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SERMON REFLECTION GUIDE

Christian Doctrine, Part 13: God Transforms: The Doctrine of Sanctification
Romans 12:1-2 - November 8, 2026

SERMON OUTLINE

Intro - Emrey surprisingly growing into a competitive runner alongside Henry, my 10-week old nephew - the dynamics of growth & maturity
Likewise - the NT speaks of being "born again", and chastises believers that should have matured more than they have (1 Cor. 3, Heb. 5)
We rejoice when someone becomes a Christian, but we should grieve if they do not grow!

The Doctrine of **Sanctification/Transformation** - Romans 12:1-2
Justification - the immediate declaration that a person is *positionally righteous* before God.
Sanctification - the progressive process of becoming *functionally righteous*.

A. What is Sanctification? - *The lifelong process of becoming what you already are.*

We should question whether we look more like Jesus than we did 5, 10, or 40 years ago.
Important: Get the order right - We are saved by grace alone, we obey as a response.
Paul's Letters
Begin with the *indicative* (stating facts): for example, Romans 1-11 and Galatians 1-4
End with the *imperative* (giving commands): for example, Romans 12-16 and Galatians 5-6
We are AGAINST EARNING, but we are NOT AGAINST EFFORT
Ephesians 2 - we are saved by grace, in order to do good works prepared in advance.

B. Who Accomplishes Sanctification? - *God or Us?*

Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, *for it is God who works* in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure. - Philippians 2:12-13
Paul Tripp says that the growing Christian is always working and resting. Working towards obedience, while resting in grace of Christ.

1. *What Does God Do* in Our Sanctification?

He who began a good work in you will bring it to completion… Philippians 1:6
How does the Spirit move us towards holiness?

- Convicts of sin
- Illuminates God's Word
- Prays for us
- Empowers our obedience
- Reminds us of our identity in Christ

2. *What Do I Do* in My Sanctification?

- *Be Patient*
  - sanctification is not what we get at the end, but who we become on the way.
- *Obey God's Law*
  - The law cannot save, yet it is still the path to life. God says that, in the new covenant, he will write his law on our hearts. (Jer. 31:33)
- *Mortify the Flesh* (kill the sin that opposes our growth)
  - "Be killing sin lest it be killing you." - John Owen
  - If sin desires to kill us, we cannot allow it resides comfortably in our lives.
- *Vivify Godliness* (animate the obedience that helps us grow)
  - Seek the things that are above, where Christ is… (Col. 3:1)
  - Pursue spiritual disciplines such as reading, praying, fasting, serving, etc..

Our good works in this world are not for a judge, but for a Father. We don't obey to be accepted, we are children who please the Father when we act in faith, serve our neighbors, and obey his instructions.

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SERMON REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. How long have you been a Christian? What Christian maturity can you see in your life during that time?
2. What is the difference between justification and sanctification? Why is *transformation* a helpful word to use when discussing sanctification?
3. Why is it important to get the order of these two doctrines correct?
4. How can we differentiate between “earning” and “effort”? Or, in other words, how can we actively obey God without becoming legalistic?
5. Re-read Philippians 2:12-13. Who is at work in our sanctification? Or, how does God work through me as I work towards him?
6. Are there sins in your life that you need to root out and kill? How can you resist temptation or put a stop to sinful patterns?
7. Are there areas of clear instruction that you need to obey? How can you pursue obedience in a more disciplined way?