

What Must I Do to be Saved – Part 2

This morning we're going to spend some time studying what I call the second half of the gospel. But by far it's the second half that's more misunderstood than the first. In fact, it's because of a misunderstanding of the first half of the gospel that has caused people to think that the first half is all there is and that that's all that's necessary for salvation.

From various Christians I've talked to over the years, I believe many are not even aware that there's more than the new birth experience. And the reason for this is because people are not studying the scriptures for themselves, but are sitting in church week after week listening to sleeping preachers preaching to a sleeping people.

If you listened to last month's sermon you already know that the first half of the gospel is a big word called justification, which simply means pardon or forgiveness and includes being born again. It's when God declares the guilty to be innocent and that is a wonderful thing to be sure. But there's more and we should be glad that there's more.

To help us better understand justification, we might think of it as the opposite of condemnation. Before we came to Christ for pardon we were all under condemnation for our sins, but justification cancels the condemnation and gives us a chance to have eternal life instead of eternal damnation.

By the way, justification doesn't cover current or future sins, only sins that are past. This is an extremely important point. Notice what it says about this in Romans chapter 3 verses 24 & 25.

Before we read, let's pray. Loving Father in heaven, we ask for the presence of Your Holy Spirit to be here with us as we open Your word this morning. We are discussing a subject that is extremely important, eternally important and we need your help. And so we pray that You would help us this morning and be our Teacher and our Guide through this subject, we pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

Romans 3:24 & 25 says. "Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;"

And so we need to get the idea out of our head that once we're forgiven we're always forgiven. When we sin we lose our justification and if we want it back we must do what it says in 1 John 1:9. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." So, no confession – no forgiveness. It's that simple. And if we're not forgiven we forfeit eternal life.

I know this may sound strange to some of you who have been taught the doctrine of eternal security, but you cannot be saved while practicing known sin. If you continue to sin when you know better, you are of the devil. And if you don't believe me read 1 John 3:8. God is very plain about this. Sometimes the Lord has to shake us up a little bit because He loves us far too much to remain silent on an issue that will rob us of eternal life.

But unfortunately there will be many that fit into what I call the “Lord, Lord” category. Turn with me to Matthew chapter 7 and I’ll show you what I mean. Matthew chapter 7 beginning with verse 21. “Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.”

Do you know what the word iniquity means? It’s wickedness or sin. And sin is the transgression of the ten-commandment law. And so there will be many professed Christians when the Lord comes that will think they’re ready to go to heaven, but will be shocked to hear that the Lord doesn’t claim them as His own. They’ve tried to obey and do good works in their own human strength, but they never understood that it takes humanity and divinity combined to have true victory over sin. They were never crucified with Christ and therefore were unable to please God by rendering heart service.

I don’t want to be in the “Lord, Lord” category, do you? We need to make sure we’re doing what we do for the right reasons and that we really know the Lord and not just know about Him. And more importantly that He knows us.

Now, getting back to justification for a minute. A good place to go in the Bible to see that justification is the opposite of condemnation is Romans chapter 6. In Romans 7 Paul talks about the convicted man that can’t quite seem to get the victory over the fallen flesh, and by the way, I believe this was his personal experience before he met Jesus on the road to Damascus. He explains how victory happens in Romans chapter 6, verses 1 through 6: let’s go there.

“What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin [or this body that is controlled by sin] might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.”

So, as we consider the second half of the gospel this morning, we’re going to find that it has to do with walking after the Spirit, that’s the way we retain our justification. And this walking after the Spirit is another big word called Sanctification, which simply means holiness. A people that have been set apart from the world to live a holy life. If we’re walking after the Spirit, we will do what the Spirit says. That’s what it means.

Justification, on the other hand, has nothing to do with walking after the Spirit, because before we came to Christ for pardon we were walking according to the flesh, weren’t we? Yes. And so holy walking is what we need to remain in a justified state.

Now you might be thinking to yourself that I'm not holy, so can I ever be sanctified if that's what it means? Well, you're right. None of us are holy. And we should never entertain the thought that we are, but I know Someone who is, don't you? And if we choose to die to our selfish desires and allow the Holy One to live within, couldn't He then live out His holy life within us? Yes! We're going to find that this is indeed true.

