

Holiness

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[0:00] 1. Sanctification So, sanctification, it means holiness.

! It means a separation.! It means that something is set apart.! It's separated for God's purpose, for God's use, for God's service. And Psalm 4 verse 3 tells us there that know that the Lord has set apart him that is godly for himself.

The Lord has set apart him that is godly for himself. The Lord will hear when I call unto him. It's telling us there that the godly have been set apart.

They've been sanctified. They've been separated. It's his grace that makes that happen. It's his grace at work in us. His continuing work. The work of God as he sets us apart for his glory as he makes us more like Christ.

holiness or sanctification means that we've been made more like Christ day by day, moment by moment. And as a Christian, when you become a Christian, something happens.

[1:10] There's a revolutionary transformation happens. As a new Christian, you've put on the new man. You've put on the new man. There's a new nature. There's a new person who comes to life.

The old man is put to death and the new man comes to life. There's a new life. Ephesians 4.21 tells us about that. From verse 21 of Ephesians 4 to verse 24 it says, It's so being that you've heard him and have been taught by him as the truth is in Jesus that you put off concerning the former conversation or the former conduct, the old man.

Put off the old man. So it's got the sense of like putting on, putting off of like a change of clothes. It's being clothed and being unclothed. And Paul's writing here, he says, Take off or put off concerning the former conversation, the former conduct, the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lust, and be renewed in the spirit of your mind.

And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. So the putting off of the old man, the putting on of the new man.

Sanctification, holiness, is the process of becoming holy and becoming pure in the will of God. In the Word of God it tells you that the old man is crucified and the new nature comes to life.

[2:38] In Galatians 2, verse 20, it tells us there, as we can profess that, as a believer in Christ, you can claim that Word of God, that I am crucified with Christ.

And there's a wonderful sense where the old man, the old nature, the old Andrew Craig is crucified, the old man is dead and buried. and there's a new man, a new person, as it says in the Word, that therefore if any man be in Christ, he's a new creature, a new creation.

Old things are passed away, behold, all things are become new. And as a Christian, there's a wonderful joy that we can have of forsaking the self and the old nature, the sinful heart and mind and seeking to serve God in sincerity and purity.

And as a believer, we experience a separation. There's a separation that takes place. A separation from evil things and ways to a new way of living, to God's way of life.

And sanctification, holiness, is that relationship with God where we enter in by faith in Christ into a new relationship with our Lord and Saviour and through the soul title of the death of Christ.

[3:54] And friends, tonight, holiness, sanctification, it's God's will for you. It's God's will for us. It's God's will. What He wants for every Christian is to be sanctified, to be made holy.

We read that in 1 Thessalonians 4 from verses 3 to 4. For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that you should abstain from fornication, that every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour.

God's will is our sanctification. It's our holiness. And theologians describe sanctification. People that explain these truths tell us that sanctification or holiness has got two aspects.

There's two aspects to it. The first one is positional sanctification. And that happens when you're saved. The moment that you're saved, you are sanctified.

You are sanctified. It tells you that, for example, as you read 1 Corinthians 6 verse 11, the context there is of those that are lost. It talks of sin and of sinners.

[5:09] And it says there of various kinds of people, fornicators, idolaters, adulterers, effeminate, abusers of themselves with mankind, thieves, covetous, drunkards, revilers, extortioners.

And God says none of those shall inherit the kingdom of God. But the good news is in verse 11, And such were some of you. Such were some of you.

But ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God. So that moment, the moment of conversion, at that instant, the Holy Spirit comes and indwells you as you're saved, as you become a Christian, as you put your faith personally in the Lord Jesus Christ, as you turn from your own self and old man and old way in repentance and turn in faith and trust in Christ and His work at Calvary's cross for you, there's an instant conversion that happens.

And what happens at conversion is the Holy Spirit comes and indwells your life. The Holy Spirit comes and resides, takes up permanent residence within your life.

