

OF SANCTIFICATION.

1 THESS. iv. 3. *For this is the will of God, even your sanctification.*

THE notion of the word sanctification, signifies to consecrate and set apart to an holy use: thus they are sanctified persons, who are separated from the world, and set apart for God's service. Sanctification hath a privative and a positive part.

1. A privative part, mortification, which lies in the purging out of sin. Sin is compared to leaven, which fours; and to leprosy, which defiles; sanctification doth purge out 'the old leaven,' 1 Cor. ix. 7. Though it takes not away the life, yet it takes away the love of sin.

2. A positive part, vivification, which is the spiritual refining of the soul; which in scripture is called a 'renewing of our mind,' Rom. xii. 2. and a 'partaking of the divine nature,' 2 Pet. i. 4. The priests in the law not only were washed in the great laver, but adorned with glorious apparel, Exod. xxviii. 2. so in sanctification, not only washed from sin, but adorned with purity.

Q. What is sanctification?

Ans. It is a principle of grace savingly wrought, whereby the heart becomes holy, and is made after God's own heart. A sanctified person bears not only God's name, but image. For the opening the nature of sanctification, I shall lay down these seven positions.

1. Sanctification is a supernatural thing: it is divinely infused. We are naturally polluted, and to cleanse, God takes to be his prerogative; Lev. xxi. 8. 'I am the Lord which sanctifieth you.' Weeds grow of themselves. Flowers are planted. Sanctification is a flower of the Spirit's planting, therefore it is called, 'The sanctification of the Spirit,' 1 Peter. 2.

2. Sanctification is an intrinsecal thing: it lies chiefly in the heart. It is called 'the adorning the hidden man of the heart,' 1 Peter iii. 4. The dew wets the leaf, the sap is hid in the root: the religion of some consists only in externals, but sanctification is deeply rooted in the soul, Psal. li. 6. 'In the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom.'

3. Sanctification is an extensive thing: it spreads into the whole man, 1 Thess. v. 23. 'The God of peace sanctify you wholly.' As original corruption hath depraved all the faculties, the whole 'head is sick, the whole heart faint,' no part sound, as if the whole mass of blood were corrupted: so sanctification goes over the whole soul. After the fall, there was ignorance

in the mind ; now in sanctification, we are ‘ light in the Lord,’ Eph. v. 8. After the fall, the will was depraved : there was not only impotency to good, but obstinacy : now, in sanctification, there is a blessed pliability in the will ; it doth symbolize and comport with the will of God. After the fall, the affections were misplaced on wrong objects ; in sanctification, they are turned into a sweet order and harmony, the grief placed on sin, the love on God, the joy on heaven. Thus sanctification spreads itself as far as original corruption : it goes over the whole soul ; ‘ the God of peace sanctify you wholly.’ He is not a sanctified person who is good only in some part, but who is all over sanctified : therefore in scripture, grace is called a ‘ new man,’ Col. iii. 10. not a new eye or a new tongue, but a ‘ new man.’ A good Christian, though he be sanctified but in part, yet in every part.

4. Sanctification is an intense ardent thing, *Qualitatis sunt in subjectio intensive*, Rom. xii. 11. ‘ Fervent in Spirit.’ Sanctification is not a dead form, but it is inflamed into zeal. We call water hot, when it is so in the third or fourth degree : he is holy, whose religion is heated to some degree, and his heart boils over in love to God.

5. Sanctification is a beautiful thing ; it makes God and angels fall in love with us, Psal. cx. 3. ‘ The beauties of holiness.’ As the sun is to the world, so is sanctification to the soul, beautifying and bespangling it in God’s eyes. That which makes God glorious, must needs make us so. Holiness is the most sparkling jewel in the Godhead, Exod. xv. 11. ‘ Glorious in holiness.’ Sanctification is the first fruit of the Spirit ; it is heaven begun in the soul ; sanctification and glory differ only in degree ; sanctification is glory in the seed, and glory is sanctification in the flower. Holiness is the quintessence of happiness.