According to what we just read in Romans 6:4, the only ones that fulfill the righteousness of the law are those who walk after the Spirit. And since the law is holy, just, and good, as it says in Romans 7:12, then the possibility exists that we have the choice to abide in Christ so the requirements of a holy law can be fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh but after the Holy Spirit. And walking after the Spirit is to produce the fruits of the Spirit. And if you want to know what the fruit is, you can read it in Galatians chapter 5. Anyway, it's something to think about and hopefully something that will come clearer as we continue our study this morning.

Last time when we discussed justification we found that it's a gift. And there's nothing we can do to deserve or to earn a gift. It comes through faith and even that is a gift that's wholly the result of God's grace. And as we study about sanctification this morning, we're going to find that it, too, is something we receive from God as a gift and therefore we can't earn it either.

Hebrews 12:2 says that Jesus is not only the author, but also the finisher of our faith. That is, if we look to Jesus as the only One who can accomplish the work in us.

You know how the Bible says, "work out your own salvation with fear and trembling"? But then it goes on to say, "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure."

And so, I have a question this morning: How does God "will" in us? Have you ever thought about that? The word "will" means to choose. And so how does God choose for us? Well, it's by giving us His Word. You see, when we do what God's word says, are we not allowing God to choose for us? Absolutely. And not only will He "will" in us, but He will also "do". That means He will give us the power and the desire to perform what He wants us to do. Therefore we are able to do God's good pleasure.

Let's look at a few Bible texts that will prove this point:

Acts 26:18. Here the apostle Paul makes it clear that sanctification, like justification, is the gift of God that comes through faith. He's explaining here the work that Jesus gave him to do. Notice what he says in verse 18. "To open their eyes [the eyes of the Gentiles], and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins [justification], and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me."

Also turn to 1 Thessalonians chapter 5 verses 23 & 24. These verses tell us that sanctification is something that God does for us and not something that we can work up ourselves.

1 Thessalonians 5:23, 24. "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it." Do what? Make you holy. He does it by creating

within us a new heart that is inclined to obey. Then it becomes our choice to either submit to God or to yield to temptation, to follow the prompting of the divine nature, or the fallen flesh. The born-again experience gives us that choice, but it's always up to us to choose.

Let's go back to Acts chapter 2, now. Peter had just preached a powerful sermon to all the people that had assembled in Jerusalem to celebrate the Feast of Weeks or Pentecost. Notice what he said in chapter 2 and verse 38. "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."

And for what purpose do we receive the gift of the Holy Ghost? To live a holy life after the remission of sins, or after we're justified in order to remain justified.

Also, let's look at Romans chapter 8 and verse 11. "But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you."

Now why did we read this verse? Well, since Jesus dwells within us through the Holy Spirit and the Holy Spirit is a gift and we can't deserve or buy or earn a gift, then holiness is something that has to come from outside of ourselves. Would you agree? Absolutely. And that outside of ourselves entity is Christ.

In John chapter 17 verses 17-19, notice what Jesus Himself said about sanctification. As Jesus was praying to His Father for His disciples, He said something very interesting. "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth. As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. And for their sakes [or for their redemption] I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth."

Notice: since Jesus sanctified Himself that makes Him the sanctifier that we might be sanctified through the truth. And Who is the way, the truth, and the life? Jesus Himself. Therefore sanctification is something that comes from God through Christ as a gift.

Now I want to tell you something very important and it's this. If we will just consent – that's our part – if we will yield our mind to God, He will so identify His will with all our thoughts and aims, so blend our hearts and minds into conformity to His Word, that when obeying Him it'll be like carrying out the impulses of our own mind. Hard to believe, I know, but it's true.

In 1 Corinthians 2:16 the apostle Paul tells us that it's possible to have the mind of Christ. And if we have His mind, wouldn't we be able to do God's will as Jesus did? Sure we will. Let's also read verses 20-23 in this same chapter (John 17). "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word;"

And so He's speaking to us here.

"That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have

given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.”

