

## Daily Sanctification

*A NOTE: This sermon was originally written for my church, but was rejected because of its message against contraception. I pray you will be blessed by reading it here anyway.*

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I am very honored by the chance to be here before you today to give a message on daily sanctification. Holiness a very big subject and is almost synonymous with our walk in salvation, but I will do my best to show its breadth and its depth. I want the major part of this message however to be about our practices in our Christian walk, since the subject of this message is “daily” sanctification and also because we live in a time when the discipline in our walk is deemphasized or despised by many church leaders. This has to change. We truly have a labor, and a battle and climb uphill.

I want to start a talk on sanctification, by telling you one simple thing at the core of it all: He is risen. The Savior has risen. I hope we can all proclaim that every day and thank God in prayer. When the women arrived at the tomb the angels told them, you remember – *Why seek ye the living among the dead?*<sup>6</sup> *He is not here, but is risen.* And I believe this truth is so important and core to holiness because holiness is in a sense progressive union with Messiah, it is daily experience of Him, it is reflecting Him, manifesting Him through our spirit and our lives. The risen living Messiah is at the burning heart sanctification. I also want to remind you of Yeshua’s promise to His apostles and likewise to us. He promised to be with them always saying *this -- Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also*<sup>20</sup> *At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you.* What is sanctification but He in us?

The literal meaning of holiness is to be set apart. It can mean scripturally set apart from sin, set apart from filth or set apart from simply what is common. Elohim (God) is perfectly holy. This is a consistent teaching throughout the Word. He can tolerate no sin and is even separate from the earthly, dwelling in the heavens beyond space and beyond time. Psalm 11 says of Him -- *The LORD is in his holy temple, the LORD's throne is in heaven: his eyes behold, his eyelids try, the children of men.*<sup>5</sup> *The LORD trieth the righteous: but the wicked and him that loveth violence his soul hateth.* The prophet Isaiah says -- *For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a*

*contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.* So God is set apart from creation, but concerned with creation. He is on a high mountain, yet He hates evil, loves the good, and nurtures the meek and the downtrodden. That is God's holiness. As you probably remember He further instructs *us -- Ye shall be holy: for I the LORD your God am holy.*

If I can paint a few common examples of what it means to be set apart, or holy, think first about a picture of a loved one. Remember, God sees us as a loved one in His Son. You don't treat a picture of a beloved one as a common thing. You cherish it. You place it somewhere special. You keep it clean. You might also think of something you set apart for a purpose. For example the potter takes a lump of clay from the rest, pulling it forth, molding it with his hands and making it into a shape according to his purposes, heating it, coloring it and heating it again. The potter takes it out of the rest and makes it according to its purpose. In Isaiah 64, by the way, Elohim reminds us -- *But now, O LORD, thou art our father; we are the clay, and thou our potter; and we all are the work of thy hand.* What about people? Think of a person who has been set apart to become an artist. His mind meditates on that art. His soul is stirred by it. He goes through training for years to fulfill his calling and purpose. He meets other artists, is mentored by them, shares ideas with them. His actions and attitude circle around that purpose he has been set apart for. He is separated from the rest to be an artist and his life shows it.

Since the New Testament likens us not to artists, but to priests, even priests of a whole new order, I want to briefly review a few rites of holiness in the Tabernacle of the old order. Hebrews 9 speaking to a Jewish audience reminds us that -- *almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission.* Here when it says purged (or katharidzo in Greek) it speaks of being purified. Being cleaned of any stains or dirt. In a moral sense, morally pure. This verse is reviewing some of the many Tabernacle rites, in which the priests and even the items of the temple needed to be purified with blood in order to serve their purposes. One example is the consecration of Aaron and his sons in Leviticus 8. After anointing with oil the men, the holy items and the altar, Moshe (Moses) *took the blood, and put it upon the horns of the altar round about with his finger, and purified the altar, and poured the blood at the bottom of the altar, and sanctified it, to make reconciliation upon it.* Then Moshe made another sacrifice -- *took of the blood of it, and put it upon the tip of Aaron's right ear, and upon the thumb of his right hand, and upon the great toe of his right foot.*<sup>24</sup> *And he brought Aaron's sons, and Moses put of the blood upon the tip of their right ear, and upon the thumbs of their right hands, and upon the great toes of their right feet: and Moses sprinkled the blood upon the altar round about.*

This ritual may seem strange to our ears, but it makes more sense when we think about the blood that we know. To be made holy to come before God relies upon the blood of sanctification. In our case, this is the blood of our High Priest, who is the glorious Son of God. His life is in His blood. That's His blood we are sprinkled with. That's His life we are dipped in.

I think you can see my point in bringing this up; for as we seek daily sanctification in Him, it is in a sense daily participation in His life. That life He poured out for us; That life which abides through the Spirit within us; That life which sits, or in saint Steven's case, stands at the right hand of the Father. Daily sanctification is daily participation in Him.

To many souls it sounds like a tremendous task to live a holy life. Some imagine it is impossible. Yet it couldn't be impossible, since that is what the divine Word of God tells us we shall do and must do. It must be possible. 2 Timothy 2 tells us -- *If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work.*<sup>22</sup> *Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.* 2 Thessalonians 2 says -- *But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth.* To be sanctified allows us to be fit for our master's use. It is also a clear instruction and our duty. Here we see it is a living part of our salvation itself. We are chosen to salvation through sanctification. 1 John 3 beautifully connects this truth about holiness to our very knowledge of the Son of God and even to the knowledge of ourselves. The apostle says -- *Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.*<sup>3</sup> *And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.* If you have hope in Him, brothers, purify yourselves. Do you long to see the Savior as He is? Purify yourselves. Do you long to be like Him? Purify yourselves. Be like your Master.

