

Christ's Sanctified Church
1 Corinthians 1:2
Jimmy Snowden

Introduction

Last week we focused our attention on 1 Corinthians 1:1. I stressed the fact that Paul did not merely identify himself as the author of this letter and the Corinthian church as the recipients, but that he elaborates who he is and who they are. Last week we looked at why Paul specifically identified himself as one ‘called as an Apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God.’ We concluded that he identified himself as such in order to establish his authority. The fact is that 1 Corinthians is an authoritative letter. Paul commands the Corinthians all over the place to repent—the letter, after all, is one large rebuke. The letter of 1 Corinthians itself testifies to the fact that Paul wrote as one with authority. Paul knew that this letter was going to be a hard hitting letter and so he established from the get-go his authority to write such an authoritative letter.

1 Corinthians 1:2

This morning we are going to be considering how Paul identifies the Corinthians. He identifies himself as an apostle of Jesus Christ in verse 1, how now does he identify the church in Corinth? As I stated last week, Paul identifies the Corinthian church in four primary ways in verse 2. Before diving in, let me remind you that Paul is here laying the foundation for the rest of this letter. The Corinthian church is a mess and Paul knows that the root of all their problems is that they have not adopted Christ’s view of things—they are failing to look at their brothers and sisters and the world at large around them through the eyes of the cross. It is interesting how Paul identifies the Corinthians in 1:2. With what we know about the Corinthians, as evidenced throughout the remainder of 1 Corinthians, you would think that Paul would identify them as those who have really blown it. You would think that he would have said, “To the messed up church at Corinth, those who have gone completely wayward.” But this is not how identifies them. He practices what he preaches. He identifies them through the eyes of the cross. There is no doubting the fact that he sees the enormity of their sins and failures; the rest of the letter testifies to that fact; however, he does not evaluate them according to the standards of our earthly, finite yardsticks; he evaluates them with the Gospel yardstick.

God's Possession

First, Paul identifies the Corinthian church as “God’s church at Corinth”—He identifies them as His own possession. Paul identifies the Corinthian church as God’s possession throughout the letter of 1 Corinthians in many different ways: God’s church (here in 1:2); God’s blood-bought possession (6:19-20), God’s field (3:9), God’s house (3:9), God’s sanctuary/temple (3:16), and as Christ’s body (1 Corinthians 12). They are His in every way. No one in the body of Christ can take ownership of Christ’s body. Even elders, who do exercise a certain amount of authority, can only consider themselves under-shepherds. Paul rebukes the Corinthians for thinking too highly of men (such as Paul, Apollos, and Peter) as if men could attain ownership of the body of Christ. Even though Paul calls himself their father in Christ (because he planted the church) he is careful to assert the fact that he is only a servant. Consider how Paul identifies himself in 1 Corinthians: he says,

“So, what is Apollos? And what is Paul? They are servants through whom you believed.” (1 Corinthians 3:5) and then again in 1 Corinthians 3:9; “For we are God's co-workers. You are God's field, God's building.” and then again in 1 Corinthians 4:1; “A person should consider us in this way: as servants of Christ and managers of God's mysteries.”

Paul did not see himself as an owner of the Corinthian church. He knew that he was their spiritual father in Christ (4:15), but he knew that they were God's possession, not his.

I want you to consider two implications of this truth—of the truth that the church is God's possession. First, this truth should cause us to rest. We are His! We are His bride (Revelation 21:2-3); we are His holy habitation (1 Corinthians 3); we are His body (1 Corinthians 12); we are His blood bought possession (1 Corinthians 6); we are His possession! Jesus says in Matthew 16:18;

And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock **I will build My church**, and the forces of Hades will not overpower it.

Jesus takes ownership of the church. And as the bridegroom, as the possessor of the church, he protects the church. Christ is the guardian of the church. He is not simply house sitting the church; the church is His body, His bride! The whole arsenal of the devil can be launched against the church but Christ will stand over the church in protection of her. Men, if someone were to break into your house in the middle of the night with the intent of putting your wife's life in danger, what will you not do to detain, to stop him? In such a moment all thoughts about the intruder's welfare go out the window. He is putting the life of your wife, your bride in danger. A husband may be as skinny as a rail, he may be scrawny and passive, but if an intruder were to step between himself and his wife with the intent on harming her he will declare with bold earnest, “You will have to get through me in order to get to her.” Why? Because she is his wife, his bride. Take a look with me at 1 Corinthians 3:16-17.