Now notices this inspired statement from *Christ's Object Lessons*, pg. 162. *Christ's Object Lessons* is a little book explaining the parables of Jesus and if you'd like to read it let me know and I'll send you a copy. On page 162, 163 it says, “As the sinner, drawn by the power of Christ, approaches the uplifted cross, and prostrates himself before it [in the spirit of your mind], there is a new creation. A new heart is given him. He becomes a new creature in Christ Jesus.”

And of course, this is talking about justification. But then it goes on to say, “Holiness finds that it has nothing more to require.”

In other words, becoming a new creature in Christ Jesus is all that's needed for God to consider me holy. Justified means just if I'd never sinned. And you can't get any better than that. But, of course, if I sin after I come to Christ for forgiveness, God can no longer look at me as though I'd never sinned. So what I need is a way to keep myself from sinning and that's where sanctification comes in.

The quote goes on to say, “To human beings striving for conformity to the divine image . . .”

That is, striving to walk in the spirit, striving to remain justified, striving to cooperate with God so we can become like Him. If we do that there is imparted an outlay of heaven's treasure, an excellency of power that will place them higher than even the angels who have never fallen. Wow. I don't comprehend that, but I believe it. What a loving God we serve.

If we think of justification as having money, it's like God depositing funds into our bank account to cover all the bad checks we've written in the past. And sanctification is a transmission of power and a willingness to keep us from writing bad checks in the future. You see, God's not satisfied with just continuing to make deposits. He wants us to learn how to manage the gifts He's given us, but all the while, acknowledging Him as the source of all our wealth and power.

The reason we need to understand that all that's necessary for salvation is furnished to us through Christ is so we're not fooled by will worship, as it says in Colossians 2:23. God's law is the great standard of righteousness, but there's a modern counterfeit sanctification that has its origin in will worship rather than in submission to the will of God.

We're never to think that we are to live in obedience to God's law by the power of our own will, because that leads to feelings of self-righteousness and that was condemned by Jesus. That's the problem the Pharisees had and this can be especially true for those who have strong willpower.

You know, some people can just set their mind to accomplish something and accomplish it because of a strong will. And that can be a good thing in many instances, but when it comes to living a holy life, a strong will is just not enough. In fact, it can be detrimental to spiritual life, because try as you might, you will fail to please God if you put forth only human effort.

You see, to me sanctification is falling so in love with Jesus because of what He has done for us that we would never want to do anything to displease Him. If that is our mindset, then our motivation will be correct and our character development will be formed in the right way. Obedience from the heart is the only kind that God can accept. And only God can change the heart. When it's in the heart to obey God, and when our efforts are put forth to this end, Jesus accepts this as our best service and He makes up for any deficiencies, like sins of ignorance with His own divine merit. But even though this is true, He will not accept us if we claim to have faith in Him and yet are found to be breaking any one of the ten commandments.

So sanctification can be obtained only in obedience to the will of God. According to Psalm 40:8 God's will is that we obey His law. And the reason I say this is because there are many professed Christians today that are trampling upon the law of God and yet claim holiness of heart and sanctification of life. But in reality they don't have a saving knowledge of God's word or of His law and instead are standing in the ranks of the devil that has been at war with the law of God for a very long time.

Revelation 22:12 makes it clear that no commandment-breaker will ever be permitted to enter heaven, because Satan who was once a pure and exalted covering cherub was cast out for that very reason. Does it make sense to you that God would allow human beings that are transgressing His law to enter heaven when He cast Satan out for doing the same thing? Of course not! That doesn't make a bit of sense.

It's true that we are saved by grace, but it's a lie of the devil that the death of Christ brought in grace to take the place of obedience to the law. The death of Jesus didn't change the law of ten commandments. In fact, His death proved that the law could not be changed. If it could have been changed then Jesus wouldn't have needed to die to save a guilty race for breaking it. Jesus, our substitute, consented to bear for us the penalty of the law transgressed. The very fact that it took the death of Christ to redeem us shows that the law can never be done away with.

