

Intro Prayer

Heavenly Father, we come before You with grateful hearts, thankful for the work You have already done in our lives through Your Son, Jesus Christ. As we gather together today, we ask that You open our hearts and minds to what You want us to receive from this time of discussion. Help us to set aside our own agendas and desires, and to truly seek Your voice. May Your Holy Spirit guide our conversation, draw us closer to You and to one another, and remind us of the incredible gift of sanctification You have freely given us. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Summary

This sermon concludes a series titled 'Love Made, Love Made Away' by focusing on sanctification, the fourth major theme following redemption, adoption, and justification. The message explains that sanctification (from the Greek 'hagiosmos') means to be consecrated or set apart as holy, and that it operates in three dimensions: a past tense (we have been sanctified through Christ's work), a present tense (we are being sanctified daily), and a future tense (we will stand blameless before God). Just as special china dishes are placed in a cabinet because they are already special, believers are set apart in Christ and then cultivated by God within the community of the church.

Key Verses

1 Corinthians 1:2	1 Peter 1:14-16	2 Corinthians 3:18	John 15:1-5
1 Corinthians 6:9-11	1 Thessalonians 4:1-8	Luke 9:23	1 Corinthians 10:13
Jude 24-25	2 Corinthians 7:1	Romans 8:11-13	
1 Peter 3:15		Galatians 5:22-25	

Questions

1. The message described sanctification as having a past, present, and future dimension. Which of these three dimensions is most meaningful or surprising to you, and why?
2. In 1 Peter 3:15, Peter calls us to 'sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts,' meaning we set Him apart as preeminent in our lives. What are some practical ways you can give Jesus the first and highest place in your daily routine?
3. The message used the image of china dishes in a cabinet to illustrate that we are special because of who we are in Christ, not because of where we are placed. How does understanding your identity in Christ change the way you view your struggles and failures?
4. Luke 9:23 calls us to deny ourselves and take up our cross daily. What does 'denying yourself' look like in your specific life circumstances this week?
5. The message warned against going back to 'dig up the old man,' meaning returning to old sinful habits after coming to Christ. Why do you think it is so tempting to return to old ways, and what helps you resist that pull?
6. Galatians 5:22-25 lists the fruit of the Spirit as evidence that God's Spirit is at work in us. Which fruit do you feel is most evident in your life right now, and which one do you sense God is currently working to develop in you?

7. John 15 teaches that we must abide in Christ, the true vine, to bear genuine fruit. What spiritual disciplines or habits help you stay connected to the vine, and are there any you feel you need to strengthen?
8. 1 Corinthians 10:13 promises that God is faithful and will always provide a way of escape from temptation. Can you share a time when you recognized God providing that way of escape? What did it look like?

Life Application

This week, choose one specific area of your life where you know the old habits or desires of the flesh tend to resurface. Each morning, before your day begins, take a few minutes to pray and intentionally deny yourself in that area, asking the Holy Spirit to produce His fruit in you instead. At the end of each day, briefly reflect on how it went. Notice where God provided strength or a way of escape and thank Him for it. The goal is not perfection but faithful, daily engagement with the sanctification process God has already begun in you.

Key Takeaways

Sanctification is not something we earn or produce on our own. It is a work of God through Christ, and it operates in three dimensions: we have been sanctified (past), we are being sanctified (present), and we will stand blameless before God (future).

Being sanctified means being set apart as holy, just as God is holy. This identity in Christ does not change based on our circumstances or failures, just as the value of the Statue of Liberty was not diminished while it was being restored.

The sanctification process requires our daily participation. Following Jesus means denying ourselves, taking up our cross daily, and actively putting to death the deeds of the flesh through the power of the Holy Spirit.

The fruit of the Spirit (love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control) is the visible evidence that God's Spirit is at work in us and that we are abiding in Christ, the true vine.

God is faithful. No temptation we face is beyond what He equips us to handle, and He always provides a way of escape. Our role is to keep our eyes fixed on Jesus and walk in step with His Spirit each day.

Ending Prayer

Lord Jesus, we thank You for this time together and for the truth of Your Word that has guided our discussion. Thank You for the incredible gift of sanctification, that You have set us apart, that You are actively working in us, and that one day we will stand blameless before You. Forgive us for the times we have gone back to dig up the old man and renew in us a commitment to deny ourselves and follow You daily. Help each person in this group to abide in You, the true vine, so that the fruit of Your Spirit will be evident in our lives and in our relationships. May we walk in step with Your Spirit this week and every week, knowing that You are faithful and that You will complete the good work You have begun in us. In Your holy and precious name, we pray, Amen.