

Sanctification pt. 5
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Today I'm going to share one last message having to do with the reality of sanctification. This particular view of Christ has been on my heart for a while, and there are just a couple more things that I want to say about this before we get back into Ephesians.

First of all, let me just say, that when we're talking about sanctification, like any and every spiritual term, we're talking about a particular view of Christ. I don't know if you've thought about it like this or not, but every spiritual term in your Bible represents a particular view of Christ. Paul writes in 1 Corinthians chapter 1:30, "Christ is made unto you wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption."

These are NOT different Christian topics to discuss. These are individual views of one Christ. Christ is all of these things, and we come to know each of these things as we see and experience Christ in these particular roles and ways. When we don't see Christ, we chop these terms up into separate pieces, as though they each are unique entities in themselves. We separate them from each other and teach them each as individual doctrines and concepts and themes. I'm talking about things like sanctification, or glory, or heaven, or truth, or love, or righteousness.

I remember a time when I used to study each of these topics as individual concepts. I had a books or listened to teachings on these things and would have told you that they were all a part of Christianity. But I didn't know them at all as parts of Christ Himself. These things are not things. They are a particular view and experience of Christ. And each of them brings something unique of Christ into view.

For example, wisdom is not what Christ teaches, it is what He is. And wisdom is known when Christ shows us Himself. That word is perhaps more obvious. What about the word "heaven". Heaven is not where Christ lives. Heaven cannot be separated from Christ. Heaven is a particular view of Christ that has to do with his separateness from the earth, the natural, the temporal. Heaven, not the sky or the atmosphere, but the heaven into which we have been raised with Christ, in Christ, is a particular view by faith, a particular experience of Christ. And we come to know ourselves raised up with Him, seated with Him, joined to Him in the heavens.

Well, sanctification is the same kind of thing. That's what I'm getting at. Sanctification is not some THING that God is trying to do with us, or some activity that we need to concede to. Sanctification is not an effort we put forth, or a doctrine we need to study and apply. Sanctification is our experience of Christ. It is our experience of being found in Him, being separated unto Him and separated in our hearts away from all that He is not, and away from all that He no longer sees. Sanctification is our hearts participation in Christ by faith.

Yes, it has to do with growth. Yes, it ultimately has to do with our relationships to the earth. But Christians try to figure out how to grow and change our relationship to the earth long before we even see what sanctification is. We try to do sanctification, or obey the rules of sanctification, rather than seeing Him who is made unto us sanctification. This is very important to understand.

Don't ever try to be sanctified. Simply try to know Christ by the revelation of His Spirit and you will see Him as the substance of that word. Don't ever try to get to try to glorify God. Know Christ, and when Christ is revealed you will be revealed together with Him in glory. Behold the Lord, and you will be transformed into the same image from glory to glory. Don't ever try learn spiritual wisdom. Know Christ. And you will see and abide in the wisdom of God.

So, back to sanctification. If I were to summarize in one sentence what we've talked about so far, I might say that we have seen that **sanctification is the experience of being found in Him, and ceasing to be found anywhere else**. Abraham, get out of your country, kindred, and father's house and go unto a Land that I will show you. That is the verse from Genesis chapter 12 that really has been on my mind. That is a natural version of what sanctification feels like. It feels like leaving one life and realm and reality behind, and it feels like awakening in another that is altogether different. It feels like leaving one country – the familiar first creation. It feels like leaving our kindred – not literally moving away from family members, but finding a far more real set of brothers, sisters, and Father. It feels like turning away from the inheritance of the earth, the inheritance of our natural father's house, and discovering another that must be shown to us.

Sanctification is our participation in Christ where the truth shows us what is now, show's us where we now are, what is now real, and crucifies our hearts to all that the cross has left behind. And we've seen that this is both a finished work of God through the cross, and it is a present and ongoing experience of our soul because we are learning Christ as our life, and we are slowly letting go of the Lie.

