

*Redemption
Accomplished
and Applied*

by John Murray

Sixteenth 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

Review

- We discussed the fact that in the order of application of Redemption, calling and regeneration are the functional antecedents of sanctification; that is, they provide the foundation for sanctification
- We discussed definitive sanctification; there is a significant sense in which we *have been sanctified* if we are born again
- But, there is also a need for progressive sanctification; we must work daily to put off the old and put on the new

Review: Progressive Sanctification

- Murray considers the topic under three headings:
 - The concern (i.e., the goal) of sanctification
 - First goal: the glory of God
 - Second goal: our glory
 - The agent of sanctification
 - The means of sanctification

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
- We will add a fourth point from his later writings: the communal, or corporate, nature of sanctification

Remaining Sin is Not Reigning Sin

- Paul uses simple, but profound logic to make the point that although a Christian still has a sinful nature, it no longer rules his life
- He bases his imperatives (commands to not sin) on indicatives (statements of fact)
- Examine his argument in Romans 6 ...

What Does the Bible Say?

We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? 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.

Romans 6:2-4

- Note the radical, unequivocal metaphors – we *died*, we were *buried* – these are indicatives
- Note the purpose – that we may live a new life – which leads to the imperatives ...

What Does the Bible Say?

Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires. Do not offer the parts of your body to sin, as instruments of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God, as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer the parts of your body to him as instruments of righteousness.

Romans 6:12-13

- Now note our responsibility – we must live this new life, which means two things:
 - First, we do not let sin reign
 - Second, we serve God

What Does the Bible Say?

- We are saved by grace alone, through faith alone, and *not by works*
- But, if we are truly saved, we *will have good works*

every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit. Matt 7:17-18

Make a tree good and its fruit will be good, or make a tree bad and its fruit will be bad, for a tree is recognized by its fruit. Matt 12:33

Good Works are Necessary

- There are many verses that show good works are necessary as proof of our having been born again; for example,

we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

Eph 2:10

Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.

Matt 28:19-20

Good Works are Necessary

Jesus said, *If you love me, you will obey what I command. ... Whoever has my commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves me. He who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love him and show myself to him.*

John 14:15, 21

[God] *will render to each one according to his works*

Romans 2:6 (ESV)

P.G. Mathew commented on this verse: *“Either we produce good works, evidencing our justification by faith, or we produce dead works, demonstrating our unbelief, stubbornness, unrepentance, and enmity against God.”*

Commentary on Romans, Vol. 1, pg 76

Good Works are Necessary

We know that we have come to know him if we obey his commands. The man who says, "I know him," but does not do what he commands is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But if anyone obeys his word, God's love is truly made complete in him. This is how we know we are in him: Whoever claims to live in him must walk as Jesus did.

1 John 2:3-6

Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory! For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready. Fine linen, bright and clean, was given her to wear." (Fine linen stands for the righteous acts of the saints.)

Revelation 19:7-8

Good Works are Necessary

- Proper Christian obedience, however, is not rendered for the purpose of gaining a reward
- First, it must be from the heart

Jesus said, *If you love me, you will obey what I command.*

John 14:15

Jesus replied: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments."

Matt 22:36-40

Good Works are Necessary

- Second, we must obey to please and glorify God, honor Christ, advance his kingdom and benefit our neighbor (e.g., examine Gal 1:10, Col 1:10, 1 Th 2:3-4, Eph 4:1-3, 11-16)

As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. Eph 4:1

- Third, we must obey God's standard
teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.

Matt 28:20

These three points are based on a theological article in the NIV Spirit of the Reformation Study Bible, Zondervan, 2003, pg 1828

Good Works are According to Law

- Many professing Christians reject the idea that the law of God has any role to play in their lives – they think law keeping is strictly Old Testament; but Christ himself extended the moral law, rather than abolishing it

The Puritan Samuel Bolton wrote: *“The law sends us to the gospel for our justification; the gospel sends us to the law to frame our way of life.”*

In The True Bounds of Christian Freedom,
Ch. 2, Application, ii

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- We will add a fourth point from his later writings: the communal, or corporate, nature of sanctification - Let's examine Eph 4:11-16

It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming. Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ. From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work. Eph 4:11-16

The Fullness of Christ

- What does “*the fullness of Christ*” mean?
- Murray notes that

This expression concerns not only the goal of the sanctifying process; it is also germane to the process itself.

