

Sanctification

The circle here represents the Spirit of God, which supports the half circle that symbolizes mankind becoming more and more like God.

Paul David Tripp
Do You Believe?

What We Believe: Solid Doctrine for Everyday Life

The Doctrine of Sanctification

Westminster Shorter Catechism

Q. 35. *What is sanctification?*

A. Sanctification is the work of God's free grace,¹ whereby we are renewed in the whole man after the image of God,² and are enabled more and more to die unto sin, and live unto righteousness.³

Justification vs. Sanctification

If Justification is God's once-for-all declaration that we are righteous in Christ, then progressive Sanctification is getting used to (living more and more into) our Justification. "Sanctification is the process by which God actually makes us what he has declared us to be in Christ, righteous." (Paul Tripp)

God's Work & Ours

Read Philippians 2:12-13. So, does our sanctification come from God or from us? Yes!

- Dangerous #1: Forgetting that we're called to work out our sanctification.

We get passive and lazy.

Read Romans 8:7-9, 12-13. "Be killing sin, or sin will be killing you" (John Owen).
Colossians 3:1-4

- Dangerous #2: Forgetting that the ultimate basis for our work is God's work.

We can do the Christian life as though we're saved by grace (justification), but kept (sanctification) by works.

And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ. (Philippians 1:6)

The Ordinary Means of Grace

Word, Sacraments, Prayer, Worship, Fellowship & Ministry of Christ's Body...

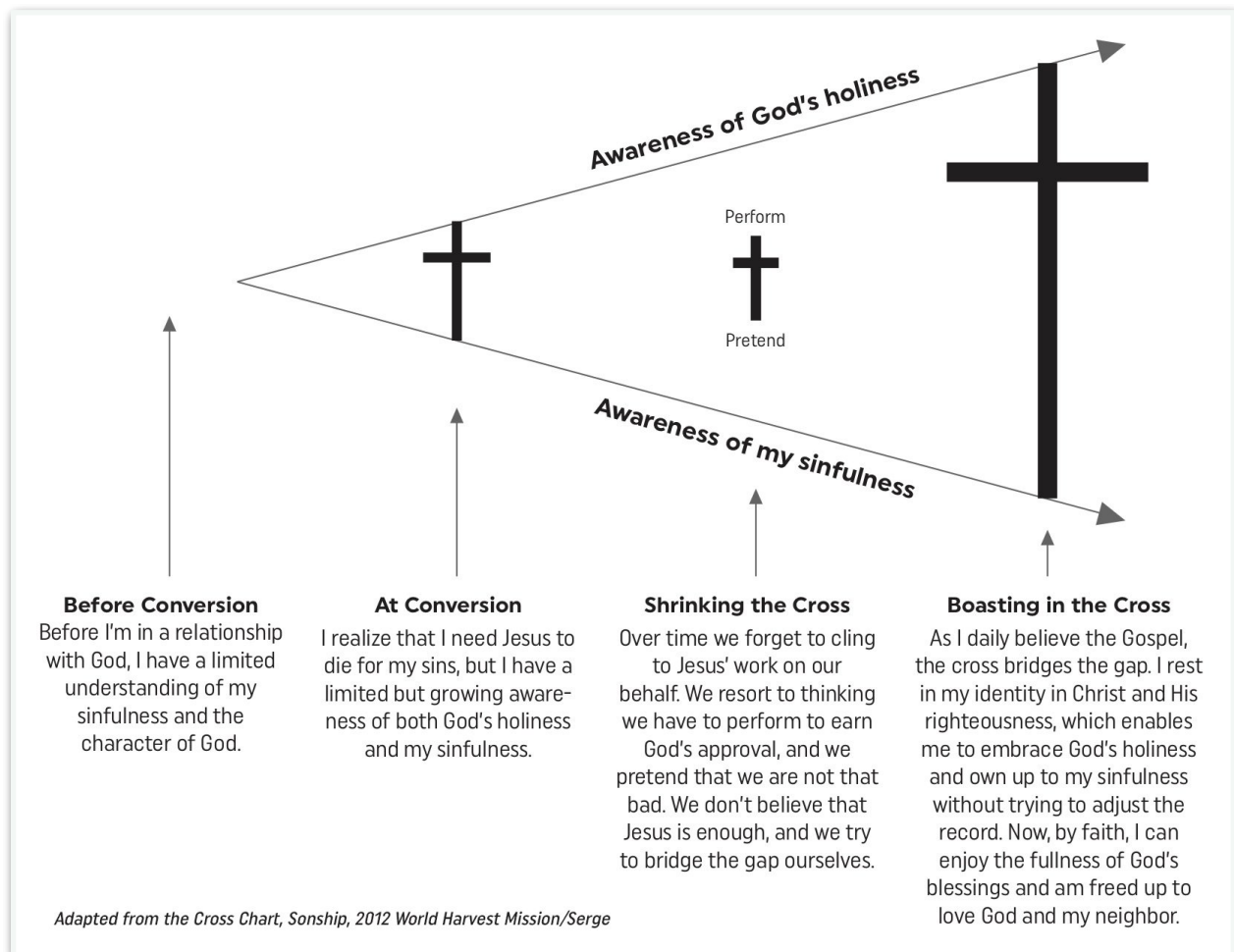
- Like channels dug out in the ground.

The Doctrine of Sanctification Promotes the Sanctity of Everything

1 Cor. 10:31; 1 Cor. 6:19-20

Difficulty is a Primary Sanctification Tool

We grow in sanctification by returning again and again to the cross, to the gospel. We never "graduate" from the gospel; we just keep growing deeper into it! Keep returning to the cross of Christ. It's your power for killing sin and growing in holiness.



Discuss and Share

- 1) Discuss ways that we “shrink the cross.” First, what are some ways people **Pretend** that they’re better than they really are? (Examples: dishonesty, comparison, excuse making, false righteousness.) Which resonate with you?
- 2) Next, what are some ways that people **Perform**, trying to earn God’s approval through their performance? (Hint: ask “What gives you a sense of worth and value?” Examples: Career righteousness, family righteousness, schedule righteousness, flexibility righteousness, financial righteousness, etc.) Which resonate with you?
- 3) Pick one example and discuss how “boasting in the cross” could help you fight that particular temptation to shrink the cross by pretending or performing.

Recommended Resources

- The artwork comes from, *Do You Believe?: 12 Historic Doctrines to Change Your Everyday Life*, by Paul Tripp (Crossway, 2021), on which this class is loosely based.
- “The Doctrine of Sanctification,” online essay by Fred Zaspel, thegospelcoalition.org/essay/the-doctrine-of-sanctification/.

¹ Ezek. 36:27; Phil. 2:13; 2 Thess. 2:13.

² 2 Cor. 5:17; Eph. 4:23–24; 1 Thess. 5:23.

³ Ezek. 36:25–27; Rom. 6:4, 6, 12–14; 2 Cor. 7:1; 1 Pet. 2:24.