

## Study 0038

### Scripture Text: 2 Thessalonians 2:13-15

There is a theological and a practical aspect of sanctification. So far, we have been looking at the theology of sanctification. The theology of sanctification tells us what God has done to make us sanctified, and how we must cooperate with the Holy Spirit and live by faith in the word of God to keep being sanctified. In this study, we shall look at the practical aspect of sanctification, which is, living the sanctified life on a daily basis.

What we want to attempt here is to obtain principles that will help us to remain sanctified after the initial sanctification, in real terms. *v. 13* of our scripture text makes it clear that God's goal is to save us through sanctification. God's goal of making us into the image of Jesus is the original goal He had from the beginning (**Genesis 1:26-28**). Sin through disobedience sought to destroy this goal, so when Jesus came, it was first, to bring man back to the place where he was, as at the time Adam and Eve were created (**Genesis 2:7-17**). In bringing us to that place, He did not change the course of the principle of permitting the devil to tempt us. God expects us to overcome such temptation which, Adam and Eve unfortunately failed (**Genesis 3:1-8; 1 Peter 1:1-7**). Thus, when Jesus, the Son of God came, He was also subject to the same temptation principle, and He succeeded (**Matthew 4:1-11; Hebrews 5:8**). It was Jesus' obedience to His Father and His desire to do His Father's will that marked Him for eternity through His resurrection. This is the same route (obedience and doing the will of the Father) for all who will come to believe and put their trust in God through Jesus Christ (**Philippians 3:7-11**)! In the course of our daily lives and everyday living, we encounter situations which seek to make us lose our closest ally, the Holy Spirit; and by that loss, our relationship with the Godhead. This is what the devil succeeded to do with Adam and Eve, and which he seeks to achieve in the believer in Christ—separate the believer from his Benefactor (God), so that he (the devil) can have a field day with us here on earth and in hell in eternity (**1 Peter 5:8-9**). But by the grace of God, the devil shall fail (**Ephesians 6:10-18; Revelation 12:10-12**). What this means is that sanctification, besides making us holy, also seeks to make us able to overcome the wiles of the devil, and as such be ultimately saved at the time of our death.

If the believer in Christ is going to fulfil God's goal of making man after His image and in His likeness, and exercising dominion over the earth and His creation, he will need to live as Adam and Eve should have; that is, in obedience and constant fellowship with God (**Genesis 3:8**). To help us along the way, God's sanctification Agents, the Holy Spirit and the word of God, are readily available. These Agents enable us to be set apart and be kept so, for God's purpose (**Galatians 5:16; Romans 8:5-14; John 17:17; 8:31-32**).

In one of Jesus' discourses, we see how God expects us to live on a daily basis. In **John 5:19, 30**, the Lord lets us understand that we need to know what God is doing and then replicate it here on earth. You need to know the will of God at every turn, and then simply do what God is showing you, leading you to do, or telling you to do. But then, the bible tells us that we cannot know what God wants us to do unless we are transformed in our minds by the word of God (**1 Corinthians 2:9-14; Romans 12:2; Ephesians 4:23-24**). The bible also tells us that when we don't know what God is doing, we act without restraint (**Proverbs 29:18**): this means that we live as we like, not as God wants us to. Therefore, to be able to live a sanctified life on a daily basis, all that these scripture verses are telling us is that we need to know the will of God, and then proceed to do it. Once in a while, however, we find it difficult to want to do God's will even when we know what it is; it is at times like this that

prayer becomes an invaluable resource (**Matthew 26:38-45**). The Holy Spirit helps us to pray as we ought, for we know not what or how to pray at times like this (**Romans 8:26-30**). Such times of prayer produce believers who are ready and willing to do the will of their Father in heaven, as it breaks down every barrier that seeks to stop us from obeying God or doing God's will (**2 Corinthians 10:3-6**). Also, once in a while, we do actually disobey God by refusing to do His will, albeit due to ignorance. At such times, God sends us help by way of our confession and His forgiveness (**1 John 1:9; Proverbs 28:13**).

Let us take for example, that in the course of a bible study, a person comes across the scripture, **1 Thessalonians 4:1-7**. It is expected that rather than gloss over such scripture, the individual in question would look at this passage of scripture as God speaking to him, and telling him that:

1. He is to abound in the things of God by continuing to do what he has been taught from the Scriptures (**v.1-2; John 8:31; 1 Timothy 4:16**);
2. He sees that sanctification (being holy, pure, and undefiled), is what God desires of him, and that he must abstain from fornication, which may require that he set limits for himself when in the presence of the opposite gender (**v.3; 1 Peter 1:13-16; 1 Corinthians 6:15-20**);
3. He also sees that God is concerned with how he gets married; in a manner that is sanctified (in a way determined by God), and honourable (one that cannot be evil spoken of); not based on the way unbelievers make their choices in marriage (**v.4-5; Proverbs 19:14; 18:22; 3:5-6**);
4. He then finds that he is expected not to defraud his fellow believer in any matter. Any matter may stand for marriage (don't covet your brother's spouse); business (don't cheat your brother, or sell him something that is bad, or give him wages that is not proper), and so on (**v.6-7**).

It would be expected that as he does his study, the believer would take note of what he is expected to do, and take such matters to God in prayer. Where there is a habit to shed, and he is finding it difficult to kick, then he must turn to fasting (**Mark 9:14-29**). Sometimes, he may find that he inadvertently does something which afterwards, the Holy Spirit tells him was wrong, then he must instantly make his confessions to God, and receive God's forgiveness (**Psalms 32:1-5**).

### Summary

Our daily responsibility is to know the things which God wants us to do, and then proceed to do them. We get to know the will of God as we spend time with Him during our quiet time, as we read the bible, as we sit through bible study, as we have fellowship one with another, and so on. Having known the will of God then, we must now proceed to do them through the power of the Holy Spirit (**James 1:22-25; 1 Peter 1:2**). Where it seems to be difficult to do, we have prayer and where necessary, fasting, as our resources to see us through; and when we fall, we do not lose hope, but humbly turn to God in repentance through confession, and are thus restored. Therefore, to live the sanctified life on a daily basis, the believer in Christ needs to listen to the Holy Spirit at all times, continue in the word of God daily, be in constant prayer (and fasting where necessary), and where he sins, to make his confessions to God immediately. It is of course expected that the Christian has, as a matter of course, begun to crucify the flesh, without which he will be fighting a lost battle (**Romans 6:1-14; Galatians 2:20; 5:16-25; Ephesians 4:17-32; Colossians 3:1-17**)

## **ASSIGNMENT**

Please study the life of Samson (**Judges Chapters 13-16**) and **1 Thessalonians 5:11-23**, Note what the will of God is for you from your study. Also note what you should be doing and not doing, to bring about the fulfilment of God's will in your life. Then put all you have noted as it concerns you into practice.