The doctrine that teaches freedom through grace to break the law of God is a fatal delusion, friend. God's grace doesn't give us license to sin, but to be forgiven and then empowered to stop sinning. Matthew 1:21 says that Jesus came to save us FROM our sins, not IN our sins.

The sufferings of Christ were not endured to purchase liberty for us to transgress the law of God, come on! It was not only that through His merits and the exercise of repentance and faith that the guilty sinner might receive pardon, but also to obtain strength to live a life of obedience. It's absolutely impossible for any individual to experience Bible sanctification while he thinks that if he just believes in Christ it doesn't matter whether or not obeys God's law.

Most ministers are telling their congregations today that can't keep the law of God. It's not binding upon us in our day, they say, you must only believe in Christ and He will save you, only believe. And you know what they're doing when they say things like that? They're trying to quiet the troubled conscience of their people with a false hope because many of them know in their hearts that disobedience is not acceptable to God. Nevertheless many of these people are led to think that they are on the road to heaven because they profess to believe in Christ while they reject the

law of God. But they're going to find out in the end that they were on the road to perdition instead of the road to heaven.

Today spiritual poison is sugar-coated with a counterfeit sanctification and administered to the people and thousands eagerly swallow it thinking that if they're only honest in their belief they will be saved. But you know what? Sincerity will never convert error into truth. A man may swallow poison thinking it's food, but his sincerity won't save him from the effects of the dose.

Cindy and I were taking a trip a few years ago and she's an excellent navigator on the road. She's like a homing pigeon. She always seems to know what direction we're headed and I'm just the opposite. And because of that I rely upon her and I don't pay much attention to where we're going. Well, this particular day, she had us heading down the freeway in the right direction, but then she fell asleep and when she finally woke up we had gone about 80 miles past our turn-off and we had a lot of backtracking to do. But there I was traveling down the road in ignorant bliss thinking we were making good time and all the while getting farther and farther from our destination.

And isn't that the way it is with many Christians today? They think they're sincerely heading in a direction that will get them to heaven only to discover that they've been going the wrong way. And the thing is, most of them won't discover their error until it's too late to make up lost time. They were sincere, but they were sincerely wrong.

In 1 Thessalonians chapter 4 verses 1-7 the apostle Paul tells us what we must all learn to do if we would be ready when Jesus comes. Let's read that. 1 Thessalonians 4 beginning with verse 1. "Furthermore then we beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk [or how you are to live your life] and to please God, so ye would abound more and more [or that you would do even more]. For ye know what commandments [instructions] we gave you by the Lord Jesus. For this is the will of God, even your sanctification [or even your purification—that's what it means], that ye should abstain from fornication: . . ."

The word fornication means harlotry. You see sanctification requires that we live differently than the rest of the world. We live in a world today that is full of sexual sin and if we want to be holy we can't be involved in such things—not in a physical or a spiritual sense.

Verse 4 says, "That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel [or his body] in sanctification and honour; Not in the lust of concupiscence [a longing for that which God forbids], even as the Gentiles which know not God:"

See, we're not to live like the world that doesn't even know God and yet many Christians do.

Verse 6 – "That no man go beyond and defraud his brother in any matter: because that the Lord is the avenger [or the punisher] of all such, as we also have forewarned you and testified."

In other words, God will take away eternal life from all who do the things that Paul warns us about here.

And then verse 7 – “For God hath not called us unto uncleanness [or unto impurity], but unto holiness.” The word holiness is the same Greek word as sanctification. And so God has called us unto the sanctified life.

You can make any excuse you want to know for your rejection of God’s law, but I’m telling you your excuse will not be accepted in the day of judgment. Every professed Christian who has not learned to walk in the Spirit and to keep their souls in sanctification and honor will very soon have to meet the great Lawgiver over His broken law. And they will find out that the wages of sin really is death—eternal death, a perpetual sleep from which they will never awaken.

You see, God requires today just what He required of Adam and Eve when they were still in the Garden of Eden—perfect obedience to His requirements. Isn’t that what God required of them? Yes. It was a simple test. You can eat of any tree you want to except the one that’s in the midst of the garden. If you eat of that, you’re going to die. And friends, this simple requirement of obedience remains the same today. God hasn’t changed and He never will.

