

Retrocession a Prerequisite of Sanctification

by Daniel Steele

The sermon argues that the theory of successive partial sanctifications is flawed and that entire sanctification requires a live, growing, and intensely earnest Christian.

Scripture: Proverbs 4:18, 1 Corinthians 9:24, Philippians 3:12, Hebrews 6:1, 2 Peter 3:18

Topics: "Christian Perfection", "Sanctification"

Description

Daniel Steele discusses the theory of successive partial sanctifications, highlighting the misconception of implying backslidings after every cleansing and the confusion between entire sanctification and being reclaimed from spiritual decline. He emphasizes that true inward purity is grasped by live, growing, and intensely earnest Christians, discouraging the preaching of Christian perfection to those who have retrograded or are indifferent to spiritual advancement.

Transcript

THE theory of successive partial sanctifications it up to light," but never reaching the extinction of depravity, seems to imply successive backslidings after every cleansing:

When justified, every person is, in the relative or comparative sense, entirely justified. And whenever, at any subsequent point, after a season of retrocession, he comes fully up to his light and once more walks in unclouded communion he becomes again entirely sanctified, in this lower sense.

Thus our author confounds entire sanctification with what has been called being reclaimed from spiritual decline. Any acquaintance with the law of spiritual progress shows that only live, growing, and intensely earnest Christians grasp the prize of inward purity.

In fact, Wesley discourages preaching Christian perfection to those who have retrograded and are indifferent to spiritual advancement. This is his answer to the question, "In what manner should we preach sanctification?" "Scarce at all to those who are not pressing forward," or "to those who are always drawing rather than driving." The good sense of Wesley in this matter is in striking contrast with the crudity of our author, who would make "a season of retrocession" a preparation for entire sanctification "in the relative sense."

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