very important. Definitions include “to set apart” (for a special purpose); “to come out from;” “to dedicate.” Both words define the action of setting apart something or someone, as well as ourselves for God’s purposes. The person or object that is “set apart” is then deemed holy and consecrated unto God, for His exclusive use. The subtle difference is this: consecration is something we are called to do as genuine believers; whereas, sanctification is something God accomplishes in us on our behalf.

As a believer, consecration means that we choose to “set part” our whole being, spirit, soul and body. Doing so certainly includes our thoughts and actions, but it also means that we consecrate all that we have and will ever have. We set apart for God’s purposes our time, talents and treasure, which includes our dreams, plans and desires. We offer the entirety of our lives to God even our possessions, family, work and hobbies. This may seem like too much to ask. But please realize that the call to consecration is not a suggestion or a casual proposal. Consider the command and the attached promise in 2 Corinthians 6:17-18 that follows God’s directive to separate ourselves. *“‘Come out from among them and be separate,’ says the Lord. ‘Do not touch what is unclean, and I will receive you. I will be a Father to you, and you shall be My sons and daughters,’ says the Lord Almighty.”*

Why would God want us to cooperate with Him to become separate and set apart from the things of this world? Does it sound like He wants to spoil all our fun? No! and here’s why: God loves you and wants to free you from counterfeits—counterfeit thoughts, vain imaginations, false beliefs, and deceitful philosophies. Counterfeits, by definition, are meant to deceive—*deceptions imprison*. This is what Jesus meant by this statement. *“Whom the Son sets free, is free indeed.”* Jesus clearly states that He gave His life to set us free from sin and death.

So, what is sin and death if not the end result of pursuing counterfeits?—the wages of sin is death. Jesus’ statement means that He came to set us free from counterfeits!

We all know that there are counterfeits out there that promise to satisfy our longing for the real thing. No one wants to be deceived and end up with a phony or a fake. The Bible tells us that God desires that we experience the genuine life He came to give us—the “real deal.” Jesus offers His *Zoe* Life, described in Scripture as abundant life, eternal life, a joy-filled life, and a mind that is free from guilt, shame, condemnation, and even mental torment.

Charles Spurgeon says it this way,

Consecration—“Jesus would have His people ‘go forth outside the camp’ for their own sanctification. You cannot grow in grace to any high degree while you are conformed to the world. The life of separation may be a path of sorrow, but it is the highway of safety. And though the separated life may seem to cost you, yet it is a happy life after all.”

Sanctification—“The blood of Christ is ‘precious’ also in its sanctifying influence. The same blood which justifies by taking away sin, does also in its after-action. We who are in Christ are quickened with a new nature which is led onward to subdue sin and to follow out

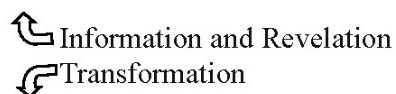
the commands of God. There is no motive for holiness so great as that which streams from the veins of Jesus.”

When we give our all to God in human terms, He will supernaturally set us apart through the process of sanctification. When He does, He includes a spiritual blessing that is more than we can ever think or ask, as only He can give. This voluntary submission is a picture of our partnership with God, and is another aspect of the Great Exchange we learned about earlier. The downside comes when we holdback those things we should set apart for Him. When we are tight-fisted or just stubborn, we “tie His hands,” preventing the blessing He has in store for us. This means that by refusing to separate ourselves, we can forgo God’s promise to “rebuke the devourer” on our behalf, as well as our ability to overcome Satan’s attempts to steal, kill and destroy in our lives. The Apostle James tells us how important submission and obedience is, “...submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw near to God and He will draw near to you.” Moreover, if we are not set apart, we severely limit the sincerity of our fellowship with God and the depth of intimate communion with Him.

We are in partnership with God. He is always asking us to cooperate with Him so He can bring us closer to Him in divine fellowship. No matter the context that He uses to draw us higher to Him, we must choose to act in faith to receive His provision. For instance, it takes great faith to “come out from the world,” but in doing so, we please God. Our obedience, frees God to bring, or establish, His overcoming Life and eternal purposes to our lives. Joshua 3:5 says it this way, “*Joshua told the people, ‘Consecrate yourselves, for tomorrow the LORD will do amazing things among you.’*”

In Summary. Consecration means that we make a conscious decision (action) to set ourselves apart for God’s purposes; whereas, sanctification defines how God sets us apart through a supernatural process that occurs after we surrender to Jesus and are born again—*sanctification follows justification*. Therefore, consecration and sanctification begin when we surrender to Jesus and start our new life in Him as babies in the faith. As with any new birth, there is a destiny written by God on the soul of that person. Consecration is the means by which we allow God to work in our lives to accomplish His will, His plans and purposes for us—our destiny. We must make a deliberate, sincere and serious decision to acknowledge that it all comes from Him. For that reason, we offer (set apart) it all to Him to use for His purposes and for His glory.

You may do this imperfectly and it may take time, but God looks graciously upon the heart. Surrender allows Him to lead you and guide through His life long plan of sanctification. God’s desire is for you to come up higher, ever higher, even into His presence. —Ω



Heavenly Father, thank You for drawing me into a relationship with You. Your love covers me—I am safe! LORD, I choose to present my body as a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to You, which is my reasonable service. I surrender my whole being to You to set me apart for Your purposes—do in me as You please. Help me come out from the world and be separate for I want to be called Your son/daughter. LORD, deliver me from counterfeits and the deception of vain imaginations, false beliefs and deceitful philosophies, for You have not given me a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind. I agree with Mr. Spurgeon and declare that “The blood of Christ is ‘precious’ in its sanctifying influence. The same blood which justifies by taking away sin, does also in its after-action.” LORD, help me submit so I can participate in the Great Exchange that takes my sin and weakness and gives me Your righteousness, strength and courage and the power to overcome Satan and His death-shrouded plans that he has for me. LORD, it is You I want, and all Your goodness, mercy and grace that You have instore for me as Your child. I am Yours, and You are mine in Jesus’ precious name. Amen.

“Let’s Make Disciples Together!”