The Doctrines of Justification and Sanctification
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In a revelation given in 1830 to the prophet Joseph Smith, the Lord stated:

And we know that justification through the grace of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is just and true;
And we know also, that sanctification through the grace of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is just and true, to all those who love and serve God with all their mights, minds, and strength. (D&C 20:30-31)

The doctrines of justification and sanctification are enigmatic doctrines for most members of the Church. The terms are not often used in the vocabulary of the Church and, therefore, most members are unfamiliar with their meanings and how they relate to the gospel. Nevertheless, an understanding of these doctrines is important in comprehending man’s relationship to the atonement of Jesus Christ.

Question of Repentance and Baptism
After Adam and Eve were driven from the garden of Eden, the Lord called upon Adam, saying, “I am God; I made the world, and men before they were in the flesh.” He then declared, “If thou wilt turn unto me, and hearken unto my voice, and believe, and repent of all thy transgressions, and be baptized, even in water, in the name of mine Only Begotten Son, who is full of grace and truth, which is Jesus Christ, the only name which shall be given under heaven, whereby salvation shall come unto the children of men, ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, asking all things in his name, and whatsoever ye shall ask, it shall be given you.” Adam responded, saying, “Why is it that men must repent and be baptized in water?” (Moses 6:52-53)

In answering Adam’s question, the Lord introduced the doctrines of justification and sanctification. The Lord’s answer is in two parts. In the first part, Adam is informed that he has no need to repent of his transgression in the garden: “Behold I have forgiven thee thy transgression in the Garden of Eden” (Moses 6:51-53). That is, Adam and Eve had acted appropriately in the garden by eating the fruit thus opening the way for God’s children to come to mortality. Therefore, the Lord forgave them unconditionally for their transgression in the garden: Adam and Eve did not need to repent of their eating of the forbidden fruit. “Hence came the saying abroad among the people, that the Son of God hath atoned for original guilt [Adam’s transgression in the garden], wherein the sins of the parents cannot be answered upon the heads of the children, for they are whole from the foundation of the world” (Moses 6:54).

The Fall Brought All Mankind Into a Fallen State
In the second part of his answer, the Lord explained why he has need of repentance and baptism. The Lord said: “Inasmuch as thy children are conceived in sin, even so when they begin to grow up, sin conceiveth in their hearts, and they taste the bitter, that they may know to prize the good” (Moses 6:55). The meaning of this statement is clear when the following is understood. Though Adam’s transgression in the garden was unconditionally forgiven, the consequences of his transgression would have lasting effects upon all mankind. With the fall, the physical nature of Adam and Eve changed. They became mortal or natural, subject to all the ills of mortality including the capacity to sin. This mortal condition would be passed on to their children and therefore they would be “conceived in sin.” Of this, Elder Bruce R. McConkie wrote: “The natural birth creates a natural man, and the natural man is an enemy to God. In his fallen state he is carnal, sensual, and devilish by nature. Appetites and passions govern his life and he is alive -- acutely so -- to all that is evil and wicked in the world” (A New Witness for the Articles of Faith, p. 282). Further, the world into which a child is born is sinful. Therefore, the enticement of sin is continually before him. Consequently, when children are born and “begin to grow up, sin conceiveth in their hearts, and they taste the bitter, that they may know to prize the good.” The Lord then explained that experiencing the knowledge of good and evil is an important part of the mortal experience: “And it is given unto them [Adam and Eve’s children] to know good from evil; wherefore they are agents unto themselves” (Moses
The Positive Consequences of the Knowledge of Good and Evil

The acquisition of the knowledge of good and evil has both positive and negative consequences. On the positive side, acquiring a knowledge of good and evil is vital for God’s children. Without it they could not become as he is. Elder James E. Talmage wrote: “A knowledge of good and evil is essential to the advancement that God has made possible for His children to achieve; and this knowledge can be best gained by actual experience, with the contrasts of good and its opposite plainly discernible” (Articles of Faith, p. 54). Mortality is necessary for obtaining the knowledge of good and evil. Elder Talmage said: “A knowledge of good and evil is essential to progress, and the school of experience in mortality has been provided for the acquirement of such knowledge” (The Vitality of Mormonism, p. 46). President George Q. Cannon declared: “It is for this purpose that we are here. God has given unto us this probation for the express purpose of obtaining a knowledge of good and evil—of understanding evil and being able to overcome the evil—and by overcoming it receive the exaltation and glory that He has in store for us” (Journal of Discourses, 26:190-191). In light of this, at the beginning of World War I, the First Presidency gave the following instruction to the Church:

