

Connecting Minds

"These are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name" (John 20:31)

The Gospel of John

Chapter 17:17-19

"Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth. As You have sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also may be sanctified by the truth."

We've been looking at the teaching and method of biblical sanctification. The method of the bible for growth in holiness is to know the doctrines about God, about sin, about Christ, about regeneration, new life, the Holy Spirit, the forgiveness of our sins, and etc. Then through our knowledge of these doctrines we make application to our lives.

This truth is evident in the words Jesus spoke to the woman caught in adultery (John 8:10,11). She was hauled before Jesus, caught in the act of adultery. What would Jesus do to this poor woman. After writing in the sand, and saying "He who is without sin among you, let him throw a stone at her first..." the accusers had left. Jesus then says to the woman "Neither do I condemn you..." For the Christian there is no condemnation. And in light of this, Jesus says "Go and sin no more." Sanctification. Do you know this glorious truth that your sins are forgiven, that there is no condemnation, that you are justified in the sight of God? If you do, then you will grow in holiness... therefore, go and sin no more.

But we must be honest here. The bible never leads us to self-deception. This process of sanctification through the truth does not work automatically. If we know the doctrines, that doesn't mean that sanctification all of a sudden becomes easy. Look at the commands in scriptures given to Christian people in the bible. God said through Joel "Now therefore turn to Me with all your heart... So rend you're your heart, and not your garments..." Repentance is a call to "rend your heart". We tear the heart in anguish at the sight and presence of sin.

Paul says in Colossians 3:5, "Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire and covertness which is idolatry..." We are called to put to death our members of sinful passion. It is a struggle to the death. Your sinful passions will not lay down and give up easily. Anyone who has struggled with sin knows this. If you say it's easy you might want to check to see if you've ever put down sin.

Sanctification *is* work. Read the instructions given in Ephesians 4:25-32. This is work - be angry and do not sin, let him who stole steal no more, put away these things from you, love one another, forgive one another, be kind to one another. Perhaps you say you don't have a problem with stealing. Great, but do you have a problem with anger? Do you hold grudges, finding it difficult to forgive? This is work.

But we can know that God is sanctifying us and is at work in us. Jesus says in John 8:31, "If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed..." We abide in His word; we continue in the truth. We fail at times, but we keep coming back to the Word of God. God will sanctify us through the truth if we are in the truth, in the word. He can and will work holiness in us through His word. So don't give up. The very fact that you are reading this lesson now is good evidence of God's sanctifying work begun in you.

TableTalk

Read 1 Timothy 6:10,11. What are we called upon to flee?

But the command is not just negative. It is also positive. What are we called upon to pursue?