

HEALING THE PAST GOD'S WAY
TEACHING NOTES
I AM SANCTIFIED; I AM CALLED

MEMORY VERSE:

If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above,
where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.
Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth.
For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.
When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.
Colossians 3:1 - 4

Two teachable moments are wrapped in this lesson:

One, I encourage you to share a piece of your testimony of how God has changed you from what you were (a liar, a murderer, a thief, etc.) into what you are becoming. Sharing a piece of your journey accomplishes three things: it models transparency to the women you are teaching; it gives God glory for what He has accomplished in your life; and it gives them hope that no matter where they are, God can change them too.

And two, focus the last half of the lesson, "I am called" on service. The Biblical principle of putting other's needs ahead of our own, Philippians 2, starts the healing process as the focus shifts from me and my brokenness to God's gift of using me to help others.

I AM SANCTIFIED

BIBLICAL PRINCIPLE: SANCTIFICATION – TO BE *SET APART* TO GOD

Sanctification is both an **EVENT** and a **PROCESS**.

The **EVENT** of sanctification happens at the moment of salvation.

Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God?
Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers,
nor men who practice homosexuality, nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards,
nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God.
And such were some of you. But you were washed,
you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ
and by the Spirit of our God.
1 Corinthians 6:9 – 11

The PROCESS of sanctification occurs throughout the lifetime of a believer.

His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us to His own glory and excellence, by which He has granted to us His precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire.

2 Peter 1:3 & 4

Sanctification is the process of BEING what you have BECOME.

Example: Francis Schaeffer once said that when he stood at the altar with his beautiful wife-to-be, at the moment he said “I do” he *became* a husband. But over the next forty years, he has learning how to *be* a husband. He experiences on a daily basis how to BE what he has BECOME.

Romans 12:9 – 21

Galatians 5:22 – 24

Colossians 3:12 - 17

Sanctification as a process can best be described as a series of steps up the stairs. 2 Peter 1:5 – 11 goes on to describe the process, or natural *progression* of sanctification:

For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge, and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness, and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love.

For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

For whoever lacks these qualities is so nearsighted that he is blind, having forgotten that he was cleansed from his former sins.

Therefore, brothers, be all the more diligent to make your calling and election sure, for if you practice these qualities you will never fall.

For in this way there will be richly provided for you an entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

2 Peter 1:5 – 11

THE PROGRESSION OF SANCTIFICATION

BROTHERLY AFFECTION with **LOVE**

GODLINESS with **BROTHERLY AFFECTION**

STEADFASTNESS with **GODLINESS**

SELF-CONTROL with **STEADFASTNESS**

KNOWLEDGE with **SELF-CONTROL**

VIRTUE with **KNOWLEDGE**

FAITH with **VIRTUE**

We start with **faith** in God which should lead naturally to a change in how we conduct ourselves (virtue). The step of **virtue** leads inevitably to a deeper **knowledge** of God, both intellectually and experientially, that impacts how we live (self-control). The step of **self-control** is practiced not once or twice, but over a period of time, learning how to remain in an attitude of patient endurance. That **steadfastness** produces in us a spirit of godliness, reflecting God's glory in a world devoted to *self*. **Godliness** produces in us a spirit of service and concern for those around us, desiring God's best for them and loving them sacrificially, **brotherly affection**. The final step of sanctification is to **love** God's creation (the people around us) as God loves them – perfectly, reflecting Jesus' example in Philippians 2.

As I teach on sanctification, I always emphasize action.

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom,
and the knowledge of the Holy One is insight.
Proverbs 9:10

Wisdom:

To the Greek Mind: to know

To the Hebrew Mind: to do

Solomon in Proverbs was reminding us that a right relationship with God leads us to response.

I AM CALLED

***Ministry takes place when divine resources meet human needs
through loving channels to the glory of God.
Warren Wiersbe, On Being a Servant of God***

Above all, keep fervent in your love for one another, because love covers a multitude of sins.

Be hospitable to one another without complaint.

As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another,
as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.

Whoever speaks, let him speak, as it were, the utterance of God;
whoever serves, let him do so as by the strength which God supplies;
so that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ,
to whom belongs the glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen

1 Peter 4:8-11

DIVINE RESOURCES:

God is the center of every focus, every practice, every desire to obey. Further, it is only with God at the center that we can focus and practice and obey. He is the One to whom all glory is due and the One from whom we receive the grace to magnify His glory. To live otherwise, is to live in sin.

Service is no different. To live my life as a servant, is to live my life waiting to receive from Him instruction, receive from Him the grace to obey that instruction, and then step out of the way so that He, and He alone would be glorified. Richard Foster captured the picture of this when he wrote: "When we choose to serve we are still in charge. We decide whom we will serve and when

we will serve. And if we are in charge we will worry a great deal about anyone's stepping on us, i.e., taking charge over us. But when we choose to be a servant we give up the right to be in charge. There is a great freedom in this. If we voluntarily choose to be taken advantage of, then we cannot be manipulated. When we choose to be a servant, we surrender the right to decide who and when we will serve. We become available and vulnerable."

Living my life as a servant is not easy. It is not glamorous. In fact, most times, it is costly and hidden, dull and ordinary. We love the life of the extraordinary. We dismiss the life of the ordinary. But God, valuing in His economy faithfulness as one of the greatest virtues, does not see it the same. "Radical self-denial gives the feeling of adventure. If we forsake all, we even have the chance of glorious martyrdom. But in service we are banished to the mundane, the ordinary, the trivial." (Richard Foster in *Celebration of Discipline*)

To serve may mean that we toil for 50 years in obscurity and isolation. Will you do that for the glory of God? It may mean that we toil without thanks or gratitude of any kind from those we serve. Will you do that for the glory of God? It may mean that it invites suffering (1 Peter 2:19 - 25). Will you do that for the glory of God?