6. Sanctification is an abiding thing, 1 John iii. 9. ‘ His seed remaineth in him.’ He who is truly sanctified cannot fall from that state. Indeed seeming holiness may be lost, colours may wash off, sanctification may suffer an eclipse, Rev. ii. 4. ‘ Thou hast left thy first love :’ but true sanctification is a blossom of eternity, 1 John ii. 27. ‘ The anointing which ye have received abideth in you.’ He who is truly sanctified, can no more fall away, than the angels which are fixed in their heavenly orbs.

7. Sanctification is a progressive thing, it is growing ; it is compared to seed which grows ; first the blade springs up, then the ear, then the ripe corn in the ear ; such as are already sanctified, may be more sanctified, 2 Cor vii. 1. Justification doth not admit of degrees ; a believer cannot be more elected or justified than he is, but he may be more sanctified than he is ; sanctification is still increasing, like the morning sun, which

grows brighter to the full meridian. Knowledge is said to increase, Col. i. 10. and faith to increase, 2 Cor. x. 15. A Christian is continually adding a cubit to his spiritual stature. It is not with us as it was with Christ, who received the Spirit without measure: Christ could not be more holy than he was. But we have the Spirit only in measure, and may be still augmenting our grace: As Appelles, when he had drawn a picture, he would be still mending it with his pencil. The image of God is drawn but imperfectly in us, therefore we must be still mending it, and drawing it in more lively colours; sanctification is progressive; if it doth not grow, it is because it doth not live. Thus you see the nature of sanctification.

Q. What are the counterfeits of sanctification?

A. There is something looks like sanctification, which is not.

1. The first counterfeit of sanctification is moral virtue. To be just, temperate, to be of a fair deportment, not having one's scutcheon blotted with ignominious scandal: this is good but not enough: this is not sanctification. A field flower differs from a garden flower: 1. Heathens have attained to morality; Cato, Socrates, Aristides. Civility is but nature refined; there is nothing of Christ there; the heart may be foul and impure: under these fair leaves of civility, the worm of unbelief may be hid. 2. A moral person hath a secret antipathy against grace; he hates vice, and he hates grace as much as vice. The snake hath a fine colour, but a sting. A person adorned and cultivated with moral virtue, hath a secret spleen against sanctity: those Stoics, which were the chief of the moralized Heathens, were the bitterest enemies St. Paul had, Acts xvii. 18.

2. The second counterfeit of sanctification, is superstitious devotion: this abounds in Popery, adorations, images, altars, vestments, holy water, which I look upon as a religious frenzy; this is far from sanctification. 1. It doth not put any intrinsic goodness into a man, it doth not make a man better. If the legal purifications and washings, which were of God's own appointing, did not make them that used them more holy, (the priests, who wore holy garments, and had holy oil poured on them, were never the more holy, without the anointing of the Spirit) then surely those superstitious innovations in religion, which God never appointed, cannot contribute any holiness to men. 2. A superstitious holiness costs no great labour; there is nothing of the heart in it: if to tell over a few beads, or bow to an image, to sprinkle themselves with holy water; if this were sanctification, and were all that were required of them that should be saved, then hell would be empty, none would come there.

3. The third counterfeit of sanctification, is hypocrisy; when men make a pretence of that holiness which they have not.

A comet may shine like a star ; such a lustre shines from their profession, as dazzleth the eyes of the beholders, 2 Tim. iii. 5. ‘ Having a form of godliness, but denying the power.’ These are lamps without oil ; whited sepulchres, like the Egyptian temples, which had fair outsides, but within spiders and apes. The apostle speaks of true holiness, Eph. iv. 24. implying that there is holiness which is spurious and feigned, Rev. iii. 1. ‘ Thou hast a name to live, but art dead :’ like pictures and statues which are destitute of a vital principle, Jude xii. ‘ Clouds without water.’ They pretend to be full of the Spirit, but empty clouds. This shew of sanctification (when it is nothing else) is self-delusion. He who takes copper instead of gold, wrongs himself ; the most counterfeit saint deceives others while he lives, but deceives himself when he dies. To pretend holiness, when there is none, is a vain thing : what were the foolish virgins better for their blazing lamps, when they wanted oil ? What is the lamp of profession without the oil of saving grace ? What comfort will a shew of holiness yield at last ? Will painted gold enrich ? Painted wine refresh him that is thirsty ? Will painted holiness be a cordial at the hour of death ? A pretence of sanctification is not to be rested in. Many ships, that have had the name of the Hope, the Safeguard, the Triumph, yet have been cast away upon the rocks ; so, many who have had the name of saintship, have been cast into hell.