God, doubtless, could avert war, prevent crime, destroy poverty, chase away darkness, overcome error, and make all things bright, beautiful and joyful. But this would involve the destruction of a vital and fundamental attribute in man--the right of agency. It is for the benefit of His sons and daughters that they become acquainted with evil as well as good, with darkness as well as light, with error as well as truth, and with the results of the infraction of eternal laws. Therefore he has permitted the evils which have been brought about by the acts of His creatures, but will control their ultimate results for His own glory and the progress and exaltation of His sons and daughters, when they have learned obedience by the things they suffer. The contrasts experienced in this world of mingled sorrow and joy are educational in their nature, and will be the means of raising humanity to a full appreciation of all that is right and true and good. (Messages of the First Presidency of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, vol. 4, pp.325-326)

The Negative Consequences of the Knowledge of Good and Evil

The negative side of all this is that the acquisition of knowledge of good and evil brings dire consequences both in mortality and in eternity. An understanding of these consequences are necessary in understanding the doctrines of justification and sanctification.

The Book of Mormon reveals that the fall of Adam brought upon Adam, Eve, and “all mankind a spiritual death as well as a temporal, that is, they were cut off from the presence of the Lord” (Alma 42:7,9; see also 2 Nephi 2:21; 9:6; Mosiah 16:3; Alma 12:22; 22:12; Helaman 14:16; Mormon 9:12). Together these two deaths comprise what the Book of Mormon calls the “first death” (2 Nephi 9:15; Alma 11:45; Helaman 14:16). Mormon also called it “the curse of Adam” (Moroni 8:8). This death was unconditionally atoned for by Jesus Christ. Therefore, all mankind will eventually free from the effects of the consequence of Adam’s transgression.

However, while in this fallen state, man transgressed the laws of God causing the natural man to “become carnal, sensual, and devilish, by nature” (Alma 42:10; see also D&C 20:20; Moses 5:13; 6:49). Abinadi explained that the condition man inherited by the fall is the very means by which he experiences the knowledge of good and evil. He taught that Satan “did beguile our first parents, which was the cause of their fall; which was the cause of all mankind becoming carnal, sensual, devilish, knowing evil from good, subjecting themselves to the devil” (Mosiah 16:3). Elder James E. Talmage wrote: “From Father Adam we have inherited all the ills to which flesh is heir; but such are necessarily incident to a knowledge of good and evil, by the proper use of which knowledge man may become even as the Gods” (Articles of Faith, p. 70).

Because of this condition, man’s relationship with God changed. The brother of Jared described this relationship while pleading to the Lord for a blessing: “We know that thou art holy and dwellest in the heavens, and that we are unworthy before thee; because of the fall our natures [i.e., physical bodies] are evil continually” (Ether 3:2). Further, King Benjamin stated that “the natural man is an enemy to God, and has been since the fall of Adam” (Mosiah 3:19). Beyond the mortal consequences, the Book of Mormon teaches that the fall of Adam brought upon mankind eternal consequences. Jacob declared: “For behold, if the flesh should rise no more our spirits must become subject to that angel who fell from before the presence of the Eternal God, and became the devil, to rise no more. And our spirits must have become like unto him, and we become devils, angels to a devil, to be shut out from the presence of our God,
and to remain with the father of lies, in misery, like unto himself” (2 Nephi 9:8-9).