In speaking of the very pure life we should be living, almost anyone will tell you that sanctification is a process, and few make great leaps immediately. Examining our own lives will tell us this too, as will examining scripture. 1 Peter 2 praises the new believer for his thirst for the word -- *As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:*<sup>3</sup> *If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious.* We love this first taste of Messiah's life and of His holiness. We learn of Him in it. This is good. Yet in Hebrews Paul warns, chides and encourages

growth to a group which have remained babes too long, saying -- *For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat.* <sup>13</sup> *For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe.* <sup>14</sup> *But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.* Here we are told we should grow from that first thirst for the word to become more mature and skillful. We should grow up to eat meat, having a greater knowledge of the word, and greater discernment. Moreover, even when speaking to the Thessalonians, who are a model Christian community known afar for their faith and righteousness, Paul encourages perfection in holiness in his blessing: *And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you.* <sup>13</sup> *To the end he may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints.* You see even speaking to a group which had grown mightily in faith, he inspires them to a greater walk, even one which is “unblameable in holiness.” This is us, brethren. This is how we should grow. In the word of God. In discernment between good and evil. Never sitting back and becoming content in our accomplishments, but shooting for the goal of being blameless. It sounds immense and it is, but when we think about how God Himself is holy, shouldn't we love this goal? We are Messiah's emissaries. We are His priests.

It is a common trend today to avoid sanctification, or at least the great portion of sanctification which involves discipline. There are people and even ministers who revile and hate talk of what seeking to live a purified life involves. They hear it might involve holding standards, so they curse it. They hear it might involve obedience, a dirty word to them, so they curse it. They hear it might involve practices no longer culturally popular or even culturally accepted so they curse it. Cursing sanctification in practice has been a deadly cancer on the Church. It has long done its damage in leaving Christians uninstructed, undisciplined or unaccountable. Yet we need to purify ourselves. We need to obey. We need to allow Yeshua to work through us and live through us in every fiber of our being. This involves things we should do and that we should not do. For all of those ministers who claim the Christian must not have standards or rules in their lives, I would ask this – do you? When you build a balcony, do you build a fence around it? They probably do. That's because it is both the ethical and the legal thing to do. When you build a house, do you follow safety codes? The answer again will probably be yes. It is both ethical and legal to do. When you hire a ministry accountant, does your accountant have to meet certain standards and follow certain safeguards? Again, the answer is yes. Having safeguards on people who work with your finances is a good protection against both criminal behavior and the risk of

it. Naturally the same souls who curse at teaching holiness and purity, if they ever took a look at their own lives, would have to count themselves the hypocrites. We all need good practices in life and we all use them.

To briefly acknowledge the other side, let me point out that there is a certain truth that they are merely taking and stretching out of proportion. Yet it really is a truth. That is the truth that we cannot rely on ourselves in daily sanctification, but can only rest upon Messiah and His perfect blood. It is also that we can never seek to justify ourselves through the law. Of course both of these are true, so I want to point again to what I mentioned at the start – living in holiness rests on the risen Messiah. The one who promised He would abide within us, just as he abides in the Father and the Father abides in Him. Our holiness rests in his life blood. It rests in the salvation he already granted. I would never mean to suggest, in pointing out the labor and fight we have to undertake, that somehow we can do this by ourselves or can make ourselves righteous this way. We cannot.

For the many who might still think that diligently seeking sanctity is a lot of boring rules, let me give you this example; think of the seaman, the sailor. You see him navigating a narrow and difficult point. His ship is being pushed towards the rocks. The captain steers the ship away from the rocks to safety. Would you ever think to ask the captain if he were merely following rules in doing that? Of course not. He wasn't merely following rules; he was steering from danger and to safety and preserving the lives on his ship. Likewise, as you saw the crewmen working with the ropes which move the sails, and you saw them pulling them this way and that, securing them here and there, making the sails catch the wind would you consider asking them – are you following empty rules? I don't think so. You would understand that, despite the complexity of their work and the importance of doing things right, they were seeking to keep their ship on course, and the sails catching the wind. We recognize that with our captain and crew. We can recognize that with the Church and with holiness. We want our ship to reach its destination. We do not follow mere rules. We are there because we want to be there, we obey our captain because he is our captain, and we love our mission and that's why we are on the boat.

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I would like to present some practices of daily sanctification to you; some of the church life and some of daily and family living. I believe each of them is a reward to bring into our lives. I also believe rejecting them is harmful. I confidently believe that each represents a magnifying of the

name of Messiah as well as an act of union with Him and protection from the devil. Please consider these as part of your walk in salvation:

1:Belief and trust First I want to mention the foundation of belief and trust in sanctification. Belief in our Savior does not end at the moment we accept Him as Lord and savior. We continue to believe, and deepen our belief, and reveal that belief in action by placing trust in Him. That belief becomes our rock and our fortress, as well as our weapon of war. That is something that continual trust does. If we seek sanctification, we believe daily. While it may not be a mandate, I encourage all to daily profess their faith in Yeshua, in who He is and in what He does. That he is the Son of the most high God, that He came down from heaven, died for our sins and rose on the third day. We trust also in His coming in glory to rule and judge the earth.

This belief carries on to action as we rely on that faith when we choose to obey, especially as we choose to obey in the face of adversity and even in the face of great loss. We proclaim His name to those who might hate Him, and hate us as well. This requires belief and trust. It also reveals belief and trust. We cut from our lives what we believe to be pleasurable sins and which can be a struggle to leave behind. This requires belief and trust. We speak up for righteousness in a world which uplifts wickedness and will despise us for it, this requires belief and trust. Please speak up for what is right and true today, and in the face of those who hate you. Remember, we speak of holiness as an act of union with the Light of eternity called Jesus Christ, so remember then that the incarnation of God Himself placed trust in the Father and believed completely in Him. In John 5 the Savior says -- *I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me.* This is obedience and trust towards the Father. Yeshua, who shared in your nature and in my nature, turned that nature over to the will of the One who sent Him. When we choose to trust in God's will, we share in that awesome love of the Father that our King has.

You know people who deny the Trinity, or deny the Deity of the Son (such as Jehovah's Witnesses or even Muslims) have great trouble with this revelation. They have trouble with the idea that God trusted in God, God called out to God, God prayed to God. Yet through the Incarnation, this is what the Almighty did. He went through life from our position here on earth (yet without sin). We go through life together with Him in our own belief and our own trust. We join our own to His. If you seek sanctification, and seek oneness with Messiah, seek to trust as He trusted.

