

8.3.20

Sanctified

Set Apart for the Will and Purposes of God for Such a Time as This

Introduction:

The generic meaning of sanctification or to be sanctified is “the state of proper functioning.” I like that definition - it is a personal aspiration. But then I thought if I use that one, I might not ever be considered as sanctified. So, decided to dig deeper - thank God.

Since we are going to dig, our first task is to clearly define the meaning of the term - Sanctified.

And, from those biblical definitions and meanings we can then identify the biblical context that the Holy Spirit will use to reveal the biblical message of Sanctified to our minds and hearts.

Here are two definitions and word meanings for sanctified: one from the original Hebrew, the other from the original Greek.

[sanctified] 1 - The Hebrew word **qadesh** translates into the English word sanctified and means; to set apart or consecrated (denominative verb)

[sanctified] 2 - The Greek word **hagiazō** translates into the English word sanctified and means; make holy, treat as holy, set apart as holy, sanctify, hallow, purify (active verb)

...Set apart, purified, to become holy and purposeful

We won't be able to gain the right perspective on this process without the fundamental and foundational acknowledgment of the exclusive Holiness of God. Two quick examples of the weight of that reality. In a sanctified prayer, Hannah consecrates and gives her son Samuel for the will and purposes of God. Her first acknowledgement is of the Holiness of God.

1 Samuel 1:27-2:10

For this child I prayed, and the LORD has granted me my petition that I made to him. 28 Therefore I have lent him to the LORD. As long as he lives, he is lent to the LORD.” And he worshiped the LORD there.2 And Hannah prayed and said, “My heart exults in the LORD; my horn is exalted in the LORD. My mouth derides my enemies, because I rejoice in your salvation. 2 “There is none holy like the LORD: for there is none besides you; there is no rock like our God.

3 Talk no more so very proudly, let not arrogance come from your mouth; for the LORD is a God of knowledge and by him actions are weighed. 4 The bows of the mighty are broken, but the feeble bind on strength. 5 Those who were full have hired themselves out for bread, but those who were hungry have ceased to hunger. The barren has borne seven, but she who has many children is forlorn. 6 The LORD kills and brings to life; he brings down to Sheol and raises up. 7 The LORD makes poor and makes rich; he brings low and he exalts. 8 He raises up

the poor from the dust; he lifts the needy from the ash heap to make them sit with princes and inherit a seat of honor. For the pillars of the earth are the LORD's, and on them he has set the world.

9 "He will guard the feet of his faithful ones, but the wicked shall be cut off in darkness, for not by might shall a man prevail. 10 The adversaries of the LORD shall be broken to pieces; against them he will thunder in heaven. The LORD will judge the ends of the earth; he will give strength to his king and exalt the horn of his anointed."

Isaiah the Prophet also presents us with a context in which only God is Holy.

Isaiah 6:3

In the year that King Uzziah died I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up; and the train of his robe filled the temple. 2 Above him stood the seraphim. Each had six wings: with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. 3 And one called to another and said: "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory!"

In both Hannah's prayer and Isaiah's vision it is clear that God is separate, distinct, and He is truly the Other - from no one else's mother. Nothing will ever change the distinct honor and glory of a Righteous and Holy God. And, in that context, it is also true that no human nor anything can compare to the Holy and Sanctified nature of God.

There is only one God and there is no one like Him.

But as you and I will discover, the Bible clearly speaks in a different context about people, places, and things set apart for the such a time - holy and sanctified for the purposes and will of a Holy God.

People, places and things chosen - called - uniquely and intentionally set apart for historic and eternity altering moments. People sanctified or set-apart for the manifest use of a sovereign God, for certain times and in specific places; to influence, enact and fulfill His will on earth as it is in heaven (binding agreement). This is the context, definition and meaning we are going to explore in this series - Sanctified.

First, let's hear the words of Jesus, as he reveals to a curious crowd and His own followers the parameters of being called and set-apart for discipleship.

Mark 8:34-38

If any of you wants to be my follower, you must give up your own way, take up your cross, and follow me. 35 If you try to hang on to your life, you will lose it. But if you give up your life for my sake and for the sake of the Good News, you will save it. 36 And what do you benefit if you gain the whole world but lose your own soul? 37 Is anything worth more than your soul? 38 If anyone is ashamed of me and my message in these adulterous and sinful days, the Son of Man will be ashamed of that person when he returns in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.

From the apostle Peter, (a man who actually heard Jesus speak the words deny yourself, take up your cross and follow Me), tell us that God directly calls people to be sanctified—holy as He (God) is holy. Again, the word holy from Peter's original Greek text is - **hagios**, meaning; one who is sanctified - set apart.