The great standard of righteousness presented in the Old Testament is no different than in the New. It’s not the work of the gospel to weaken the claims of God’s holy law, but to bring men up to where they can keep it. But this kind of obedient faith in Christ that saves the soul is not what’s represented by the majority today. Believe, believe is their cry. Only believe in Christ and you’ll be saved. That’s all you have to do.

While it’s true that faith trusts wholly in Christ for salvation, true faith will also lead to perfect conformity to the will of God, because genuine faith is made known by our works or our deeds and our actions. Read James chapter 2.

And in 1 John 2:4 it says he that says, I know him, but doesn’t keep his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.

Remember when the rich young ruler asked Jesus, “What shall I do to inherit eternal life?” And what did He say? He said, “What is written in the law? How readest thou?” And when the young man replied, “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and thy neighbor as thyself” Jesus said, “Thou hast answered right. This do and you shall live.”

When you consider the ten commandments you’ll find that the first four have to do with our relationship to God and the last six our relationship to our neighbor – or to every other human being. Therefore obedience to all ten is the way to inherit eternal life. Jesus said so. But is that what is being taught today in the popular churches? No. The popular preachers teach that Bible sanctification is liberty to transgress the law of God and that those who obey the ten commandments as part of the gospel have fallen from grace. But just the opposite is true.

Obedience to the law of God IS sanctification. It IS walking in the Spirit. Sanctification is not an instantaneous work like justification, but a progressive work. Just as obedience is the be continuous, so is sanctification. Just as long as Satan is able to tempt us the battle for self

conquest will have to be fought over and over again. But by obedience the truth will sanctify the soul. Jesus said so in John 17:17, which we already read.

If our hearts are ever going to be purified and made fit for heaven there are two lessons that need to be learned—self sacrifice and self control. When we come to Christ for justification self must be sacrificed on the altar. Self must be crucified with Christ as it says in Galatians 2:20. And then through the process of sanctification we learn to walk in newness of life. We read that a few moments ago in Romans chapter 6.

You know some people learn these important lessons more easily than others do and they don't have to go through as many trials, while others require the slow discipline of suffering that the cleansing of fiery trials might purify their hearts of all self-reliance, that they might become victorious through the grace of Christ.

True sanctification is nothing more or less than to love God with all the heart and to walk in His commandments and ordinances blameless as Luke 1:6 said about the parents of John the Baptist.

Sanctification is entire conformity to the will of God. It's not an emotion, but a heaven-born principle that brings all human passions and desires under the control of the Spirit of God. In fact, self-control – or temperance – is one of the fruits of the Spirit. And if we don't have it, we don't have Christ, as it says in Romans 8:9. And if we don't have Christ we don't have eternal life. And so you can see how serious this is.

We have so much to be thankful for this morning because by Christ's perfect obedience He has won back the heaven that Adam lost through disobedience. Adam sinned and because all the children of Adam – that's us – share his sinful nature and have all sinned themselves, they share in its consequences. But the good news is, Jesus bore the guilt of Adam and all the children of Adam that will flee to Christ – the second Adam – can also escape the penalty of transgression as he did. You can read about that in 1 Corinthians chapter 15.

Jesus regained heaven for fallen man by bearing the test that Adam failed to endure. But because of that Adam wasn't given permission to repeat his sin, was he? No. Because Jesus obeyed the law perfectly, everyone that has a right conception of the gospel will see that they can't possibly be saved while continuing to break the law that Jesus kept. We must stop breaking the law by laying hold on the promises of God that are available to us through the merits of Christ and not think that because Jesus kept it that we don't have to. Yes, Jesus kept the law so that His perfect obedience, when applied to our life, can cleanse us from sin. But we must not use that as an excuse to continue sinning.

You see, the Lord requires today just what He required of Adam and Eve – perfect obedience to the law of God. We've got to have righteousness without a flaw and that's why Jesus came and died for a sinful world. But he didn't die to repeal the law, as many teach today. On the contrary, the sacrifice of Christ is an unanswerable argument showing that the law cannot be altered or changed in any way.

