

Sermon Title: The Deeper Life

by: Pastor Alan Hannah

Scripture: [1 Thessalonians 5:23-24] - *May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul, and body be kept blameless at the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful and he will do it.*

Big Idea: The Christian life isn't one filling and you're done; it's a daily coming back to the Spirit and saying, "fill me again."

Last week Pastor Spencer walked us through the doctrine of **justification**: the declaration that we are not guilty before God and that we are in right standing with Him the moment we put our faith in Jesus.

Today we are going to talk about **sanctification**: the ongoing work of God in your life to make you more like Jesus.

Salvation doesn't complete sanctification; it begins it. God's not interested in cleaning up the outside (what everyone sees) and leaving the inside (what everyone doesn't see) alone. God intends to be in every part of your life. Sanctification - your transformation into the likeness of Jesus - isn't something God expects you to handle on your own. You are a work He is doing. [Galatians 2:20]

During Week 3 of this series, we looked at the **Holy Spirit**: a person who comforts, empowers, convicts and has a will for your life. And He desires to make you look more like Jesus every single day.

Sanctification is the work of the Holy Spirit. [Romans 8:13, 2 Corinthians 3:18]

Philippians 2:12-13 tells us because God is working in us, we need to work with Him. He is doing the work, but we need to cooperate with what He is doing.

- 1. Stop performing and start surrendering.** So many of us work hard at being good Christians, but effort that is not rooted in dependence on the Spirit is just religion. Sanctification is not about being better, it's about surrender.
- 2. Practice the practices.** Prayer, Bible intake, solitude, worship, generosity, community, fasting, Sabbath
- 3. Repent.** When you feel conviction or heaviness of sin in your life, don't minimize it or run from it. Conviction is the Spirit pursuing you and challenging you to be transformed.
- 4. Be filled every day.** Being indwelt by the Spirit is a one-time reality, but being filled by the Spirit is a daily need.

Sanctification is His responsibility. Your job is to keep showing up. To keep practicing the practices. To stay surrendered. Daily come back and say, "fill me again".

Life Group Discussion Questions

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WARM-UPS

1. Do you have plans for Memorial Day? Do you feel like summer is here?
2. What do you think of this series on foundational doctrines? What is something you have learned so far?

DISCUSSION

1. At the beginning of the message Pastor Alan asked these questions. Have you ever felt like you were a better Christian back when you got saved than you are right now? Do you wonder is this what following Jesus is really supposed to be like? Are you deeply aware of your shortcomings?
2. Do you understand the difference between justification and sanctification? You have put your faith and trust in Jesus, are you growing more like Him? Do you think salvation is enough?
3. Who is responsible for your growth in the Lord? Do you feel like you are failing the Lord because you are trying to grow on your own? Have you ever asked the Spirit to “fill” you again?
4. Have you heard about the practices before? Should you investigate what the practices are? Is there one practice you need to learn more about or put into your daily life?

IN THE WORD

1 Thessalonians 4:7-8

1 Corinthians 7:1

Philippians 1:6

Romans 6:19-22

Romans 12:1-2

Philippians 2:13

1 Peter 1:2

Galatians 2:20

Colossians 3:12

Hebrews 12:14

Galatians 5:22-24

James 4:8

PRACTICE

- There are classes starting soon on the practices mentioned. Beginning this Wednesday morning and evening there are classes on The Fasting Practice meeting throughout July. Starting next Sunday morning there is a class on The Community Practice also meeting through July.
- If you don't want to join a class perhaps you can investigate the practices yourself. Begin with the prayer “Holy Spirit, fill me again”.