GOD’S COMMAND TO SANCTIFY OURSELVES

The Chronological Path from Daily Purification to the First Resurrection Standing

Chapter I: The Mandatory Command to Sanctify Ourselves

The sovereign decree of Almighty God to His creation is not a casual invitation to personal improvement, but an unyielding, absolute mandate for total separation. Throughout the pages of Sacred Writ, the Lord establishes holiness not as an optional luxury for the spiritually elite, but as the foundational requirement for any who desire to walk with Him. To be sanctified is to be set apart, purged from the defilements of a fallen world, and reserved exclusively for divine use. Without this deliberate separation, a soul remains fundamentally cut off from the divine economy.

In the Old Testament, God laid this immutable standard upon the congregation of Israel, making it clear that His own holy nature is the ultimate pattern and justification for this demand. He commanded them:

> *“For I am the LORD your God: ye shall therefore sanctify yourselves, and ye shall be holy; for I am holy: neither shall ye defile yourselves with any manner of creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.” (Leviticus 11:44, KJV)*

This ancient command was never abolished or minimized by the introduction of the New Covenant; rather, its spiritual depth was intensified. The Apostle Peter re-established this exact precept as the operational baseline for every single believer traversing through the wilderness of this world. He warned against falling back into the lusts of former ignorance, writing:

> *“But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.” (1 Peter 1:15-16, KJV)*

To the average reader, the word 'conversation' in the King James Version does not merely mean spoken words; it encompasses one’s entire conduct, lifestyle, behavior, and daily choices. God demands an all-inclusive purity. This call initiates an urgent journey: a person cannot remain static in their natural condition and expect to belong to the Ruler of Heaven. The absolute command to sanctify oneself requires a total departure from the profane, establishing a visible boundary between the clean and the unclean.

Chapter II: The Process of Progressive Sanctification

Because God is completely holy, and man is not yet perfected, an immediate leap to structural perfection is impossible. Therefore, the scriptures reveal that before a believer can ever receive the permanent legal status of an unalterable overcomer, they must first enter the arduous, living crucible of progressive sanctification. This is the active, day-by-day practice of spiritual growth. It is a dynamic process where the believer, working under the direct influence of the Holy Spirit, systematically mortifies the deeds of the body and aligns their daily life with the divine standard.

The Apostle Paul explicitly identifies this ongoing moral purification as the direct, active will of God for our immediate earthly lives. In his letter to the Thessalonians, he writes:

> *"For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication: That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour;" (1 Thessalonians 4:3-4, KJV)*

Progressive sanctification is a literal highway that must be walked with deliberate intent throughout our earthly existence. It is not an automated or passive experience; it requires the daily yielding of our faculties, minds, and bodies to the reforming power of Truth. The prophet Isaiah spoke of this spiritual corridor as an exclusive route reserved solely for those undergoing active purification:

> *"And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein." (Isaiah 35:8, KJV)*

How does a believer practically execute this daily separation? The primary instrument chosen by God for this progressive refining is His own written Word. As the believer reads, meditates upon, and obeys the scriptures, the truth acts as a living water that cleanses the inner motives and outer habits. Jesus Christ Himself revealed this mechanism during His high priestly prayer for His followers:

> *"Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth." (John 17:17, KJV)*

This daily application of truth transforms the believer's mind, pulling them away from the dominant cultural patterns of the world and reshaping them into the image of Christ. This is not achieved in a single moment, but through gradual, incremental spiritual milestones, as described by Paul:

> *"And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." (Romans 12:2, KJV)*

> *"But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." (2 Corinthians 3:18, KJV)*

Chapter III: The Crucible of the Flesh and Urgent Warnings

The path of progressive sanctification is not a peaceful stroll, but an intense battlefield. The fallen human nature—the flesh—is in constant, violent rebellion against the promptings of the Holy Spirit. To successfully navigate this crucible, a believer must endure rigorous divine discipline, severe testing, and display persistent vigilance. The scriptures are filled with sobering warnings making it clear that failing to engage in this active process leads to spiritual ruin and ultimate disqualification from God's presence.