Don't you know that you are God's sanctuary and that the Spirit of God lives in you? **If anyone ruins God's sanctuary, God will ruin him**; for God's sanctuary is holy, and that is what you are.

“If anyone ruins God's sanctuary, God will ruin him.” If anyone messes or tinkers with God's bride, God will mess with him. What a comfort for those who are truly part of the body of Christ. We do not stand vulnerable to the attacks of Satan—Christ is our protector, our watch dog, our Captain (Hebrews 12:2). Paul, in Romans 8:31, says, “If God is for us, who can be against us?!” And we must remember that our protector, the One who possesses us, never sleeps nor grows weary (Psalm 121). He has a personal investment in us, the church; after all, He died to purchase us (Revelation 5:9-10). He does not stand aloof while we struggle; He is intimately involved in the affairs of His people, protecting and directing. We are not on our own here.

Second, the church is not ours to do what we want with. We are not at liberty to do with the church what we want—to manipulate the church in the direction that we want it to go. The church is not mine, it is not yours. The church is not a platform for personal advancement—it is not a platform for the advancement of your or my own agendas. The church is His. The Corinthian church was never Paul's and he knew that quite well. So often, though, some in the church can feel that the church is in some sense theirs. I have known rich people in the church

who have felt a sense of entitlement because of the great amount of money and time they had invested into the church. The church does not become ‘your baby’ the longer you are here and it does not become ‘your baby’ the more you give. If you have been here since the beginning and if you have invested much of your time, talents, and treasure to the church, God bless you, you reward will be great in heaven; however, your great commitment and investment gives you no special favors before God. However, it must be asserted that Paul did exhort the church to give special honor to those who evidenced an incredible sacrificial commitment to serving the body of Christ (see 1 Corinthians 16:15-18).

This line of thinking usually comes into play whenever the church is not distinguished from the building. You see, the church is not the building. There is a church within what we call the ‘church building’. We, the people of God, are the church. It is incorrect to call this building the church. Really, on Sunday mornings when we meet together there is a building inside of what we call the church building and that building is the church. I would much rather prefer to call the building the ‘meeting house’ or the ‘meeting place’ as opposed to ‘the church’ because when we call it the church it leads to much confusion and misreading of the Scriptures. I have met people who think that they are entitled to have a special say in the affairs of the church simply because they have invested much of their time, talents, and treasure to the building.

I once knew an extremely rich man who wanted to leave his church and the only thing that kept him there was the financial investment that he had made to the church. The thing that held him was the building. His error was theological. We put so much work in propping up the outside of the church building and cleaning and decorating the inside of the church building, but so often I fear that we are focused on the wrong building—we are laboring over the wrong building. Our focus should be on God’s building, the people of God. Sometimes the church building can be a distraction from what the ministry is to be all about. Sometimes we can get so focused on the building that we forget that the building that God is most concerned about is a spiritual building.

Look at what the Spirit says through Peter in 1 Peter 2:4-5

Coming to Him, a living stone—rejected by men but chosen and valuable to God—**you yourselves, as living stones, are being built into a spiritual house** for a holy priesthood to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

The building exists as a matter of convenience. The building exists to be used by the church for the ministry of the Gospel, but the building itself is not the church. Why does this matter, because when there is a blurring of the lines in regard to what the church is, there is a tendency for individuals to take ownership (ownership in the sense of entitlement as opposed to ownership in the sense of embracing or taking seriously delegated responsibility) of something which they have no business taking ownership. If we would keep in mind that the building is not the church the temptation to take such ownership would be less. God’s church is His, not ours.

Sanctified/Called as Saints

Notice, second, how else Paul identifies the Corinthians. Once again, he is identifying them through the eyes of the cross. In spite of their many sins we now see that he identifies them as “those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus and called as saints.” There are actually two ideas communicated in this part of the verse (1. They are “those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus” and 2. “called as saints”), but the idea is really one and the same. The word for “sanctified”

(*hagiazō*) and the word for “saints” (*hagios*) are in the same word group, they are cognates of each other. Since these words are similar, I will deal with both of them at the same time. I want you to notice two things about these two words.