Each Man’s Personal Fall Results in Man Not Being Justified

Each person who suffers this condition of carnality, experiences a personal fall when they transgress the laws of God. This is a condition for which each person who has sinned is accountable. The transgression of the laws of God also results in eternal consequences. Alma taught his son that each law of God has “a punishment is affixed.” When a law is broken, justice demands that the penalty must be paid, for “justice claimeth the creature and executeth the law, and the law inflicteth the punishment; if not so, the works of justice would be destroyed, and God would cease to be God” (Alma 42:22). The penalty of a broken law is as “eternal as the life of the soul should be” (Alma 42:16). Elder Dallin H. Oaks stated: “According to eternal law, the consequences that follow from the justice of God are severe and permanent. When a commandment is broken, a commensurate penalty is imposed. This happens automatically” (“Sins, Crimes, and Atonement,” An address given to CES religious educators, 7 February 1992, p 1). The punishment affixed is as “eternal as the life of the soul should be” (Alma 42:16).

Lehi taught that since all men violate the laws of God through sinful acts, “by the law no flesh is justified” (2 Nephi 2:5, emphasis added). The term justify means to be free from blame or found guiltless (Webster’s New World Dictionary). Because of each man’s individual or personal fall, all are found guilty of sin and therefore not justified. The result, Lehi explained, is that “men are cut off. Yea, by the temporal law they were cut off; and also, by the spiritual law they perish from that which is good, and become miserable forever” (2 Nephi 2:5).

The Doctrine of Justification

A way was needed whereby man might become justified from their sins. Or in other words, a way was needed whereby guilty man might become free from the eternal consequences of their sins and thereby be found guiltless. The process provided by the Lord is called justification. Justification is a legal term that means to become acquitted from sin. It is the act by which a sinner is freed from the penalty of sin and is accepted by God as righteous (Webster’s New World Dictionary).

The Lord stated that justification comes “through the grace of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” (D&C 20:30). As part of the process of the atonement, Jesus Christ suffered and paid the eternal consequences of each man’s “individual sins” (D&C 138:19). The atonement for individual sins satisfies the demands of justice and establishes a “plan of mercy” that can save each man from their individual fallen condition. Alma said: “And now, the plan of mercy could not be brought about except an atonement should be made; therefore God himself atoneth for the sins of the world, to bring about the plan of mercy, to appease the demands of justice, that God might be a perfect, just God, and a merciful God also” (Alma 42:15).

Unlike redemption from the fall of Adam which is unconditional, justification of personal sin is conditional. It requires the sinner to exercise faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, repent of their sinful acts, and enter into a covenant with God through the ordinance of baptism. The Lord declared: “That as many as would believe and be baptized in his holy name, and endure in faith to the end, should be saved” (D&C 20:25).

The Book of Mormon emphasizes the necessity of repentance to appease the demands of justice as part of the justification process. Because Christ suffered the eternal consequences of our sins, repentance will release man from the grips of justice. Alma explained: “according to justice, the plan of redemption could not be brought about, only on conditions of repentance of men . . . for except it were for these conditions, mercy could not take effect except it should destroy the work of justice” (Alma 42:13). “Wherefore, redemption cometh in and through the Holy Messiah,” said Lehi, “Behold, he offereth himself a sacrifice for sin, to answer the ends of the law, unto all those who have a broken heart and a contrite spirit; and unto none else can the ends of the law be answered” (2 Nephi 2:6-7). Because of his sacrifice, Christ stands “betwixt them and justice” having “satisfied the demands of justice” (Mosiah 15:9). Thus, Amulek stated:

And thus he shall bring salvation to all those who shall believe on his name; this being the intent of this last sacrifice, to bring about the bowels of mercy, which overpowereth justice, and bringeth about means unto men that they may have faith unto repentance.

And thus mercy can satisfy the demands of justice, and encircles them in the arms of safety, while he that exercises no faith unto repentance is exposed to the whole law of the demands of justice; therefore only unto him that has faith unto repentance is brought about the great and eternal
As part of the plan of salvation, it became necessary that “the days of the children of men were prolonged, according to the will of God, that they might repent while in the flesh; wherefore, their state became a state of probation, and their time was lengthened” (2 Nephi 2:21; see also Alma 12:24; 42:4,10,13). This is affirmed by the Lord himself in latter-day revelation:

But, behold, I say unto you that I, the Lord God, gave unto Adam and unto his seed, that they should not die as to the temporal death, until I, the Lord God, should send forth angels to declare unto them repentance and redemption, through faith on the name of mine Only Begotten Son.