4. The fourth counterfeit of sanctification, is restraining grace. When men forbear vice, though they do not hate it ; this may be the sinner’s motto, ‘ Fain I would, but I dare not.’ The dog hath a mind to the bone, but is afraid of the cudgel ; men have a mind to lust, but conscience stands as the angel, with a flaming sword, and affrights ; they have a mind to revenge, but the fear of hell is a curb-bit to check them. Here is no change of heart : sin is curbed, but not cured ; a lion may be in chains, but is a lion still.

4. The fifth counterfeit of sanctification, is common grace, which is a slight, transient work of the Spirit, but doth not amount to conversion. There is some light in the judgment, but it is not humbling ; some checks in the conscience, but they are not awakening : this looks like sanctification, but is not. Men have convictions wrought in them, but they break loose from them again, like the deer, which, being shot, shakes out the arrow : after conviction, men go into the house of mirth, take the harp to drive away the spirit of sadness, and so all dies and comes to nothing.

Q. *Wherein appears the necessity of sanctification ?*

A. In six things : 1. God hath called us to it, 2 Pet. i. 4. ‘ Who hath called us to glory and virtue ;’ to virtue as well as glory, ‘ God hath not called us to uncleanness, but unto ho-

liness,' 1 Theff. iv. 7. We have no call to sin, we may have a temptation, but no call; no call to be proud, or unclean, but we have a call to be holy.

2. The necessity appears in this: without sanctification there is no evidencing our justification; justification and sanctification go together, 1 Cor. vi. 11. 'But ye are sanctified, but ye are justified.' Mic. vii. 18. 'Pardoning iniquity,' there is justification; ver. 19. 'He will subdue our iniquities,' there is sanctification. 'Out of Christ's sides came blood and water,' 1 John v. 7. Blood, viz. justification; water, viz. sanctification. Such as have not the water out of Christ's sides to cleanse them, shall never have the blood out of his sides to save them.

3. Without sanctification we have no title to the new covenant. The covenant of grace is our charter for heaven; the tenure of the covenant is, 'that God will be our God' (the crowning blessing.) But who are interested in the covenant, and may plead the benefit of it? Only sanctified persons; Ezek. xxxvi. 26. 'A new heart will I give you, and I will put my Spirit within you, and I will be your God.' If a man makes a will, and settles his estate upon such persons as he names in the will; none else but they can lay claim to the will: so God makes a will and testament, but it is restrained and limited to such as are sanctified; and it is high presumption for any else to lay claim to the will.

4. There is no going into heaven without sanctification, Heb. xii. 14. 'Without holiness no man shall see the Lord.' God is an holy God, and he will suffer no unholy creature to come near him; a king will not suffer a man with plague-sores to approach into his presence. Heaven is not like Noah's ark, where the clean beasts and the unclean entered; no unclean beast comes into the heavenly ark: though God suffer the wicked to live a while on the earth, he will never suffer heaven to be pestered with such vermin: are they fit to see God, who wallow in wickedness? Will God ever lay such vipers in his bosom? 'Without holiness no man shall see the Lord.' It must be a clear eye that sees a bright object: only an holy heart can see God in his glory. Sinners may see God as an enemy, but not as a friend; may have an affrighting vision of God, but not a beatifical vision: they may see the flaming sword, but not the mercy-seat. O then what need is there of sanctification?