The Holy Spirit comes as the helper, as the Word tells us, to help us in our walk, to help us in our relationship with Christ. And this sanctification places you in the family of God.

[6:41] It's at that moment that He gives us power to become the sons of God even to them that believe on His name. And there's a sense where the Holy Spirit seals us. There's a sense where there's a gift from God as we trust Christ as our Saviour, unmerited, undeserved, for no reason of our own.

He gives us the gift of everlasting life. He gives us the gift of the Holy Spirit. And at that instant, at that point, the believer has been set apart for God and has received the gift of eternal life, freely given, received by faith to the one who places their trust in Christ.

So that's the first kind of sanctification. It's positional. It's when you become a Christian, you are sanctified. You are sanctified. And secondly, there's a progressive sanctification.

That's talking about your walk. It's talking about your walk with the Saviour. And we know for some of us, including me, your walk might look a bit like this. You know, a bit like up and down.

You know, you have your highs and lows. You have one step forward and two steps back. There's times when your walk with the Saviour is not what you'd be, you'd like it to be.

[7:55] It's not what we would like it to be. It's not what God would like it to be. But God sees that walk and He wants us to have progressive sanctification.

So in other words, a day by day, a moment by moment, a walking with Christ, a walking in the light, a walking in the Spirit, a fellowshiping with Him.

He wants us to have that, to be committed to that in our will and action, to follow after Christ, so at regeneration we have the new man, the new nature, but following on from that, there's a progressive sanctifying work that goes on as we draw closer to Him, as we learn and grow and increase in faith and struggle at times and face tests and setbacks still.

He's there with us, helping us by His Holy Spirit to come to know that holiness of heart and life and we can grow holiness and sanctification is something we grow in.

Younger people, older people, we all are growing. I'm growing older and greyer and broader, but younger people are growing stronger and more intelligent and more alert and more strong and skilful and wiser day by day, I'm sure.

[9:16] And we all are growing. The Christian life is a growing thing. It's a growing learning experience as we transform day by day as that new nature is resident in us and as we grow we determine to resist temptation, to seek out godly fellowship and bible study and worship.

We follow after those things that are good for us and healthy for us as a Christian. We seek after witnessing. We seek to grow in good works, in faith, in self-discipline and self-control, the sanctified life.

Different Christian authors have termed this in different ways. For example, Hudson Taylor called it the exchanged life. Andrew Murray called it the abiding life.

A preacher called Maxwell called it the crucified life, the sanctified life. It's the victorious Christian life. It's a life truly lived. It's a life lived in honour and truth in close relationship with our dear Lord. And 2 Corinthians 6 verse 17 says there, Wherefore come out from among them and be ye separate saith the Lord and touch not the unclean thing and I will receive you.

[10:27] It's a deliberate stand that we take as we separate and as we not only separate from that which is displeasing to God but we separate unto that which is pleasing to God.

It's a deliberate renewing of the mind, a decision of the will of taking every thought captive and capturing it, letting Christ captivate our thoughts and for our practice to change.

How can this happen? How can this happen to me? You might ask the question tonight as we all can. How can I know this? How can I know the sanctified life?

How can I know the victorious Christian life? It starts with the life of Christ. The life of Christ as we read earlier 1 Corinthians 6 11 and such were some of you.

You used to be sinful. You used to have those sinful things going on but ye are washed. Ye are sanctified. Ye are justified. Why?

[11:27] Because life comes into your dead body. The Bible says you're dead in trespasses and sins. His life comes. It's like Adam. God breathed life into that form of dust and clay and fashioned him with his breath.

And the Christian spiritual life likewise is God's breath. It's God's life. It's God's spirit. It's God's work. It's Christ in you. And 1 Corinthians 1 verse 30 talks about Christ of God is made unto us wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption.

That according as it is written he that glorieth let him glory in the Lord. So where do we glory? Do we glory in any of our good works?