The cross of Calvary forever condemns the idea that Satan has placed before the Christian world, that the death of Christ abolishes the unchangeable law of God. Calvary didn't abolish anything, but rather provides a second opportunity to keep the law of God in the strength of Christ.

Through every possible means Satan tries to make of none effect the sacrifice of Jesus and to make His mission a failure. He claims that the death of Christ makes obedience to the law unnecessary and permits the sinner to come into favor with a holy God without forsaking his sins, that men can come to Christ not to be saved FROM their sins, but IN their sins.

But when John the Baptist saw Jesus for the first time he said plainly what His mission was. He said, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."

So let's do a little recap of what we've covered so far. The Bible clearly teaches what sanctification is and how it's to be obtained. Jesus, praying for His disciples said, "Sanctify them through Thy truth, Thy word is truth." And Paul teaches that believers are to be sanctified by the Holy Ghost. And what is the work of the Holy Spirit? Jesus told His disciples when He, the Spirit of truth is come, He will guide you into all truth. And in Psalm 119:142 David said, "Thy law is the truth."

And so, by the Word of God, as it's brought to our mind by the Holy Spirit, are open to us the great principles of righteousness that are embodied in the law. You can't get away from it. And since the law of God is holy, just and good, it follows that a character formed by obedience to that law will also be holy and Christ is the perfect example of such a character. He told His disciples, "I have kept My Father's commandments." And He said, "I do always those things that please Him." And as followers of Christ we are to become like Him. This is Bible sanctification, and it's not that hard to understand. And it can be accomplished only through faith in Christ.

As Christians with fallen sinful natures, we are going to feel the promptings of sin, but at the same time we must maintain a constant warfare against it. And this is where Christ's help is really needed. When human weakness becomes united to divine strength, when we become partakers of the divine nature, then we can say, Thanks be to God which gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Scriptures plainly show that the work of sanctification is progressive. When we are justified through the shed blood of Christ, the Christian life has only begun. After we're forgiven the apostle Paul says we are to go on unto perfection and to grow up unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

And Peter sets before us the steps by which Bible sanctification is to be obtained. In 2 Peter chapter 1, verses 5-7, he says, "Giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity [love]."

Then in verse 10, he says if you do these things you shall never fall. Isn't that what you want? As Christians, shouldn't that be our goal? God's plan for us is that we stop violating His law, and as

we are privileged with more and more advanced truth, that we advance with it by receiving and obeying it.

Clearly sanctification is the process of bringing us more and more into the truth and into harmony with God's law which will enable us to become more and more like Christ. And if that's not what you want, then there's something seriously wrong with your understanding of the gospel.

We shouldn't fool ourselves into thinking that we can become holy while willfully violating even one of God's requirements, because when we sin knowingly we silence the convicting power of the Holy Spirit and we separate ourselves from God.

As we've discussed many times before, sin is the transgression of the law. The apostle John is very clear when he says, He that says "I know Him", but doesn't keep His commandments is a liar and the truth isn't in him. But whoever keeps His Word, in him verily is the love of God perfected. You can read that in 1 John 2:4 & 5.

But I think we've probably explored this subject enough for today. And I hope that sanctification is a little clearer in your mind as a result of our study this morning. Just remember, God has not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness. He's called us to live the sanctified life, and I hope this is your desire this morning, because, friend, this world is waxing old like a garment and soon Jesus is going to come and take His children out of this wicked place. But He can take us only if we have learned to possess our vessels in sanctification and honor. If you want to live the sanctified life, I invite you to bow your head as we close with prayer.

Loving Father in heaven, Thank You for the possibility that we can live a sanctified life, a holy life, a life that is free from transgressing Your law. Lord, help us not to trust the salvation of our souls to the minister or to any other person, but that we would learn that no other soul can pay the ransom for our transgression but Jesus. We don't ever want to raise the terrible cry, "I'm lost—eternally lost, because I failed to look to Jesus and His word for my marching orders.

Father we are so weak and in our own strength we know that we cannot please You or obey Your law by only human willpower. We pray this morning that You will will in us both to will and to do according to Your good pleasure. We love You and we thank You in Jesus' name. Amen.