**2: Evangelism** – One of the first lessons in trusting God is following through on sharing our faith. If we believe, we trust enough to speak the saving truth of the Lamb. Not only as an act of obedience, but also as a revealing of our belief. If we believe man is lost in sin and that Yeshua is the only way to restore the human soul to God, it is an inner imperative as well. We do not rest comfortably knowing that souls go to damnation. We do not rest comfortably especially when those souls are near to us, be they friends, family members or members of our communities. We communicate the need for turning from sin and placing our trust in the author of Salvation. There is sanctification in this. We are set apart, remember, as a nation of priests. Just as Aaron and his sons were set apart for service, the blood applied to their ears, their hands, their feet so they could do service in the Tabernacle, we are set apart through the blood of our High Priest. Just as our Lord spoke of repentance and the kingdom of God, so do we, and we speak also of His cross and resurrection. Yeshua did not waver in speaking the truth. From His time in the desert onward, we are told -- *Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.* He also spoke -- *that the Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and of the chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again.* We are in the best company possible when we live in that same life and share in that same truth. For His life is in us.

I also want to point out that we have imperative as born-again children of God to stand up for righteousness as well. We speak for what is ethical and just. Our Savior spoke against the corrupt powers not only for their unbelief in Him, but also for their wicked practices. He said *woe unto you*, for devouring widows houses, for making men swear by the gold in the temple, for ignoring the heavy matters of judgment, mercy and faith. There is sanctification then, is speaking for the truth, especially in those places where you risk being crushed because of it. To speak for the truth is to speak together with the Savior; to share in his bold word, and in His love for righteousness and hatred of evil. This is especially crucial in the Body of believers, many of whom tragically treat evil as normal, who treat immodesty as the good, who treat fornication as the national sport, who treat education and comfort as the high ideals, who treat adultery through divorces and second marriages as the norm that believers must live with or be silent about. Do you speak out against evil, especially in Christ's precious Bride, His Church? If we are being made into the image of Mashiach we are being made into the image of One who hates evil and loves good, and the image of One who calls out the false teachers of every age. Do not be afraid. Trust, as we spoke of above, trust as He trusted and let the will of the Father be done in you.

**3: Confession** -- Another immensely important part of our sanctification is confession of sins. It is repentance. For we do not only turn one time to Yeshua when we turn our back on unbelief

and sin to receive Him. We turn repeatedly for forgiveness of sins. We turn repeatedly in repentance from sins. Just as scriptures tells us -- *our old man was crucified with Him...for he who has died has been freed from sin* – it also tells we should die regularly to sin. The apostle Paul said – *I die daily*. Those are incredible words. Some people might see a contradiction here, asking how we can die once in being born again but also die daily, but there is no contradiction. If we have died in our rebirth in Messiah then as a necessity, as an intrinsic part of that new life in Messiah, we regularly send the old man to the cross, impurity after impurity, pice after pice, carnality after carnality. That is a part of the new life and that is why confession is so important.

I cannot tell you about how Yeshua did this, since Yeshua was without sin. He did not need to repent of evil. However, I tell you that He still participates intimately in this process. He participates as forgiver. He is the one who looked down from His brutal execution stake and said – *Father forgive them, for they know not what they do*. He also participates as he is the very sin offering that cleanses us and that allows us entrance into eternal life in the Kingdom. Yeshua may not have done the same thing we do when we confess, but He is there as forgiver and as sanctifier.

And one more thing on this topic: there is powerful growth in Messiah to sincerely grieve of the evil that we do and turn to God for forgiveness and for restoration. It may not seem that way, but one of the greatest areas of growth is found in our failure. For the same Lord who made the entire cosmos out of nothing, can take our act of wickedness, and through our repentance teach us a deeper knowledge of who He is and to walk in faith more humbly and rightly. Have you confessed your sins? Have you grieved over them and repented of them? In this is holiness. We might read a news story about some terrible crime, about some thugs who brutally murdered someone and one of our first thoughts is – how could anyone do such a thing? But brothers do we ask the same question about ourselves? How could anyone do such a thing? We also think about that same vicious criminal we read about and we deeply want that person to be able to see their own crime, to see the incredible harm they caused and feel real sorrow. We want them to be able to grieve of their own crime. Not because we are some kind of sadist. Rather because we want their soul to be restored. Can we also want the same thing of ourselves? Can we also want our soul to grieve and turn from its sin like that terrible assassin on the news? In the full life of Messiah we can. In sanctification we can. Seek these things, and if they seem too hard, ask our Lord for the grace. He truly makes the heart anew. We have died to our old man, but like Paul, we must die daily.



**4:Prayer** -- Yet one of the first and most profound ways we live in Messiah's holiness is through our prayers. Can you think of any loved one you would not desire to speak with, to share your soul with? That would be what it is like if we did not desire to pray to God. Although the subject of confession I just discussed is a part of prayer, what most people think of first when they hear the word is the petition – asking for something. As an early believer, I didn't really know how to pray, and the first time I really thought to get down on my knees and pray was to ask for something, in this case I prayed to overcome my insomnia and weariness, and have the energy to make it through the work day. This I did, thanks to God. I was to pray that way many times in the years to come, and with similar and even more powerful deliverance from the Lord. Later, from studying, and from meeting other believers, I learned to use prayer to praise God and worship Him. This is an integral part of prayer also, speaking of who God is and what he does and what he has done for us. The praise of Psalm 145 goes like this -- *All thy works shall praise thee, O LORD; and thy saints shall bless thee.* <sup>11</sup> *They shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom, and talk of thy power;* <sup>12</sup> *To make known to the sons of men his mighty acts, and the glorious majesty of his kingdom.* <sup>13</sup> *Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and thy dominion endureth throughout all generations.* It seems that all you have to do is speak of Adonai and you praise Him. And of course thank Him for His awesome works – what he has done, what He does, what He will do. King David in Psalm 22 (speaking prophetically for Messiah) is crying out to God in a time of grievous trials, and after speaking of His crushing troubles, He goes on to recall what God did in the past, to recall His character and perhaps reassure himself of who God is rather than be dispirited by his hardship. He says -- *But thou art holy, O thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel.* <sup>4</sup> *Our fathers trusted in thee: they trusted, and thou didst deliver them.* <sup>5</sup> *They cried unto thee, and were delivered: they trusted in thee, and were not confounded.* Then again David repeats his turmoil and his suffering, only to return again to the reassurance of Adonai's goodness -- *But thou art he that took me out of the womb: thou didst make me hope when I was upon my mother's breasts.* <sup>10</sup> *I was cast upon thee from the womb: thou art my God from my mother's belly.* In recalling God's lordship of his birth and mothering, David praises the Lord in prayer and in turn reassures himself.