And thus did I, the Lord God, appoint unto man the day of his probation--that by his natural death he might be raised in immortality unto eternal life, even as many as would believe;

And they that believe not unto eternal damnation; for they cannot be redeemed from their spiritual fall, because they repent not;

For they love darkness rather than light, and their deeds are evil, and they receive their wages of whom they list to obey. (D&C 29:42-44)

Justification, then, is the process by which man is acquitted from sin and made guiltless. The story of Enos is a perfect example of the justification process. Enos described the repentance process in these words: “I will tell you of the wrestle which I had before God, before I received a remission of my sins. Behold, I went to hunt beasts in the forests; and the words which I had often heard my father speak concerning eternal life, and the joy of the saints, sunk deep into my heart. And my soul hungered...” He then demonstrated his faith by turning to the Lord: “...and I kneeled down before my Maker, and I cried unto him in mighty prayer and supplication for mine own soul; and all the day long did I cry unto him; yea, and when the night came I did still raise my voice high that it reached the heavens. And there came a voice unto me, saying: Enos, thy sins are forgiven thee, and thou shalt be blessed.” Then note these words: “And I, Enos, knew that God could not lie; wherefore, my guilt was swept away” (Enos 1:2-6, emphasis added). Enos now found himself justified, or acquitted of sin. He knew he was justified because the guilt was removed. The story of Alma the younger is also a marvelous example of the justification process (see Alma 36:4-24).

A comment needs to be made about the guilt that is removed. Guilt that is God given is God removed. It comes as part of the light of Christ to help men see the error of their ways and cause them to repent. However, guilt is not to be confused with personal disappointment, remorse, and regret. Man brings these emotions upon himself. Personal disappointment and regret most often come at the very moment guilt is experienced and therefore often are wrongfully associated with guilt. After repentance, guilt is removed by the Lord but the personal disappointment and regret may remain. Therefore, some feel, wrongly, that they haven’t been forgiven because they still feel these emotions. They must distinguish between that which comes from God and that which they have produced themselves.

The term justification is also used in another sense. The term justify also means to prove or qualify as surety (Webster’s New World Dictionary). That is, to justify means to ratify, approve, confirm, or give authorized sanction of an action. All actions relative to the gospel, such as repentance, baptism, temple marriage, etc., must be justified through the Holy Ghost or they are not enforce after this life is over. The Lord has stated: “All covenants, contracts, bonds, obligations, oaths, vows, performances, connections, associations, or expectations, that are not made and entered into and sealed by the Holy Spirit of promise, of him who is anointed, both as well for time and for all eternity, and that too most holy, by revelation and commandment through the medium of mine anointed, whom I have appointed on the earth to hold this power... are of no efficacy, virtue, or force in and after the resurrection from the dead” (D & C 132:7). Therefore when an action is “sealed by the Holy Spirit of promise” it is approved or ratified by the Holy Ghost as being legitimate.

In General Conference, Elder Bruce R. McConkie, gave the following instruction regarding justification:

Now, to justify is to seal, or to ratify, or to approve; and it is very evident from these revelations that every act that we do, if it is to have binding and sealing virtue in eternity, must be justified by the Spirit. In other words, it must be ratified by the Holy Ghost; or in other words, it must be sealed by the Holy Spirit of Promise. All of us know that we can deceive men. We can deceive our bishops or the other Church agents, unless at the moment their minds are lighted by the spirit of revelation; but we cannot deceive the Lord. We cannot get from him an unearned blessing. There will be an eventual day when all men will get exactly and precisely what they have merited and earned, neither adding to nor subtracting from. You cannot with success lie to the Holy Ghost.
Now let us take a simple illustration. If an individual is to gain an inheritance in the celestial world, he has to enter in at the gate of baptism, that ordinance being performed under the hands of a legal administrator. If he comes forward prepared by worthiness, that is, if he is just and true, and gains baptism under the hands of a legal administrator, he is justified by the Spirit in the act which has been performed; that is, it is ratified by the Holy Ghost, or it is sealed by the Holy Spirit of Promise. As a result it is of full force and validity in this life and in the life to come.