First, it will be profitable to define the words ‘sanctify’ and ‘saint’. In the same way that ‘run’ and ‘runner’ are related words, one being a verb (run) and the other being a noun (runner), ‘sanctify’ and ‘saint’ are also related words. The word ‘holy’ is a synonym of these words. But now I am just adding words to the pile—we now have three words to define (holy, sanctify, and saint). They all have to do with being set apart. When Paul says that the Corinthian’s ‘are sanctified in Christ’ he is saying that they have been ‘set apart in Christ.’ When Paul says that they are ‘called as saints’ he is saying that God has called them as ‘set apart’ people. To sanctify or to make holy is to set something apart. And a saint is someone who has been set apart.

Now, of course, we must ask what it means to be ‘set apart’. Last weekend I got in trouble. I came to the church’s spring cleaning day with my new pair of shoes on. I knew that there was a possibility that I was going to have to dig in the dirt, but I didn’t think that the possibility was going to become a reality. As soon as I walked in the door after I got home, Kristal saw my new shoes covered in dirt and scolded me. She made me sit in the corner for a day or two (just kidding, but I did get something of a lecture!). Why? Because I got my brand new pair of shoes dirty. She told me, “Jimmy, you have work shoes that could have worn.” My work shoes are shoes that are ‘set apart’ for dirty work. We all have different pairs of shoes that we use for different purposes and functions. I have one pair of shoes that I only wear to special occasions such as weddings, funerals, graduation ceremonies, etc. These shoes are ‘set apart’ (sanctified, holy) for special uses. Many families have fine china dinnerware that they only use on special occasions. Such china is ‘set apart’ (sanctified, holy) for special events. Women, when you see your husband’s microwaving nachos in the microwave with your fine chinaware dishes, you probably tend to get a little perturbed; “He knows that he is not supposed to use the fine chinaware for nachos—he knows that this chinaware is only to be used on the most specialist of occasions!” And men, the response of, “I had to use the chinaware because all of the other plates were dirty” will not work.

We find that certain items in the Old Testament were ‘set apart’ (sanctified or holy) as well. Items that were used in the temple, for instance, were sanctified; they were set apart for temple usage only. The garments that the priests were to wear while in the temple were called ‘holy’ by God. “You shall make holy garments for Aaron your brother, for glory and for beauty” (Exodus 28:2). In what sense were the priest’s garments be considered ‘holy’? In the sense that these garments were to only be worn by the priests and they were to only be worn at the temple. These garments were to be ‘set apart’ for temple usage only—they were to never be worn outside the temple.

In what sense then can we say that the Corinthian’s are *set apart* or *sanctified/saints* or *holy*? In what sense can we say that we are *set apart* or *sanctified/saints* or *holy*? God’s blood bought saints are set apart for God’s use. David Peterson helpfully explains that sanctification “primarily refers to God’s way of taking possession of us in Christ, setting us apart to belong to him and to fulfill his purpose for us.”¹ Gordon D. Fee suggests that sanctification refers to our being “set apart solely for God’s holy purposes.”² This being set apart has two implications.

¹ David Peterson, *Possessed by God*; New Studies in Biblical Theology. Edited by D.A. Carson (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1995), 27.

²Gordon D. Fee, *God’s Empowering Presence: The Holy Spirit in the Letters of Paul* (Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 1994), 859.

First, we are set apart from the world. Second, we are **set apart from the world unto God** and His purposes. In other words, we are not distinct and separate from the world for the mere sake of being different, but rather we are set apart, sanctified, for the purpose of fulfilling His purposes in the world.

Second, notice that these words (sanctified/saints) already characterize (or define) the Corinthians. You will notice that Paul is not issuing a command here to the Corinthians in 1:2. He is not telling them to become sanctified or to become saints. Rather, Paul is defining the Corinthians. It is interesting also that Paul does not define them as those who *are being* sanctified, but rather as those who *are* or *have been* sanctified. So often we speak of sanctification as a process. In this passage (as is the case also in 1:30 and 6:11), however, sanctification is spoken of as a past event; ‘those who are (or have been) sanctified.’ The verb *sanctified* is in the **perfect tense**, which connotes the idea of a past action with results continuing into the present. It would be sort of like saying, ‘He lost his job’ (past event) ‘and is still without work’ (continuing results in the present). Here the Corinthians are those who ‘have been sanctified’ (past event) and there are present day effects of the past event of sanctification.

