



THE CHURCH OF GOD at JERUSALEM ACRES ■ Pastor David W. Kramer
WEDNESDAY NIGHT BIBLE STUDY ■ February 18, 2026



For most of my life I have heard a testimony in church that went something like this: *“Every night I pray and ask God to forgive me for my sins because I don’t want to possibly die in my sleep and end up in hell.”*

I am not questioning the motive behind this prayer, I am just questioning **WHY** we as born-again, spirit-filled believers feel like we are on the cusp of hell-fire-and-brimstone even though we have accepted Jesus Christ as our Savior and are believers. Therein lies the dilemma: Maybe we weren’t so “devout” today and feel like we are not worthy of salvation and the paradise that is promised to “faithful” believers.

Have you ever struggled with that concept? Have you ever felt that you have failed God—one too many times—and it’s not possible that you could inherit all that we read about in God’s Word? If so, this lesson is for you. Let’s investigate the **HOPE** that we as believers have. ***It’s a hope not based on our works***, but on the work of Jesus Christ—OUR LORD AND SAVIOR.

1. THE THREE TENSES OF SALVATION

- A. Have you ever heard this statement: “I am saved, I am being saved, and I will be saved”?
1) **PAST TENSE (Justification)**: “I am saved” refers to the moment of *justification*, where

one is saved from the penalty of sin through faith in Jesus Christ.

- » This happens when we say THE SINNER'S PRAYER and accept Jesus Christ as our Savior.
- » We ask Him to forgive us of all of our sins—which He does thus making us *justified with God*. We are no longer “sinners” but “believers.”
- » We invite Him to be Lord of our life.
- » We start on our journey to follow Jesus all the days of our life.
- » Our ultimate goal is to end up spending eternity with Jesus in Paradise.

2) PRESENT TENSE (Sanctification): "I am being saved" indicates the ongoing process of sanctification, where believers are being saved from the power of sin in their daily lives.

A. The word *sanctification* means: *to set apart for special use*. To “sanctify” a person is to make them “holy”.

- » Sanctification is the second definite work of grace wrought by the blood of Christ, which purges us from the **NATURE OF SIN**.
- * How many of us know a thing or two about the **NATURE OF SIN**?
- * I don't care how long you have been saved, filled with the Holy Spirit, and attended church faithfully...you still have to fight that inherent **NATURE OF SIN!**

B. Due to the fall of Adam, all mankind is cursed with the **NATURE OF SIN**.

- » What is this nature? It is *the nature which causes him to commit sin in spite of his desire not to do so*.
- » This is revealed in Psalm 51:5: "*Behold, I was shaped in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.*"
- » This was the nature of every man, for the sin of Adam was passed on to every man and woman born (Romans 5:14,15).

C. The ineffectiveness of the sacrifices of the Old Testament Law is revealed in the fact that, though they provided atonement and justification for sins, they did not destroy the nature of man that caused him to sin. So, sin continued.

- » Hebrews 9:13,14;10:1,2 reveal that the sacrifices of the Law could not make those who were repenting PERFECT (whole, mature) because they could not purge the conscience. *The purging of the conscience from dead works is **SANCTIFICATION***.

D. Paul explains this purging of the conscience further in Colossians 2:11-12. He says that the people were circumcised SPIRITUALLY in putting off the body of sin of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ.

- » This *circumcision of the heart* removed the nature of sin, the cause of sin.
- » The born-again experience only brings about *a forgiving of past sins* while this experience removes the *body of sins*. It is interesting to note the parallel between the natural and the spiritual.

E. **IN THE NATURAL REALM:** After natural birth, a child may be circumcised. This process does not remove any impurity, BUT IT DOES REMOVE A **CAUSE** OF IMPURITY OR UNCLEANNES.

- » **IN THE SPIRITUAL REALM**, when one is born again, he still has the excess of the flesh over his heart, the organ which symbolically reproduces the likeness of Christ in him.
- » Sanctification removes this body of sin, this excess fleshly element that brings about impurity. *Once removed, there is **NOTHING** to bring about an involuntary recurrence of impurity in one's heart.*

F. In short, *the nature of sin has been cut away* by the sword of the Spirit to produce the likeness of Christ in the heart of the believer.

» In Colossians 2:12, Paul goes on to show that this circumcision is a baptism in which we are buried with Christ.

* We need to get a VISUAL IMAGE in our mind.

* We go down as one thing...and we emerge as something brand new.

* **We went down a SINNER – and we emerge as a BELIEVER!**

* **We went down as POWERLESS – and we emerge POWERFUL!**



G. This baptism is clarified in Romans 6:1-8 where Paul tells us that **when we are baptized into Jesus—we are baptized into His death**. *"Therefore, we are buried with Him by baptism into death."* (Note also Paul's statement in Galatians 2:20: *"I am crucified with Christ."*)

» In **ROMANS 6:6-8**, Paul goes on to reveal the nature of this baptism in the death (blood) of Jesus, saying,

6 *"knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin.*

7 *For he who has died has been freed from sin.*

8 *Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him,"*

H. We are told that when we have *been baptized into His death* (blood baptism) **we are dead to sin, the body of sin is destroyed, and there is no more nature of sin in us**.

