



Week 9 Session Guide

Jehovah M'Keddesh

“The Lord who Sanctifies”

Sanctify - 1. to make holy, set apart as sacred 2. to purify or free from sin

Old Testament:

The first time we see the Name of God as “YHWH M’Keddesh” (The LORD Who makes you Holy) is when He was speaking to Israel after releasing them from their bondage in Egypt. God then told His people how to escape from their captivity to sin, which was far deadlier than any slavery to men. He gave them His Laws which directed His people to both do the things which pleased God and to refrain from the destructive behaviors they saw in Egypt and in the wicked people who lived in the Promised Land that was about to be given to Israel. In Leviticus 20:7-8 God said, “You shall consecrate yourselves therefore and be holy, for I am the Lord your God. You shall keep My statutes and practice them; **I am the Lord who sanctifies you (YHWH M’Keddesh).**”

The term “Holy” itself is generally understood to mean “a separateness”; that is separated FROM one thing, but at the same time separated TO something else. We see in the Old Testament that part of being “Holy” is to be separated from the behaviors that the majority of people who don’t know God (people of the “World”) consider perfectly acceptable, but which God has defined as “wicked”, “abominable”, “destructive”, and “sinful”. The other part of Holiness is being set apart TO God to fulfill His design and purpose for our life. God certainly wants His people to refrain from those sinful habits that ultimately destroy themselves and others but more than that His desire is that His children would demonstrate His attributes of love, peace, joy, patience, kindness, protection, provision, peacefulness, etc in every area of their lives for the benefit of all.

A world populated by Holy people (as defined by God) would be Paradise indeed!

Sadly, most of the Old Testament demonstrates the inability of human beings to maintain even a semblance of God’s Holiness for any length of time. Instead people always revert to the self centered, pleasure seeking, short term thinking we inherited from our first parents, Adam and Eve. And even the word of God through His prophets and the judgments of God against His people were not able to produce a people who were Holy in God’s eyes. They continued to partake in and enjoy the “pleasure” of the lifestyles of the ungodly people around them, even when it destroyed everyone and everything that was dear to them.

New Testament:

God knows that our, “spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.” (Matt 26:41) His plan from eternity was to have a people who “would be holy and blameless before Him.” (Eph 1:4). So to accomplish this He first provided for the forgiveness of our sins and the restoration of fellowship with Him by “reconciling you in [Jesus’] fleshly body through death, in order to present you before Him **holy** and blameless and beyond reproach.” God now sees as Holy all those who put their faith in Jesus’ sacrifice on the cross.

Yet, even as those redeemed by Christ by God's New Covenant, we are commanded to not only revel in the Holiness that God has imparted to us but to actually live Holy lives daily. God wants us to live by a radically different set of values than the vast majority of those in this world who do not know God and who do not have His Holy Spirit.

In 1 Peter 1:15-16 the Apostle admonishes the Church that we "like the Holy One who called you, [are to] **be holy yourselves also in all your behavior**; because it is written, '**You shall be holy, for I am holy.**'". He also reminds us in 1 Peter 2:9 that "you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, **a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.**"

As we ponder the weightiness of this calling and wonder how it could be possible to live up to it, we see once more that God alone is able to accomplish in us what He has purposed for us from eternity. In 2 Peter 1:3-4 we read, "**seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence. For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, so that by them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust.**"

Here then is the key to being Holy: God said "You shall be holy, for I am holy". We have too often understood that to mean that we should try to behave in a way that closely resembles the holiness of God. What Peter tells us however is that BECAUSE of our faith in His Word (His promises) we will become partakers of God's divine nature – WHICH IS HOLINESS. As we grow in HIS Holiness, He will impart to us His very Life and Being which will enable us to overcome the cravings of our flesh ("the corruption in the world by lust") so that we stop engaging in destructive behavior.

At the same time God gives us His Holy Spirit to strengthen us with the power needed to truly understand God's love and good purposes. And as the revelation of His goodness and love for us grows, our love for Him grows ever stronger causing us to desire to obey Him and to accomplish all the good works He has individually planned for us to do (Eph 2:10). We soon find that the Holiness that was an impossible burden for the people who lived under the Old Covenant has become for us a light burden under an easy yoke as Jesus promised in Matthew 11:30.

God has great plans for His people who will walk in His Holy ways, His only requirements are that we forsake our love of this evil world and through the power of His Holy Spirit to put our faith and trust in His completed work and promises.

Discussion Questions:

1. God says, "Be Holy as I am Holy". We can't do that on our own. How do we grow in holiness? What has God given to us to develop holiness in our lives?
2. Many people think being separate or holy means to be distant from the world. Yet, the life of Christ demonstrates this is not the case as he was even labeled a sinner for the company that he kept. How do we separate ourselves to God and still engage the "world?"
3. What are some obstacles to a Christian living a Holy life? How can we overcome them?
4. What are some practical ways that we might demonstrate God's holiness to the world?