

We've been speaking about our most important standing with God – Holiness. Let's be careful we do not get the wrong view of holiness. It does not mean to be "holier than thou" or super spiritual.

Rather,

It means to be set apart from the world and set apart for God.

Our last time together we had a pretty serious message about our own holiness, whether present or absent.

In review:

Why be Holy?

1. Scripture commands it
2. Christ died for our holiness
3. It's evidence of our faith in Christ
4. It's evidence we love Him
5. It's evidence we are God's children
6. It helps us to do good to others
7. It's where we find true comfort.

Today I want us to see God's grace in holiness.

I.e.

How it is His work that makes us holy.

1 Thessalonians 5:23

Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

"sanctify" *hagios* – set apart, make holy

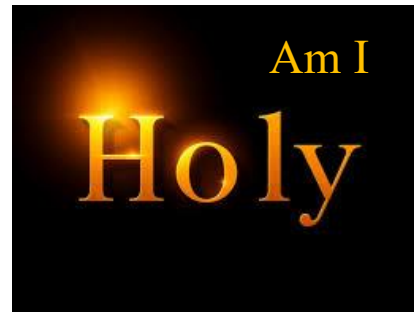
V.24 *Faithful is He who calls you, and He also will bring it to pass.*

God's Grace in Holiness

Holiness is not something we achieve by our own strength — it is something God *produces* in us. From salvation to sanctification, God is the One who sets us apart, cleanses us, and shapes us into His likeness.

So,

It is important to know how God makes us holy and how we can cooperate with His transforming work.



1. Positional Holiness

We have been talking about our effort to keep ourselves holy, set apart, which is needful and true.

But there is a "positional" holiness that is the work of God.

God Declares Us Holy Through Christ

Hebrews 10:10 *By this will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.*

When we receive Christ, God declares us righteous. Our holiness begins with being declared Just by God because of our faith in the work of Christ.

Therefore;

- We are made holy by the blood of Jesus.
- We are set apart from sin to belong to God.
- We are accepted before God not because of our works, but because of Christ's finished work.

Think now of what God has done for you!

- Living in darkness
- Lost in sin
- In step with the world's system

And now,

You are just and set apart for God!

Not because of what we do but because he loves you so much, He would not leave you there.

You're striving is finished.

Your feelings of not measuring up – gone!

2. Jesus set Himself apart

Jn 17:18 *As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world.*

Jesus came with a message and He sent out His apostles with that message as well.

So,

v.19 *"For their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they themselves also may be sanctified in truth.*

Jesus set Himself apart from His deity as a man so he could set apart His people to be like God, righteous and just.

And He certainly set Himself apart from the world.

2. Experiential Holiness

God Teaches Us to Live Holy

1 Peter 1:15–16 *but like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all your behavior;*
v.16 *because it is written, "YOU SHALL BE HOLY, FOR I AM HOLY."*
While God declares us holy, He also calls us to grow in holiness daily. This is the process of sanctification — becoming more like Jesus in thought, word, and action.

This is the part of life that is challenging, when you feel short:
Short on

- Finances
- Love
- Patience
- Happiness
- Friends

I call it God's tool box.

James 1:2 Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials,

v.3 knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance.

v.4 And let endurance have *its* perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

- Trials reveal what needs changing.
- God uses pain to produce perseverance and maturity.
- Through suffering, we learn obedience and dependence on Him.

Trials don't mean you are wrong, they mean God is working in you.

And the good news:

3. God Will Finish His Work of Holiness

Philippians 1:6 *For I am* confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus.

Are you confident in this?

God's sanctifying work is ongoing — and He promises to finish what He started. When we get to Heaven, our holiness will be complete.

Be still, and know that He is God.

Sometimes we don't do too well with either part of that verse.

We have a hard time being still

We have a hard time believing God is in it.

Lastly;

4. Seek to Experience What God is Doing

God makes us holy, but He calls us to respond in faith and obedience. We don't earn holiness — we *walk in it*.

How to cooperate with God's work:

1. Be humble and teachable

Ja 4:6 God is opposed to the proud but gives grace to the humble

2. Seek Him

Mt 6:33 But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.

3. Walk in His plan

Eph 2:10 For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.

4. Don't resist

Phi 2:13 for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure.

5. Rest in Him

Heb 4:10 For the one who has entered His rest has himself also rested from his works, as God did from His.

"rest" abode

"rested" settle down

Ie.

If you are in Christ, settle down and rest. Your works are over. Right where you are, you are loved and cared for by the Lord Jesus, Himself.