

Sanctified Through Truth

As mentioned in the previous article “sanctify” means to separate something as holy. Jesus uses the term three times in His prayer in John 17. The prayer was offered shortly before His arrest, torture, and crucifixion. His primary concern was for His Apostles. *Sanctify them through thy truth, thy word is truth. As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth* (Jn. 17:17-19).

Jesus came into the world but remained separate from it. That is, He never sinned. He did not take on the ways of the world, but remained pure and distinct from it. His separation from the world was intended to produce His disciples’ separation as well. This comes through the application of truth.

Too many members of the church do not want to be separated from the world. Like Israel they want to have kings so they can be like the other nations. They want to dress, drink, talk, and live like the world. They do not wish to stand out in holiness. They are embarrassed to be the only one who will not join in with the behavior of the people surrounding them.

This failure to be sanctified comes by disobeying the truth. It causes the Christian to be salt without savor. The influence we could have on the world is lost. We are not unique. We adopt the world’s values and behaviors and condone wickedness.

Had Jesus done this He could not have been our sacrifice. Had His Apostles done this the church would have died in the first century. What do you hope to accomplish by doing this?

Ron Roberts

Mooresville church of Christ

720 N. Indianapolis Road

Mooresville, IN 46158

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Assemblies

Sunday:

9:30 a.m. Bible Study

10:30 a.m. Worship

5:00 p.m. Worship

Wednesday:

7:00 p.m. Bible Study

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Mooresvillecoc.com

**Count your
blessings: How
about good
health?**

Announcements

Last week’s bulletin contained a new phone tree for the members. Bob’s phone number is wrong on the sheet. It should be (765) 342-4556. Please make this change and notify me of any other corrections needed.

The men decided to give me a generous raise last week. I thank you for your vote of confidence and I will try to be worthy of your trust.

Our next “meet up” study will be on Acts 7. We gather at 2:00 at the library. The date is January 27.

Keep the shut-ins in your prayers and on your schedules to visit. A call or a card is always appreciated too.

Braden will be preaching for us tonight. Come back at 5:00 to worship God and encourage Braden.

Be careful in the cold weather and call someone if you are sick.

“Sanctify the Lord God in your Hearts”

Ron Roberts

I Peter 3:15 says, “*But 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 with meekness and fear:*”

Like many verses in the New Testament this one can be understood without considering the context. The text should be considered however when you notice the opening word, “*But*”. This word indicates that this verse is joined with the preceding one with a contrasting term.

The verse before it speaks of suffering for righteousness sake. When this happens we should not be afraid or troubled. “*But*” our reaction to their terror is found in verse 15.

The word “*sanctify*” means “*to make holy*”. It suggests separating something special from the common and ordinary. It means to *purify* or *consecrate* in regards to physical items. Of course in this verse we are told to *sanctify the Lord*. We are to separate Him in our thinking during times of suffering. When troubles come we tend to focus only on the problem. We may seek relief from the pressure without considering the proper way to react. I think of Heb. 11:35 which mentions godly people who “*...were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection.*” They could have been rescued by a king. A captor might have stopped their torture. An army might have rescued them. But instead of getting their freedom at the cost of offending God, they accepted their torture in order to obtain the resurrection. Recall Daniel’s companions and the fiery furnace.

When we *sanctify the Lord God in our hearts* (minds) then we react differently than the world. When Christians died in the arena they made the audience wonder. “Why don’t these people fear death? How can they be at peace when threatened by wild animals or armed soldiers? What makes these people so comfortable amid mistreatment?” These questions are aimed at the *hope* we have that the world does not.

The way Christians react to suffering makes people question them. The spectators want to know about the *hope* we have. Obviously our *hope* is not for physical deliverance. We do not anticipate a super hero swooping down in the nick of time. Our *hope* lies beyond the world we now occupy. There is a better resurrection we look forward to.

Our behavior is going to produce the questions. We must be *ready* with the answer. We need to think much about heaven and our salvation in order to have a constant ready answer. We must *sanctify God in our hearts* in order to know what to say. If we can get swept away by our trials then we cannot present the proper example, which produces the right questions, and then gives us the chance to answer.

Not everyone who asks us a question for *the reasoning* behind our *hope* is going to be the torturing enemy. Others will also be mystified and will ask us. The Philippian jailor was likely influenced to ask how he could be saved by observing the singing and praying of Paul and Silas after they were tortured and imprisoned. Why did they react that way? What did they know that the jailor did not? When he faced his trouble his first thought was suicide. Their behavior brought his question to them about the *hope* of eternal life.

When we give the *answer* it is to be with *meekness and fear*. We should not be arrogant or antagonistic. God has given us a treasured *hope* that we desire to share. Anyone who *asks* about it should be answered in a manner that would not drive him away. Our suffering does not relieve us of our responsibility to *answer* with *meekness and fear*.

The following verse tells us we can have a *good conscience* by doing this and cause our enemies to be *ashamed* or embarrassed at the way they treated us. Perhaps this was Paul’s idea when he wrote of putting coals of fire upon their heads (Rom. 12:19-21).

All people are going to suffer in this world. We should suffer for our goodness instead of evil. We should handle our suffering in a way that glorifies God, leads to our salvation, and makes others’ question us.