



CONNECT

RENEWED IN CHRIST

Lesson 8: The Process of Sanctification - Our Deeds



Objectives

- To help members understand more about the process of sanctification and our deeds.

Guidelines to Use This Lesson

- Read through the whole lesson to gain a better understanding of the main points that could be drawn out and linked with the introduction.
- Read through bible verses within the lesson prior to teaching so as to be able to effectively teach your mentee.
- Share relevant testimonies.
- Consider illustrations that you could include in your sharing to help facilitate greater comprehension.
- Ask questions at different points of the lesson.

The work of sanctification in our lives affects every part of our being. Not only does it transform our heart and mind, but it also changes the way we act. In this, the things we do also affect the outworking of sanctification in our lives. But what are these actions that help us to grow more to be like Jesus? Let us look at some of the deeds that assist us in walking out sanctification in our lives.

What We Should Do to See the Outworking of Sanctification in Our Lives

1. Faith in Christ

As Christians, faith is such a key word! If we were to be without it in Christ, our lifestyle would essentially be the same as those in the world around us. As such, it is literally impossible to become like Christ unless we have it. Without faith we cannot grow into the image of God.

He did not discriminate between us and them, for he purified their hearts by faith.
Acts 15:9

I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.
Galatians 2:20

So that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love.
Ephesians 3:17

Faith is a progressive walk. Much like a muscle, faith is something that grows more the more we exercise it. It is not doing foolish things such as jumping down from a cliff and expecting God to catch us before we hit the ground. Rather, it is trust and dependence on God. It is us taking that simple step to believe that God is who He says He is and that He has and will do everything He says He has and will do. In life, we can do a lot of things, but if we never take the step to have faith, to trust in God, then it will be hard to walk with Him and become like Him as we will find ourselves stuck. Stuck in a position of relying on self, making it hard for Jesus to come in and transform us into His image. Without a growing faith, we will never progress further in our likeness of Christ.

2. Abide in Christ

In order to become like Christ, to see fruit in our lives, we need to take that step to actively abide in Him. But, what does this actually look like lived out?

A close relationship with Christ

How can we become like someone unless we have a close relationship with them? As Christians, if we are to be transformed into the image of Christ, then we need to be ones who are spending time with Him; who are developing a close relationship with Jesus.

"I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.

John 15:5

For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly also be united with him in a resurrection like his.

Romans 6:5

It is through intentionally taking steps to know Jesus more that we are able to be ones who abide in Him; out of which will come a fruitfulness and maturity in our character. As we continue to walk close with Him, we will find that we will no longer desire to live our lives by the world's standards, but, rather, we will develop a heart to want to do things God's way.

Participate in communion

The Lord's supper, communion, is one of two sacraments that Jesus commands us to keep. It is a reminder of the work of the cross, the victory that we, as Christians, now share in and of what awaits us because of what Jesus has done. It is a reminder of the New Covenant that we now walk in. But how does this relate to abiding in Christ? Well, when we partake in communion is it not just a symbolic act; drink some grape juice and eat a wafer and it is done. Rather, it is something that engages our heart and mind as well. When we approach communion with the right heart attitude, it is a time where we have communion with God! We encounter Him and remember all that He has done, all that is to come, and all that we share in now. We identify ourselves with Christ and all that He has done and made a way for. When we approach communion and partake in it with this realisation, the Lord's supper becomes something that assists us in abiding in Him and out of such is something that creates space for God to move in our lives; to be transformed more and more into His likeness.

And when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me." In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me." For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

1 Corinthians 11:24-26

Walk in obedience to Christ

As Christians, we have a call to walk in line with the Word of God, to walk in obedience. Obedience, though, is often easier said than done. We do not always understand God's ways or why He calls us to live out our lives in a certain manner. We can often find ourselves holding onto the world's way of judging how things should be done, thinking we know best. But if we are to abide in Christ, obedience is key. After all, how can we say that we abide in something, that we live, continue or remain in something, if we do not walk in line with it?

Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like someone who looks at his face in a mirror and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. But whoever looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues in it—not forgetting what they have heard, but doing it—they will be blessed in what they do.

James 1:22-25

When we act like someone who is a mere listener of the Word, when we do not have a heart to fully obey, our lives start to crumble as we are no longer in a place of actively abiding fully in Him. Instead, we are to take those steps to abide in Christ by living out an obedience-orientated life. In doing so we will see a work of alignment take place. In humility, as we lay down our reliance on human reasoning and take a hold of the Word of God, in its entirety; we will see fruit spring up in our lives. We will be transformed more and more into His image. Rather than holding onto our own ways or picking and choosing what we like from the Word, we are to be ones who lay down our preferences and to choose to actively abide in Him.

3. Follow Christ's Example

Each and every one of us are on a journey of becoming more like Christ, so it is only natural that we, as His followers, follow in His footsteps. As Jesus walked the earth doing the will of the Father, Jesus demonstrated to us exactly what it looked like to live a holy and blameless life. He demonstrated to us exactly what it looked

like to live in a righteous manner. This example, though, is not just for the people of that time, it is an example to all believers throughout all ages! We are called to follow in His steps!

