Discussion Questions

Date: November 15, 2026

Preacher: Josh Ratliff

Sermon Outline

The Necessity of Holy Living
1 Thessalonians 5:23-28

The earnest closing prayer of Paul is that the church would be sanctified. (23-24)

- Sanctification is demonstrated by living in wholeness and peace with God and others. (23)
- We have hope and assurance of being sanctified because it is the work of God by grace. (24)
- **Question**: Have you given up hope in your sanctification? What barriers do you experience in your pursuit of what it means to live holy?

Paul's final instructions are for reciprocal and embodied care for all. (25-28)

- Prayer is a constant and necessary form of mutual care in the church. (25)
- Holy affection is meant to be reflected in the culture of God's family. (26)
- Teaching, guidance, and affection must be extended to all in the family of God. (27)
- **Question**: In what ways are you engaging in good care for all those within the church? In which of these areas do you need to take a growth step: sanctification, prayer, embodied care, all people matter?

<u>Bottom Line: Sanctification is essential for the church to love well.</u>

Talking Points

- **What is your relationship with sanctification? (Perhaps you have not thought about it, or it seems out of reach, or it has been growing in you for years.)**
- **How do your thoughts and feelings change when you remember that sanctification is God's work first of all?**
- **What are the biggest barriers to your sanctification? What is God's invitation to you?**
- **How could you contribute to the sanctification of the people in your families and groups?**
- **Who are the people you feel called to pray for? How do you prioritize prayer in your life?**
- **How can you grow in holy affection when the world around you teaches you to dehumanize and objectify other people?**
- **Who in the family of God is the hardest for you to love? How can God's sanctifying power cause you to grow in love?**

Understanding Scripture

1. **Read the passage aloud.**
   - Question: How would the original audience have understood this passage?
   - Question: What was God's desire for them?
2. **Reread key verse(s) aloud.**
   - Question: What does this teach us about the human soul, desires, or behavior?
   - Question: What does this teach us about the nature, desires, or behavior of God?
3. **Ask if anything is difficult to understand in the passage, or simply point it out yourself.**
   - Back up from the confusing verse and reread the whole section slowly—highlight the author's flow of thought.
   - Ask everyone, "What are some possible interpretations?" Encourage curiosity!
   - If needed, provide clarification, but admit if you don't have a satisfactory explanation, and volunteer to research answers. Share your findings over text or at the next meeting.
4. **Summarize the passage in 1-3 sentences to refocus the group ("Okay, so far we've seen in Amos...")**
   - Question: What does this say about our relationship with God and/or each other?
   - Question: How do the teachings, actions, or person of Jesus shed light on this passage?

Prayer Requests