

**Colossians 2:16-17** - 16 Therefore let no one act as your judge in regard to food or drink or in respect to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath day — 17 **things which are a mere shadow of what is to come; but the substance belongs to Christ.** NASB

The New testament then is the account of how Jesus the Christ did come and actually bring the fulfillment of all of the promises of God to save His chosen people from the bondage of sin and its destructive consequences of wrath and death. Now we read of the realities of Salvation which **“have been”** accomplished already by Christ, and we now eagerly await the fulfillment of all that He has worked as the stages of that Salvation are being brought to pass in time and space which will all culminate in the eternal state. This will happen when Jesus returns and brings all earthly rule and power under His dominion and destroys all His enemies, including death itself.

**1 Corinthians 15:22-26** - 22 For as in Adam all die, so also **in Christ all shall be made alive.** 23 **But each in his own order:** Christ the first fruits, after that those who are Christ's at His coming, 24 then *comes* the end, when He delivers up the kingdom to the God and Father, when He has abolished all rule and all authority and power. 25 **For He must reign until He has put all His enemies under His feet.** 26 **The last enemy that will be abolished is death.** NASB

We are now in that stage of fulfillment where we eagerly await His second coming. During these **“last days”** (*gk. eschaton*), this Salvation is now being applied by the ministry of the Holy Spirit to all the elect people of God, during **“this age,”** as we await the future fulfillment of **“the age to come”** when Christ will consummate the ages.

## Sanctification

It is no small thing that God has **“sanctified”** those who are in Christ. Indeed for those who have come to Him, they are reckoned as **“holy and without blemish”** in **POSITION** before God. ***The sacrifice of Christ has completely covered over the sin of His people and His sinless life of perfect righteousness has been imputed to their account.*** Christ Jesus is a perfect priest who accomplished a perfect mediation between God and man. We can have confidence and assurance before God because of what Christ has done. Jesus has merited for us eternal salvation by His broken body and shed blood. The debt of our sins has been paid in full (redemption), our guilt has been removed (expiated), and the wrath of God on our behalf has been satisfied (propitiated).

**Hebrews 10:10, 14** - 10 By this will **we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.**.... 14 For by one offering **He has perfected for all time those who are sanctified.** NASB

**1 Corinthians 1:30-31** - 30 But by His doing you are in Christ Jesus, **who became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption,** 31 that, just as it is written, "Let him who boasts, boast in the Lord." NASB

**Colossians 1:21-22** - 22 But now he has reconciled you **by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation-** NASB

**1 Corinthians 6:11** - 11 And such were some of you; **but you were washed, but you were sanctified,** but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and in the Spirit of our God. NASB

Indeed it is true that Christ Jesus died to sanctify and cleanse us from our sins and that through Him we have been justified (declared righteous). ***Although we have been sanctified in POSITION before God, the Lord is actively sanctifying us in our conduct and PRACTICE.*** The work of salvation is continuing in those of us who are actually being saved. God is the *primary* agent in this process. We as humans are no more capable of sanctifying ourselves as we are of saving ourselves. Without the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives, we would be powerless against temptation and sin, continuing to trample the grace of God under our feet. This practical aspect of salvation will not be completed until the resurrection of our bodies.

**Philippians 1:6** - 6 *For I am confident of this very thing,* **that He who began a good work in you will perfect it** until the day of Christ Jesus. NASB

**John 17:17,19** - 17 **"Sanctify them in the truth;** Thy word is truth....19 **"And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they themselves also may be sanctified in truth.** NASB

1 Thessalonians 5:23-24 - 23 Now **may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely**; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. 24 **Faithful is He who calls you, and He also will bring it to pass.** NASB

1 Corinthians 1:7-8 - 7 so that you are not lacking in any gift, awaiting eagerly the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ, 8 **who shall also confirm you to the end, blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.** NASB

Although it true that in Christ we have been justified (declared righteous), and also that God is the One who continues to sanctify us by His Spirit, nevertheless we are commanded to pursue righteousness and holiness in our conduct. We are admonished again and again to be holy and to purify ourselves by remaining in repentance. This is the practical aspect of salvation. We are to pursue Christ in our behavior and to bring honor to His name by our holy and righteous conduct. ***Therefore, sanctification is a progressive work of God in which we cooperate with God to become free from the practice of sin and progressively practice righteousness in our conduct.*** In this sense, sanctification is the work of God and the work of the believer.

Leviticus 20:26 - 26 Thus **you are to be holy to Me, for I the LORD am holy**; and I have set you apart from the peoples to be Mine. NASB

2 Corinthians 7:1 - Therefore, having these promises, beloved, **let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.** NASB

1 Thessalonians 4:3-8 - 3 For **this is the will of God, your sanctification; that is, that you abstain from sexual immorality; 4 that each of you know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor,** 5 not in lustful passion, like the Gentiles who do not know God; 6 *and* that no man transgress and defraud his brother in the matter because the Lord is *the* avenger in all these things, just as we also told you before and solemnly warned you. 7 **For God has not called us for the purpose of impurity, but in sanctification.** 8 Consequently, he who rejects *this* is not rejecting man but the God who gives His Holy Spirit to you. NASB

2 Peter 1:5-10 - 5 Now for this very reason also, **applying all diligence, in your faith supply** moral excellence, and in *your* moral excellence, knowledge; 6 and in *your* knowledge, self-control, and in *your* self-control, perseverance, and in *your* perseverance, godliness; 7 and in *your* godliness, brotherly kindness, and in *your* brotherly kindness, love. 8 **For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they render you neither useless nor unfruitful in the true knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.** 9 For he who lacks these *qualities* is blind *or* short-sighted, having forgotten *his* purification from his former sins. 10 Therefore, brethren, be **all the more diligent to make certain about His calling and choosing you**; for as long as you practice these things, you will never stumble; NASB

2 Peter 3:14 - 14 Therefore, beloved, since you look for these things, **be diligent to be found by Him in peace, spotless and blameless.** NASB

1 John 3:3 - 3 And everyone who has this hope *fixed* on Him **purifies himself, just as He is pure.** NASB

Further, this progressive work of sanctification begins at regeneration (the moment in time when we were born again), and increases throughout our lives so that there is a decreasing practice of sinful conduct and an increasing practice of righteous conduct. We are being transformed progressively into the character and likeness (image) of Christ Jesus.

2 Corinthians 3:18 - 18 But we all, with unveiled face beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, **are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory,** just as from the Lord, the Spirit. NASB

Romans 6:19 - 19 I am speaking in human terms because of the weakness of your flesh. For **just as you presented your members as slaves to impurity and to lawlessness, resulting in further lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness, resulting in sanctification.** NASB

Romans 8:29 - 29 For **whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son,** that He might be the first-born among many brethren; NASB

Colossians 3:9-10 - 9 Do not lie to one another, since you laid aside the old self with its *evil* practices, 10 and have put on **the new self who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him** NASB

This progressive sanctification continues until death, or the resurrection (whichever happens first). At that time we will be resurrected into a completed and glorified body which is no longer subject to the corruption of sin. This is called "***Glorification.***" Sanctification continues until we die at which time we are glorified.