

**TRAINING IN GODLINESS**  
*The Doctrine of Sanctification*

**LESSON TWO**

**I. INTRODUCTION**

Brief Review Lecture One

Attempting to pursue lifelong obedience to Christ where one is not first firmly grounded in God's gracious acceptance and security of us in Christ, will be a fluctuating and frustrating pursuit, because that pursuit will not be one energized by the very power of God in the gospel to sustain it.

*"Some Christians have never been right about their justification, and it is just here that the devil causes confusion. It suits him well that such people should be concerned about sanctification and holiness and other things, but they can never be right until they are right here, and that is why we must start with this. It is of no use going on to deal with the superstructure if the foundation is not right. We therefore start with this great doctrine. This confusion is an old trouble. In a sense it is the masterpiece of Satan. He will even encourage us to be righteous as long as he has us confused at this point."*

*Martin Lloyd Jones*

The very first and continuous discipline we need to develop, if we would make progress in sanctification, is to preach the gospel to ourselves every day, and sometimes all day.

*"Right thinking about the gospel produces right living in the gospel. Practical piety (our duty) is the product of sound theology (our doctrine)."*

*Joel Beeke & Michael Barret*

**II. UNION WITH CHRIST**

- "Union with Christ is the central truth of the whole doctrine of salvation".*

*John Murray*

- "We must understand that as long as Christ remains outside of us, and we are separated from him, all that he has suffered and done for the salvation of the human race remains useless and of no value for us....All that he possesses is nothing to us until we grow into one body with him"*

*John Calvin*

- We are vitally united to Christ before time in the purposes and decree of God, but then we are actually united to Christ in time when we are born again and place our faith in Him.

- “Union with Christ”, is “Identity”.
- John 15:1-5, *“I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit. Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you. Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. I am the vine; you are the branches.”*
- As the branch is dead apart from the life-giving nourishment of the vine, so humans are spiritually dead unless they are connected to the vine.
- Romans 5:12-21, *“Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned— for sin indeed was in the world before the law was given, but sin is not counted where there is no law. Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sinning was not like the transgression of Adam, who was a type of the one who was to come. But the free gift is not like the trespass. For if many died through one man’s trespass, much more have the grace of God and the free gift by the grace of that one man Jesus Christ abounded for many. And the free gift is not like the result of that one man’s sin. For the judgment following one trespass brought condemnation, but the free gift following many trespasses brought justification. For if, because of one man’s trespass, death reigned through that one man, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ. Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men. For as by the one man’s disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man’s obedience the many will be made righteous. Now the law came in to increase the trespass, but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more, so that, as sin reigned in death, grace also might reign through righteousness leading to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”*
- "In Adam," we possess all that he possesses: sin, judgment, condemnation, fear, alienation and death; "in Christ" we possess all of his righteousness, holiness, eternal life, justification, adoption, and blessing.
- We are in union with Adam by natural birth, but we come into union with Christ through spiritual birth.
- Union with Christ guarantees that we shall share in all His spiritual blessings! What’s His by right becomes ours by grace!
- All of the **“In Him”** language of the epistles is another way of amplifying this truth of our union with Christ.

- Our first work, our great work and our continuous work in sanctification...is to behold Christ!
- II Corinthians 3:18, “*And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another.*”
- “*For every look at yourself, take ten looks at Christ.*”  
Robert Murray McCheyne

Out of this vital union with Christ flows two other spiritual blessings...

### III. JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH

#### Westminster Confession of Faith (WCF) Chapter 11 of Justification

Section one: Those whom God effectually calls, he also freely justifies; not by infusing righteousness into them, but by pardoning their sins, and by accounting and accepting their persons as righteous; not for any thing wrought in them, or done by them, but for Christ's sake alone; nor by imputing faith itself, the act of believing, or any other evangelical obedience to them, as their righteousness; but by imputing the obedience and satisfaction of Christ unto them, they receiving and resting on Him and his righteousness by faith; which faith they have not of themselves, it is the gift of God.

- The doctrine of justification is providing the solution to man’s greatest problem.
- The wages of sin is death! We sinned in Adam and we are condemned in Adam.
- We are sinners by representation with Adam but we are also sinners by nature. We inherited Adam’s condemned status and we inherited Adam’s sinful nature.

“*How can sinful man become right with God?*” Through union with the second Adam!

