

2. SANCTIFIED IN CHRIST JESUS: 1 Corinthians 1:1-3

by Brett Baggett on Sunday, July 11th, 2021

INTRO

- In Paul's introduction to his letter to the church at Corinth, he answers three of the most important questions you or I could ask:
I) What does it mean to be a Christian? II) How do I know if I am a Christian? III) What is promised to me if I am a Christian?

BIG IDEA: The benefits and assurance of being a Christian. But first, let's ask this: Who wrote this letter and why must we listen?

WHO WROTE THIS LETTER AND WHY MUST YOU LISTEN? (v. 1)

1 Corinthians 1:1 "Paul, called by the will of God to be an apostle of Christ Jesus, and our brother Sosthenes,"

- **1 Thessalonians 2:13** "And we also thank God constantly for this, that when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men but as what it really is, the word of God, which is at work in you believers."

CHILDREN: What if Jesus sent you a letter and said He was going to come over for dinner because He wanted to talk to you?

Q. Do you receive the words of Jesus' Prophets & Apostles for what they really are, the word of God? From Genesis to Revelation, God is speaking!

WHO RECEIVED THIS LETTER AND WHAT WERE THEY LIKE? (v. 2a)

1 Corinthians 1:2a "To the church of God that is in Corinth,"

I. WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A CHRISTIAN? (v. 2b)

1 Corinthians 1:2b "to those sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints"

I) To be a Christian means that you have been "sanctified in Christ Jesus."

- Now, there are at least *THREE WAYS* God says in His Word that Christians are "sanctified."

I) If you are a Christian, you have been sanctified through being **MADE HOLY** by God with the righteousness of Jesus!

- **1 Corinthians 6:9-11** "9 Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor [effeminate, nor homosexuals], 10 nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. 11 And such were some of you. **But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ** and by the Spirit of our God."

- **There is good news for the unrighteous who flee to Christ Jesus for mercy!** Even though He never sinned, He suffered and died to pay the penalty for sin, so that everyone who trusts in Him will be both forgiven and counted righteous before God!

CHILDREN: If you are a Christian, God the Father says to you the same thing that He said to Jesus when Jesus was baptized. Do you remember?

- "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased." (**Mark 1:11**)
- Christ is able to carry a mountain of sin and throw it into the ocean of forgetfulness!
- Christ is willing to scrub away all of your filthy guilt and give you His clothes, bright and undefiled!
- Christ is willing & able to count you righteous with His righteousness and be condemned with your condemnation! That is why He lived/died!
- **This is why the writer says in Hebrews 10:10** "we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all."
- You can try to carry the mountainous hoard of your sins to the sea but you will be crushed under its weight and perish forever!
- You can try to clean your sins off by good works but you will only stain your soul more—the blood of Christ & faith in Him only can wash you!

Q. Have you been made holy by God with the righteousness of Christ or are you still trusting in your own works to justify you before God?

II) If you are a Christian, you have been sanctified by being **SET APART** by God Himself for holy service to Him!

- **This is what Jesus prays what He does in John 17:17-19:** "17 Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. 18 As you [Father] sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. 19 And for their sake I sanctify myself, that they also may be sanctified in truth."
- The priests were set apart in the Old Covenant to serve God in His temple, but now, in Christ, we are a kingdom of priests, serving Him in the home, the church, and the world for His glory!
- Priests under the Old Covenant were set apart for service to God *IN* the LORD's temple; Saints under the New Covenant are set apart for service to God *AS* the Lord's Temple!
- **1 Corinthians 6:19-20** "Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body."

- **If you are in Christ, you are FAR FROM ORDINARY!** God Himself has purchased you and taken up residence in you. You are set apart to glorify and enjoy Him! **You are set apart for holy service to God in the church, in your home, in your work, in society!**

Q. Believer, how can you best glorify and enjoy Christ in every sphere of your life, seeing that you are set apart to serve Him?

Q. Believer, do you live as if you are ordinary? You are not! **Q.** Unbeliever, do you live as if you are extraordinary? You are not! But you can be.

III) If you are a Christian, you are being "sanctified" through being **TRANSFORMED** by God the Holy Spirit to be more holy in your thoughts, affections, and actions! *Progressive sanctification; most commonly talked about*

- **This is what the Apostle Peter calls,** "the sanctification of the Spirit" in **1 Peter 1:2.**
- **Q. What is sanctification?** The Baptist Catechism asks in question 39. And the answer is,
A. Sanctification is a work of God's free grace whereby we are renewed in the whole man after the image of God, and are enabled more and more to die unto sin, and live unto righteousness.
- **Phil. 2:12-13** "work out your own salvation with fear & trembling, for it is God who works in you, both to will & to work for his good pleasure."

CHILDREN: If you are a Christian, God has promised to keep changing you so that you become more like Jesus. And you are to work hard!

- Q. Are you passive or inactive in your life, because you see that God is the one that sanctifies? You need to look at verse 12 in Phil. 2.
- Q. Are you trusting in your own efforts to sanctify you, because you see that you are to work out your own salvation? You need to look at v.13 in Phil.2.

II) Therefore, to be a Christian means you have received a new identity and are now a “saint.”

- **Despite many errors and sins that needed to be repented of, Paul still addresses the Corinthians as “saints” (1:2)** and continually reminds them of the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ, whereby they were cleansed from the guilt and stain of sin (6:11). First Corinthians helps us remember a crucial truth that Richard Sibbes was fond of saying: “there is more grace in Christ than sin in you.”

II. HOW DO I KNOW IF I AM A CHRISTIAN? (v. 2c)

1 Corinthians 1:2c “together with all those who in every place call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, both their Lord and ours.”

I) A Christian calls upon the name of the Lord Jesus Christ for mercy!

- **Like the tax collector in Luke 18:11-13.** “**11** The Pharisee, standing by himself, prayed thus: ‘God, I thank you that I am not like other men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. **12** I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I get.’ **13** But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, ‘God, be merciful to me, [the] sinner!’”
- **Q.** Which are you?

II) A Christian submits to Jesus as Lord!

- **Like Jesus says in John 14:15.** “If you love me, you will keep my commandments.”
- **Q.** How do I know if I am submitting to Christ as my Lord? For one, you listen to & obey His apostles when they speak on His behalf (cf.v1).

III. WHAT IS PROMISED TO ME IF I AM A CHRISTIAN? (v. 3)

1 Corinthians 1:3 “Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.”

I) If you are in Christ, you are promised *GRACE* from God our Father & the Lord Jesus Christ!

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II) If you are in Christ, you are promised *PEACE* from God our Father & the Lord Jesus Christ!

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Never forget, beloved, that, in Christ, you and I get God’s grace and peace because on the cross Jesus got God’s justice and condemnation for our sin!