I Peter 1:13-17, 2:1-5, 8-9

So, prepare your minds for action and exercise self-control. Put all your hope in the gracious salvation that will come to you when Jesus Christ is revealed to the world. 14 So you must live as God's obedient children. Don't slip back into your old ways of living to satisfy your own desires. You didn't know any better then. 15 But now you must be holy in everything you do, just as God who chose you is holy. 16 For the Scriptures say, "You must be holy because I am holy."

So, get rid of all evil behavior. Be done with all deceit, hypocrisy, jealousy, and all unkind speech. 2 Like newborn babies, you must crave pure spiritual milk so that you will grow into a full experience of salvation. Cry out for this nourishment, 3 now that you have had a taste of the Lord's kindness. 4 You are coming to Christ, who is the living cornerstone of God's temple. He was rejected by people, but he was chosen by God for great honor.

5 And you are living stones that God is building into his spiritual temple. What's more, you are his holy priests. Through the mediation of Jesus Christ, you offer spiritual sacrifices that please God.

8 And, He is the stone that makes people stumble, the rock that makes them fall. They stumble because they do not obey God's word, and so they meet the fate that was planned for them. 9 But you are not like that, for you are a chosen people. You are royal priests, a holy nation, God's very own possession. As a result, you can show others the goodness of God, for he called you out of the darkness into his wonderful light.

The writer of Hebrew joins in to illuminate understanding and purpose for the call of sanctified from the will of God and the sacrifice of Christ Jesus.

Hebrews 10:10

For God's will was for us to be made holy by the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ, once for all time.

And then the apostle Paul adds to in a letter to the Christians in Thessalonica...

Thessalonians 2:13-15

But we ought always to give thanks to God for you, brothers beloved by the Lord, because God chose you as the first fruits to be saved, through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth. 14 To this he called you through our gospel, so that you may obtain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. 15 So then, brothers, stand firm and hold to the traditions that you were taught by us, either by our spoken word or by our letter.

The clarity we see in the "big message" of this biblical process is undeniable - we are called to be Sanctified. That is, to be set apart in holiness for the will and purposes of God for such as time as this.

This "big message" should not frighten or terrify us as leaders or as followers - but it does. Let me explain.

The calling of Sanctified itself insures us a path of access and purpose with God. This access and purpose came to us in and through the sacrifice Christ - that is not terrifying. What terrifies us is not God's part in the "big message" of sanctified - it's our part that scares us to death! This is not a narrative of fear that we should follow - there is no need to fear.

1 Peter 3:13-17

Now who is there to harm you if you are zealous for what is good?

14 But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, you will be blessed. Have no fear of them, nor be troubled, 15 but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect, 16 having a good conscience, so that, when you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ may be put to shame. 17 For it is better to suffer for doing good, if that should be God's will, than for doing evil.

It is right now that the bold and courageous message of Sanctified should ring out. Not simply in believing, but in purposefully obeying - not simply acknowledging, but

in passionate and righteous action. Listen one more time to the biblical path of calling and consecration - Sanctified.

Hebrews 2:8-11

Now in putting everything in subjection to him, he left nothing outside his control. At present, we do not yet see everything in subjection to him. 9 But we see him who for a little while was made lower than the angels, namely Jesus, crowned with glory and honor because of the suffering of death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.

10 For it was fitting that he, for whom and by whom all things exist, in bringing many sons to glory, should make the founder of their salvation perfect through suffering. 11 For he who sanctifies and those who are sanctified all have one source. That is why he is not ashamed to call them brothers.

In our present-day Christian culture, the idea of this uniquely polarizing call and purpose of Sanctified is alarming and terrifying. Since March 22nd, this has been painfully obvious. The Church of Jesus has not led we have followed - we have not been fearless we have been more fearful.

We are not "un-woke", we do get it.

An unknown viral pandemic fell on us almost overnight.

Startling, honest to goodness and certainly sobering. Careful responses from the Church were important. Not only for our safety but for the safety of many, many, whom we love and respect. But... after two-months two things became clear.

ONE: The virus was real, it was highly contagious and could be deadly for everyone older, sicker, or more vulnerable to viral infections. And that we should support and encourage those vulnerable to stay safely home.

TWO: The narrative of fear was going to be used to control and be used to necessitate the re-write of the American way of life and the constitutional rights that many of us have taken for granted while living in our great country.

As the implications and narrative engulfed the political, social and racial aspects of our culture we could see of the vulnerability of our humanity and our economy. The last but certainly not the least societal engine to be exposed connects with the message of Sanctified - The Church.

We would certainly and respectfully comply with the nationally mandated lock-down. But when it was lifted, and states began to open up our lost identity and our ability to decisively to lead was exposed. Not knowing any longer who we were we simply did not know what to do. Not wanting to do the wrong thing we did nothing.