The Collected Writings of John Murray, Vol. 2, pg 300

The Fullness of Christ

- After a lengthy discussion Murray concludes *the church is the fulness of Christ, because to the church as the body of Christ is being imparted the fulness that is in Christ. The church is the recipient of that fulness of righteousness, wisdom, knowledge, power, grace, goodness, patience, love, truth and mercy* Ibid, pg 304
- And we, functioning together as a church, not as individuals, are to attain to the whole measure of this fullness of Christ!

The Communal Aspect

- Murray notes,

This progression [growth in knowledge and love] has respect, not only to the individual, but also to the church in its unity and solidarity as the body of Christ. In reality the growth of the individual does not take place except in the fellowship of the church as the fellowship of the Spirit. Believers have never existed as independent units. ... And sanctification itself is a process that moves to a consummation which will not be realized for the individual until the whole body of Christ is complete and presented in its totality faultless and without blemish.

The Collected Writings of John Murray, Vol. 2, pg 299

The Communal Aspect

- Murray also notes that if an individual is “*indifferent to the sanctification of others and does not seek to promote their growth in grace, love, faith, knowledge, obedience, and holiness*” it interferes with his own sanctification in at least two ways:
 - His lack of concern is itself a sin that “*gnaws at the root of spiritual growth*”
 - And his indifference to the interests of others means that he does not minister to them as he should; and, as a result, they are impoverished and not able to minister to him as they should

The Communal Aspect

- This communal aspect cannot be accomplished without commitment and involvement
 - Many modern Christians want to watch sermons on the internet or bounce around to different churches and not be answerable to anyone; but this is a clear violation of biblical principles: we must be members of a local body, in vital connection with one another, with accountability and responsibility, and this is a serious commitment, which we cannot unilaterally break without very serious cause and due diligence

What Does the Bible Say?

- Don't forsake meeting together; fellowship *in the local church of which we are members* is necessary for a proper Christian life

let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another Heb 10:24-25

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Acts 2:42

What Does the Bible Say?

- We must work together so that we can “all reach unity” together as a part of the body of Christ

[Christ] gave some to be apostles, ... so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

Eph 4:11-13

What Does the Bible Say?

- Christians must be members of a local church with clear membership and authority or the following verses make no sense

Remember your leaders, who spoke the word of God to you. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith. ... Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you.

Heb 13:7, 17

What Does the Bible Say?

Shouldn't you rather have been filled with grief and have put out of your fellowship the man who did this? ... When you are assembled in the name of our Lord Jesus and I am with you in spirit, and the power of our Lord Jesus is present, hand this man over to Satan, so that the sinful nature may be destroyed and his spirit saved on the day of the Lord.

1 Cor 5:2, 4-5

- The most severe church discipline is to put someone out of the church; this makes no sense unless we are all to be members of a local church and held accountable

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The Agent of Sanctification

- Although we are active in our sanctification, we do not sanctify ourselves

Paul wrote to the church in Philippi that he was *confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.*

Phil 1:6

- It is God who sanctifies,

May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through.

1 Thess 5:23

The Agent of Sanctification

- Specifically, it is the Holy Spirit who sanctifies, *if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live, because as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.*

Rom 8:13-14

But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.

2 Cor 3:18 (KJV)

The Agent of Sanctification

- Murray again makes three points:
 - The mode of operation of the Holy Spirit is mysterious (John 3:8)
 - We are completely dependent on the Holy Spirit (Rom 8:13, 2 Cor 9:8, Phil 4:13, Col 1:29)
 - We can't think of the work of the Holy Spirit apart from the risen and glorified Jesus Christ: He is the Spirit of Christ (Rom 8:9), the Spirit of him who raised Christ from the dead (Rom 8:11)

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The Means of Sanctification

- Murray writes,
sanctification is a process that draws within its scope the conscious life of the believer. The sanctified are not passive or quiescent in this process. RA&A, pg 148
- The Apostle Paul wrote to the church in Philippi:
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

The Means of Sanctification

- Commenting on this passage in Philippians 2, Murray writes:

The salvation referred to here is not the salvation already in possession but the eschatological salvation

RA&A, pg 148

- We cannot “work out” our election, regeneration, justification or adoption, but we must be changed and “work out” our faith; we must have a real personal righteousness as well as the imputed righteousness of Christ

Application

- Are you functioning as a proper part of the body of Christ?
- Read Ephesians carefully and meditate on the communal nature of the church as the body of Christ
- Identify, verify, cultivate and use your gifts for the good of the body of Christ

we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them

Romans 12:5-6 (ESV)

To Prepare for Next Session

- You should read Chapter 8 of Part II (on Perseverance)