

**Review (46): *It's a Wonderful Life: How a Christian Spouse Sanctifies an Unbelieving Spouse & the Children*; 1 Cor 7:14**

- (46) This second use of **ἀγιάζω / hagaizo** / is the one stated in context. It reveals that the unbelieving spouse is sanctified by the believing spouse in the corporate marriage.

NOTE: A legitimate question arises as to how the saving faith of one spouse can sanctify another individual simply because the two are married. The key to understanding this is to remember that sanctification means “to be set apart by God.” The Christian marriage is top priority with God and He desires to protect it. When one spouse believes He “sets apart” the entire household and treats it differently than if all were unbelievers. But the unbelieving spouse’s sanctification is not the same as that of the believing spouse. We will refer to this stated use of **ἀγιάζω / hagaizo** / as “judicial sanctification.”

**Development of the Term “Judicial Sanctification”:**

1. The salvation of the believing spouse at salvation results in the marriage being judicially sanctified.
2. There is therefore no need for a divorce since that marriage has been “set apart” by God.
3. Second Corinthians 6:14 does not apply when the yoke becomes unequal during a marriage. If it did then the children would be illegitimate.
4. But because the marriage has been judicially sanctified then the children are legitimate and set apart.
5. Put another way: if the salvation of one spouse nullifies an resultant unequally yoked marriage, then the children become illegitimate. But because God judicially sanctifies that marriage, the children are set apart as well.
6. Here is a commentary on this verse by:

**Chafer, Lewis Sperry. “Angelology-Anthropology-Hamartiology.” Vol. 2 of *Systematic Theology*. Dallas: Dallas Seminary Press, 1947; p. 291:**

The “uncleanness” is the state at birth of every child except for the influence of even one Christian parent. The Christian parent does not remove the sin nature from the child, but the child is *set apart* as different by the Christian parent.

7. Such a divine act may be illustrated by the “real” and “judicial imputations” of the “Equation of Hope.” The difference between a real and a judicial imputation has to do with the presence or absence of “affinity”: the possession by one thing of a quality that pulls another to it; a predisposition on the part of the one drawn; a mutual attraction.
8. An imputation occurs when the justice of God credits something to someone for cursing or blessing.
9. A real imputation credits something to a person that belongs to him. Thus, there is an affinity between what is received and the one who receives it. Two examples:
  - 1) At physical birth, soul life and biological life are mutually attracted to each other. Therefore, the imputation of soul life to the physical body is a real imputation.
  - 2) At physical birth, Adam’s original sin and the body’s sinful nature are mutually attracted to each other. Therefore, the imputation of Adam’s original sin to the sinful nature is a real imputation.

10. A judicial imputation credits something to a person that does not belong to him. Thus, there is no affinity between what is received and the one who receives it. Therefore, the justice of God must take action by pronouncing a judicial verdict. Two examples:
  - 1) At the cross, the personal sins of the human race found no affinity with the impeccable Person of Christ. Therefore, with the Lord's permission, the justice of God made a judicial decision to impute our sins to Him.
  - 2) At salvation, the perfect righteousness of God finds no affinity with the unrighteous condition of the new believer. But, because of faith alone in Christ alone, the justice of God makes a judicial decision to impute God's righteousness to that person.
11. Therefore, in 1 Corinthians 7:14 the sanctification of the unbelieving spouse is not the real sanctification that was experienced by the believing spouse at salvation.
12. But this unequally yoked marriage is said to be sanctified by God because of the presence of the believing spouse.
13. In order to clarify the difference between the two sanctifications involved, we borrow terminology from the doctrine of imputations: real and judicial.
14. The sanctification of the husband is real. It refers to salvation at which point the baptism of the Holy Spirit enters every believer into union with the Person of Jesus Christ.
15. Obviously this is not the case for the unbelieving spouse and possibly the children, dependent upon how old they are and conditional upon their response to the Gospel.
16. However, the believing spouse who has been the recipient of real sanctification has immediate impact on his unbelieving spouse in that he or she is "set apart" by God for blessing, protection, and provision.
17. This impact is also true for the children. They are not to be considered illegitimate because of the unequally yoked marriage but rather sanctified by agency of the believing parent.
18. In fact, the entire household is sanctified, that is, set apart to God for special purpose. Thus, the entire household is blessed, protected, and provided for as if it were made up entirely of believers.
19. Therefore, we refer to this situation by the term, "judicial sanctification."
- (47) God deals with believers and unbelievers in different ways. He deals with the believer under the principle of grace and with the unbeliever under the principle of judgment.
- (48) We know from Galatians 3:26 that believers are the "children of God." Hebrews 12:5-11 informs us that God deals with us as earthly fathers do their children. He punishes us for wrongdoing but the motivation is love and it is executed in grace.
- (49) Unbelievers in a nuclear family receive special treatment because one or more of its members is a believer. This indicates the importance God places on the institution of marriage.
- (50) It also indicates why Satan places the home as top priority in his assaults against the children of God. There is no quicker way to spiritually damage future generations than by the destruction of the home and its corporate marriage.
- (51) In God's management of the human race He deals with us both individually and collectively. He deals with us individually with reference to salvation, spiritual growth, punishment, and reward. He deals with us collectively through the divine institutions with reference to His granting or withdrawal of provision and protection.