

Greek Words About Sanctification

The New Testament Greek word for “*sanctify*” is “*hagiazō*”. “*Hagiazō*” means “consecrate, dedicate...purify”¹ or “to set apart to God”,² when used in relation to the sanctification of people. Forms of “*hagiazō*” are also used in reference to things (see Matthew 23:19, 1 Timothy 4:5), Jesus as Lord in our hearts (see 1 Peter 3:15) and God’s Name (see Matthew 6:9).

According to Vine, the Greek word for sanctification which is “*hagiasmos*” means “(a) separation to God, 1 Corinthians 1:30; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; 1 Peter 1:2; (b) the course of life befitting those so separated, 1 Thessalonians 4:3, 4, 7; Romans 6:19, 22; 1 Timothy 2:15; Hebrews 12:14.”³ Vine states, “Sanctification is thus the state predetermined by God for believers, into which in grace He calls them, and in which they begin their Christian course and so pursue it”.⁴

The main New Testament Greek word for “*holy*” is “*hagios*”. “*Hagios*” means “being holy in the sense of superior moral qualities and possessing essential divine qualities in contrast with what is human”.⁵ Forms of “*hagios*” are used to refer to the absolute purity or holiness of God the Father (see John 17:11), the Lord Jesus Christ (see Luke 1:35, Acts 3:14, 4:27 and 4:30) and the Spirit of God when He is called the “Holy” Spirit (see Matthew 1:18, 1:20 and many other verses).

In the New Testament, the words “*saint*” or “*saints*” are translations of a number of words derived from the Greek word “*hagios*”. These specific words derived from “*hagios*” refer to “human beings consecrated to God, holy”.⁶ Vine says that when applied to believers, the word “*saints*” means “all such and is not applied merely to persons of exceptional holiness, or to those who, having died, were characterised by exceptional acts of ‘saintliness.’ ”⁷

Vine also says “*hagios*” means “separated from sin and therefore consecrated to God...This sainthood is not an attainment, it is a *state* into which God in grace calls men.”⁸ Forms of the Greek word “*hagios*” are also used in the Scriptures to refer to things dedicated to God (see Matthew 24:15, Acts 6:13 and Revelation 21:2), to angels who are God’s servants (see Mark 8:38, Acts 10:22) and to describe our faith (see Jude 20).

Another Greek word “*hagiosune*” means “*holiness*”.⁹ A form of the word “*hagiosune*” is used in Romans 1:4 in relationship to the Holy Spirit and Jesus Christ. In 2 Corinthians 7:1, a form of “*hagiosune*” and in 1 Thessalonians 3:13 “*hagiosune*” are used in relation to the holiness or purity of God being manifested in believers’ hearts.

¹ Bauer, pages 8-9.

² Vine, page 307.

³ Ibid, page 545.

⁴ Ibid, page 307.

⁵ Louw and Nida, page 745.

⁶ Bauer, page 9.

⁷ Vine, page 544.

⁸ Ibid, pages 307-308.

⁹ Bauer, page 10.

Another New Testament Greek word is “hagiotēs” which also means “**holiness**”. Forms of the word “hagiotēs” are used of God’s nature in Hebrews 12:10 and of the manifestation of God’s holy nature in the conduct of Paul and his fellow workers in 2 Corinthians 1:12.

The words “hagiozo”, “hagiasmos”, “hagiosune” and “hagiotēs” are derived from the word “hagios”. The word “hagios” is derived from the same Greek word that the Greek word “hagnos” is derived.¹⁰ “Hagnos” means “pure, holy”¹¹ or “being without moral defect or blemish and hence pure”.¹² “Hagnos” or forms of it are used in Philippians 4:8, 1 Timothy 5:22, James 3:17 and 1 John 3:3. 1 Timothy 5:22 says: “...**keep yourself pure.**”

Words related to purity or cleansing which are derived from “hagnos” are “hagneia”, “hagnizo” and “hagnotes”. Vine says “hagneia” refers to “chastity which excludes all impurity of spirit, manner or act”.¹³ “Chastity” means “purity, avoidance of unlawful sexual intercourse”. “Hagneia” is used in 1 Timothy 4:12 and 5:2. In 1 Timothy 5:2, Paul commanded Timothy to relate to younger women with absolute purity: “**the older women as mothers, the younger as sisters, with all purity.**”

“Hagnizo” means “to purify, cleanse from defilement”.¹⁴ Forms of “hagnizo” are used in James 4:8, 1 Peter 1:22 and 1 John 3:3. “Hagnotes” means “purity”.¹⁵ A form of the word “hagnotes” is used in 2 Corinthians 6:6.

The Greek adjective “hosios” is used of God in Revelation 15:4 and 16:5 and of Christ in Hebrews 7:26. In these three contexts, “hosios” means “being holy in the sense of superior moral qualities and possessing certain essentially divine qualities in contrast to what is human”¹⁶ or “supremely holy”.¹⁷ A form of the word “hosios” is used in Titus 1:8 to refer to holiness of character and life and “being pleasing to God”.¹⁸

The Greek word “hosiotes” is derived from “hosios”. Bauer argues that in Luke 1:75, the form of the word “hosiotes” here means “holiness of life”.¹⁹ Luke 1:74-75 says in part, “**might serve Him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before Him all the days of our life.**” A form of the Greek word “hosiotes” is also used in Ephesians 4:24 to refer to the true God-given holy nature of the new man in Christ.

The Greek adverb “hosios” is also derived from the Greek adjective “hosios”. The adverb “hosios” means “in a manner pleasing to God, in a holy manner”²⁰ or “pure from evil conduct and observant of God’s will”.²¹ “Hosios” is translated as “**devoutly**” in the New King James Version of 1 Thessalonians 2:10: “**You are witnesses, and God also, how devoutly and justly and blamelessly we behaved ourselves among you who believe.**”

¹⁰ Vine, page 498.

¹¹ Bauer, page 12.

¹² Louw and Nida, page 746.

¹³ Vine, page 498.

¹⁴ Ibid, page 499.

¹⁵ Bauer, page 12.

¹⁶ Louw and Nida, page 745.

¹⁷ Perschbacher, page 298.

¹⁸ Bauer, page 583.

¹⁹ Ibid, page 585.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Vine, page 308.