Follow God's example, therefore, as dearly loved children.

Ephesians 5:1

To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps.

1 Peter 2:21

WWJD - What would Jesus do? This was once a very popular saying amongst certain Christian circles and it is something that we can hold onto too! As we continue to live out our walk with God, let us be ones who frequently pause and ask ourselves, "What would Jesus do?". When we are determining how to respond to someone; what would Jesus do? When we are at a crossroads with a decision where our actions will affect others; what would Jesus do? Whatever the situation is that we find ourselves in, we need to be ones who take those steps to lay down self and put on the character of Jesus, allowing Him to transform us into His image.

4. Obey the Word of God

As the children of God, we are called to obedience! How, though, are we to obey if we do not know what steps to take?

When it comes to abiding in Christ and being transformed into His image, the Word is very key! The Bible is our standard; the map which gives us the overall direction for our lives. As such, if we are not diving deep into the Word, it will be extremely difficult to ever be transformed into the resemblance of God and to live out a life that is pleasing to Him. It is by being ones who both read the Word and live it out by the grace of God that we are transformed to be like Him. In this it is not by memorising facts, but rather by allowing the God, through His Word, to shape and mould us.

Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like someone who looks at his face in a mirror and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. But whoever looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues in it—not forgetting what they have heard, but doing it—they will be blessed in what they do.

James 1:22-25

You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you.

John 15:3

If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.

John 15:7

Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth.

John 17:17

“Now I commit you to God and to the word of his grace, which can build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified.

Acts 20:32

To make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless.

Ephesians 5:26-27

See also **Psalm 119:9-11, 45, 105; Luke 11:28; Ephesians 6:17; Colossians 3:16; 2 Timothy 3:16; Hebrews 4:12; James 1:21, 23-25; 1 Peter 1:22; 2 Peter 1:19; 1 John 2:5-6, 14; 2 John 1:9.**

5. Live by the Holy Spirit

As Christians, we are called to be ones who live by the Holy Spirit. Practically speaking, this means that we take that step to actively partner with the Holy Spirit, allowing Him to lead and guide us in every aspect of our life. We allow Him to change and transform us more and more into the likeness of God. As the children of God, we are called to be ones who are Spirit-filled. God’s heart is never for us to have to walk alone, by our own strength, rather He wants to be with us every step of the way, empowering us and growing us to be more like Him.

For what the law was powerless to do because it was weakened by the flesh, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh to be a sin offering. And so he condemned sin in the flesh, in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fully met in us, who do not live according to the flesh but according to the Spirit...For if you live according to the flesh, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live.

Romans 8:3-4, 13

So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh...But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.

Galatians 5:16, 22-23

For if you live according to the flesh, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live.

Romans 8:13

You show that you are a letter from Christ, the result of our ministry, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts.

2 Corinthians 3:3

6. Fellowship with Others

If we are to truly mature, as a believer it is important that we commit to being actively planted in a church community. Not only is spending time with God important, but so is spending time with fellow Christians! In our journey of growing to become more like Jesus, fellowship is key!

*All the believers were together and had everything in common. They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. **Every day** they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favour of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.*

Acts 2:44-47

When we look to the example of the early church, we see that fellowship was such a big part of their lives that in fact it happened daily! This priority that they placed on fellowship, though, is not just something for the first century church, it is something for Christ followers in all ages. Being in relationship with others grows us! It provides insight into where we are really at in terms of our walk with God, opening our eyes to just how much we need God and to the areas that we need to grow in in order to be more like Him. It provides opportunities for us to be strengthened and built up, helping us to not only last the distance, but to also reach greater levels of maturity than we ever could if we were to run the race all on our own. By planting ourselves in community, we open the doors to be grown and moulded to be more like Jesus!

As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another.

Proverbs 27:17

And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

Hebrews 10:24-25

From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.

Ephesians 4:16

Flee the evil desires of youth and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, along with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

2 Timothy 2:22

Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts.

Colossians 3:16

7. Accept Discipline

For lack of discipline they will die, led astray by their own great folly.

Proverbs 5:23

For this command is a lamp, this teaching is a light, and correction and instruction are the way to life

Proverbs 6:23

Correction, discipline, is necessary if we are to be grown and moulded into the likeness of God. Many of us would have heard the phrase “Practice makes perfect” before, but practice does not make perfect, it makes permanent. If we keep on repeating the same things in life, we will simply be ones who make permanent the ways that we are currently walking in, whether they are godly or not. If we are to truly become like Christ, then correction, discipline, is necessary! While sometimes correction can feel like bitter medicine, when we take time to receive and process what is shared, it is, in fact, healing to the soul. After all, correction is not given for the benefit of the corrector, but for the benefit of the receiver. If we want to grow in our likeness to Christ, then we need to be ones who learn to take on board feedback, allowing both God and those around us to speak into and shape our lives for the better!

Whoever heeds discipline shows the way to life, but whoever ignores correction leads others astray.

Proverbs 10:17

And have you completely forgotten this word of encouragement that addresses you as a father addresses his son? It says,

“My son, do not make light of the Lord’s discipline, and do not lose heart when he rebukes you, because the Lord disciplines the one he loves, and he chastens everyone he accepts as his son.”

Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as his children. For what children are not disciplined by their father? No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it.

Hebrews 12:5-7, 11

See also **Job 5:17; Psalm 94:12; Revelation 3:19**

8. Flee from Sin

In a way, holding onto sin can be likened to holding onto a grenade with the pin taken out. It is not something that you want to keep in your hands for long because doing so would be detrimental to our life. Rather, the first instinct of most of us, if handed that live grenade, would be to throw it away as far as possible while then running as fast as we could in the opposite direction. Our reaction should be the same to sin! Rather than it being something that we keep a hold of sin should be something that we flee from! In doing so, it enables us to become more and more like Christ.

You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires.

Ephesians 4:22

Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires.

Romans 6:12

Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry...But now you must also rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips.

Colossians 3:5, 8

See also **2 Corinthians 7:1; Colossians 3:9-10; 2 Timothy 2:22; Hebrews 12:1.**

9. Flee from the Influence of Sin

Not only are we to flee from sin, but we should also be careful to flee from the things that influence us to fall into sin; including people. When it comes to people, looking into the Word, we see that we are not to yoke ourselves with people who pull us into wrong lifestyle patterns, especially when it comes to our close friends and choosing a life partner. A close friend or life partner is someone who helps to give us advice and who supports us. They have an influence on how we act. Bad influences corrupt! As such, how can our closest friends, especially a life partner, be people who do not love and walk intimately with God? In this, we are not to disassociate from the world altogether, so do not cut off ties completely, but rather be one who is selective with those who you let in to your inner circle. Rise up to be someone who is an influencer for Jesus in the lives of those around you, but also flee from putting yourself in situations with people where they will influence you to walk away from the ways of God.

Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness?

2 Corinthians 6:14

Therefore do not be partners with them. For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light.

Ephesians 5:7-8

10. Persevere

Spiritual growth takes time and, as such, it requires us to have perseverance. In many ways the way that we are grown, spiritually, can be compared to that of long process of making wine. Wine making is an arduous process! Often, the work of making wine starts years before the vines are even planted with the working of the soil. It is often only after several years of this that planting takes place, after which the vine master must then wait for even more years for the vines to mature enough for full sized grapes to be produced. This, though, is not anywhere near the end of the process! Once full-sized grapes are produced, they must then be carefully picked and squeezed. The juice is then poured into huge vats and undergoes processing before it is then poured into smaller containers. As time goes along, more and more sediment is drained from the wine in the smaller containers. Finally, it comes to the time where it is ready to be bottled. The wine is funnelled into bottles and is then carefully stacked in a wine cellar. But even though it is now in the bottles that people buy them in, they are still not ready. It will be another several years before the wine is fully matured and is fit for drinking.

Just as there is a long process involved in making wine, it is the same for us in being made into the image of God. After coming to saving faith, little by little the Lord refines us over the years, clearing away the dross in our lives. This can at time be a painful process, but if we do not give up we will reap the reward of the process. Perseverance is key in being transformed into the likeness of God.

You need to persevere so that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what he has promised.

Hebrews 10:36

Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already arrived at my goal, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me...I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 3:12, 14

11. Repent

Repentance is so key if we are to be someone who is being transformed more and more into His image. Despite trying our best, there will be many times along the way where we will stumble and fall. As such, we need to be someone who is quick to recognise our wrongs and to take that step to commit to turn away from sin in our lives. In this, though, we can often find ourselves blind to the very sin that entangles us. So, as we go along, we need to be proactive in coming to God and asking Him to reveal to us where we are falling short. This is so powerful as when He does, we are then able to take that step to repent, to turn away from those ways by His grace; the eventual fruit of which is restoration!

If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

1 John 1:8-9

Remember, therefore, what you have received and heard; hold it fast, and repent. But if you do not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what time I will come to you.

Revelation 3:3

See to it that no one falls short of the grace of God and that no bitter root grows up to cause trouble and defile many. See that no one is sexually immoral, or is godless like Esau, who for a single meal sold his inheritance rights as the oldest son...See to it that you do not refuse him who speaks. If they did not escape when they refused him who warned them on earth, how much less will we, if we turn away from him who warns us from heaven?

Hebrews 12:15-16, 25

Those whom I love I rebuke and discipline. So be earnest and repent.

Revelation 3:19

Conclusion

To become Christ-like is the only thing in the whole world worth caring for, the thing before which every ambition of man is folly and all lower achievement vain.

Henry Drummond

Each of us have a calling to be like Christ! To be transformed into His image. This, though, requires us to be ones who actively partner with Him. What we do affects who we become! As such, let us be ones who eagerly pursue Jesus, asking Him to make us more and more like Him. Let us lay down all that hinders and position ourselves to be ones who are renewed by Christ.

Discussion Points

1. Reflecting upon the different areas mentioned above, what would you say are currently your strengths? E.g., Perseverance or obeying the Word of God.

2. Taking some time to reflect once again, are there any areas mentioned above that you need to grow in in this season? E.g., Fleeing from sin or obeying the accepting discipline.



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