Prayer binds us incredibly to the Son of God. This is not only because of the divine object of our prayer, but also because it mirrors the Son's own experience. It was the Son who turned fervently to the father in the garden before His sacrifice. *He fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt.* Do you fall on your face in prayer? If you do, you lie on your face with the Messiah who is in you. In fact it was in prayer to the Father that Yeshua spoke the perfect message of salvation proclaiming -- *As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as*

*many as thou hast given him.* <sup>3</sup> *And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.* If our Lord spoke these words in prayer how amazing it is then when we proclaim His salvation in our prayers, or proclaim His salvation to others, praise Him and glorify Him. There is holiness to speak with Yeshua, as these is to walk with Yeshua. He abides in us, and we in Him.

On a final note with prayer, do not forget the incredible power of religious song and hymns. Many victories over demonic attacks have been won by turning to Adonai in song, whether through hymns, or through the Psalms, which Christians have prayed for ages straight from the Jewish tradition. You can even make up your own hymns as your new-born heart desires. I remember not long ago walking down the street feeling beset with burdensome thoughts, ones which were negative, discouraging and impure. I immediately began singing songs of praise to God, saying in song all that He is and that He does, saying in song how He makes us new men and makes us pure. As my song continued, the weary and burdensome thoughts lifted, and I was free in the Savior again released from bondage and burdens. All it took was a song brothers, and many battles with Satan have been lost because believers did not praise God with their voices in song. Just think of Yeshua's Passover with the disciples, before He went to His sacrificial death. Yeshua sang hymns, just as the Jewish liturgy told. These were the Psalms sung at the end of the Passover meal. He was singing before He was praying in the Garden, and He was praying before He died.

**5: Scripture study** – Now if we are bound to Him in prayer we are bound to Him in the love of the Word of God. He displayed that love and lived it. One of the remarkable moments we have of the young Yeshua's life is of His trip to Jerusalem with Miriam and Yosef to be dedicated to the Lord. During this trip on the way home, they found themselves without him, and had to return. After three days of searching, He was in the temple, hearing teachings of the Word of God and asking questions. I think we imagine the questions he asked to these experts on the law were both enlightening and very challenging. And remember, he had been gone from them three days. Such a hunger for the Word and thirst for deeper knowledge of it should be evident in born-again believers as well. Just as He hear and spoke and asked questions, so do we desire to.

We remember also Yeshua in the desert, as He used the Word of God as a powerful weapon against the devil, quoting verse after verse to escape the snares of Satan. He finally vanquished the adversary in battle with the divine Word, saying -- "*It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.*" And the devil was silent. If we walk with Yeshua, and in the power of the same Spirit that raised Him from the dead, do we not also do battle with the word of Truth? Do

we not face the devil with the full resources given by our heavenly Father. Not just with our own wits or will, but with His perfect word. We are nearly naked in battle without it. When it comes to abiding in Yeshua's love for the divine Word, remember it was also He who gave the first explanation to the apostles of how the Torah spoke of Him: *beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.* How incredible. Can you imagine that exposition, coming from God the Son. We might never be able to live up to it, but we can share in His zeal for the divine Word and His knowledge of it, just as we share in his Being.

Lastly, regarding the knowledge of scripture, I want to point out two things. Firstly, spending time in reading, study and meditation of the word is an immense part of being released from the worldly and impure and being brought to sanctification. When we spend time with God's Word in our thoughts, or being spoken on our lips, it has a way of filling up our being, our consciousness. Other lusts really do fall by the wayside, being subdued, weakened or conquered. Realize the intimacy with Yeshua that is there and the immense freedom that exists in having your innermost parts filled with God's truth. Some of those habits or vices that have a hold on you almost seem to disappear. God's word is perfect and pure. Perhaps this is what Yeshua spoke of when He prayed for us -- *They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.*

<sup>17</sup> *Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.* The other point I want to leave you with is that we will be given many opportunities to share our faith, and how limited that ability will be if we do not know the word of Truth. We will be given many opportunities to disciple others or to teach, even on that informal, daily scale that we all do. Even just with family members, or a friend in the congregation. The apostle Peter tells us -- *sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you.* If we do not know God's word, our testimony may still be worth something, but we have given up the chance to present God's teachings, as opposed to our own. I think you will find there are many people out there with questions, some of them serious and fair-minded; we have an answer to those questions. Yet it must have its roots in the word of God. Be thirsty in study of the scripture, and you will see how God uses that, both in growing your own holiness, and leading others to faith.

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**6:Controlling the tongue** -- One of the first areas of my lifestyle that I began to walk forward in when I came to faith was the use of my words. Perhaps as a new believer, and on my own, that seemed the easiest place to start for me. Perhaps the Spirit just placed it on my heart as well. I wanted to rid myself of the filth and corruption that was so typical, almost compulsive in my life, especially in ugly language, blasphemy and filthy music. I had practiced it all abundantly, and like second nature. One image or thought that led me forward in changing my speech was the incredible purity of God's word and the incredible truth of the Bible. If I was a child of the light, I thought to myself, my words ought to be pure.

The divine Word of scripture has a lot to say about how we speak. It teaches us and shows us from start to finish. Psalm 39 says -- *I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue: I will keep my mouth with a bridle, while the wicked is before me.* In the New Testament, Paul writes -- *But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth.* Communication comes from us, and ought to reflect the child of God we are inside. Our words then, must reflect what is good, what is truthful, what is morally clean. They should furthermore not slander or gossip. As we turn ourselves fully over to unity with Yeshua, those innumerable ways we use our tongue come under His hold as well and our tongue becomes a great tool for Him to use. As James points out -- *Behold, we put bits in the horses' mouths, that they may obey us; and we turn about their whole body.* If such a small bit can control this powerful horse then, this small organ of the tongue can restrain the powerful and sometimes unruly soul, and guide it on its journey.

Since I want to point out how our holiness relates to the risen Yeshua, and our union with Him, let me remind you of His use of words. How often it was that His words spoke straight from scripture. How often it was they provided now and perfect revelation from God. How perfect were His words. He spoke -- *thy sins are forgiven thee.* He spoke -- *follow me and I will make thee fishers of men.* He spoke -- *Talitha cumi...I say to thee arise.* On hearing a denial of His saving mission He spoke -- *get thee behind me, Satan.* You see, the words of the Savior taught, they encouraged, they gave rebuke, they expressed love, they even mourned in godly mourning saying -- *O Jerusalem, Jerusalem...how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not.* All Yeshua's words reflected His divine nature, character and purpose on this earth. It is not hard to see, then, as we unite with Him also, that our words all speak to the purpose God has given us, the children of light. How natural in sanctification, that they reflect our new character as well. That they reflect our unity with Him.