5. Without sanctification, all our holy things are defiled, Tit. i. 5. 'Unto them that are defiled is nothing pure.' Under the law, if a man who was unclean by a dead body, had carried a piece of holy flesh in his skirt, the holy flesh had not cleansed him, but he had polluted that, Hag. i. 12, 13. An emblem of a sinner's polluting his holy offering. A soul flow-

mach turns the best food into ill humours: an un sanctified heart pollutes prayers, alms, sacraments. This evinceth the necessity of sanctification: sanctification makes our holy things accepted; an holy heart is the altar which sanctifies the offering; his duties though they are not to satisfaction, yet to acceptance.

6. Without sanctification we can shew no sign of our election, 2 Theff. ii. 13. Election is the cause of our salvation, sanctification is our evidence; sanctification is the ear mark of Christ's elect sheep.

Q. *What are the signs of sanctification?*

A. 1. Such as are sanctified, can remember a time when they were un sanctified, Tit. iii. 3. We were in our blood, and then God washed us with water, and anointed us with oil, Ezek. xvi. 9. Those trees of righteousness that blossom and bear almonds, can remember when they were like Aaron's dry rod, not one blossom of holiness growing: a sanctified soul can remember when he was estranged from God through ignorance and vanity, and when free grace planted this flower of holiness in him.

Second sign of sanctification is the indwelling of the Spirit, 2 Tim. i. 14. 'The Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us.' As the unclean Spirit dwells in the wicked, and carries them to pride, lust, revenge; the devil hath entered into these swine, Acts v. 3. so the Spirit of God dwells in the elect, as their guide and comforter. The Spirit possesseth the faints. God's Spirit sanctifies the fancy, causing it to mint holy thoughts; it sanctifies the will, putting a new bias upon it, whereby it is inclined to good. He who is sanctified hath the influence of the Spirit, though not the essence.

The third sign of sanctification is an antipathy against sin, Psal. cxix. 104. an hypocrite may leave sin, yet love it; as a serpent casts its coat but keeps its sting: but a sanctified person can say, he not only leaves sin, but loathes it. As there are antipathies in nature, between the vine and laurel, so in a sanctified soul there is an holy antipathy against sin: and antipathies can never be reconciled. Because he hath an antipathy against sin, he cannot but oppose it, and seek the destruction of it.

Fourth sign of sanctification is, the spiritual performance of duties, viz. with the heart, and from a principle of love. The sanctified soul prays out of a love to prayer, he 'calls the Sabbath a delight,' Isa. lviii. 13. A man may have gifts to admiration, he may speak as an angel dropped out of heaven, yet may be carnal in spiritual things; his services do not come from a renewed principle, nor is he carried upon the wings of delight in duty. A sanctified soul worships God in the Spirit,

1 Pet. ii. 5. God doth not judge of our duties by the length, but by the love.

Fifth sign, a well ordered life, 1 Pet. i. 15. 'Be ye holy in all manner of conversation : ' Where the heart is sanctified the life will be so too ; the temple had gold without, as well as within. As in a piece of coin, there is not only the king's image within the ring, but his superscription too without ; so where there is sanctification, there is not only God's image in the heart, but a superscription of holiness written in the life ; some say they have good hearts, but their lives are vicious, Prov. xxx. 12. ' There is a generation that are pure in their own eyes, yet is not washed from their filthiness.' If the water be foul in the bucket, it cannot be clean in the well, Psal. xlv. 13. ' The king's daughter is all glorious within ; ' there is holiness of heart ; ' her clothing is of wrought gold.' Holiness of life. Grace is most beautiful when its light doth so shine, that others may see it ; this adorns religion, and makes profelytes to the faith.

Sixth sign, stedfast resolution. He is resolved never to part with his holiness ; let others reproach it, he loves it the more ; let water be sprinkled on the fire, it burns the more. He saith, as David, when Michal reproached him, for dancing before the ark, 2 Sam. vi. 22. ' If this be to be vile, I will yet be more vile.' Let others persecute him for his holiness, he saith as Paul, Acts xx. 24. ' None of those things move me ; ' he prefers sanctity before safety, and had rather keep his conscience pure, than his skin whole. He saith as Job, ' my integrity I will hold fast, and not let it go,' ch. xxvii. 6. He will rather part with his life than his conscience.