» Now, if we stopped right there—we would be in paradise—right?

» We would have NO MORE PROBLEMS.

» We would simply SERVE GOD UNTIL HE RETURNS!

» Easy, peasy—right?

» As Paul Harvey would say, "And now, for the rest of the story..."

I. **This is not to say that temptation is destroyed.**

» However, the *inherent desire to sin* is removed.

» Before Jesus, men were incapable of prevailing over sin.

» You can read the Old Testament to see how that sin prevailed over God's Kingdom (Israel), God's Chosen People (Judah), and even God's chosen servants.

* I think of King Solomon who was described by God as the wisest man ever in I Kings 3:12.

J. Did King Solomon ultimately make it to heaven? I've asked myself this question (in my mind) many times in my life.

» He was chosen by God. He was the son of King David. He was extremely wise (and was famous for being wise).

» However....He failed God SPECTACULARLY!

» One commentator says it this way: *"The book of Ecclesiastes [written by King Solomon] is a dark study on a life lived apart from God. Solomon looks back over his wasted years and finds no joy in them, only futility, vanity, and "a chasing after the wind" (Ecclesiastes 1:14). But he had learned his lesson—albeit the hard way—and he wraps up the book with this advice: "Now all has been heard; here is the conclusion of the matter: Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the duty of all mankind. For God will bring every deed into judgment, including every hidden thing, whether it is good or evil" (Ecclesiastes 12:13–14). This surely sounds like a man who has returned to the Lord and is trusting in Him."*

- K. Acts 22:16 reveals this process and the manner in which this blood baptism or sanctification takes place. Ananias instructed Paul; *"Why tarriest thou? Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord."* Notice that to be baptized so *as to wash away sins* is accomplished by calling on the name of the Lord.
- » This baptism is sanctification, baptism in the blood or death of Jesus which destroys the body of sin. After we have been sanctified, we are then set apart and are *"a vessel for honor, sanctified and useful for the Master, prepared for every good work"* (II Timothy 2:21b).
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- L. The Church of God also teaches progressive individual self-sanctification—the living of a sanctified life. **The sanctified heart then corrects the fleshly weaknesses.**
- » It is necessary for every person to continue to renew their sanctification progressively, for business affairs and necessary resting and recreation draw men's minds from God and His work. It is necessary to *"keep under"* one's body *"and bring it into subjection"* (I Corinthians 9:27).
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- M. Further clarification of progressive self-sanctification is found in II Corinthians 7:1, *"Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse [sanctify] ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit perfecting holiness in the fear of God."*
- » We may be born again and sanctified; however, we must seek continually to cleanse ourselves from filthiness of flesh and spirit to reach the state of Bible perfection/maturity.
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- N. Another facet of sanctification is revealed in Jesus' statement: *"Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth"* (John 17:17). Jesus prayed to His Father that He would sanctify (set apart) His disciples as a collective body.
- » Sanctification takes place **through the Word of God.**
 - » The truth of this statement is found in Ephesians 5:23-27, where Paul explained the relationship of Christ and the Church. He said in verse 25: *"Husbands, love your wives even as Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself for it...that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word."*
 - » This shows that there is sanctification or cleansing of the church by the washing (purifying) of the Word of God. The church must be purified as a body in the Word of God, so that He *"might present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."*
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3) FUTURE TENSE (Glorification): "I will be saved" points to the future hope of glorification, where believers will be saved from the presence of sin in eternity.

CONCLUSION – When I chose to move to Cleveland, Tennessee some 30 years ago, I became a **RESIDENT** of Tennessee. I set up a home, I found a job, and I made a life for myself here in Tennessee. All kinds of things have happened to me since I came here in 1996. I've experienced the birth of my youngest daughter, the dissolution of my first marriage, the death of my parents, a second marriage to a blonde bombshell, I became a pastor, I survived tongue cancer, and so on. Throughout all of these events, I have remained a resident of Tennessee.

The same principle applies to us as Believers. When I chose to accept Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior, I became a **CHRISTIAN**. No matter what I go through in my life, I am still a **CHRISTIAN**. If I have a failure today, I am still a **CHRISTIAN**. I can confess my sin and ask God for forgiveness. I John 5:17 tells us, *"All wicked actions are sin, but not every sin leads to death."*

Just because I am tempted by sin, does not mean that I am a sinner. Even Jesus was tempted, right? Quit beating yourself because you fell. Get up and walk anew in the power of His might—let His Holy Spirit help you! You are a **CHRISTIAN!**