It is not a journey for us because God is still working on His eternal plan. No. Christ finished that plan. It is finished in Him. Ephesians 3:11, the eternal purpose of God has been accomplished in Christ Jesus the Lord. But here is the question that I have been trying to present for your consideration. Here is the question I am hoping the Lord has been stirring in your heart. **Are we like Paul who had only one cry in His heart – to be found in Christ. To forget what God had forgotten. And to lay hold, by faith, of what God had given.**

And with that in mind, I want to ask you another question. Here is a question for you to think about today. Why weren't the Israelites able to enter into the Land after coming out of Egypt. I know we all think we know the answer to that question. But lets look at it again for a minute. What was the issue? They grumbled. But that wasn't the problem. That was a symptom. They disobeyed, and rebelled, and complained, and wanted to go back. But all of those were symptoms of the problem. What was the root. What was the heart of their problem?

The author of Hebrews tells us plainly in chapter 3 and 4.

***Heb 3:12** Watch, brothers, lest perhaps there shall be in any one of you an evil heart of unbelief in withdrawing from the living God. ... 19 And we see that they were not able to enter in because of **unbelief**. 4:1 Therefore, since a*

*promise remains of entering His rest, let us fear lest any of you seem to have come short of it. 4:2 For indeed the gospel was preached to us as well as to them; but the word which they heard did not profit them, **not being mixed with faith** in those who heard it.*

Here is the issue. Let me say it like this: **the land, the inheritance, was guarded by faith. It was protected by faith.** The crossing of the Red Sea had given them the right to that land. But the Jordan River stood there like a barrier that only faith could cross. The Jordan River is not a large river. It is easily crossable in the natural. But it stood as an impenetrable barricade in the mind of the Lord. The walls of Jericho fell flat before Israel. **But the people could not even cross a small river when the land behind that river was guarded by faith.**

Do you see what I mean by "guarded by faith?" I mean that sight would have accomplished nothing on the other side of the Jordan. Sight would have gotten them killed by the Canaanites. Sight would have possessed nothing of this land. Faith, the mind of the Lord, is how everything was possessed. **Only when we come to see with the mind of the Lord can we access what only He can see.** That's where this is pointing, and we'll say more about that in a minute.

These Israelites could see the other side with their eyes. They had heard God describe the other side with their ears. But they could not cross this impenetrable boundary unless they entered in by faith into God's view. The word that they heard did not profit them because it was not mixed with faith. And by faith, for any who are still unfamiliar with that word, I do not mean strong belief or deep convictions. I mean a Spirit-given view in God's light. I mean the miracle of God sharing His perspective, His mind, His understanding with the hearts of those who will die to their own perspective, mind, and understanding.

And so, in order to demonstrate what it takes to cross into the Land, God has the Israelites cross the Jordan in a very specific way. We've talked a little about this in the 9am class. He doesn't just have Joshua lift up his staff and part the river. No, that's how they exit Egypt, but that's not how they enter the land. He doesn't build a bridge. He doesn't let them all wade across. That certainly would have been quicker, but that wouldn't have been an accurate portrayal of how they were entering into their inheritance.

What does He command? He commands that they take the ark of glory out from behind the veil, and have the priests carry it right into the middle of the Jordan river in **full view** of the entire congregation. He sets it off a certain distance from the congregation where all of them could see the ark as they pass over. And the ark in the midst of the river stops the water from flowing and creates a way for the people to enter in.

And the way that God describes this plan to the people is very interesting. Notice the wording.

***Jos 3:3** and they commanded the people, saying, "**When you see the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God, and the priests, the Levites, bearing it, then you shall set out from your place and go after it.** **Jos 3:4** Yet there shall be a space between you and it, about two thousand cubits by measure. Do not come near it, **that you may know the way by which you must go, for you have not passed this way before.**"*

Now keep in mind that this river is not very big. It averages only about 17 to 25 yards across in most places. It is nothing like the Red Sea, or even the Nile or Mississippi River. It's not like they couldn't see across. It's not like they couldn't have easily found their way to the other side. But listen to the language here. When you see the ark, go out from your place after it. And then you will know the way because you have not passed this way before.

This is such strange language. It almost sounds like they are passing into a pitch black cave and the ark of the covenant is the only lamp that they have. It sounds like there is no possible way for them to find their way across this little river unless the ark creates that way and points to exactly where and how they can cross.