So Paul is not here commanding the Corinthians to become more sanctified, he is rather declaring the fact that they have already become sanctified. This is where you see Paul looking at the Corinthians through the eyes of cross. How could anyone look at the Corinthians and identify them as those who have been sanctified? Paul could, because he viewed them through the eyes of Christ—he identifies them as ‘those who are sanctified *in Christ*’. Believe it or not, as D.A. Carson, David Peterson, and many other have asserted; ‘*Most of the places where Paul talks about being ‘holy’ or ‘sanctified’*’³ Paul is referring to an act simultaneous with conversion. Fee actually describes sanctification as ‘a metaphor for conversion,’ and ‘not a reference to a work of grace *following* conversion.’⁴ As another commentator has said in light of this passage, ‘Holiness is received, not achieved.’⁵

Paul then defines them as those who have been ‘called as saints.’⁶ Some translations (ESV, NIV, NKJV, KJV, NLT) communicate it as if Paul were commanding them to *become* saints. This is just not what Paul is saying. Paul is not admonishing the Corinthians to become saints; he is rather establishing the fact that they have already become saints by virtue of their relationship with Christ. We see the same language used in 1:1; ‘Paul called as an apostle.’ Christ did not exhort Paul to work hard at becoming an apostle; Christ simply declared to Paul that he was an apostle. Similarly here in 1:2 Paul identifies the Corinthians as those who have been declared to be saints. Paul identifies them as those who are already saints.

If we take these two statements together, then, we see that Paul identifies the Corinthians first as ‘those who are (or have been) set apart’ and second as ‘set apart ones by calling’. What Paul is saying is rather redundant. Or to say it another way, the Corinthians are first ‘those who

³ DA Carson, *For The Love of God: A Daily Companion for Discovering the Riches of God’s Word*; Vol. 1 (Wheaton: Crossway Books, 1998), 265.

⁴ Fee, *God’s Empowering Presence*, 859.

⁵ H. Conzelmann in Anthony C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text*; The New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2000), 76. David E. Garland communicates the same idea. See David E. Garland, *1 Corinthians*; Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003), 27-28.

⁶ This is the rendering of the HCSB. Although almost every other translation inserts ‘to be’ in the sentence, it does not exist in the original. Fee makes this very observation but then suggests that ‘to be’ helpfully communicates the idea of vocation. See Gordon D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*; The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1987), 28-29. The NASB seems to communicate the idea with the most clarity, ‘saints by calling.’

are (or have been) made holy' and second 'holy ones by calling'. Paul is declaring to the Corinthians who they have become in Christ. This is true of us as well. If you are in Christ you are sanctified and you are a saint. The Roman Catholic Church has wrongly taught that only the elite of the elite of those who follow Christ (the 'who's who of Christianity, as it were) can become a saint. However, this faulty Roman Catholic teaching cuts right at the heart of Paul's teaching here in 1 Corinthians 1:2. Even the Corinthians, in spite of their many failures, are identified as 'those who are sanctified' and as "saints by calling". If you are in Christ there is a mighty strong sense in which you are already sanctified and there is an absolute, unequivocal sense in which you are already a saint.

It is rather strange that many Christians want to assert that all Christians are full blown saints but that not all Christians are sanctified. But to assert one is to assert the other. After all a saint is precisely a 'sanctified one'.

The Tragedy of Corinth

The problem with the Corinthians, however, and this is what makes the Corinthian situation so tragic, is that they were not living consistent with who they had become in Christ. Paul saw them as people who were living inconsistently with who they had become in Christ. When I was in high school I had a 1989 Ford Probe. My grandpa nicknamed the car *The Bruise*. It more than lived up to the name. Each and every panel on the car was unique. It had dents all over it and had a panel or two that simply did not match the rest of the car. This is exactly what was wrong with the Corinthians' their lives did not match their position in Christ. Or to say it another way; "they are already sanctified in a relational sense, but need to express that sanctification in lifestyle."⁷

This gives us an insight into what sanctification is all about. Sanctification is not the process of becoming something that you are not already in Christ. The goal of sanctification (if we can speak of sanctification as having a goal—maybe it would be more accurate to speak of the implication of the fact of sanctification) is not to become more of a new creature than you already are. No, if you are in Christ you are already a new creature. The task of sanctification has everything to do with getting your life in line with who you already are in Christ.

