

SET APART

Bible Baptist Church, November 13, 2004
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John 17: 17-21

- 17 **Sanctify them through thy truth:** thy word is truth.
18 As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world.
19 And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth.
20 Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word;
21 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.

SANCTIFY: to separate from profane things and dedicate to God

- a) consecrate things to God
- b) dedicate people to God
- c) to purify
- d) to cleanse externally
- e) to purify by expiation: free from the guilt of sin
- f) to purify internally by renewing of the soul

The people of God are a purchased possession of the Lord (Titus 2:14, 1Pet. 2: 9)...a people whom God has special plans for...They are set apart to the Lord for the purpose of glorifying Him, being conformed to the image of Jesus (John 15:8, Rom. 8: 29) sharing in His glory, and being heirs of the riches of God (Romans 8: 17). To accomplish this, God has established **a specific way** to set his people apart for this wonderful privilege. In that setting apart He has intended that his people be identifiable from others of the human race. Jesus is praying about this in our text. He says..."**Sanctify them through thy truth:**"

This that He prays about is the only process for setting apart of believers that He has ordained. So, let's look at the beginning of sanctification, its effects on us, and let's look at ways this sanctification influences and changes our lives.

I. Where our being set apart begins

- (We usually start thinking about sanctification at the point of our conversion...that it begins the day we are born again, but fundamental sanctification begins as a result of the work of God in raising Christ from the dead): **Hebrews 10:10** By the which will we are **sanctified through** the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all."
- So, the starting place, and the power to get it done, lies in Christ - **John 14:6** "...I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."
- Jesus speaks of setting Himself apart so that we might also be set apart: John 17:19 "And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth." Here He is speaking of what Heb. 10:10 tells us He did.
- How it begins in each believer: The Word comes with power: (Rom. 1:16) The gospel of

Christ is said to be “...the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth....”

- Then, it reveals itself in our response to that great work the gospel tells us about: **Romans 10:9** “That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.”
- Another fact: the work of sanctification comes from a two-fold direction (the Spirit sets you apart in the new birth and empowerment to believe in the Lord Jesus and belief of the truth continues and matures the process) **2 Thessalonians 2:13** But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning **chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth:**
- So, what is our proof that we are set apart to God? Belief of the truth

II. Sanctification grows or expands in our lives as we learn from the word and as it influences the way we behave:

- **1 Thessalonians 4: 1** Furthermore then we beseech you, brethren, and exhort *you* by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, *so* ye would abound more and more. (Notice the suggestion here that they received instruction about how to walk, and Paul expected them to abound more, or “grow” in that “right walking”)
 - ▶ This is nothing less than fulfillment of Jesus’ prayer in our text (“Sanctify them through thy truth. Thy word is truth”.)
- How does this (being set apart by the truth) occur? There are at least 5 ways that knowing and believing the truth sets us apart for God:
 - ▶ It teaches us that we are **dead to sin**: **Romans 6:11** Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be **dead indeed unto sin**, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.
 - ▶ **1 Peter 2:24** Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being **dead to sins**, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.
 - ▶ It teaches us that we are to **deny ungodliness**: **Titus 2: 11** For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, 12 Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world;
 - ▶ It teaches us that we are to **live by faith**: **Hebrews 10:38** Now the just shall live by faith: but if *any man* draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.
 - 2 Corinthians 5:7 (For we walk by faith, not by sight:)
 - ▶ It teaches us that we are to **watch and wait confidently for his return** (this is what we know as hope): **Titus 2:13** Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;
 - ▶ It teaches us that we are to **discover and practice godlike love** (Jesus had a conversation with a scribe in Mat. 12. In that conversation we get a great inside look at this thing the word teaches):
 - Mar 12:30 And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this *is* the first commandment.
 - Mar 12:31 And the second *is* like, *namely* this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these.
 - Mar 12:32 And the scribe said unto him, Well, Master, thou hast said the truth: for there is one God; and there is none other but he:
 - Mar 12:33 And to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and

with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love *his* neighbour as himself, is more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices.

- ✓ NOTE: this godlike love goes in two directions - a) toward God and b) toward our neighbor
- ▶ A lesson taught by Jesus in John 15 is companion to that:
 - John 15:12 This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you.
 - John 15:17 These things I command you, that ye love one another.
- ▶ Yet another in Rom. 13:8 "...he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law."

Conclusion: God only does wonders among his people when they are set apart to Him.
Joshua 3:5 And Joshua said unto the people, Sanctify yourselves: for to morrow the LORD will do wonders among you.