Well that is exactly what I'm trying to describe about sanctification this morning. The way out of one country, kindred, and father's house, and the way into another is guarded by the Jordan River. It is guarded by a wall that can only be crossed by faith. The inheritance that God has given to you, and set apart for you, when you came out from Egypt is accessed when you begin to see the glory of the Lord. **Only in seeing the Lord can you pass into an experience of your inheritance. Only when you see the Lord can you "set out from your place and go after it." Because until you begin to see Him by faith, you simply do not know the way. With the natural mind, you have never passed this way before.**

This is where we misunderstand everything. We think that this land can be possessed by sight. We think that we can know Christ in the flesh, that we can inherit Christ in the earth. We think that our eyes can know Him, and our hears can hear Him, and our mind can perceive the things that God has given. But the Lord tells Joshua that you cannot even set out from the place where you are until you see the ark. You cannot even see the way that you must go until the glory of the Lord appears. When you see Him in this way, it strikes you with such truth and reality that, indeed, despite all of your effort and learning and determination and prayer and fasting, you have never gone this way before. It's a foreign country, a foreign kindred, a foreign father's house. Just as God said to Abraham, it is one that must be SHOWN TO YOU.

This is what I mean when I say that the land is guarded by faith. I mean that the inheritance is inaccessible with all natural senses and natural minds. Paul says this in 1 Corinthians in a verse that is often misquoted and misunderstood. He says,

1Co 2:9 But as it is written: "EYE HAS NOT SEEN, NOR EAR HEARD, NOR HAVE ENTERED INTO THE HEART OF MAN THE THINGS WHICH GOD HAS PREPARED FOR THOSE WHO LOVE HIM." 10 But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God.

In the revealing of Christ by the Spirit of God, we are can see the inheritance. When we begin to genuinely grow in faith, then we are set apart unto the unseen inheritance of God. Sanctification working in our soul allows us to look not at those things which are seen, but at those which are unseen.

Do you remember that when we started this series several weeks ago I began by quoting some Bible verses about sanctification. And what we saw in those New Testament Scriptures was the fulfillment of what we just read from Joshua. What we

saw was that there is an inheritance that is inherited as we are sanctified by faith, sanctified by the truth.

Let me read some of them again to you now, five weeks into this, and see if they haven't grown a little in your heart.

Joh 17:17 Sanctify them in Your Truth; Your Word is Truth. 18 As You have sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world, 19 and I sanctify Myself for them, that they also may be sanctified in Truth.

Act 20:32 And now, brothers, I commend you to God and to the Word of His grace, which is able to build up and to give you inheritance among all those being sanctified.

Act 26:14 And all of us falling to the ground, I heard a voice speaking to me, and saying in the Hebrew dialect, Saul, Saul why do you persecute Me? It is hard for you to kick against the prods. 15 And I said, Who are you, Sir? And He said, I am Jesus whom you persecute; 16 but rise up and stand on your feet, for it is for this reason I appeared to you, to appoint you a servant and a witness both of what you saw, and in what I shall appear to you, 17 having delivered you from the people and the nations, to whom I now send you, 18 to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the authority of Satan to God, in order that they may receive remission of sins, and an inheritance among those being sanctified by faith in Me.

2Th 2:13 But we ought to thank God always concerning you, brothers, beloved by the Lord, because God chose you from the beginning to salvation in sanctification of the Spirit and faith in the truth, 14 to which He called you through our gospel, to obtain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

And we never talked about this last one in 1 Peter. But pay special attention to this one because I believe we are in a better place now to understand what Peter is describing.

1Pe 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who, according to His great mercy, has regenerated us to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4 to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and unfading, having been kept in Heaven for you 5 the ones in the power of God being guarded through faith to a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time;

Can you see what Peter is talking about here? We have been regenerated, that is born again, into a living expectation. In the shadow, Moses would have said, you have been regenerated by the Passover Lamb and left Egypt, and have come out into a great expectation. There is an inheritance. It is incorruptible, undefiled, and unfading. It's all yours, but its not in this wilderness. It's completely yours for the possessing. But you won't see it here in the desert. Eyes can see the provision in the wilderness. Eyes can see the miracles in the earth. But only faith can see the kingdom beyond the Jordan. Only faith can see my purpose and glory in the promised land. It's all beyond the Jordan. And it is accessed by faith. You can only go there when you're seeing the glory of the Lord. You can only possess it when the ark is showing you the way.