This is good news because it gives us insight into the fact that our growth in grace is not a hopeless cause. As we seek to become more like Christ—to be used by Him—we are not seeking to do or become something that goes contrary to who we are. The opposite is true; when we sin, we are living a lie. This is exactly what Paul communicates in Romans 6:2; "**How can we who died to sin still live in it?**" Paul's clear point is that a believer who lives in sin is a contradiction in terms. A Christian living in sin is like a fish live in a bucket of motor oil. It can't happen for too long or else the fish will die.

There are clear practical implications of the past work of sanctification in the life of the believer. This is what the rest of 1 Corinthians is all about. There is a progressive (incremental) aspect to sanctification, but the emphasis here in 1 Corinthians 1:2 is more on their position in Christ than it is on their forward progress to Christ likeness. And, it must be said, that the forward progress to Christ-likeness (as emphasized in texts like 2 Cor. 3:18) have more to do

⁷ Peterson, *Possessed by God*, 41. Consider 1 Corinthians 1:2,30-31; 3:16, 23; 5:6-8; 6:9-11, 15-20; 12:12-13 for a few texts which evidence this mindset in Paul. Paul deals with the Corinthian's issues by establishing who they have become in Christ—he seeks to solve many of their problems by showing them the inconsistency of their living with their identity in Christ.

with getting our lives in line with who we already are in Christ as opposed to transforming into a creature that we are not yet in the present. To say it another way, our transformation is a transformation into consistency.

Conclusion: The Big Question

Here is the big question which you need to ask yourself; Do you have a correct view of yourself? I don't care how much you may struggle with sin--for crying out loud, look at the Corinthian church!--do you see yourself (and your fellow brethren for that matter) as sanctified saints? Have you bought into the idea that the goal of the Christian life is to become a creature that you are not yet already? Do you see yourself as a new creature? Do you see your fellow brothers and sisters in Christ who may struggle with sin as new creatures in Christ? You are sanctified in Christ; you are already a saint. The aim of your Christian walk is to, by the power of the Spirit, get your life in line with this reality.

Does your life resemble the life of one who has been set apart by Christ to fulfill the purposes of God. Do you see yourself as your own, or do you see yourself primarily in relation to Christ. Do you see yourself through the eyes of the cross?

Appendix: Sanctification Quotes

Quotes on Sanctification

David Peterson: "Sanctification is commonly regarded as a process of moral and spiritual transformation following conversion. In the New Testament, however, it primarily refers to God's way of taking possession of us in Christ, setting us apart to belong to him and to fulfill his purpose for us. Sanctification certainly has present and ongoing effects, but when the verb 'to sanctify' (Gk. *hagiazēin*) and the noun 'sanctification' (Gk. *hagiasmos*) are used, the emphasis is regularly on the saving work of God in Christ, applied to believers to the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

-David Peterson, *Possessed by God*; New Studies in Biblical Theology. Edited by D.A. Carson (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1995), 27.

DA Carson: "Most of the places where Paul talks about being "holy" or "sanctified" fall into this POSITIONAL or DEFINITIONAL camp. That is certainly the case in **1 Corinthians 1:2**: Paul writes to "the church of God in Corinth, to those *sanctified* in Christ Jesus and *called to be holy*." The Corinthians *already are sanctified*; they have been set apart for God."

-DA Carson, *For the Love of God: A Daily Companion for Discovering the Riches of God's Word*; Vol. 1 (Wheaton: Crossway Books, 1998), 265.

Thomas R. Schreiner and Ardel B. Caneday, *The Race Set before Us*; "All believers from the time of their conversion are designated as saints or holy ones; the term is not reserved for the specially righteous. Paul says that the church in Corinth is 'sanctified in Christ Jesus' (1 Cor 1:2), emphasizing that holiness is their present possession. Similarly, in 1 Corinthians 1:30 'righteousness, holiness and redemption' now belong to those who are in Christ Jesus."

-Thomas R. Schreiner and Ardel B. Caneday, *The Race Set before Us: A Biblical Theology of Perseverance and Assurance* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2001), 72.

Gary Shogren: "Christians have been sanctified as part of their conversion. They are called without qualification 'those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus and called to be holy' (1:2). 'But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.' (6:11). Most evangelicals are in the habit of speaking of sanctification as progressive or future, but biblical references frequently place it at our conversion (see also 1:30; Acts 26:18; 2 Thess 2:13; 1 Peter 1:2)."

