

## Life, Part 3 | Man

**I. Sanctification**

- Sanctification is the process whereby we are conformed into the image of Christ from one degree of glory to another—slowly transformed by the Holy Spirit so that we through His power will sin less and less as we glorify God more and more.
- It's important to remind ourselves that we don't do good works in order to earn eternal life, and we don't do good works in order to keep eternal life. We do good works because we have eternal life.
- Ephesians 2:10 — Sanctification is the process of God working in and on us so that we would walk in the good works in which He created us to walk.

**II. Conformity to the Character of Christ**

- If we're not as holy and righteous and loving and joyful and forgiving and passionate and gracious and merciful and patient and obedient as Jesus was, then we still have a lot of growing to do. And, yes, we still have a lot of growing to do.
- Read the New Testament asking the question, "What does this verse teach me about the character of Jesus?" Write the answer down. Journal it if you need to. But then you need to ask the second question, "What does this verse reveal about me?" Generally speaking, the lessoned learned is that my character is not nearly as much like Jesus' as it needs to be. And then ask, "What does all of that mean for me today?" Compare your character to Jesus', choose one attribute or trait and dedicate to maturing in that area.
- We need to start with this point because the last two points are completely vain and worthless if they are not firmly rooted in this point. We humans are so incredibly superficial. We're all like impersonators who are really good at putting on an external show, a facade of righteousness, superficial obedience, and freckle-deep morality. But mere outward pretense is not the product of true spiritual life. Even if you were the best actor on the planet and you could play-act all the right words and deeds, you would still be spiritually dead. You'd be just like the pharisees—beautiful on the outside, but full of dead men's bones. Your obedience would be hypocritical and empty. (Luke 11; Leviticus 27:30)
- If you're not maturing in the character of Christ, it doesn't really matter what outward show is put on, and I'll be reminding us of this point as we consider the final two.

**III. Conformity to the Words of Christ**

- Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life. Ephesians 4:5 command us to speak the truth in love. We are not only expected to speak that which is true regardless of whether or not we have recorded evidence that Jesus said it, but we're also to make the entirety of the Scriptures part of our interactions with people.
- We should be speaking the Word into as many conversations as possible. It may be evangelistically, it may be in discipleship, it may be answering a question or simply encouraging someone, but if we're never quoting the Bible, there's a problem. If we're maturing in the character of Christ, how could we not also talk about what is important to Him?
- Before Jesus did anything, *He spoke*. (Luke 2; Mark 1; John 1:1) You've probably heard it said, "Preach the Gospel, and—when necessary—use words," but Romans 10:13-14 tells us that people can't believe in the Gospel without people hearing the Gospel.
- This is why God gave us His Word—the Bible. We know that people can learn about God from His creation, but they can't learn enough. In order to have a relationship with Him, they need the special revelation found in the Scriptures.

- God in all of His infinite wisdom ordained that human beings would communicate via language. We don't read each others' minds, we don't turn colors, we utilize language. It may be verbal, it may be written, it may be in sign or signal, but it's language. We absolutely must speak, we must communicate, and that communication must conform to the communication of Jesus.
- Do not believe the lie that you can just waft through life being a decent person and others will somehow come to know the Lord because of it. You must speak of God, and you must speak as God would have you speak.

#### IV. Conformity to the Deeds of Christ

- Only when we conform to the character of Christ and speak the words of Christ can we be certain that our actions will also be in conformity to Christ.
- But so many people are preaching the exact opposite. They're preaching the sermon of the Pharisees. They demand that we do certain things without the necessary foundation, and though our actions may look godly, may appear biblical, they're not pleasing to the Lord.
- Matthew 7:22-23
- Doing isn't good enough. The doing must be motivated by God, and that only comes as we are genuinely conformed to the character of Jesus.
- This is not a suggestion that Christians need to participate in the supernatural deeds of Christ. This is not a call to perform miracles. This is a call to serve, minister, help, lead, obey the Father, and sacrifice the way Jesus did. Do you serve others? Are you hospitable? Do you go out of your way to help people? Do you sacrifice? Do you do the will of your Father Who's in heaven? Is your life characterized by giving? Would the people who know you best say that you prefer others above yourself and outdo others in showing honor?
- If we are truly growing in the character of Christ, we will serve as He served, we will love as He loved.
- After washing the disciple's feet in John 13, Jesus said in verses 12-16, "*Do you know what I have done to you? 13 You call Me Teacher and Lord; and you are right, for so I am. 14 If I then, the Lord and the Teacher, washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. 15 For I gave you an example that you also should do as I did to you. 16 Truly, truly, I say to you, a slave is not greater than his master, nor is one who is sent greater than the one who sent him.*"
- If you have the life of Christ, you have been created for good works. The life God gives you is for one purpose and one purpose only . . . to invest in following Him. As you strive to know the Savior and emulate His character, you will also see others the way He sees them. You will be moved with compassion for them. You will be zealous to do the will of the Father. You will spend and be spent. You will speak God's truth in love to them, and you will act God's truth in love to them.
- This is why you have spiritual life (if you've been born again). Here and now, God expects you to use the life with which He's graciously gifted you to know Him, understand Him, believe Him, and therefore speak and act accordingly.