There is an inheritance that is kept for you. It's not kept *from* you. It's kept for you. It is entirely heavenly. There is nothing natural about it. There is nothing earthly to your inheritance. It's incorruptible in the heavens.

Just as a side note, I wonder how many of us consider the fact that there is absolutely nothing natural about our inheritance in the Lord. It's not your family and friends. It's not your health and protection. It is certainly not your wealth or provision. Even if God gave you all of the money and power in the world, that would have nothing to do with your inheritance. That's the wrong realm, the wrong man, the wrong treasure. It is not there. Jesus says "where your treasure is, there your heart will be also". And that is always our problem.

But there **is** an inheritance. Peter says it is yours. It is kept FOR you. But it is kept for you in the heavens, not in the earth. And then He describes the way it is accessed. It is known by faith and ready to be revealed. That's really what I'm trying to get to today. Nothing new. But hopefully a deeper and fuller realization of something very old.

I'm going to wrap this up, but let me just summarize a few things and then try to concisely say what I'm trying to get at today. We've talked about how God has divided the first from the second. We've talked about how the death of Christ accomplished a judicial end to the first man, the first creation, and the first covenant. God has no relationship with it. If He touches it now, He touches it to invite us out from it. Miracles and revivals have this purpose behind them.

In the resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ, God drew a line between the Himself and the natural universe. And the only way for you and I to know God, to come to God, to escape this realm and man is to be born from above. To be born of a completely different realm. We cross the divide only when the man on one side dies, and our souls are made partakers of the Man on the other side.

So this is the miracle of new birth. This is the fact of sanctification. A great division and separation where God judged the world, and yet saved those in the world who would leave the world in His Son. Crucified, like Paul, to the world. Raised up out of it.

But then there is the experience of the soul where the Truth is faced and the residue of the first is washed away from our hearts. I don't mean we've literally brought the first with us into Christ. I simply mean that until we see the reality of the second, the first is all that we know. Until we see the reality of Christ, though we are born of the Spirit, we are perfectly ignorant of the life and realm that is spiritual.

In the language of type and shadow, we are then out of Egypt, but not yet in the land. We are out of slavery to sin and death, and yet divided from our inheritance by a veil that still lies over our heart. The Red Sea has parted, but the Jordan River parts only when we see the ark. The Egyptians are dead. They were stuck by hand of the Lord on the night we left Egypt. But have we begun to see that we also died that night. Have we begun to realize that we died in the Lamb and were passed over by death because we had already been judged.

So we stand at the banks of the Jordan River. We are those who have come out, but have had no idea what it means to come in. We are those who have been sanctified from Egypt as a matter of FACT. But we are those who have yet to have the

reproach of Egypt rolled away from our hearts as a matter of inward experience. This, the Bible says, happened only in Joshua chapter five when they crossed the Jordan River in full view of the glory of God.

We are those who have been sanctified as a matter of fact, but we can still be those who have not been sanctified as a matter of inward reality and experience and possession. How does that happen? Where does that begin? It begins at the Jordan River when faith shows us a way that we have not gone before. A way that we could not have known before. It begins at the Jordan where the Lord's people can cross over in view of the glory of God and leave their flesh at the banks of the River. Do you see?

This land is guarded by faith. That's not a theological term. That's just my way of saying that man could not pass into, or even SEE, the land of inheritance until they saw through the eyes of God. **The heavens are opened to us in the resurrection of Jesus Christ. But the heavens are always guarded by faith. When we begin to experience His mind, then we begin to access what only He can see.**

It is in this way that we are sanctified by faith. It is in this way that we forget what is behind and lay hold of what God has laid before us. It is in this way that we heed the upward call of God in Christ. It is in this way that we leave our country, kindred, and father's house and find the inheritance that must be shown to us. It is in this way that we come out, like Lot, and never look back. Only when we see the ark of glory do we see the way that we have not gone before.