Use 1. See what is the main thing a Christian should look after, viz. sanctification ; this is the *unum necessarium*, the one thing needful. Sanctification is our purest complexion, it makes us as the heaven, bespangled with stars ; it is our nobility, by it we are born of God, and partake of the divine nature : it is our riches, therefore compared to rows of jewels, and chains of gold, Cant. i. 10. It is our best certificate for heaven : what evidence have we else to shew ? Have we knowledge ? so hath the devil : do we profess religion ? Satan often appears in Samuel's mantle, and transforms himself into an angel of light : but here is our certificate to shew for heaven, sanctification. Sanctification is the first fruits of the Spirit ; the only coin will pass current in the other world. Sanctification is the evidence of God's love ; we cannot guess of God's love by giving us health, riches, success, but by drawing his image of sanctification on us by the pencil of the Holy Ghost.

Branch 2. It shews the misery of such as are destitute of a principle of sanctification ; they are spiritually dead, Eph. ii. 1.

‘ though they breathe, yet they do not live.’ The greatest part of the world remain un sanctified, 1 John v. 19. The world lies in wickedness, that is the major part of the world. Many call themselves Christians, yet blot out the word saints: you may as well call him a man who wants reason, as him a Christian who wants grace; nay, which is worse, some are buoyed up to such a height of wickedness, that they hate and deride sanctification: They hate it; it is bad to want it, it is worse to hate it: they embrace the form of religion, but hate the power. 1. The vulture hates sweet smells, so do they the perfumes of holiness. 2. Deride it; these are your holy ones. To deride sanctification, argues an high degree of atheism, and is a black brand of reprobation: scoffing Ithmael was cast out of Abraham’s family, Gen. xxi. 9. such as scoff at holiness shall be cast out of heaven.

Use 2. Of Exhortation. Above all things pursue after sanctification; seek grace more than gold, Prov. iv. 13. ‘ Keep her, for she is thy life.’

Q. What are the chief inducements to sanctification?

A. 1st, It is the will of God that we should be holy: in the text, ‘ This is the will of God, your sanctification.’ As God’s word must be the rule, so his will, the reason of our actions: ‘ this is the will of God, our sanctification.’ Perhaps it is not the will of God we should be rich, but it is his will that we should be holy. God’s will is our warrant.

2dly, Jesus Christ hath died for our sanctification. Christ shed his blood to wash off our impurity. The cross was both an altar and a laver, Tit. ii. 14. ‘ Who gave himself for us, to redeem us from all iniquity.’ If we could be saved without holiness, Christ needed not have died. Christ died, not only to save us from wrath, but from sin.

3dly, Sanctification makes us resemble God. It was Adam’s sin that he aspired to be like God in omniscience, but we must endeavour to be like him in sanctity. It is only a clear glass in which we can see a face; it is only an holy heart in which something of God can be seen; there’s nothing of God to be seen in an un sanctified man: you may see Satan’s picture in him: envy is the devil’s eye, hypocrisy his cloven foot; but nothing of God’s image can be seen in him. You can see no more of God in him, than you can see a man’s face in a glass that is dusty and foul.

4thly, Sanctification is that which God bears a great love to. Not any outward ornaments, high blood, or worldly grandeur, draws God’s love, but an heart embellished with holiness. Christ never admired any thing, but the beauty of holiness; he slighted the glorious buildings of the temple, but admired the woman’s faith, ‘ O woman great is thy faith;’ *amor junda-*

tur similitudine. A king delights to see his image upon a piece of coin : where God sees his likeness, there he gives his love. The Lord hath two heavens he dwells in, and the holy heart is one of them,

5thly, Sanctification is the only thing doth difference us from the wicked : God's people have his seal upon them, 2 Tim. ii. 19. 'The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his; and let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.' The godly are sealed with a double seal : 1. A seal of election, 'The Lord knoweth who are his : ' 2. A seal of sanctification, 'Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.' This is the name by which God's people are known, Isa. lxiii. 18. 'The people of thy holiness.' A chastity distinguisheth a virtuous woman from a harlot, so sanctification distinguisheth God's people from others, 1 John ii. 27. Ye have received an unction from the holy One.