Like in many areas, I think you will see, as you approach holiness in communications, that it supports your holiness in other areas. As the Spirit begins to work on you here, suddenly some of those other parts of our new life become easier to walk forward in. The light the Spirit sheds on the tongue starts to carry over, and shine light on our whole being. This is perhaps what it means

when James speaks of the small bit that guides the whole horse. That is no mere figure of speech. As our words begin to reflect the Savior's words, our mind sees that path before us more clearly. Our will is more malleable to God's will. Our path more His path. Not only that but as you give your communications over to Messiah, you will provide a clear witness to the unbelievers and the new believers and the weak around you. It is noticeable, believe me. If you consistently walk in purity of language, including the purity of music, they will notice the difference. They will notice you as a son of light: a Christian. Speak in a filthy, or boastful or deceitful way, they won't be able to tell the difference. The words of the Lord are pure words. The words of Christians are as well.

**7:Avoiding popular media** -- It is very common today in speaking of seeking and keeping purity to warn the sheep against pornography. This is especially because it is so available today. Yet pornography is clearly not the only thing believers might receive into themselves which can bring impurity or worse. I believe there is in fact much worse out there. So in speaking of holiness in our lifestyles, we as a nation of priests, let me make this humble proposal: There are other media we must avoid besides pornography.

I say this because the mass influx of popular media, print and film commonly act as a form of indoctrination. There can be no dispute in this. In an age of communication and information, you will find very little of the popular kind which uplifts our perfect Savior or the Father of lights. Rather, what it tends to do is communicate attitudes, words, teachings and an overall spirit which are anti-Christ. That's why I believe confidently that as a body of believers, we keep our intake of these things at a true minimum. Psalm 101 says -- *I will behave wisely in a perfect way. Oh, when will You come to me? I will walk within my house with a perfect heart.*<sup>3</sup> *I will set nothing wicked before my eyes; I hate the work of those who fall away; It shall not cling to me.*<sup>4</sup> *A perverse heart shall depart from me; I will not know wickedness.* I try to do the best in my own life, and I ask you to do your best as well. We are a holy people. It is hard to imagine how we can live in that holiness with constant indoctrination, glorification of evil and a godless worldview pressing into us.

Of course this is especially true of our young. Yet it holds true of adults and mature believers as well. I don't want my young children to be gaining their teachings and impressions from a godless and pagan mass communications. I don't want myself to either. Or you brethren to. Since I have ceased working in ministry and had the opportunity to work in the secular world, I have encountered the secular (and I think it's fair to call it pagan) culture in some in-your-face kind of ways. I remember once being forced to listen to the most outrageous and aggressively immoral

music, and simply to keep its constant vulgarity from penetrating my thoughts, I began speaking prayers out loud and reciting scriptures. It is a tremendous battle for us as priests against evil. We do not need to make it more difficult for ourselves by willingly pouring the ramblings of sensual and unbelieving souls into our own soul. Where a choice exists, rather, we should fill our souls with holy words, holy images, holy attitudes and expressions. I also wonder, since many Christians complain about some of the wicked messages taught anywhere from music to books. Yet all the while it is often Christians who are making sure that these unclean things have a market. You know if you go into an orthodox Jewish neighborhood, you're going to have a hard time selling pork chops. You know it's just not going to work and masses of people will get very angry at you. But if you go into a Christian neighborhood, and sell for example lewd fashion magazines, you'll do tons of business. The Christians will buy them up.

Let me ask you if you can imagine this: Can you imagine secularists blasting old Protestant hymns incessantly from their car stereos? Can you imagine them putting their favorite biblical character on their t-shirts and on their hats? Maybe a picture of Elijah placing a curse upon those young men? Or Paul in chains in prison? Can you imagine pagans playing disc after disc of the Holy Scriptures in Hebrew for their families? Can you imagine them painting lovely pictures of their neighborhood Bible-believing church and its events because they're so cool? Can you imagine them having verse after verse of the Bible memorized? Could you imagine a pagan doing any of those things? Because if not, it bears asking why the sheep of Jesus do the same things in reverse.

How can we be holy when we are willfully absorbing pagan attitudes, language and doctrines? If you want to see just one single stark picture of how dark swallowing the culture is, let me tell you this. When I was teaching in China (a country more and more absorbed in western entertainment) I remember attending one of my school's performances for the end of the semester. Students would come up and play music or read a speech or whatever act they had prepared. Chinese love ceremonies. Well, one student act included a girl who must have been not much older than 3d grade, and she was dancing to pop music exactly as you'd see one of the sensual and sexual women do in the grosser of music videos. It was a small child dancing like a harlot. This has got to be one of the sickest things I have seen in my life, and it was sick enough that even the secular teachers complained about it. Well, I just leaned over to the guy next to me and I asked him – Do you know how you get to a point what a little girl is dancing around like whore? He said no, how do you do it? I said well first you say it's okay for an adult, then you say it's okay for a teenager, and before long you have little kids doing it. This act was truly sick. But you see the Chinese people didn't learn to put together an act like that because of Confucius or his teachings. They didn't do it because of Mao Tse Tung. They didn't even do it because of

pornography. They probably learned to do it by innocently absorbing pop culture, and trying to imitate it. They didn't have to be madmen. They just had to trustingly absorb what comes from the airwaves or appears on the screen. And darkness leads to more darkness and more darkness still.

You and I have the light. We do not need to give ourselves unnecessary battles to fight because we absorb the darkness. If we are a dwelling place of the Holy Spirit, we need to be very minimal in the amount of media we absorb, and discriminating in what little we choose. For me, one of the best and most liberating weapons has been to get rid of my television entirely. I cannot tell you how great it is. It frees up our entire house from the indoctrination and gives us enormously more free time.