The author of Hebrews describes this pursuit as an athletic race requiring the stripping away of every entangling weight, warning that holiness is a non-negotiable prerequisite to seeing the Creator:

> *"Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord:" (Hebrews 12:14, KJV)*

God acts as a loving yet firm Father who actively disciplines His children to ensure they develop this necessary character. If a person avoids this refining process, they prove they do not truly belong to His household:

> *"But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons... Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live? For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness." (Hebrews 12:8-10, KJV)*

The scriptures leave no room for the false assumption that a person can indulge in practical unrighteousness while assuming they are secure. Paul provides a stark, unambiguous list of behaviors that are entirely incompatible with progressive sanctification, warning that those who persist in them are barred from the coming kingdom:

> *"Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God." (1 Corinthians 6:9-10, KJV)*

To prevent this disqualification, a believer must treat themselves like a vessel in a grand house, actively cleansing themselves from low, common, and defiled practices so they can be set apart for the Master's immediate use:

> *"If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work." (2 Timothy 2:21, KJV)*

Chapter IV: The Reward of Positional Sanctification – The 144,000 First Fruits

When a believer successfully endures the crucible of progressive sanctification, demonstrating an overcoming life of continuous obedience, they reach a monumental prophetic milestone. This is the receipt of positional sanctification in its ultimate, prophetic sense. Having been tried, tested, and purified through daily living practices, they are permanently set apart by God. They receive an unalterable structural status, being legally sealed as His absolute property—His chosen 'first fruits.'

This elite company of fully sanctified overcomers is detailed in the book of Revelation as the 144,000 standing victoriously upon Mount Zion. Their positional perfection is the direct result of their previous, successful endurance through the living practices of holiness:

> *"And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads... These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb. And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God." (Revelation 14:1, 4-5, KJV)*

To the wise reader, the description 'not defiled with women' and 'virgins' represents total spiritual fidelity. They refused to pollute themselves with the false religious systems, worldly ideologies, and moral corruptions of the earth. Because they completed their progressive sanctification, God applies an unalterable stamp: they are 'without fault before the throne.'

This definitive status guarantees them a primary role in the climax of human history: the First Resurrection. When Jesus Christ returns, these positionally sanctified overcomers are instantly transformed, receiving immortal bodies before the rest of humanity, entirely exempt from final judgment:

> *"Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years." (Revelation 20:6, KJV)*
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> *"Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." (1 Corinthians 15:51-52, KJV)*

Their positional sanctification is thus achieved as a permanent reward. God completely seals them spirit, soul, and body, preserving them blameless for His eternal kingdom, fulfilling the grand apostolic prayer:

> *"And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." (1 Thessalonians 5:23, KJV)*

Chapter V: The Magnificent Rewards of the Saints

The completion of this chronological journey—moving from the absolute command, through the daily practices of progressive sanctification, to the ultimate reward of positional sealing—culminates in an inheritance so vast it defies human language. The rewards granted to these fully perfected saints are physical, governmental, and relational, establishing them as permanent pillars in the fully realized Kingdom of God.

First, they receive a joint inheritance of the entire universe alongside Jesus Christ Himself. They are no longer mere servants, but legitimate legal heirs to everything the Father owns:

> *"The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together." (Romans 8:16-17, KJV)*
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> *"Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:" (Matthew 25:34, KJV)*

Second, they are given real, cosmic governmental authority. The saints who overcame their own fleshly desires are appointed as judges and rulers over the earth and the angelic realm, sitting directly upon thrones of dominion alongside Christ:

> *"Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters? Know ye not that we shall judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life?" (1 Corinthians 6:2-3, KJV)*
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> *"To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne." (Revelation 3:21, KJV)*

Finally, they receive the greatest reward of all: unmediated, face-to-face communion with Almighty God. The curse of separation is permanently destroyed, and the sanctified saints dwell in absolute intimacy with their Creator forever:

> *"And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him: And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads." (Revelation 22:3-4, KJV)*

Summary Matrix of the Sanctification Process

Stage & Sequence	Living Practices Required	Scriptural Milestones (KJV)	Resulting Eternal Status
1. The Absolute Call (Prerequisite)	Total separation from worldly conduct; answering the call to depart from profane environments.	Lev. 11:44 1 Pet. 1:15-16	Accountable and set apart for divine testing.

2. Progressive Refining (The Lifelong Walk)	Daily reading of the Word; mortifying the deeds of the body; yielding to the Holy Spirit.	John 17:17 Rom. 12:2 1 Thess. 4:3-4	Gradual transformation from 'glory to glory' in character.
3. The Overcoming Crucible (The Final Proof)	Enduring divine chastisement; remaining pure from spiritual adultery and worldly systems.	Heb. 12:14 2 Tim. 2:21 1 Cor. 6:9-10	Proven vessel, meet for the Master's use without disqualification.
4. Positional Sealing (The Ultimate Standing)	Receiving the unalterable divine mark of ownership upon the forehead as an elite overcomer.	Rev. 14:1-5 Rev. 20:6 1 Cor. 15:51-52	Sealed among the 144,000 First Fruits; in the First Resurrection.
5. The Eternal Reward (The Final State)	Reigning on thrones with Christ; administering cosmic judgment; face-to-face communion.	Rev. 3:21 Rev. 22:3-4 1 Cor. 6:2-3	Glorified joint-heir ruling in the unmediated presence of God.