Do we glory in any of our merit? Do we glory like Paul could have glory in his heritage in his learning in his wisdom of schooling and theology and all of the in depth and thorough training that he had of his family and heritage as a Jew as a as a member of the of one of the tribes of Israel as a one who had reputation with the establishment of his time yet he gloried in none of that and neither can we we can't glory in any of our credentials if we have any you know I'm challenged to think as it says in Isaiah that all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags so that's challenging to think all of our righteousnesses all of the very best things about you and me all of the good things we can do or have done are counted as just filthy rags in comparison with the glory of God and unto him be glory glory in the Lord let him that glories glory in the

Lord put your praise on him today the life of Christ he's the one that should get all the glory for any holiness and righteousness and sanctification and redemption it's all due unto him read that later 1 Corinthians 1 verse 30 to 31 Christ Jesus who of God is made unto us wisdom righteousness sanctification redemption and the life of holiness that life of personal holiness is by the grace of God we can't lay any claim to it we can't lay any merit in our own working in our own doing it's got to be entirely of his glory of his grace and the wonderful truth is that every one of us as believers has that wonderful privilege of knowing that grace and of growing in that spiritual life that spiritual maturity to the glory of God and we've got coming up as I say this camp that our theme is revival and how we hunger and long for revival you know the church worldwide through the accounts of scripture the church was revived on occasion and we see the people of God with spiritual life with awakening with zeal with love with joy with fervor

[14:51] I know in preparing for this camp we're looking at a theme and it was Forbes actually who suggested the theme of revival mind you he said to have fasting and revival but we're going to get fed at this camp so I hope that we'll still have revival anyway because some of us can't go without food but maybe we can do with a bit of that too but revival something that we want isn't it what is revival it's the life of God revival Duncan Campbell a preacher who saw revival in the Hebrides he wrote this he said revival is not churches filled with people but people filled with God people filled with God that is revival it's the life of Christ another aspect of sanctification is that it's the blood of Christ it's the blood of Christ that makes us holy in Hebrews 13 12 it says that

the Lord Jesus might sanctify or make holy the people with his own blood think of that precious blood the blood of the spotless lamb of God the blood uncontaminated blood blood that was precious and unspoiled sinless blood was spilt for you it was shed for you it was bled for you the blood of our

Lord Jesus Christ as he laid out his hands on that frame of work and was scarred and wounded battered and bruised and pierced for you for me he bled he died as our sacrifice and by his work you can be made a holy one that's the meaning of the word saint it means a holy one literally you are made holy by the blood of the Lord Jesus and ask the Lord by his blood to do that working in your life as a newborn Christian as a mature Christian apply the blood let the blood cleanse your affections let the blood cleanse your appetites let the blood be upon the doorposts and lintels as it were of your life the gates and doorposts of your life of your heart the blood of Christ makes us holy another aspect is that the word of God makes us holy the word of God in Ephesians 5 25 to 26 it says their husbands love your wives even as

Christ also loved the church and gave himself for it that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word it's interesting isn't it the washing of water by the word there's a sense where we can get brainwashed if you like by the word washing our minds washing our thoughts washing our thinking cleansing our thinking and our thought life the word of God there's a sense where it purifies and makes us glorious and pure as a church even though we know we're not there yet we haven't arrived yet none of us have all of us are frail and failing and faulty and yet in his grace he calls us a glorious church one day it shall be without spot without wrinkle without any such thing he's going to come back for it that glorious church may glorious how because unto him be glory in the church may glorious because of the life of Christ the blood of Christ the word of God and another aspect is the fear of God 2 Corinthians 7 1 it says as God's people we are to be cleansing ourselves it's talking about that walk again it's talking about that day by day walk again as God's people it says they let us from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit perfecting holiness in the fear of