However, if your eyes are on another prize, the possibility of service becomes the problem of self. C.J. Mahaney, in his book *Humility*, pulls no punches when he states, "Pride takes innumerable forms but has only one end: self-glorification. That's the motive and ultimate purpose of pride - to rob God of legitimate glory and to pursue self-glorification, contending for supremacy with Him." If our focus is on self, even as we serve others, the end result will be devastating to all involved. Divine resources means that only God can provide, both the ones to serve and the way to serve them, in His time and for His glory, Amen!

And God is able to make all grace abound to you,
so that having all sufficiency in all things at all times,
you may abound in every good work.

2 Corinthians 9:8

HUMAN NEEDS:

Step outside your door and you are hit in the face by human need. Stay inside your house and you are smacked alongside your head by the same affliction. We can not go through our day without encountering human need, including our own.

So, how do I know if my service is genuine and obedient to God's purposes? Richard Foster, in his book, *Celebration of Discipline*, does a great job of distinguishing our idea of service with the true service modeled by Christ in the Gospels:

- true service finds it almost impossible to distinguish the small from the large service
- true service rests contented in hiddenness
- true service is free of the need to calculate results. It delights only in the service. It can serve enemies as freely as friends
- true service is a life-style

- true service can withhold the service as freely as perform it. True service knows that sometimes to serve is to be destructive. The need does not necessarily direct the call, and there are times we do more harm than good by filling the need.
- true service builds community
- true service understands that we are to receive as easily as we are to give

*I commend the chapter on service in Foster's book, *Celebration of Discipline*. It is, perhaps, the greatest teaching on this topic I have ever read.

Before we move on, I want to highlight that last point. "True service understands that we are to receive as easily as we are to give." Sometimes, we serve by letting others serve us. We are used by God as a model of a gracious, open-handed and joyful receptacle for the sole purpose of living out humility before those who are to give. We teach them through this obedience to serve as God directs and to do so with gratitude, joy and humility. When we are both servant and served, we focus our minds and hearts on the glory of God and give / receive in humility. The bond of community is strengthened and the schemes of the evil one are thwarted every time. There is power in humility. There is death and destruction in the pride of refusing to be served.

Don't only look outward as you search out need. Look inward. We serve one another when we allow one another to serve us. Let me say that again, we serve one another when we allow one another to serve us:

"There is the service of being served. When Jesus began to wash the feet of those He loved, Peter refused. He would never let his Master stoop to such a menial service on his behalf. It sounds like a statement of humility; in reality it was an act of veiled pride. Jesus' service was an affront to Peter's concept of authority. If Peter had been the master he would not have washed feet! It is an act of submission and service to allow others to serve us. It recognizes their "kingdom authority" over us. We graciously receive the service rendered, never feeling we must repay it. Those who out of pride refuse to be served are failing to submit to the divinely appointed leadership in the Kingdom of God." Richard Foster, *Celebration of Discipleship*

And let our people learn to devote themselves to good works,
so as to help cases of urgent need, and not be unfruitful.

Titus 3:14

God is as concerned about the servant as He is the service.
Warren Wiersbe, *On Being a Servant of God*

LOVING CHANNELS:

Father, deliver us from the self-deception that makes us believe anxiety is mere precaution, and that unfaithful precaution is anything other than cloaked anxiety. O, how devious is the self-protecting soul! Have mercy on us, and make us bold. Free us from

fear and from prudential avoidances of love. Make us more eager for the joy of giving than for the security of keeping. In Jesus' Name, Amen. John Piper, *Life as a Vapor*

We are empty tubing, a pipe through whom God flows every needed divine resource to meet every human need. God could accomplish the task without the piping. We can not accomplish the task without God. It is important to get our roles straight here. Nothing elaborate about what we do or who we are except that God chooses for His own reasons to make us a joyous part of the process. As a reward for being a vessel, we get to be in the front row seat as God accomplishes change, life-altering change in the lives of His children and those who don't yet know that they are His children. We are the proverbial "fly on the wall" of human history. God is writing the story and we are the witnesses to His glory in the lives of those we meet and serve.

To be a loving channel, then, we need to embrace the recipe God chose for accomplishing His will in this world. It is all about "grace". Warren Wiersbe in, *On Being a Servant of God*, puts it like this, "You don't *earn* grace, and you don't *deserve* grace; you simply receive it as God's loving gift and then share it with others. In ministry, we are *channels* of God's resources, not reservoirs: "Give, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you." Luke 6:38

Loving channels through which God flows His grace. Grace, as you will recall, is undeserved favor or merit. God pours out what we need to serve, provides who we need to serve and allows us the blessing of serving.

So, where does the pipe go? We "go" wherever God sends us.

Do nothing from rivalry or conceit,
but in humility count others more significant than yourselves.
Philippians 2:3

TO THE GLORY OF GOD:

"When I am asked, "Is the doctrine of total depravity Biblical?" my answer is, "Yes." One thing I mean by this is that all of our actions (apart from saving grace) are morally ruined. 1 Corinthians 10:31 "So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God." . . . sin is not just a list of harmful things (killing, stealing, etc.). Sin is leaving God out of account in the ordinary affairs of your life. Sin is anything you do that you don't do for the glory of God." John Piper, *Pierced by the Word*

To the glory of God. What a passion, what a pursuit. To live and love and serve and be served to the glory of God is to do all things as we were created to do them. When our world, finally and completely, becomes about God and His glory, then our lives are full and complete, in power, in joy, in peace and in contentment. Choosing God's glory over every other thing produces in my heart the heart of my Savior, the One in whom the holy One of Israel was well pleased. Now that is something worth striving to know.