We also practice care and discrimination in choosing what little we allow in. One way to do that is to take the time to choose from short videos online, or research films we might want to see. If I pick short videos for our children, I choose the kind without any ads, because we don't want to be watching them either. When we watch something outright secular, which is on average once every few weeks, we remind ourselves we are looking at an expression of the worldview of a non-believer, the attitudes of the unsaved. We also look for where there is something redeemable in it, and also where the ideas and characters portrayed are outside of God's law. We never ever simply turn on a device and let it go.

**8:Interacting with secular world** – The need that we have to keep out an influx of impure influences naturally leads to another question: How do we interact with others in society who allow these influences to flood their lives? This is a very important question, and I want to put forth some tactics that I use and encourage you to further build upon them. Before I go on, I'd also like to remind you that, despite all the complexities, and despite the fact that Holy Scripture does not lay out these applications for us, we are still benefitted by trying to live wisely in this regard, and benefitted by drawing some clear lines. Let me point out again that we are like a ship at sail; we are motivated by love of our destination, love of our captain, even love of the voyage. We are not motivated by mere rules or mere customs. It is only that they can help us greatly. When that ship steers away from the rocks, it is not because of mere rules, it is because of a desire to preserve the crew and the ship. When those sailors move the sails and tie the ropes, they are not motivated by mere rules either. They simply desire to arrive at their destination, and to do it in one piece.

A simple rule that I have in interacting with a society drowning in impurity, is that I let friends know how I operate before we come over to their home. Our secular friends, including some secular Christians, know that we do not watch television, and that our children do not either. That means they either turn the television off, or we simply stay in another room if they don't want to. Likewise, when their children come and visit our house, they know that our kids do not use handheld electronic devices, which these days parents have their kids using them as young as two years old. That means if they bring them, they know to go to another room to use them. It's as simple as that. We've done it many times. I realize a lot of people are afraid of being laughed at or shunned for drawing lines as we do, but it has been easy for us, and we maintain our friendships just fine. In fact not staring at other people's electronic devices opens up time for other things; we invite them to pray, to read the Bible, or to sing hymns with us. It also opens up more time for conversation, and playing with the kids outside. If you try it yourself I believe you will find the same thing. It is much easier than many imagine.

I want to go a step further than that, and point out that I openly encourage our friends to avoid these impure influences and to turn off the tidal flood of media. A couple of years back our next door neighbors invited me over to watch the Superbowl. They are a large family, and include a few sincere Christians along with a few I take to be unbelievers, but who have a Christian background. The challenge, as I saw it, was mainly that the halftime show at the Superbowl is typically a lewd, sexualized demonic display. I didn't want to give approval to this kind of garbage. So what I did was, when the halftime show arrived, I announced that I found this kind of display of nudity and sexuality disgusting. Then I handed out a list I had compiled of shops where one can buy modest clothing and I left the room for the entirety of the performance. Well, no one got mad. Not only that, let me tell you the best part of the story. The patriarch of the family, who had been sitting there seemingly interested in the show, got up in the middle and joined me in the hallway. Praise be to God. He said – I don't think I want to watch that garbage either -- and he stayed there in the hallway with me. Now what's so hard about that? If one simple act that anyone can do inspired this man to act too, imagine a hundred thousand little Messiahs doing the same thing. Or a hundred million. We would live in a different world. God will give us the grace to seek purity, if we allow Him and we cooperate.

In another incident, I found myself working with a laborer who was a secular non-believer. I had worked with him a number of times, shared my faith and we had a good back and forth. When he turned on the pop music on his smartphone, I asked him if we could instead work in silence. I told him this kind of music promotes a man-centered worldview, instead of a God-centered one, and often promotes very bad things. He had no problem with that. No conflict whatsoever. Now would that request be accepted by everyone? Probably not. But you're not going to know unless



you try. Moreover, that silence you have will give you the chance to talk, befriend someone and communicate what your faith is all about. You'll be able to do that without pagan music beating into your brain. Would anyone here be willing to try that too?

Things haven't changed so much in thousands of years, brethren. I remember reading some material by Augustin, the early Christian leader in the Church. He related a story of a new Christian who had sworn off going to the Coliseum, where the Romans gathered to watch men fight to the death or be torn apart by beasts. His Roman friends kept pestering him about going, and finally this new believer relented and said he would go, but he would keep his eyes closed the whole time so he didn't see the terrible things. Well, as the events in the arena unfolded, and grew to a fevered pitch, and the crowd roared as someone got brutally attacked, this new Christian couldn't resist anymore and opened his eyes to watch. After this, he was back to going to the Coliseum again with his Roman buddies. Does that sound familiar? The technologies may have changed some, as well as the events, but you and I face many of the same challenges as he did. Our solution shouldn't be the failed tactic tried by this struggling young man. It should be to trust that we walk with our Savior and that He walks in us. We should find holiness in Him, be it holy words, images and activities. The book of Jude calls Almighty God -- *Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, And to present you faultless Before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy.* So despite some of the complexities or possible discomfort of the battle tactics I've presented, I believe we can use them not just out of necessity, but with exceeding joy.

**9:Planning for marriage and children and refraining from contraception** – Many Christians are feeling disheartened today and discouraged. They have witnessed the utter moral collapse of a civilization. They have seen the collapse of their faith simultaneously, with many losing faith, and others disregarding holiness while apparently embracing lawlessness. Some feel as if there is no hope. However, the solution is often right in front of our noses.

One of the first acts of repentance we can do in turning around a struggling faith, is to begin respecting the family. What I mean here is that family should be what we plan for, and it should not be long off into the future. We have embraced the modern cultural attitude of letting the family wait for some indefinite period in our lives and we have suffered for it. We have suffered through the impurity people practice while refusing the family. We have suffered through adopting the view that a young person with a child has a problem and not a blessing. One of the strongest battle tactics we can use in restoring holiness is embracing the family and children and planning our lives for it from a young age. That doesn't mean some people may not legitimately need to wait, or that some people may not be able to commit to celibacy for some godly purpose.

Yet as a general practice, the family should be high in our priorities, and something we work for in the near future, not the distant.