God putting aside filthiness of the flesh and spirit perfecting holiness in the fear of God it's a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God we can be neglectful of judgment of wrath of the danger of neglecting our salvation friends there's a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God it's necessary that we have a fear of God not a fear of man but a fear of God and as we have that right attitude to him the holy one he makes us pure he makes us in right relationship with him as we bow to him as we yield to him as we submit to his holy spirit we have that fear that fear of offending a holy God there's a sense where we as a people should tremble at his word we should not take it lightly and carelessly none of us should do so and we should be open to correction and rebuke as I must be lead me and guide me if I err show me from the scriptures brothers and sisters we need to be accountable to the word of God to not offend a holy

God and think of it tonight how do you stand today how do you stand let us not waste our life let us be a useful Christian be a useful Christian there's a term being used of some Christians that they're like a dead sea Christian now if you go to Israel I'm told that the dead sea it's a sea a great lake with many inlets and no outlet it's many streams and water courses go into this lake the dead sea and it gets very salty and full of minerals and there's no outlet for the lake for the dead sea some Christians can be dead sea Christians dead sea Christians where it's all in flow it's all in flow through Bible study through learning and that's great and good but there's no outflow there's no flowing out there's no outflow in active living because we've become dead spiritually dead stagnant spiritually stagnant and God urges you and me to be useful

[21:03] Christians clean vessels clean vessels a quote again of revival revival is a sovereign move of God by his Holy Spirit at work through consecrated men a study of revivals in the Bible and history reveal that all revivals begin with a deeper appreciation for the holiness of God and a realisation of how offensive our sin must be in the sight of our Holy God Paul writes to Timothy in 2 Timothy 2 verses 21 1 if a man therefore purge himself from these he shall be a vessel unto honour sanctified and meet or prepared or useful for the master's use and prepared unto every good work God God's wanting us to be useful Christians to be prepared for every good work be prepared to witness be prepared to labour be prepared

to serve be prepared to use your talents and callings and giftings to use yourself to be used of God for the master's use for every good work and we could think as the picture there is of a vessel and you can hold a vessel in your hand of a dirty cup a dirty cup you know not something you'd want to drink out of but when that vessel is cleansed and not on the outside as the

Lord Jesus told the Pharisees not just the outside but the inside when that vessel is cleansed! it's prepared it's useful it's a spirit of sanctification is the spirit of God the spirit of God the Holy Spirit it's noteworthy isn't it that it's the Holy Spirit it's called elsewhere the spirit of holiness it's one of the terms of the Holy Spirit the Holy Spirit is the agent of sanctification and

Romans 15 16 says sanctified by the Holy Ghost The Holy Spirit indwells the believer we call it a holy temple each Christian your life your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit that God resides within you like a temple like a holy dwelling place God dwells within you by his Holy Spirit and he's at work within us to convict us to empower us to transform us and we have an action from the Holy One it says in 1 John 2 verse 20 ye have an unction it's elsewhere translated an anointing from the Holy One now there's a lot of talk about anointing on the airwaves but the anointing is really the Holy Spirit filling us and flowing through us within us and without us and lastly another aspect of holiness is obedience in 1 Peter 1 verse 13 Peter writes gird up or put a belt on your mind prepare your mind gird up the loins of your mind be sober and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of

Jesus Christ as obedient children not fashioning yourselves according to the former lust in your ignorance but as he which hath called you is holy so be ye holy in all manner of conversation because it is written be holy for I am holy 1 Peter 1 22 it goes on having purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit we obey the truth through the Spirit we obey the truth God wants us to be obedient Christians now I've got children of my own and they haven't always been obedient it's a sad thing when your children are disobedient my parents are here there wouldn't have been a time I wasn't disobedient to them pray for me later for telling lies brothers sisters we all have a time of disobedience to parents maybe as a

Christian we can be a disobedient Christian and that's a shameful thing we should be embarrassed it talks of being ashamed before him at his coming of having lost and friends it's a shameful thing to be caught out we know that the Lord's coming is soon some will be caught hopping some will be caught hopping like we read of the unwise five when our Lord came and they were caught hopping and not prepared not awake not alert not watching not awake and we need to be found watching found working found ready for his coming obeying the truth through the spirit and friends just to close sanctification holiness is a battle it's a battle that rages within every man every woman as we read in Romans 8 the contest the struggle for your soul the struggle the inward fight and contest the battle that goes on as we see as some have pictured it as a picture of a heart with two boxers in there with their boxing gloves on and there's the flesh and the spirit warring against one another there's a battle raging between the flesh and the spirit