If an individual thereafter turns from righteousness and goes off and wallows in the mire of iniquity, then the seal is removed, and so we have this principle which keeps the unworthy from gaining unearned blessings. The Lord has placed a bar which stops the progress of the unrighteous; he has placed a requirement which we must meet. We must gain the approval and receive the sanctifying power of the Holy Ghost if eventually and in eternity we are to reap the blessings that we hope to reap.

The same thing that is true of baptism is true of marriage. If a couple comes forward worthyly, a couple who is just and true, and they enter into that ordinance under the hands of a legal administrator, a seal of approval is recorded in heaven. Then assuming they do not thereafter break that seal, assuming they keep the covenant and press forward in steadfastness and in righteousness, they go on in the next world as husband and wife; and in and after the resurrection, that ordinance performed in such a binding manner here has full force, efficacy, and validity. (Conference Report, April 1956, p.65)

Both senses of the term justification are meant when the word is used in gospel discussions. When one is justified, he is acquitted of sin. This can only come through compliance to the principles and ordinances of the gospel. When one has exercised faith in Christ, repented of his sins, is baptized, and thereafter remains faithful to the teachings of the gospel, then the same person is justified. That is, he is sealed by the Holy Spirit of promise thus acquitting him from his sins and approving him qualified to regain God’s presence and receive eternal life.

With the sealing of the Holy Spirit of Promise comes not only eternal blessings but mortal blessings as well. President James E. Faust has said:

I wish to say a word about the Holy Spirit of Promise, which is the sealing and ratifying power of the Holy Ghost. To have a covenant or ordinance sealed by the Holy Spirit of Promise is a compact through which the inherent blessings will be obtained, provided those seeking the blessing are true and faithful (see 76:50-54).

For example, when the covenant of marriage for time and all eternity, the culminating gospel ordinance, is sealed by the Holy Spirit of Promise, it can literally open the windows of heaven for great blessings to flow to a married couple who seek for those blessings. Such marriages become rich, whole, and sacred. Though each party to the marriage can maintain his or her separate identity, yet together in their covenants they can be like two vines wound inseparably around each other. Each thinks of his or her companion before thinking of self. (Ensign, April, 1996, p. 5-6)

The Doctrine of Sanctification

Justification is only part of what must occur before man can be brought back into the presence of God. Nephi explained that when man commits sin, he becomes unclean or filthy. He then declared: “I say unto you, the kingdom of God is not filthy, and there cannot any unclean thing enter into the kingdom of God; wherefore there must needs be a place of filthiness prepared for that which is filthy (1 Nephi 15:34). Justification acquits man from sin but it does not cleanse him from the effects of sin. The process of cleansing man from the effects of sin is known as sanctification. To sanctify means to be made free from the effects of sin, to be purified (Webster’s New World Dictionary). Sanctification is the process by which one is cleansed and purified from sin.

The following example will serve to illustrate the difference between justification and sanctification. Suppose a man, who had smoked for twenty years, finally realized the error of his ways and repented of his actions. He quite smoking, cold turkey, and never picked up another cigarette the rest of his life. He could be justified or acquitted of his sin and allowed to join the Church and participate in the blessings of the gospel. Though he quite smoking, he nevertheless would still suffer the effects of his sinful habit. His lungs would remain blackened because of the continually inhalation of smoke filled with tar and nicotine. What can he do about the effects of his sin? Nothing! The same is true with any sin. Though we may repent of our sins and never do them again, nonetheless, we cannot do away with the effects of our sins. We need divine help in order to become clean. This cleansing comes through the sanctifying powers of the Holy Ghost.

