

*Redemption
Accomplished
and Applied*

by John Murray

Fifteenth Lecture

Presented by Dr. Richard Spencer

Review

- Here is Murray's order of the events in the application of redemption:
 1. Effectual calling
 2. Regeneration
 3. Faith and Repentance
 4. Justification
 5. Adoption
 6. Sanctification
 7. Perseverance
 8. Union with Christ
 9. Glorification

Westminster Shorter Catechism

Q. 35. What is sanctification?

A. Sanctification is the 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.

What Does the Bible Say?

those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. Rom 8:29

And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory 2 Cor 3:18

we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. 1 John 3:2

- God's purpose for us is to conform us to the image of Christ and of the Father, to make us holy and fit for heaven

The Antecedents of Sanctification

- In the order of application of redemption, it is calling and regeneration that are the functional antecedents of sanctification
 - In calling, God unites us to Christ through faith, which delivers us from the power of sin
 - In regeneration, God makes us new creations, which delivers us from the defilement of sin
- Murray states,
Sanctification is a work of God in us, and calling and regeneration are acts of God which have their immediate effects in us.

Definitive Sanctification

- Murray does not use the phrase definitive sanctification in *Redemption Accomplished and Applied*, but the idea is present there and he uses the phrase in his later writings
 - When we respond to the effectual call in repentance and faith, we are united to Christ and, immediately, partake of the “*virtue of his death and the power of his resurrection*” RA&A, pg 142
 - When we are regenerated we are immediately indwelt by the Holy Spirit and are, from that point on, led by him (Jn 16:13, Rom 8:14)

Union With Christ

- Union with Christ yields immediate change:
We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. ... our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be done away with ... , that we should no longer be slaves to sin—because anyone who has died has been freed from sin. ... Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body ... but rather offer yourselves to God, as those who have been brought from death to life

Rom 6:4-7, 12-13

Indwelt by the Holy Spirit

- Murray writes,
The Holy Spirit is the controlling and directing agent in every regenerate person. Hence the fundamental principle, the governing disposition, the prevailing character of every regenerate person is holiness – he is “Spiritual” and he delights in the law of the Lord RA&A, pg 142
- By saying that regenerate people are “Spiritual”, Murray is referring to the passage in 1 Corinthians ...

Indwelt by the Holy Spirit

The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned. The spiritual man makes judgments about all things

1 Cor 2:14-15

- Paul also writes about the Spirit's relationship with a Christian in Romans 8

if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live, because those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.

Romans 8:13-14

Indwelt by the Holy Spirit

- Murray goes on to say,

This [i.e., that he is led by the Holy Spirit] must be the sense in which John speaks of the regenerate person as not doing sin and as unable to sin (1 John 3:9, 5:18). It is not that he is sinless (cf. 1 John 1:8; 2:1).

RA&A, pg 142

No one who is born of God will continue to sin, because God's seed remains in him; he cannot go on sinning, because he has been born of God.

1 John 3:9

If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.

1 John 1:8

Definitive Sanctification

- Murray summarizes:

An all-important consideration derived from the priority of calling and regeneration is that sin is dethroned in every person who is effectually called and regenerated. ... Respecting this freedom from the dominion of sin, this victory over the power of sin, it is likewise to be recognized that it is not achieved by a process, nor by our striving or working to that end. It is achieved once for all by union with Christ and the regenerating grace of the Holy Spirit.

