

## Jehovah Mikkadesh – My Sanctifier - Study 12

God, our sanctifier. In its broadest sense, sanctification is the selection of an article or person for holy purposes. This vessel or person is set apart for specific use in God's plan. For example, articles used for worship in the Old Testament Temple were sanctified (or consecrated) for use exclusively in the temple. Never to be used for ordinary, daily purposes. Similarly, the Levite priests were 'set apart' for their service at the temple. This sanctification was usually accompanied with a ceremonial washing, prior to its use for ministerial function.

As we have seen over the previous weeks, for those of us chosen by God to be a royal priesthood, Christ's sacrifice cleanses us and makes us holy. We have been sanctified by our response to His call as He declares us set apart for His purpose. Jesus is our sanctifier! His blood has cleansed us and we are accepted by God because of His work on the cross. This initial sanctification (set apart, cleansed for holy purpose) has nothing to do with us. Whilst praying, Jesus announced His purpose this way:

*“Sanctify them by the truth...For them I sanctify myself, that they too may be truly sanctified.”*

**(John 17:17a, 19)**

The writer of Hebrews tells us that “we have been made holy (sanctified) through the sacrifice...of Christ”, and again, “because of one sacrifice he has made perfect forever, those who are being made holy.” **(Heb 10:10 & 14)** Through Christ, we are made holy, set apart, sanctified. It is His work; our only part was to believe! Likewise, Paul writes:

*“In a large house there are articles not only of gold & silver, but also of wood and clay; Some are for noble purposes and some for ignoble (common). If a man cleanses himself...he will... be made holy, useful to the Master...”*

**(2Tim 2:20)**

But here we see an unveiling truth, that sanctification has a double meaning for the believer. Being sanctified means to be chosen, or declared holy, (as we are in an eternal sense by God – set aside for noble purpose) but it also refers to a process of becoming more holy in a practical sense. In affect, being declared holy should therefore outwork in the believer as both an inward and outward change to *become* holy. It stands to reason that something chosen by God for His purpose (declared sanctified), would be most affective if it was actively pursuing a holy life with holy purpose. It is true, God loves us and chose us as we are, but He also loves us too much to *leave us* as we are. We are to pursue a holy life. We should, the longer we

profess Christ, look and think more and more like Him. So how do we do this? Well even here, we are empowered by God's grace, so that He gets the glory!

In Paul's letter to the Ephesians, he exclaims that we have been chosen according to the purpose of his plan, and He has sealed us with His Holy Spirit who is a deposit / guarantee. **(see Eph 1:11-14)** For the Holy Spirit to inhabit us, there has to have been a cleansing – a declared sanctification – this was done at the cross and attributed to the believer through faith. If this was not the case, then the *Holy* Spirit could never inhabit *unholy* man. But there is also an unfolding sanctifying work that the Holy Spirit does in the yielded heart. In effect, His presence, through prompting and empowerment, should bring about 'good fruit'.

Jesus said of the Holy Spirit, that He would be a counsellor (advocate, helper), a teacher, would convict of sin, and be a guide into all truth. God, living in the believer, is able to wrought changes in the heart of man, guiding, convicting, teaching and counselling him *into* holiness. If the believer listens to His prompting, acknowledging the path set for him by the Holy Spirit, he will naturally live a progressively more holy life. He will become outwardly and inwardly sanctified, apart from the sanctification of being chosen by God.

In 1Thess 4:3, Paul declares that it is God's will for us to be sanctified. He goes on, exhorting his readers to avoid all manner of sinful ways. Finally he says:

*“For God did not call us (choose / sanctify) to be impure, but to live a holy life. Therefore, he who rejects this instruction does not reject man but God, who gives you His Holy Spirit.”*

**(1Thess 4:7, 8)**

Paul is making a very real link between being chosen, having the Holy Spirit within us and the outward expression of this being evident by living holy lives. But God does not leave us alone to live in holiness. He gave us His Holy Spirit, to guide us and teach us, to counsel us. As a Christian, often we will find ourselves in situations where we are tempted, or faced with a choice that may not line up with God's will. Often, if we are sensitive to the voice of the Holy Spirit, we will be brought under His conviction, and what may have seemed like a simple choice between two options, suddenly becomes a very real decision between holiness and unholiness.

Similarly, impure thoughts might run through our heads. We can ignore the voice inside that is counselling us in Christ's righteousness, or we can allow this fleshly desire to be conceived, and give birth to sin. **(James 1:15)** The choice of course remains ours, but this choice will taint the pure gold of the noble article within God's House, and we will become less and less useful (effective) to the Master.

Paul sums up our call to a holy life and the Spirit's work in unfolding sanctification in the book of Galatians. He declares that we are *called to be free*. But this freedom should not lead us to indulge in our sinful nature. (**Gal 5:13**) He calls us to *live by the Spirit* (controlled by, guided by, responsive to), for the fleshly desires of the sinful man is at odds (warring, in conflict) with the Holy Spirit that has been deposited within us. What he is saying, is that although we *are* free and have been sanctified, there is in the here and now, a fight that will still wage on, as the Holy Spirit tries to guide man into holy living. Paul cries to us, to heed His Spirit within us, and follow His guidance, so that we might live holy lives to His glory.

He goes on to explain, that it will be obvious whether the individual is walking according to his sinful nature or according to the Spirit of God. It can be viewed in their fruit. The sinful nature will produce fruit in the form of immorality, impurity, idolatry; hatred, discord, jealousy, rage, selfish ambition, envy, drunkenness, etc. (in other words sin). Whenever we display such attitudes or actions, we have silenced the Spirit of God in our hearts, and have given ourselves over to ignoble purposes.

However, the fruit of the Spirit are love, joy peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. We don't manufacture these (if they are true fruit), they are the self-evident fruit of a life sanctified by the work of the Holy Spirit within a believer. And whose fruit is it? Whose work? God's, the Holy Spirit's! He, through the cross of Christ, declares us Sanctified for His purpose, and it is Him who produces an ever increasing level of sanctification (holiness) within the life of the believer, so that we will desire and eventually become more and more like Jesus.

So what is our role in all this? Accept through faith in Jesus, that He is our Jehovah Mikkadesh – our Sanctifier. He has chosen us for Himself! Now our role is to step aside and let the Holy Spirit sanctify our lives, as He gently guides us into holy living, pointing out that which needs to change, guiding us in paths of righteousness and helping us to make the changes to our sinful hearts, that we could not make on our own. It is all His work, as He takes our weaknesses and proves His power.

It is Him who is our sanctifier!

1. **Read 2 Tim 2:20** What distinction is Paul making between being sanctified (as in selected), and becoming holy (sanctification as a process toward holy living)?  
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2. How does our (sanctified) life affect our usefulness to God? Do you think our personal sanctification is important to Him?  
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3. Have you ever been in a situation where you know God's Holy Spirit has been counselling you one way, and your flesh has fought to go another?  
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4. Read **Galatians 5:25**. What does it mean to be in step with the Spirit? How do / can we do this?  
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5. Paul tells us of the fruit that will be evident in people's life and how it will be dependant on which of the two natures we nurture. In what ways can we feed (fertilise) the Spirit, so that we might produce good fruit.  
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6. In the study, we read, "God loved us and chose us as we were, but that He loves us too much to leave us as we are." Comment on this statement.  
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7. What has God revealed to you through this study?