Sanctification comes through the gift of the Holy Ghost which is often called the baptism of fire. One of the primary missions of the Holy Ghost, and one not often
spoken of, is his power to sanctify man from sin. Elder Bruce R. McConkie has written:

To be sanctified is to be saved; to fall short of sanctification is to fail to gain full salvation. Only the sanctified gain eternal life. To be sanctified is to be clean; it is a state of purity and spotlessness in which no taint of sin is found. Only those who die as to sin and are born again to righteousness, becoming thus new creatures of the Holy Ghost, are numbered with the sanctified.

It is the work and mission and ministry of the Holy Spirit of God to sanctify the souls of men. This is his assigned labor in the Eternal Godhead. How he does it we do not know, except that it is a work that can only be performed by a spirit being, and hence the need for one of his personality, status, and standing in the Supreme Presidency of the universe.

Baptism of the Spirit is the way and the means whereby sanctification is made available. Thus, Jesus commands all the “ends of the earth” to be baptized in water “that ye may be sanctified by the reception of the Holy Ghost, that ye may stand spotless before me at the last day.” (3 Nephi 27:20.) Truly, the Holy Ghost is a sanctifier, and the extent to which men receive and enjoy the gift of the Holy Ghost is the extent to which they are sanctified. In the lives of most of us, sanctification is an ongoing process, and we obtain that glorious status by degrees as we overcome the world and become saints in deed as well as in name. (A New Witness for the Articles of Faith, pp. 265-266; emphasis added)

When one is sanctified from sin, he is cleansed from all effects of sin. It is as if he never had committed the sin. Nevertheless, the knowledge of good and evil acquired through sin remains. Without question, Alma eventually became sanctified of his sinful past. However, it is evident that he never forgot his sins or the pains associated with them. Years after he had been forgiven or justified of his sins, he declared to his son:

And now, behold, when I thought this, I could remember my pains no more; yea, I was harrowed up by the memory of my sins no more.

And oh, what joy, and what marvelous light I did behold; yea, my soul was filled with joy as exceeding as was my pain!

Yea, I say unto you, my son, that there could be nothing so exquisite and so bitter as were my pains. Yea, and again I say unto you, my son, that on the other hand, there can be nothing so exquisite and sweet as was my joy. (Alma 36:18-20)

Alma had come to know by his own experience good from evil!

When one is sanctified, he has received a full remission of his sins. The Lord declared that a remission of sins is two fold process requiring both the baptism of water and the baptism of fire, “yea, even the Holy Ghost” (D&C 19:31). Baptism alone does not remit sins. It only begins the remission process. The actual remission of sins comes through the Holy Ghost. Nephi declared: “For the gate by which he should enter is repentance and baptism by water; and then cometh a remission of your sins by fire and by the Holy Ghost” (2 Nephi 31:17). Likewise, the Savior taught the Nephites, “Now this is the commandment: Repent, all ye ends of the earth, and come unto me and be baptized in my name, that ye may be sanctified by the reception of the Holy Ghost, that ye may stand spotless before me at the last day” (3 Ne. 27:20). Joseph Smith said: “I further believe in the gift of the Holy Ghost by the laying on of hands. Evidence by Peter’s preaching on the day of Pentecost, Acts 2:38. You might as well baptize a bag of sand as a man, if not done in view of the remission of sins and getting of the Holy Ghost. Baptism by water is but half a baptism, and is good for nothing without the other half -- that is, the baptism of the Holy Ghost. (Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, p. 314). Elder McConkie wrote:

Baptism is for the remission of sins; it is the ordinance, ordained of God, to cleanse a human soul. Baptism is in water and of the Spirit and is preceded by repentance. The actual cleansing of the soul comes when the Holy Ghost is received. The Holy Ghost is a sanctifier whose divine commission is to burn dross and evil out of a human soul as though by fire, thus giving rise to the expression baptism of fire, which is the baptism of the Spirit. Forgiveness is assured when the contrite soul receives the Holy Spirit, because the Spirit will not dwell in an unclean tabernacle. (A New Witness for the Articles of Faith, p. 239)