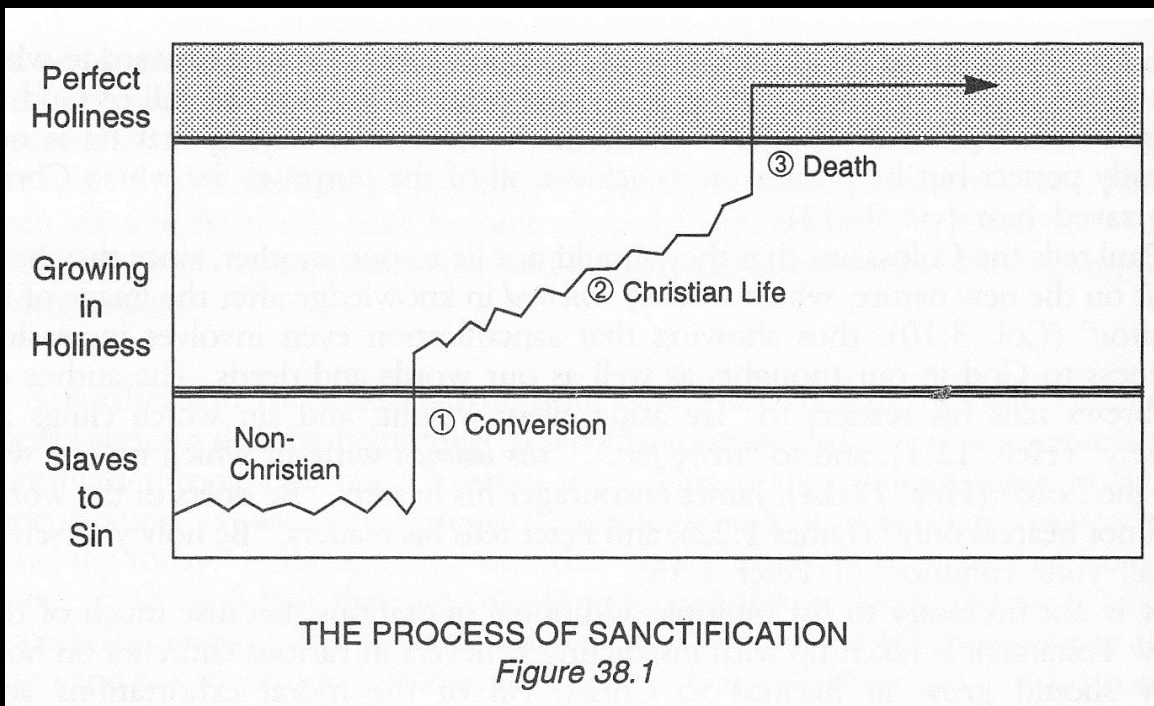
RA&A, pp 141, 142-143

Definitive Sanctification

- This sanctification that is “*not achieved by a process*” but “*is achieved once for all*” is definitive sanctification
- Murray wrote (after RA&A)
in the New Testament the most characteristic terms that refer to sanctification are used, not of a process, but of a once-for-all definitive act.
Collected Writings of John Murray, Vol. 2, pg 277
- But, there is also a sense in which we are being sanctified – that is progressive sanctification

Picture of Sanctification

- Wayne Grudem gives a figure that may be useful to understand sanctification



Conversion
includes
definitive
sanctification

Death includes
glorification

Progressive Sanctification

- Murray considers the topic of sanctification (which is really progressive sanctification) under three headings:
 - The concern (i.e., the goal) of sanctification
 - The agent of sanctification
 - The means of sanctification

The Goal of Sanctification

- In his later works on this topic, Murray emphasizes that the ultimate goal of sanctification, as with all of God's works, is his own glory:

he predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will—to the praise of his glorious grace

Eph 1:5-6 (see also vv 12 & 14)

Paul prayed that they may be *filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ—to the glory and praise of God.*

Phil 1:11

The Ultimate Goal: God's Glory

- That God's glory is the ultimate goal allows us to understand at least two things that might otherwise be impossible to grasp:
 - How can the full disclosure of all my sins comport with my own eternal bliss?
(e.g., Ps 90:8, Matt 10:26, 1 Cor 4:5)
 - How can I be happy in heaven knowing that people I cared for are in hell?
(e.g., Matt 25:46, Luke 12:5, 16:23)
- Murray answers these two questions ...

Murray Answers

- How can the full disclosure of all my sins comport with my own eternal bliss?

God 'will judge the world with righteousness, and the people with his truth' (Psalm 96:13). How could the people of God contemplate with delight an eternity that would leave anything at loose ends? ... The bliss of heaven is not constituted by forgetting sin, but by glorying in the redemption that washed from sin and made us white in the blood of the Lamb.

The Collected Writings of John Murray, Vol. 2, pp 313-314

Murray Answers

- How can I be happy in heaven knowing that people I cared for are in hell?

The damnation of the reprobate will redound to the glory of God, and no speck of stain will attach to God's action. It will redound to the glory of his justice and power.

The Collected Writings of John Murray, Vol. 2, pg 314

- We will rejoice in God's justice and his receiving the glory due his holy name

we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. Rom 5:2

God's Glory Tied to Our Glory

- Finally, in regard to God's glory, it is an astounding fact that God's glory is tied to the glory of his adopted children

those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. Rom 8:29

- In order for Jesus to be the firstborn of many, he must have many brothers, and they must be holy and glorious to be his brothers!

The Goal of Sanctification

- The secondary goal of sanctification is *the glorification of the believer and ... the whole body of the elect.*

The Collected Writings of John Murray, Vol. 2, pg 315

- We make a grievous error if we have a strictly personal view of sanctification; I cannot learn to be humble, to love, to serve, to be patient, to grieve with others, to rejoice with others, or to use my gifts for the benefit of others, and I cannot profit from accountability and rebuke, if I function as a lone-ranger Christian (more next time)

What Does the Bible Say?

we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory

2 Cor 3:18

In bringing many sons to glory, it was fitting that God, for whom and through whom everything exists, should make the author of their salvation perfect through suffering.

