

## Brief Perspective on Changing Seasons: Changed or Refined

### Justification and Sanctification.

Justification is the once-off work of God where the righteousness of Jesus Christ is imputed on the sinner, simply on the basis that the sinner has faith in who Jesus is and what Jesus has done for him on the cross. Justification is the work of God and cannot be earned. Justification is succeeded by sanctification.

Sanctification refers to the processes where the justified sinner is being conformed to the image of Christ. Unlike justification, sanctification involves both God and the person. On God's part, He has provided the written revelation of His truth and ways (the Bible) and sent His Holy Spirit to indwell the justified person (to strengthen him, aid him in prayers, guide him to God's truth, etc..). The justified person is responsible to avail himself to the means where God can change him. Some of the processes are listed in the table below.

Some hold the view that a truly justified person who understand what Jesus has done for him will avail himself/herself to the processes of sanctification. We want to be around the One who loves us and whom we love in return. Yet others maintained that justification and sanctification are separate matters. Even if we are not sanctified, we are still justified.

Table 1. A list of three processes (there are more) that God uses to change His people and how BCEC is providing opportunities in the three processes.

Processes of change	How the processes look like	What BCEC is doing
<b>The Word of God</b>	Reading on a regular basis (preferably daily) Studying on a regular basis (preferably weekly) Memorizing on a regular basis (preferably weekly)	The Word of God is preached weekly from the pulpit And studied weekly in the small group
<b>Prayer</b>	Personal prayer (preferably daily) Corporate prayer (weekly or monthly)	The small groups pray weekly. The Sunday school teachers will start to pray monthly.
<b>Service</b>	Serving other is Christ-like (John 13:14-15)	Different areas of service include playing/singing in the worship team, be a Sunday school teacher, audio visual team, ushering team, Bible study notes team, Food Bank team

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### Warming Up

1. What is the difference between being good and doing good?
2. What is the difference between being a Christian and 'doing' Christian things?

### Into the Passages

*The Levitical Law, read Leviticus 19 and 20, note especially 19:1, 37, 20:7, 8*

3. What is the attribute of God mentioned in the two chapters? How does adhering to all these rituals please God?
4. How did God deal with the sinful and apostate Israelites as specified in these two chapters? (see 19:8, 21-22, 20:9-16)

*Fast forward now to the New Covenant in Jesus Christ.*

*Refined in our bodies (Read 2 Corinthians 6:16-18, 17:11 John 3:1)*

5. What is God's promise to us? Is the promise of God conditional or unconditional?

*Refined in our bodies (Read Romans 6:1-14).*

6. Note how many times the word 'die', 'death', 'live', 'life' appeared in these verses. What needs to die and what needs to live?

*Refined in our relationship (Read 1 Peter 1:22, 23)*

7. What is the consequence of obeying God? How is love for one another demonstrated?

### Moving Forward

We frequently focus on ourselves (we need to change, we are weak, how much we give up, etc...). There need to be a paradigm shift where the focus is shifted from us to Him and what He has done.

He gave His life

His death and resurrection have granted us forgiveness from our sins, and power to overcome sin

He sent the Holy Spirit to empower us in everyday living (guide us into the truth of God, teach us what to pray, etc..)

He is the great and eternal High priest who sympathises with us and intercedes for us!

### Life Together

*Reflect together on how we are doing in the three different processes in Table 1. Add to the list other processes that God uses to change His people.*

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*These notes are primarily for the Into the Passage portion, and are to be used just as guidelines or commentary notes. Most of them are my own thoughts, so take that with a grain of salt. Let the Word of God lead you to truth, not these notes.*

### Warming Up

1. What is the difference between being a Christian and 'doing' Christian things?

*It is possible to 'do' the Christian things like coming to church without experience a personal walk with God. The true test is justified person is transforming to be more like Jesus.*

### Into the Passages

*The Levitical Law, read Leviticus 19 and 20, note especially 19:1, 37, 20:7, 8*

2. What is the attribute of God mentioned in the two chapters? How does adhering to all these rituals please God?

*God's holiness (set apart, so far above and beyond us that He would appear to be foreign to us). How do you teach a group of people (ingrained with the habits of the Egyptians and familiar with the abhorrent practices of the surrounding nations) about God's holiness? By strictly adhering to ritualistic and ceremonial laws given out by God, the people were taught the principles of God's holiness. The Israelites were set apart to fulfil God's purposes.*

3. How did God deal with the sinful and apostate Israelites as specified in these two chapters? (see 19:8, 21-22, 20:9-16)

*Severely. The Israelites would learn that it was impossible to please God.*

*Fast forward now to the New Covenant in Jesus Christ.*

*Refined in our bodies (Read 2 Corinthians 6:16-18, 17:11 John 3:1)*

4. What is God's promise to us? Is the promise of God conditional or unconditional?

*God would be our Father and we are His children. There is such a picture of contrast from the holy, holy, holy God (untouchable) and slight deviation from His holy demand was met with severe response (death, or isolation). As*

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*far as we read, Abraham, Moses or David never addressed God as Father. But we have this marvellous privilege because the perfect (and holy) Son is able to meet the demand of the Father.*

*The promise of God is conditional that we separate ourselves from the world.*

*Refined in our bodies (Read Romans 6:1-14).*

5. Note how many times the word 'die', 'death', 'live', 'life' appeared in these verses. What needs to die and what needs to live?

*Sin is so terrible that it took no less than the perfect Son of God to overcome it.*

*Our sinful nature has been nailed to the cross - we have the capability not to sin. The prebelievers (I prefer the term prebelievers to unbelievers) sinful nature is very much alive and they have NO capability NOT to sin.*

*We need to live for God (be alive to God) by offering ourselves to Him. Remove and Replace principle. Remove the sinful nature, replace with the God's nature in us*

*Refined in our relationship (Read 1 Peter 1:22, 23)*

6. What is the consequence of obeying God? How is love for one another demonstrated?

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*We have sincere love for one brother/sister in Christ. This love can be demonstrated in many ways - providing practical help, offer encouragement and prayer, rebuke if the brother/sister is in error, meet regularly, etc..*