Just as one may know that he has been justified when the guilt is removed, so one may know he has been sanctified. Alma taught that there were many who chose “to repent and work righteousness rather than to perish; Therefore they were called after this holy order, and were sanctified, and their garments were washed white through the blood of the Lamb. Now they, after being sanctified by the Holy Ghost, having their garments made white, being pure and spotless before God, could not look upon sin save it were with abhorrence” (Alma 13:10-12; emphasis added). The evil which they used to find
appealing now became an abhorrence to them. The desire for sin had been removed through the sanctifying process. In the days of King Benjamin, the people who heard him speak and repented of their sins felt this same sanctifying power:

And now, it came to pass that when king Benjamin had thus spoken to his people, he sent among them, desiring to know of his people if they believed the words which he had spoken unto them.

And they all cried with one voice, saying: Yea, we believe all the words which thou hast spoken unto us; and also, we know of their surety and truth, because of the Spirit of the Lord Omnipotent, which has wrought a mighty change in us, or in our hearts, that we have no more disposition to do evil, but to do good continually. (Mosiah 5:1-2; emphasis added)

Generally speaking, the full effects of sanctification will not be experienced in mortality but will come after death as part of the resurrection process. President Brigham Young taught that those who seek after and obtain a celestial resurrection will be free from the effects of sin:

I think it has been taught by some that as we lay our bodies down, they will so rise again in the resurrection with all the impediments and imperfections that they had here; and that if a wife does not love her husband in this state she cannot love him in the next. This is not so. Those who attain to the blessing of the first or celestial resurrection will be pure and holy, and perfect in body. Every man and woman that reaches to this unspeakable attainment will be as beautiful as the angels that surround the throne of God. If you can, by faithfulness in this life, obtain the right to come up in the morning of the resurrection, you need entertain no fears that the wife will be dissatisfied with her husband, or the husband with the wife; for those of the first resurrection will be free from sin and from the consequences and power of sin. This body “is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body.” “And, as we have borne the image of the earthly, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.” (Journal of Discourses, Vol.10, p.24)

Just as the blessing of justification is conditional, so is the blessing of sanctification. The Lord stated the conditions: “And we know also, that sanctification through the grace of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is just and true, to all those who love and serve God with all their mights, minds, and strength” (D&C 20:31). Putting God and his work and glory at the center of our lives is the necessary condition for sanctification. Mormon noted that the more one places his God at the center of his life the greater the sanctification:

Nevertheless they did fast and pray oft, and did wax stronger and stronger in their humility, and firmer and firmer in the faith of Christ, unto the filling their souls with joy and consolation, yea, even to the purifying and the sanctification of their hearts, which sanctification cometh because of their yielding their hearts unto God. (Helaman 3:35)

“Sanctify Yourselves”

The word sanctify is used in another sense in the scriptures. The Lord declared:

And if your eye be single to my glory, your whole bodies shall be filled with light, and there shall be no darkness in you; and that body which is filled with light comprehendeth all things.

Therefore, sanctify yourselves that your minds become single to God, and the days will come that you shall see him; for he will unveil his face unto you, and it shall be in his own time, and in his own way, and according to his own will. (D&C 88:67-68)

In these verses, the Lord commands that men “sanctify” themselves that their “minds become single to God.” The meaning of the word sanctify in this verse is not to be confused with the definition given previously. Another definition of sanctify is to set apart or to consecrate to a certain end (Webster’s New World Dictionary). This is the meaning of sanctify in the sacramental prayer. When the priest calls upon God to “bless and sanctify this bread (or water) to the souls of all those who eat in remembrance” of Christ, they are not asking that the bread be cleansed from sin. That is absurd. What is meant is that the bread and water are dedicated, consecrated, or set apart to the purposes of the sacrament and to nothing else. What the Lord is stating in these verses (D&C 88:67-68) is that men should set apart or consecrate their lives to God’s work and glory. Then they will experience the sanctifying powers that will make them clean from the sins of the world and thus allow them to come back into the presence of God.

