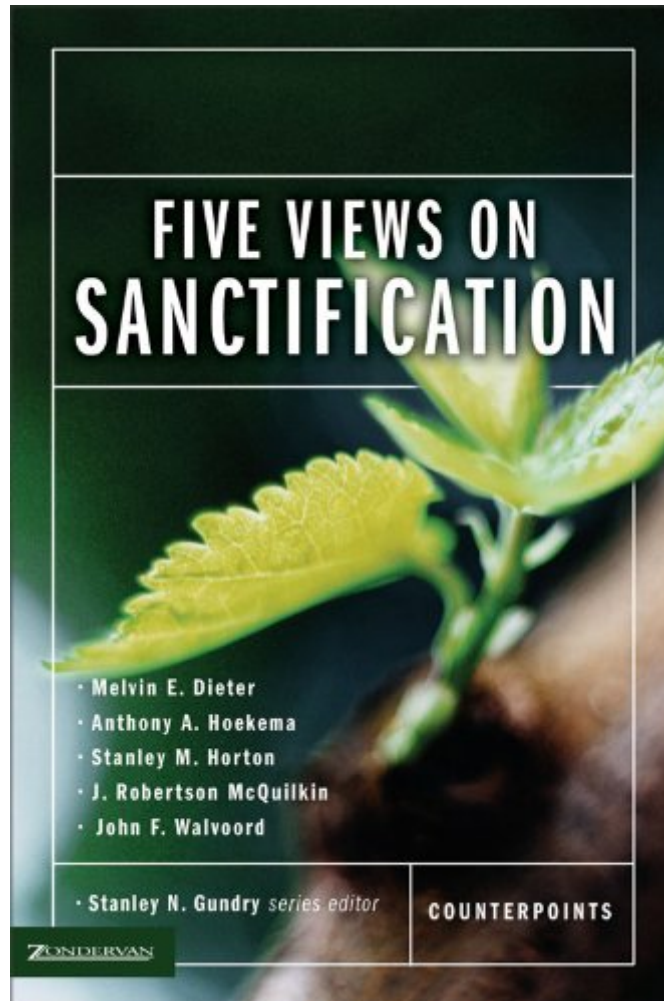


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Five Views On Sanctification (Counterpoints: Bible And Theology)



Synopsis

Christians generally recognize the need to live a holy, or sanctified, life. But they differ on what sanctification is and how it is achieved. *Five Views on Sanctification* brings together in one easy-to-understand volume five major Protestant views on sanctification. Writing from a solid evangelical stance, each author describes and defends his own understanding of the doctrine, and responds as well to the views of the other authors. This book addresses such practical questions as: How does one achieve sanctification in this life? How much success in sanctification is possible? Is a crisis experience following one's conversion normal or necessary? If so, what kind of experience, and how is it verified? The Counterpoints series provides a forum for comparison and critique of different views on issues important to Christians. Counterpoints books address two categories: Church Life and Bible and Theology. Complete your library with other books in the Counterpoints series.

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Customer Reviews

The New Testament exhorts Christians to "walk in the Spirit". What does that look like practically? How does the evangelical church teach believers how to "be holy" as God is holy? Too often we do not critically examine our teaching -- and the consideration of our teaching against other evangelical views that attempt to do justice to Scripture is often very helpful in evaluating our own position. That is precisely the reason why this book is helpful. This book allows you to read proponents of the views in their own words -- which is a helpful antidote against the mischaracterization that can sometimes occur in a standard theology text. That being said, because all 5 indeed attempt to do justice to all of Scripture, they are actually not that far different from one another. Where they differ is in nuanced visions of sin, "walking in the Spirit", the question of the old v. new nature struggle, and in "being filled with the Spirit". Don't be put off if the terms "Keswick" and "Augustinian-Dispensational" are unfamiliar to you. They are actually very common views in evangelical Christianity -- and related forms of both are taught throughout the evangelical Christian church (just not often identified by those terms)! Two very well-known ministries that espouse Keswick teaching are the Christian and Missionary Alliance and Campus Crusade for Christ. "Augustinian-Dispensational" is just a term Walvoord uses to identify the teaching on personal holiness which has been historically associated with Augustine, the early Reformers, and many dispensational and Bible churches today. You'll find it in Jerry Bridges' "Pursuit of Holiness", and probably much other contemporary Christian devotional and theological literature.

This volume is one of many in the Zondervan Counterpoints series which "provide a forum for comparison and critique of different views on issues important to Christians." The five views of sanctification which are presented include: (1) the Wesleyan perspective written by Melvin E. Dieter; (2) the Reformed perspective written by Anthony A. Hoekema; (3) the Pentecostal perspective written by Stanley M. Horton; (4) the Keswick perspective written by J. Robertson McQuilkin; and (5) the Augustinian-Dispensational perspective written by John F. Walvoord. Each perspective is presented in turn. Following the presentation of each of the five perspectives, the other four authors provide responses which critique the perspective just presented. This provides a point-counterpoint dialog which is most helpful in clarifying the essential elements in which each perspective differs from the others. The volume concludes with both a subject index and a scripture index. Although a main purpose of the book is to clarify the differences in which each of the five perspectives understands the Biblical teaching regarding sanctification, it becomes evident during the process that the five views have much more in common than one might at first assume. Although differences remain, one finds that many of the secondary disagreements have more to do with how definitions

and terminology are used than with incompatible views of what scripture teaches on the topics discussed. The result is a strengthened confidence in what scripture teaches concerning the core issues of sanctification-which all the views recognize. Among the five views, two of the views stand out as holding perspectives which are markedly different than the rest.

I worked for Columbia Bible College & Seminary for nine years as general educational staff, and taught the undergraduate night course on "Theology of Christian ethics and Sanctification" in Charlotte. This is a well-written book, but you might find that it delves too deeply into fine shadings of difference between several of the views. The general consensus I heard over the years from nearly all my students to this textbook was that it really should be titled the Two Views of sanctification. This was because of the strong similarities of McQuilkin (Keswick), Walvoord (Dispensational), Dieter (Wesleyan), and Horton (Pentecostal). Only Hoekema's "Reformed" chapter stands out as distinct from the other four. Not to say that there aren't differences between the other four. Dr. John Walvoord went to great lengths to defend the so-called two nature view of the Christian soul, to which Robertson McQuilkin particularly did not subscribe. But the foundations of Walvoord's view were the same as McQuilkin's. Robertson McQuilkin takes great pains to distinguish his toned-down version of Keswick from Methodist perfectionism, which he does not accept; yet the only real difference between the two is a denial of eradication. And Horton's only real difference with the other three is his addition of speaking-in-tongues. My undergraduate students often got lost in the authors' small points of detail. But it seemed as if those four writers needed to focus on small, technical details of difference, because the big elements of their mutual views were so similar to each other.

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