It is truly unrealistic to expect that the masses of people who put off marriage are going to lead moral lives during this extended period of many years. Most of them don't even try too hard. The Apostle Paul offered perhaps the best advice for these situations. It's very simple and achievable. He said of the unmarried -- *if they cannot exercise self-control, let them marry. For it is better to marry than to burn with passion.* Did you hear that? I realize it doesn't sound like the most romantic view of marriage, but the word of God is not primarily concerned with romance. The godly advice of the apostle is that if believers cannot control their lust, they should marry. In this one simple instruction is a good part of our restoration as the Body of Messiah, the living picture of the Savior. Putting off marriage, with no serious commitment to celibacy, has been a cancer on the Body, and has made fornication about as common as water, and as easy to acquire. We fervently pray for our rebellious nation to repent and turn to God, but we need to repent and turn to God first, and this is one awesome area where we must immediately do it. Marriage is an expression of our salvation as well as a societal life-support network. Children are always a blessing from God. Let us embrace them and plan for them in our lives.

This subject of embracing marriage and avoiding fornication turns to what might be an even deeper area for repentance. Because there is one terrible thing which facilitates the Body of Messiah in leaving marriage off for years, and practicing fornication. That one terrible thing is called contraception. (Contraception by the way literally means "against the beginning." You might remember that "the beginning" is the first word of the Bible in Genesis as well as the first word of John's Gospel. It is written -- *In the beginning made God the heavens and the earth* -- and -- *in the beginning was the Word and the word was with God.* This is the beginning and contraception is against it.) When contraception became mainstream and legal in this country, it did exactly what pious souls had predicted it would do. It led to greater promiscuity. It led to more adultery and divorces. It led to the devaluing of women to being temporal instruments of selfish pleasure for men. Not only that, but there is a powerful link between contraception and abortion that has been factually demonstrated. If we are pro-life, we should be anti-contraception too.

Now personally, I hold to the traditional historical view about this practice; I believe it is wicked in itself. It is always wrong. This is what the historical Church taught for many centuries, including major Protestant figures and that rejection of contraception did not change until the Anglican Church began allowing it in 1930. But I'll tell you this. Even if you do not hold the historical view as I do, I believe you can look at how the Bible speaks of children always as a

blessing, you can look at how the Bible teaches us to love one another, you can look at how it violates natural law principles, you can look at the disastrous affects it has produced and you can come to a conclusion extremely close to the historical one. I realize that final step of considering it immoral in itself requires a step of faith, but it's not an especially large step of faith, after looking at all the angles. Moreover, I'd point out that the saturation of contraception we have today began with the reasoning many still have – that contraception is usually wrong, but can be excused in some situations. This very reasoning is what led to the full embrace of it. I encourage you to stand fully against it.

Not only that, but the most popular forms of contraception are designed to be abortifacient. That means they are very likely to cause an early term abortion in the case that a child is conceived. The common birth control pill does this by thinning the lining of the uterus. IUDs do this as their main property, by preventing implantation of the newly conceived child. For believers to use these instruments of death is not just less than holy, but is truly negligent towards human life and clearly evil. In fact for millions of our holy priesthood to not only make their bodies infertile, but also cause an untold number of abortions, is unspeakable in its darkness. It seems as if a deep and penetrating satanic spell has fallen upon entire populations. I ask everyone to call on the name of Mashiach in breaking that spell. He is the author of our salvation and has power over any fallen angel. He has crushed the serpent's head. He has conquered death. I realize most believers have come to accept contraception, and I also realize most believers really don't want to hear that what they are doing is wicked. Nevertheless, I ask you to call on the name above all names, and end any involvement you have with contraception. If it is in your house, destroy it, and get it out. If it is in your body, remove it and do the same. We cannot simply continue complaining about the state of the Church, while all the while crippling ourselves. It might be painful to do, but repentance sometimes comes with grief and with struggle. You battle with the Lord at your side. He will bring you love and joy even when the burdens are heavy. I am reminded of the new believers at Corinth, who when they came to believe and confess Yeshua, brought all their books of magic together and *burned them before all men*. I would love to see the Church with similar fervor. We must leave contraception behind.

Now that I've said that with some clarity, let me turn around and give a brief picture of the holiness of the family, and of marriage; that enormous experience of sanctification that much of the church treats as a low priority, or even to be avoided. That people make themselves infertile simply to avoid. In the family there is the unique experience of raising children in the Lord, showing them and teaching them who He is and sharing His teachings and sacrificial character. Just as scripture says that the believing spouse can sanctify the unbelieving, I say we all can sanctify any unbeliever we are close to, including our children before they come to faith. If we

are living in the Lord we are setting those children apart. We are setting them apart to have opportunities to hear the Gospel, to experience the Church community, to learn the Bible and to gain sanctified habits even before they start to walk in faith. How chosen our children are by God. How set apart. Doesn't that sound substantially more important than trying to earn the highest degrees possible or amassing wealth over many years? It definitely does to me. In marriage and the family also is the illustration of the divine nature itself. It is a picture of God. How could we ask for a greater honor than to marry and become a picture of the Trinity? Just as the Father and Son are one, so are the man and wife. Just as the Father and the Son turn to one another in love, so do the man the wife. Just as the Holy Spirit comes forth through the Father and the Son, so our children come forth through us. Our union, like the union of the Trinity is a life-producing one, not only in spirit but in real, physical, miraculous generation of life that we common folks call children. Marriage is an honor, and an act of holy unity with Mashiach. If I didn't have a family myself, I would be jealous of those who do.

I'm going to touch on one more area in which the chosen priesthood most repent before I close. It might be burdensome to hear, but imagine in your heart the joy of the entire Church repenting and the hope we have of the Savior's constant presence with us. Adonai tells us His Bride should be – *a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish*. The same God will surely give us the power to do this. For -- *He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ*.

**10: Gender segregation:** We frequently encourage our young people to have purity in their thoughts and lives. We also want the same for adults. We point to a righteous goal here, yet we do not provide the tools to help them reach that goal. More precisely, it is unfathomable to expect young people to do well in the battle for purity while simultaneously mixing young men and women in all kinds of arenas in life. What should a reasonable person expect if men and women are left alone together, with no one overseeing them, and often with all kinds of licit or illicit drugs? A reasonable person should know what to expect: Those men and women are mostly going to use that as an opportunity for sin. The same goes for housing arrangements and things similar. Mixing men and women without restrictions provides little or no tools for those desiring a holy life. The results are predictable.

