



On The Secret Of Sanctification

By

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Teaching Notes are Bible studies we taught before GraceLife Ministries began publishing articles online in 1995. Some were presented as sermons, others as group studies.

Our hope is that these older studies will be a blessing to you in your life and ministry. Please use them in any way God leads you.

These teaching notes are from a study about **sanctification**.

[These notes are from a study taught more than 40 years ago.]

I've been a child of God for several years and during this time I have strived to please God and do His will. But as I read more and more in His Word about His particular will for my life as a Christin, I have become more and more aware that I could not live up to His expectations. Let me share with you some of what I read in the Bible that I am supposed to be and do.

"Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." 2 Corinthians 7:1

"Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord." Hebrews 12:14

"Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy." 1 Peter 1:16

"Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness." 2 Peter 3:11

"For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven." Matthew 5:20

"Awake to righteousness, and sin not; for some have not the knowledge of God: I speak this to your shame." 1 Corinthians 15:34

“Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned.” 1 Timothy 1:5

“Lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other men’s sins: keep thyself pure.” 1 Timothy 5:22

“Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently.” 1 Peter 1:22

“Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded.” James 4:8

“And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.” 1 John 3:3

“Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.” 2 Timothy 2:19

I thought to myself .. “you’ve got to be kidding! I can’t do all that.” This can be a struggle that discourages and defeats you in everything you try to do for the Lord I have found that many other Christians also have this problem, so I started to search God’s Word for an answer.

One day I came across a verse in the Bible that jumped out at me and said, “Here I am!” Through this portion of Scripture I learned that I could indeed be pure and holy in my daily living.

Turn to 1 Thessalonians 5:23 (Read aloud)

“And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Verse 23 in an expanded translation from the Greek reads – “Now, may the God of peace Himself consecrate you, and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved in their entirety blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

An amplification reads – “And may the God of peace Himself sanctify you through and through — that is, separate you from profane things, make you pure and completely consecrated to God — and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved sound and complete and found blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Messiah.”

If you will, look back at 1 Thessalonians 4:3. You’ll see that God’s will for our lives is that we would be sanctified (set apart). How is this to take place? How are we to be sanctified? What is the secret to sanctification?

Turn with me to John 17:9-21 (Read aloud)

“I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine. And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them. And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are. While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled. And now come I to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves. I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth. As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth. Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.”

Sanctification is a very practical process. It is a work of the Holy Spirit in our lives every moment of every hour of every day of every week of every month of every year for the rest of our lives. One Christian writer of the past century said – “Sanctification will show itself in habitual respect to God’s Law, habitual endeavor to do Christ’s will, and habitual desire to live up to the standard which Paul sets before the churches in his epistles.” (J.C. Ryle, *Holiness*, 1877)

As we continue our study into Sanctification, let's answer an important question. What are the standards of Paul's apostolic letters?

Turn to 1 Thessalonians 5 and let's read together verses 14 – 23. (Read aloud)

“Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feebleminded, support the weak, be patient toward all men. See that none render evil for evil unto any man; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all men. Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing. In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you. Quench not the Spirit. Despise not prophesyings. Prove all things; hold fast that which is good. Abstain from all appearance of evil. And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

In these verses we find 14 practical steps and practices that lead toward the goal of spiritual sanctification.

1. “Warn them that are unruly” (not subject to rule) .. admonish them, counsel them, put them in mind of the truth, warn them by instruction
2. “Comfort the feebleminded” .. encourage and stimulate the fainthearted to the earnest discharge of duties of Christian living
3. “Support the weak” .. hold up the weak in body and soul and spirit

4. “Be patient toward all men” .. be long-tempered and long-suffering toward everyone
5. “See that none render evil for evil unto any man” .. we are not to give back evil to the evil .. we are not to react wickedly to the wickedness of men
6. “Ever follow the which is good, both among yourselves and to all men” .. we are to follow forever that which, being good in its character or constitution, is beneficial in its effect
7. “Rejoice evermore” .. express gladness forever
8. “Pray without ceasing” .. pray fervent, earnest, stretched-out prayers .. always be in an attitude of gratitude toward God
9. “In everything give thanks” .. thank God all the time for everything
10. “Quench not the Spirit” .. don’t extinguish or hinder the work of the Holy Spirit
11. “Despise not prophesyings” .. don’t scorn the setting forth of God’s mind and counsel
12. “Prove all things” .. test and try all teaching and preaching
13. “Hold fast that which is good” .. take a firm grasp on those things which are good and hold on to them
14. “Abstain from all appearance of evil” .. keep yourself from every form or kind of wickedness

Sanctification is not something that we have to do alone. Verse 24 reads – “Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it.”

In verse 25, Paul wrote – “Brethren, pray for us.” It’s almost as if Paul was saying, “Brothers and sisters, this life of set-apart living for God is hard and we need your prayers.”

Let’s go over all that we’ve learned and break it down in the what, why, where, when and how of sanctification.

What should I be? **Sanctified**

Why should I be sanctified? **Because it’s God will**

Where should I be sanctified? **Everywhere**

When should I be sanctified? **All the time**

How can I be sanctified? **“Through Christ who strengthens me”**

The secret of sanctification is:

- Total yieldedness to the Holy Spirit
- Disciplined obedience to the Holy Bible

Let’s pray

[Thank you for reading these teaching notes from more than 40 years ago. My prayer is they will be a blessing to you and your ministry.]