6thly, It is as great a shame to have the name of a Christian, yet want sanctity, as to have the name of a steward, and yet want fidelity; the name of a virgin, yet want chastity. It exposeth religion to reproach, to be baptized into the name of Christ, yet unholy; to have eyes full of tears on a sabbath, and on a week day eyes full of adultery, 2 Pet. ii. 14. To be so devout at the Lord's table, as if men were stepping into heaven; and so profane the week after, as if they came out of hell. To have the name of Christians, yet unholy, is a scandal to religion, and makes the ways of God evil spoken of.

7thly, Sanctification fits for heaven, 2 Pet. i. 3. 'Who hath called us to glory and virtue;' glory is the throne, and sanctification is the step by which we ascend to it. First, you cleanse the vessel, and then you pour in the wine; first, God cleanseth us by sanctification, and then pours in the wine of glory. Solomon was first anointed with oil, and then he was a king, 1 Kings i. 39. First, God anoints us with the holy oil of his Spirit, and then he sets the crown of happiness upon our head. Pureness of heart and seeing God are linked together, Mat. v. 8.

Q. How may sanctification be attained to?

A. 1. Be conversant in the word of God, John xvii. 17. 'Sanctify them through thy truth.' The word is both a glass to shew us the spots of our soul, and a laver to wash them away; the word hath a transforming virtue in it, it irradiates the mind, and consecrates the heart.

2. Get faith in Christ's blood, Acts xv. 9. 'Having purified their hearts by faith.' She in the gospel that touched the hem of Christ's garment was healed; a touch of faith purifies. Nothing can have a greater force upon the heart, to sanctify it, than faith; if I believe Christ and his merits are mine, how can

I sin against him? Justifying faith doth that in a spiritual sense, which miraculous faith doth, it removes mountains, the mountains of pride, lust, envy. Faith, and the love of sin are inconsistent.

3. Breath after the Spirit; it is called 'the sanctification of the Spirit,' 2 Thess. ii. 13. The Spirit sanctifies the heart, as lightning purifies the air, as fire refines metals. *Omne agens generat sibi simile*: The Spirit stamps the impression of its own sanctity upon the heart, as the seal prints its effigies and likeness upon the wax. The Spirit of God in a man perfumes him with holiness, and makes his heart a map of heaven.

4. Associate with sanctified persons. They may, by their counsel, prayers, holy example, be a means to make you holy: as the communion of saints is in our creed, so it should be in our company, Prov. xiii. 20. 'He that walketh with the wise, shall be wise.' Association begets assimilation.

5. Pray for sanctification. Job propounds a question, 'Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?' Job xv. 14. God can do it. Out of an unholy heart he can produce grace. O! make David's prayer, Psal. li. 10. 'Create in me a clean heart, O God.' Lay thy heart before the Lord, and say, Lord, my un sanctified heart pollutes all it toucheth. I am not fit to live with such an heart, for I cannot honour thee: nor die with such an heart, for I cannot see thee.' O create in me a clean heart; Lord, consecrate my heart, and make it thy temple, and thy praises shall be sung there for ever.

Use 3. Of thankfulness. Hath God brought a clean thing out of an unclean: hath he sanctified you? wear this jewel of sanctification with thankfulness, Col. i. 12. 'Giving thanks to the Father, who hath made us meet for the inheritance,' &c. Christian, thou couldst defile thyself, but not sanctify thyself: but God hath done it, he hath not only chained up sin, but changed thy nature, and made thee as a king's daughter all glorious within. He hath put upon thee the breast-plate of holiness, which, though it may be shot at, can never be shot thorough. Are there any here that are sanctified? God hath done more for you than millions: they may be illuminated, but not sanctified. He hath done more for you, than if he had made you the sons of princes, and caused you to ride upon the high places of the earth. Are you sanctified? heaven is begun in you; happiness is nothing but the quintessence of holiness. O how thankful should you be to God! Do as that blind man in the gospel, after he had received his sight, 'He followed Christ, glorifying God,' Luke xviii. 43. Make heaven ring of God's praises.