[27:15] Romans 8 verse 6 it says for to be carnally minded or to be occupied with the flesh is death but to be spiritually minded as we seek to please the Lord you could say to be spiritually minded is life and peace there's life there there's life in the spirit there's life in being spiritually minded there's life in seeking to please the Lord now it's a fact today that we're living in a world that is godless it's a perverse world it's a world that's warped and twisted a perverse generation a crooked and perverse generation as it was in the days of Noah as it was in the days of Lot you see as it was in the days of Sodom these are the days of our world today that there's a very real perversity and there's a prevailing wind that is prevailing against that which is truth and godly and god contrary to god contrary to the ways of god contrary to the things of god its trend is downwards hellwards and devilwards you know

I was trying to clean out a room in this building lately it's this little storage room and there's a slope there up to the entrance of this room the storage room and try as I did the dust and the feathers and the fluff and the muck was just blown in downwards into this room because the prevailing wind was against me and that is true for us as christians the prevailing wind the prevailing tide it's all going

against god contrary to god and truth and the bible and friends we can be subject to that sometimes we can we can sometimes be swayed we're living in a godless world with a godless sister the god of this world is the enemy of our soul and he will do his very best to steer you away to turn your side to take you off the course the prevailing wind is against you the struggle is constant it doesn't let up it won't let up till glory we know of some i've heard stories of saints men of god women of god on their deathbeds still with regrets and thinking of the things they could have done and should have done and shouldn't have done and yet in grace in faith they trusted christ they claimed his promise they trusted his word they trusted the blood they trusted the saviour and we can all have regrets and loss and things we are ashamed of and neglectful of fight the fight keep fighting don't let up don't give ground don't give way feelings can be and often are selfish and self-centered and self-serving we're subject to feelings the bible talks about feelings a lot calls them lusts lusts for example ephesians 4 22 deceitful lusts 1 Timothy 6 9 foolish and hurtful lusts 2 Timothy 2 22 youthful lusts titus 2 12 worldly lusts 1 Peter 2 11 fleshly lusts

Jude 18 ungodly lusts feelings do we go by feelings or do we go by faith is it feelings that dictate where we are or is it faith is it the spirit or the flesh that's getting the victory is it the spirit or the flesh that's gaining ground tonight sanctification it's a battle it's a struggle for all of us for all of us we have positional sanctification in that we're saved but there's a progressive sanctification and there's that walk there's that walk there's that battle there's that adversity as some have said adversity builds character everything is a test of character extreme situations expose and bring out the best or the worst in people don't let adversity sway you battle on fight on to sum up sanctification it's a separation it's a setting apart set apart from set apart unto it's God's will for you it's a new man a new nature that you have that positional sanctification that salvation by God's grace through faith the Holy Spirit indwells you it's positional it's progressive in that it's the life of Christ in you working out of you working in you your hope of glory the life of Christ it's the blood of Christ the blood that was shed to purchase your pardon it's the word of God that you're washed by it's the fear of God as you tremble at his word as you consider his wrath as you consider judgment to come as you consider your faithfulness or lack thereof there's a sense of the fear of God to be found faithful and yet there's no condemnation to those who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit the spirit of God makes you a useful

Christian a clean vessel someone God can use as he cleans you up and sends you out there's an obedience there's a battle friends be encouraged tonight to think of how God can do that work of sanctifying you of making you more holy really and truly it's making you more like Christ that's what it is it says I must decrease and he must increase that's really in a nutshell isn't it where we stop our own way of life and thinking and day by day we draw closer we draw ever nearer to that perfect day to that perfect one time time time time time!