Any polarizing public messaging or any advancement narrative of biblical truth; any thought of gathering and opening the Church had become terrifying. So much so that there was not many of us who would dare go there.

We could not bear to hear the hateful and negative social media responses. Selfish, killers, ignorant, idiots, foolish, and my personal favorite - if your church is open - you should go find a new one (lol).

Pastors and church leaders everywhere were terrified to end up digitally viral... shamed as "the" pastor or "the" church who had the COVID-OUTBREAK. And sadly, far too many of our churches and pastors were even more terrified to open the doors and preach to empty seats.

The message of Sanctified in a time such as this reminds us that we must go there – we have been called and chosen to go there. The biblical message of Sanctified will remind us of who we are as followers and true disciples of Jesus. It will remind us that we are chosen, called, and set apart for such a time as this.

Finally, the message of Sanctified will remind us that we are not afraid of evil or evil-doers - that in Christ we are God's holy remnant - **people of faith, courage, and calling.**

I promise to behave during this series - but I also promise to share with you the biblical and eternal truth that will make us (the Church) relevant in a time where Christianity and Christian worship are (in real time) viewed with irrelevance, disdain, condescension and contempt.

So, from time to time during this series I will speak openly and honestly about how things are - as well as to who and where those things are coming from.

For example: I am not seeking to be political, racial, or social. However, as the political, racial, and social realities before us are weaponized against biblical truth and the Christian community I will seek to hold those attacks of darkness up into the accountability of biblical truth in full recognition of God' Holy Word.

I am committed to a genuinely loving approach that I hope will always reflect the grace and mercy of our Father.

But I am equally committed to "ringing the bell" of biblical truth regarding the message and calling of Sanctified.

I'm going to ask two questions. And, I am not soliciting an external response because from my heart of love, I know many wonderful people whose risk factors to the COVID-19 virus are and can indeed be deadly. I whole heartedly support quarantine for anyone with "high risk" factors, I support wearing masks in public gatherings, I fully support the practice of "social distancing." I am not naive or resentful of any of these precautionary practices. I believe in the entire First Amendment - not just the parts that I like.

Congress will make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech; or of the press, or the right of the people to peaceably assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

Now my questions...

Question One:

After four and a half months of a very real global battle with the COVID-19 Virus there continues to be state government mandates being used to shut-down nearly 70% of Christian worship gatherings nation-wide. Do you still think that extended shut-down mandates for Churches are for the sole reason of health and well-being? In spite of the fact that in many regions of our great country Bars, Beaches, Casinos, Resorts, Gyms, Indoor water parks, PPC's and law-breaking protests have been permitted (without visible restrictions) and even in some cases sanctioned as non-risk essentials.

Question Two:

Do you still believe that the biblical conviction and Christ-led call to be sanctified and set-apart for the will and purposes of God is more terrifying than the moments we are witnessing and experiencing today with our very own eyes?

Galatians 4:1-18

Have I now become your enemy because I am telling you the truth?

17 Those false teachers are so eager to win your favor, but their intentions are not good. They are trying to shut you off from me so that you will pay attention only to them. 18 If someone is eager to do good things for you, that's all right; but let them do it all the time, not just when I'm with you.

Final Concept

God's SOP is to sanctify (set apart) common people - like you and I, common places - like Reunion, and common things - like gathering, worship, and biblical preaching. Throughout history God has SANCTIFIED His Church and His people for His redemptive purposes. More directly, He has done this consistently in times of human suffering, such as pandemic-illness, drought and famine, war and conflict, natural disaster and devastation, and finally in times of faithlessness and fear. In His profound and sovereign wisdom, God chose not to call on or consecrate perfect heavenly things and beings to be the presence and messengers of hope and redemption in the world's greatest moments of darkness and brokenness. He chose us.

1 Corinthians 1:26-31

Remember, dear brothers and sisters, that few of you were wise in the world's eyes or powerful or wealthy when God called you. 27 Instead, God chose things the world considers foolish in order to shame those who think they are wise. And he chose things that are powerless to shame those who are powerful. 28 God chose things despised by the world, things counted as nothing at all, and used them to bring to nothing what the world considers important. 29 As a result, no one can ever boast in the presence of God. 30 God has united you with Christ Jesus. For our benefit God made him to be wisdom itself. Christ made us right with God; he made us pure and holy, and he freed us from sin. 31 Therefore, as the Scriptures say, If you want to boast, boast only about the LORD.

Yes.

He chose us.

He Sanctified us.

We are on Holy ground.

He has set us apart on this ground, for His will and His purposes.