Heb 12:28

The Secondary Goal: Our Glory

- Since we are made in God's image, and the purpose of creation is to make God's glory manifest, it makes sense that he will also glorify us; Murray notes

likeness to God is the ultimate pattern of sanctification. ... man is made in the image of God and nothing less than the image of God can define the restoration which redemption contemplates.

The Collected Writings of John Murray, Vol. 2, pg 306

The Secondary Goal: Our Glory

- Beware of a very serious error!
- We are being transformed into the likeness of Christ, and we were created in the image of God; but Satan lied when he said that we could “be like God”

it must not be thought that likeness to God is absolute. There is a sense in which to aspire after likeness to God is the epitome of iniquity. ... There is one lawgiver. This belongs to the uniqueness in respect of which the attempt to be like God is blasphemy

Ibid, pp 306-307

The Secondary Goal: Our Glory

- There is much work necessary for us to be conformed to the image of Christ because Christians still have sin in them

If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.

1 John 1:8

- Paul's admonitions in Romans 6 would be unnecessary if our sin was removed, e.g.,

do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires.

Rom 6:12

The Secondary Goal: Our Glory

- Murray writes,

the condition of the believer in this life ... is one of progression, a progression both negative and positive in character; it embraces both mortification and sanctification.

The Collected Writings of John Murray, Vol. 2, pg 295

Mortification

if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live

Romans 8:13

Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry.

Col 3:5

Mortification

- Murray also writes,

Nothing less than the complete eradication of this sinfulness is compatible with the destination of the believer, namely, conformity to the image of God's Son. ... It is not only to the image of Christ that they are to be conformed, but also to that of the Father. Jesus himself said "Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect. (Matt. 5:48)"

The Collected Writings of John Murray, Vol. 2, pg 296

Sanctification

- Murray writes,

It is not only the cleansing from sin, however, that sanctification as a process involves. The eradication of sin would not of itself constitute the goal. It is eloquent of something more positive, that Paul should have added in 2 Corinthians 7:1 the words, 'perfecting holiness in the fear of God'.

The Collected Writings of John Murray, Vol. 2, pg 297

What Does the Bible Say?

Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness? ... As God has said: "I will live with them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they will be my people. Therefore come out from them and be separate, says the Lord. Touch no unclean thing, and I will receive you. I will be a Father to you, and you will be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty." Since we have these promises, dear friends, let us purify ourselves from everything that contaminates body and spirit, perfecting holiness out of reverence for God.

2 Cor 6:14, 16-18, 7:1

The Goal of Sanctification

- Murray makes three points with regard to the goal of sanctification:
 - Sin is a contradiction of God's holiness
 - Sin produces conflict in the inner being of a true Christian
 - Remaining sin is not reigning sin
- We will add a fourth point from his later writings: the communal, or corporate, nature of sanctification

Sin is a Contradiction of God's Holiness

- Christians are God's children and when we sin it is a contradiction of his holiness

Sin does not change its character as sin because the person in whom it dwells and by whom it is committed is a believer.

RA&A, pg 144

- It is true that “*there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus*” (Rom 8:1), but our sin still deserves wrath and evokes God's displeasure; so do not minimize sin

What Does the Bible Say?

My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have one who speaks to the Father in our defense—Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. ... everything in the world—the cravings of sinful man, the lust of his eyes and the boasting of what he has and does—comes not from the Father but from the world. 1 John 2:1, 16

Everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as he is pure. 1 John 3:3

- John's point is clear; we must work hard to put all sin to death, but don't despair, we have an advocate

The Secondary Goal of Sanctification

- Murray makes three points with regard to the secondary goal of sanctification:
 - Sin is a contradiction of God's holiness
 - Sin produces conflict in the inner being of a true Christian
 - Remaining sin is not reigning sin
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Sin Produces Inner Conflict

- Whenever we see God properly it should illicit the same response Job had:
My ears had heard of you but now my eyes have seen you. Therefore I despise myself and repent in dust and ashes. Job 42:5-6
- Because we must work daily to put sin to death and put on the new man, there will necessarily be conflict
- Healthy salmon swim upstream to get home; it is only when they are dying that they float lazily downstream: struggle is good!

What Does the Word Say?

You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; to be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness. Eph 4:22-24

And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit. 2 Cor 3:18

Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Rom 12:2

Application

- We must take very seriously the biblical admonition to work out our salvation; ask yourself, “Am I doing better today than I was last year?”

– Meditate on Paul’s admonition:

Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed—not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence—continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose.

Phil 2:12-13

To Prepare for Next Session

- You should review, or read if you haven't already, Chapter 7 of Part II (Sanctification)
- You should read Paul's letter to the Ephesians