- Jesus is truly, truly, Man. But, He is not only a Man. He is the God-Man!
- Jesus Christ is unique in all of human history, b/c He is one Person comprised of two natures...that one the Godhead and that of the manhood. One Person, two natures.
- This Man, and this Man alone, qualifies to RE-REPRESENT fallen man.
- God declares the ungodly sinner “righteous”, **not** for any-thing wrought in us, or done by us, but for Christ's sake alone. God declares us righteous by imputing the obedience and satisfaction of Christ unto us.

- God declares us righteous for one and only one reason...b/c we are united to our new representative JC!
- Justification is a one-time unrepeatable act by God.
- Justification grants the sinner a new and irreversible status, that they are righteous before God forever.
- The doctrine of justification guarantees the sinner heaven before he or she ever takes one obedient step towards heaven.
- Through union with Christ, we are uncondemnable!

“Can it get any better?” “YES”!

#### IV. ADOPTION

- Adoption is the **apex** of all spiritual blessings.
- Justification deals with the removal of guilt and grants us the status of righteous people; but adoption grants us the status of children.
- Justification brings us into the kingdom, but adoption brings us into the family!

#### London Baptist Confession of Faith (LBCF) Chapter 12 of Adoption

Section one: All those that are justified, God conferred, in and for the sake of his only Son Jesus Christ, to make partakers of the grace of adoption, by which they are taken into the number, and enjoy the liberties and privileges of the children of God, have his name put on them, receive the spirit of adoption, have access to the throne of grace with boldness, are enabled to cry Abba, Father, are pitied, protected, provided for, and chastened by him as by a Father, yet never cast off, but sealed to the day of redemption, and inherit the promises as heirs of everlasting salvation.

- Adoption is concerned with the Fatherhood of God in relation to the redeemed.
- Ephesians 1:5-6, “*In love, He predestined us for adoption to Himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of His will, to the praise of His glorious grace, with which He has blessed us in the Beloved.*”
- God determined our destiny before time began. And that destiny, that final and glorious destination is to be children of God.
- Jesus Christ is the one and only begotten Son of God. He is a Son by eternal generation; but we are sons by adoption, by being united to Him!

- John 17:20-26, *“I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me. Father, I desire that they also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory that you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world. O righteous Father, even though the world does not know you, I know you, and these know that you have sent me. I made known to them your name, and I will continue to make it known, that the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them.”*

### **Why is holiness true beauty?**

- *“In a sense ‘holiness’ is a way of describing love. To say that ‘God is love’ and that ‘God is holy’ ultimately is to point to the same reality. Holiness is the intensity of the love that flows within the very being of God, among and between each of the three persons of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. It is the sheer intensity of that devotion that causes the seraphim to veil their faces.”*  
Sinclair Ferguson

- Holiness is the perfect and pure and intense love that each of the 3 Persons of the Godhead have for one another.
- Through union with the Son, we are not only granted access into the presence of the Triune God to gaze upon their love...but...we through our adopted status, are granted the eternal blessedness to share in the very gazing itself!
- Adoption is the “sweetest” doctrine!

## **V. TWO IMPORTANT IMPLICATIONS**

**#1** It’s out of this mainspring that we gain...assurance.

- *“Terror accomplishes no real obedience. Suspense brings forth no fruit unto holiness. No gloomy uncertainty as to God’s favor can subdue one lust, or correct our crookedness of will. But the free pardon of the cross uproots sin, and withers all its branches. Only the certainty of love, forgiving love, can do this.”*  
Horatius Bonar
- The only way we can really face and fight and weaken the root system of our sins is when we are certain of God’s love for us.

- Eternal security is not the same as assurance. Salvation is secure. Assurance is when the Holy Spirit bears witness with our spirit that we truly are united to Christ.

**#2**, The only way we can face and continuously fight against indwelling sin and actual sin without falling into the bondage of shame and condemnation, is when we have a firm and settled grasp of our unchangeable status as righteous sons and daughters of God!

- The doctrines of justification and adoption are our spiritual weapons in this warfare.

- *“The only sins we can fight and die daily to...are forgiven sins”.*

John Piper

- The doctrine of justification and adoption anchor us! They stabilize faith b/c those doctrines take us outside of ourselves and plant us in the outside of us/objective work of God in Christ!
- Our heavenly Father will never, ever disinherit us! All our trials and battles with sin work to make us beautiful in holiness!
- We are being prepared now, so that we can gaze upon Him forever!