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## THE HOLY SPIRIT SANCTIFIES

Not "sanitizes" which means making something pure. That's close. "Sanctifies" means becoming holy, more like Christ. It's what the Holy Spirit does - on purpose, and with great power. Being made holy is the believer's new spiritual reality, "in union with Christ." You've been reborn by the Spirit, and so you must grow up into Christian maturity - also by the Holy Spirit.

This "positional" truth means your new identity is "in Christ" and Christ is "in you." Passages like Romans 8:9-13 spell out how the "real you" is no longer *"in the flesh"* but spiritually reborn *"in the Spirit."* Being made holy is also "progressive." You are in the process of realizing experientially what is true about you eternally. You experience eternal positional truth progressively, as you grow in grace and faith.

**3- God says believers are becoming holy - PURPOSEFULLY.** God is working out His plan, to make believers in Christ more like Him. Romans 8:29 says *"those whom He foreknew He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son."* Colossians 3:9 says *"you have put off the old self and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its Creator."* Ephesians 3:24 says *"put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness."* You have become a child of God by spiritual rebirth, therefore you are to grow up, and become like Him.

This is all part of the Old Testament promises of the Holy Spirit. Ezekiel 36:25 says *"I will give you a new heart and a new Spirit. I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes and obey My Word."* God has a plan, and He purposefully and progressively works it out. Becoming more like Christ, sanctified, isn't by the strength of your flesh, but rather by the power of the Holy Spirit. If you are made alive by the Spirit, then walk by the Spirit, and you'll bear the Spirit's fruit (Galatians 5:22-25).

**4- God says believers are becoming holy - POWERFULLY.** The apostle Paul echoes these truths in Ephesians. Chapter 1 talks about *"the immeasurable greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the work of His great might."* Chapter 3 talks about *"being strengthened with power through His Spirit in your inner being"* - through the Holy Spirit, *"Him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us."*

The apostle Peter agrees in 2 Peter 1, *"His divine power has granted us His promises so that you may become partakers of the divine nature... for this very reason make every effort... be all the more diligent."* But not by your own strength - rather by the Holy Spirit, *"since you are no longer in the flesh but in the Spirit, therefore by the Spirit you must put to death the deeds of the flesh"* (Romans 8:9-13).

**HOW does God do this?** Making your positional truth progressively real in your life, according to His purpose and by His power? It's what Jesus prayed for His disciples in John 17:17, *"sanctify them in the truth - Your Word is truth."* Romans 12:2 says *"do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind."* 1 Corinthians 2:12 says *"we have received the Spirit who is from God, that we might understand the things freely given us by God."* 2 Corinthians 3:18 says the Holy Spirit removes the veil over God's Word, so that *"we are being transformed into the same image"* of Christ.

In brief, we can understand this holy process as an operative principle: *"The Spirit of God works the Word of God so the people of God become like the Son of God."* That's how the positional truth of who you ARE in Christ becomes progressively REAL to you, as God powerfully works out His purpose, by the Spirit.

In dark days of Nazi-occupied Holland, the Gestapo was everywhere. Jews were disappearing. *"What should we do?"* some Christians asked a former missionary. *"I cannot tell you what to do but I can tell you who you are. If you know who you are, then you will know what to do."* Hendrik Kraemer read them 1 Peter 2:9, first written to scared Christians in the first century: *"You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for His own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light."* The people then started the Dutch underground resistance.

What is TRUE about you in Christ is the reason you are able to obey God's commands. In the same way, believer, read and trust and obey God's Word, about how He intends you to become like Jesus. Know who YOU are in Christ, then live it out - all by the Holy Spirit's power within you!