-Gary Shogren, *1 Corintios*. Comentario Bíblico Iberoamericano. Buenos Aires: Ediciones Kairos, forthcoming), 51

David Peterson: "The Corinthian Christians were a holy and distinct people in that corrupt and godless city. This was so because of God's initiative, drawing them into an exclusive relationship with himself. What he had done for them 'in Christ Jesus' had made them part of his eschatological community. Here the perfect passive participle 'sanctified' should be understood as another way of speaking about *their conversion and incorporation into Christ*. It can hardly refer to their holiness of character or conduct, since Paul spends much time in this letter challenging their values and their behavior, calling them to holiness in an ethical sense. He does this on the basis that they are already sanctified in a relational sense, but need to express that sanctification in lifestyle"

David Peterson, *Possessed by God*; New Studies in Biblical Theology. Edited by D.A. Carson (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1995), 40-41.

DA Carson: **8. False assumption about technical meaning:** "In this fallacy, an interpreter falsely assumes that a word always or nearly always has a certain technical meaning—a meaning usually derived either from a subset of the evidence or from the interpreter's personal systematic theology. An easy example is the word *sanctification*. In most conservative theological discussion, sanctification is the progressive purifying of the believer, the process by which he becomes increasingly holy after an instantaneous 'positional' or 'forensic' justification. But it is commonplace among Pauline scholars that although the term *sanctification* can have that force, it commonly refers to the initial setting aside of an individual for God at his conversion. Thus Paul can address his first epistle to the Corinthians, that singularly 'unholy' church, to those who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus... [*hegiasmenois en Christo Iesou*], 1 Cor. 1:2)"

-D.A. Carson, *Exegetical Fallacies*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1996), 45.

See also Grant Osborne who quotes part of this paragraph and then adds, "In the case of *sanctification*, passages like Romans 6 or 1 Corinthians 1:2 equate it with the moment of justification rather than with the process of spiritual growth."

-Grant R. Osborne, *The Hermeneutical Spiral: A Comprehensive Introduction to Biblical Interpretation*; Revised and Expanded ed. (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2006), 95.

Gordon Fee: "Paul's primary use of the term 'sanctification' is also as a metaphor for conversion, not a reference to a work of grace *following* conversion. This can be seen most clearly in 2 Thess 2:13, where Paul refers to the Thessalonians' experience of salvation as being

effected ‘by sanctification of the Spirit and belief in the truth.’ The metaphor is drawn from Jewish religious practices, where the sacred rites and utensils have become so by their having been ‘sanctified’ unto God, i.e., set apart solely for God’s holy purposes. This same use of the metaphor, referring now especially to Gentile conversions under Paul’s ministry, is found in Romans 15:16. The Jewish Christians in Rome may not call ‘common or unclean’ (because of failure to be circumcised) those whom God has ‘sanctified’ by the Spirit. The Gentiles’ reception of the Spirit was God’s ultimate act of creating for himself a ‘sanctified offering’ composed of both Gentile and Jew. On the other hand, the usage of the same imagery to refer to the Corinthians’ conversion (1 Cor 6:11) is intended to emphasize that conversion includes the sanctifying work of the Spirit that disallows the kind of behavior in which they formerly engaged. ‘Such were some of you,’ he asserts, ‘but you have been... sanctified... by the Spirit of our God.’”

-Gordon D. Fee, *God’s Empowering Presence: The Holy Spirit in the Letters of Paul* (Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 1994), 859. See also pages 63-66, 78-79, 128-32, 135-37, 270, 475-476, 625-627, 880. See also Gordon D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1987), 32.

David Garland: “... they are ‘saints’ by God’s call (as Paul is an apostle by God’s call). The translation ‘called as saints’ may imply that this is some goal they must attain, but the Corinthians already are ‘saints’ in the same way that Paul already is an apostle. As Paul did not achieve his apostleship, so they do not achieve holiness but receive it.”

-David E. Garland, *1 Corinthians*; Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003, 27-28.

Anthony Thisselton quoting Conzelmann: “Holiness is received, not achieved.”

Anthony C. Thisselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, The New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2000), 76.

Gerhard O. Forde: “Sanctification... is perhaps best defined as the art of getting used to the unconditional justification wrought by the grace of God for Jesus’ sake.”

Gerhard O. Forde in *Christian Spirituality: Five Views of Sanctification*; edited by Donald L. Alexander (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1988), 13.