

Doctrine #5- Perseverance, Part 2

Written by Calvin Fox
Monday, 29 September 2008 20:35 -

Sanctification

Out of our standing, our legal or “forensic” position (being in union with Christ), comes our experience. This is the necessary process of sanctification. “Necessary” because all who are declared or reckoned to be righteous in Christ must go on to actually be righteous, holy or sanctified. If this were not the case, our justification would be legal fiction. And that will not fly, because it is still true that practicing sinners have no place in a sinless Heaven. Darkness can have no fellowship with Light. Without holiness, no one will see God. The children must become like the Father. We must become holy, even as He is holy. We set our hearts and minds on this goal.

But achieving this goal is really the work of the Holy Spirit of God who lives within each regenerated and justified convert. He transforms the Believer’s character and actually makes [him] holy. The Spirit will do this through what are known as “Spiritual Disciplines”.

This is a
life long process

. It has its set backs and dormant periods. There is conflict and struggle. Spiritual warfare is real, but the life long trajectory is upward and sure. (This is why we must withhold judgment about who is saved or not, as any particular professed believer, at any particular time, may be in one of those difficult periods.) We still commit sins, but the truly justified will not make a habit of it and s/he will hate it when that happens.

That is a good sign.

No one who has been regenerated will normally, habitually, characteristically live in sin or disobedience to God.

If anyone does, s/he belies his or her testimony and there is no reason to believe such a person is regenerate or in Christ.

Though the Believer will sometimes struggle to be faithful, God motivates and enables us to persevere and overcome. The entire process of Salvation, beginning to end, is the work of

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God. It is entirely God's doing. There is no room for pride ("I did it" deserve it"

"I

"I earned it").

It is all, every step from beginning to end, of grace alone!

It should be obvious that in this system of the Doctrines of Grace is embedded the four-fold "Gospel of Grace": salvation is in Christ alone by faith alone by grace alone to the glory of God alone.