That is why for centuries countless sincere believers practiced a common sense separation of the sexes. I'm not making this up. I'm not inventing some new doctrine or tradition here. It has worked for millions over centuries. Segregation may be viewed as a dirty word today, but there is nothing wrong with it practiced rightly. It's very simple. We do not house unmarried together. We do not have unmarried young people mixing without a mature, godly chaperone. We do not attend events where mixing and immorality commonly go hand in hand except perhaps to witness to Yeshua and then leave. I would add that mixing is asking for trouble in dancing as well because of its intimate nature. Another time-tested practice of believers is that the unmarried should not be alone together with a door closed. It's just common sense. In fact in traditional Judaism, it is said that when a man and woman are together, closing the door is a sexual act. Even if nothing happens, simply closing them off in a room qualifies as sexual, and if you think about it I believe you'll see the logic there. We can practice this in our homes, in church buildings or other institutions which we run. It may be nearly impossible in a secular workplace, but we can still keep it in view and seek to implement it opportunity allows.

Were millions of faithful saints in years past just crazy for doing this? Did they simply lack our advanced modern knowledge that allows gender mixing? I posit instead that they were wise in doing it, and that we should as a habit do the same. Abandoning their customs has facilitated endemic hedonism and helped turn the woman into a disposable piece of garbage. A common sense segregation of sexes is an awesome tool for anyone who cares about our sanctification. As the book of James tells us -- *Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am tempted by God"; for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone.* You and I desire to be like Him.

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Brothers, we do desire to be like Him. That is the main point of this message. If there is anything I've spoken on which you doubt, or resist in your soul, please examine it further. I believe each of these experiences of sanctification is a treasure to us, be they truths divinely instructed in scripture, or be they our careful applications of biblical principles, or simply helpful customs. The Church and mankind in general have benefited from good customs, and I believe the ones I have mentioned which are mere customs, are ones which sincerely encourage holiness, and clearly discourage evil. I have spoken about prayer, confession of sins, service, purity in communication, making an imperative of family life, refraining from throwing men and women together in obviously tempting situations, evangelism and more.

For those here who might be new believers, or merely seeking to know more, let me say this. Our faith is not about finding a way that the Lord of glory, who rose from the grave, can serve us in our desires. It not about getting mere help from Him, although trust me He does provide help. Rather it is about trusting in Him, and then turning our entire self over to Him, step by step. He provided victory for us on the cross, then in us and through us leads us to victory over evil. Just as He gave His being for us we desire to give ours over to Him, who is the way, the truth and the life. Jesus died for us, in incredible agony so that we might live. Likewise, He also lives for us and share of that life as much as we are willing to receive. He died for us. He lives for us. As Romans 5:10 says -- *For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.* We are saved by His death. We are also saved by His life.

There is a great cancer in the body of Messiah today, one which would counter much of what I say here about sanctification and the need for a living like the priests that we are. It is one which would revolt at words like obedience and authority. It is one which would think sharing the full message about the battle we have against Satan would scare the young folks away. It is one which would revile the aim of shooting for the mark of holiness, or seeking to live up to standards. It would refrain from telling a brother if he is leading a defiled life. That attitude which hates our sanctification is of the devil. The word of the living God tells us that we are to shoot for the mark, to be holy, to be saints, to be blameless before God. True, we will still need to confess sin. True, we may stumble. But we still seek the goal, and seek the victory in Jesus. I have no doubt we can all walk towards that victory, or as the apostle Paul expressed it – run the race of faith. To doubt this, is not to doubt ourselves but to doubt God. For as apostle John writes -- *whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.*

As we stand in a Church world which has collapsed nearly to a pile of rubble, as we watch as an entire civilization commits suicide, returning to its pagan origins or perhaps something even darker, remember those words. Our faith has overcome this world. Our faith is not of this world. Please commit to holiness in your lives, both in the areas I have covered in this material as well as in other areas. Men, please lead your families in holiness, seeking to honor God and not the world. Lead the household liturgy. Set the rules. I have discussed a few strategies to keep out the

tidal wave of pagan culture from flooding our lives; I also invite you to adopt those strategies and to devise some of your own. Be consistent. Be strong. I invite you to start building a godly society from the ground up. Start with your own lives, with your own families. We can complain all we want about the record-setting depravity of this nation, but what matters in the end is that we are living in our Savior ourselves, not what someone else is doing.

I want to leave you all where I began in this message on sanctification. Three words: Jesus is risen. Jesus is risen and we are vessels of his life. Do not doubt that He can sanctify you since you are bound to Him and He will not lose you. Yeshua says -- *My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: <sup>28</sup> And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.* We have been called forth and separated for this: to be His children and his priests. Just as the Levitical priests would burn the sacrifices upon the altar as a sweet aroma to Adonai, just as the Son of God offered Himself fully for us, so we offer our faithfulness as sweet-smelling sacrifices. Paul even calls the kind gifts sent to him *an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, wellpleasing to God.* We have been anointed with the blood of the King, so much better than the blood which was placed upon Aaron and his sons, we have the blood which justifies us and saves us completely.

Realize that sanctification is a chance to walk with our Shepherd step by step, and unite with Him, from our rising up to our laying down, from our baptism to our confession of sins, from our diligent walk in purity to our love for the brethren and for the children that Adonai gives us. We are bound to the Son of God:

For though He was in the form of God, *he made himself of no reputation,* and we are bound to Him.

*He became obedient unto death,* and we are bound to Him.

*He was oppressed and he was afflicted, yet he opened not His mouth,* we are bound to Him.

He came to John at the Jordan to be baptized, and we are bound to Him.

He taught in the synagogues, and we are bound to Him.

He preached -- *the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent ye, and believe in the gospel* -- and we are bound to Him

He said -- *Zacchaeus, make haste, and come down* – and we are bound to Him.

He went into the temple of God, and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple; and we are bound to Him.

He cast out spirits with His word, and we are bound to Him.

He cried out – *Lazarus come forth* – and we are bound to Him.

He said *Father, glorify thy name*; and we are bound to Him.

He said – *Father, thy will be done* – and we are bound to Him.

He said -- *Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation* – we are bound to Him.

He prayed -- *Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do* – and we are bound to Him.

The angels present at His tomb said – *He is not here: for He is risen* – and we are bound to Him.

The martyr Steven proclaimed -- *Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing on the right hand of God* – and we are bound to Him, knowing He is with us *even unto the end of the world*.

Tom Ackerman

[kodeshkallah@yahoo.com](mailto:kodeshkallah@yahoo.com)

[www.holinessofthebride.com](http://www.holinessofthebride.com)