Because it is not often understood that the word sanctify has two different meanings and that both meanings are used at different times in the scriptures and in other circumstances, many are left confused when the
word is used. For example, if one understands the word sanctify to mean be cleansed from sin, and he hears such phrases as to “sanctify yourselves” (D&C 43:11,16; 88:68, 74; 133:4), he might think that the Lord is asking his people to purify or cleanse themselves from sin. But as already been shown, we cannot cleanse ourselves from sin! That is why their was an atonement made. What those scriptures mean is that we should remove ourselves from ungodly activities and dedicate ourselves to the work of God. When we do this, we are then we can become sanctified from sin. In view of this, Moroni stated:

Yea, come unto Christ, and be perfected in him, and deny yourselves of all ungodliness; and if ye shall deny yourselves of all ungodliness and love God with all your might, mind and strength, then is his grace sufficient for you, that by his grace ye may be perfect in Christ; and if by the grace of God ye are perfect in Christ, ye can in nowise deny the power of God.

And again, if ye by the grace of God are perfect in Christ, and deny not his power, then are ye sanctified in Christ by the grace of God, through the shedding of the blood of Christ, which is in the covenant of the Father unto the remission of your sins, that ye become holy, without spot. (Moroni 10:32-33)

There are many scriptures that use sanctify to mean “cleansed from sin.” For example, we are told, “That he came into the world, even Jesus, to be crucified for the world, and to bear the sins of the world, and to sanctify the world, and to cleanse it from all unrighteousness” (D&C 76:41). The meaning here is obvious. Jesus Christ came into the world to cleanse or purify the world from sin. The context of each use must be considered in order to understand which definition should be used.

**CONCLUSION**

In answer to Adam’s question, “Why is that men must repent and be baptized in water?” (Moses 6:53). Adam learned what the Apostle Paul has since taught, “For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23). That in order to be forgiven of their sins and regain God’s presence, man must repent and be baptized. Therefore, the Lord declared to Adam: “Wherefore teach it unto your children, that all men, everywhere, must repent, or they can in nowise inherit the kingdom of God, for no unclean thing can dwell there, or dwell in his presence” (Moses 6:57). The Lord told Adam that “all things have their likeness, and all things are created and made to bear record of me” (Moses 6:63). He taught Adam that the very birth of man is a likeness of what must happen to man in order to regain God’s presence. Said he: “inasmuch as ye were born into the world by water, and blood, and the spirit, which I have made, and so became of dust a living soul, even so ye must be born again into the kingdom of heaven, of water, and of the Spirit, and be cleansed by blood, even the blood of mine Only Begotten; that ye might be sanctified from all sin, and enjoy the words of eternal life in this world, and eternal life in the world to come, even immortal glory.” He then declared: “For by the water ye keep the commandment; by the Spirit ye are justified, and by the blood ye are sanctified” (Moses 6:59-60).

In other words, just as men have come into this fallen world through the birth process consisting of water (the mothers womb), blood (both the natural life and capacity to sin given to offspring by parents), and the spirit (the power given by God to live), so they must be born again to come into the presence of God. The born again process also consists of water, blood, and spirit. The process begins when men exercise faith in Christ, repent of their sins, and then make a covenant with God that they will keep his commandments. This covenant is made when one is baptized in water. Hence, “by the water ye keep the commandment.”

Coming out of the waters of baptism is like coming out of the womb; a new person in a new world, a spiritual world! Baptism, however, is only the sign of the new beginning and a forgiving and cleansing of sin. The birth of water must be followed by the baptism of the Spirit which justifies man. After baptism, one must receive the ordinance of the laying on of hands for the Holy Ghost. If one has been baptized with integrity, has received the laying on of hands for the Holy Ghost, and remains faithful, then he may receive the actual reception of the gift of the Holy Ghost. With that reception, the ordinance of baptism would be sealed by the Holy Spirit of promise confirming that he qualifies for the promised blessings of cleansing. Hence, “by the Spirit he are justified.”

After the man is justified, he must be sanctified through the blood of Christ freeing him from the effects of sin. Though sanctification actually comes through the baptism of fire or Holy Ghost, sanctification it is made possible only through the atoning blood of Christ. Hence, “by the blood ye are sanctified.”