

TOUGH TIMES, TOUGHER FAITH

II Thessalonians Series #10

November 9th, 2025

TEXT: II Thessalonians 2:13-15; I Thessalonians 4:1-3A

CONSIDER THIS: What are the character traits that make someone difficult to love? What do they do that angers, frustrates, disappoints or saddens you? Now ask yourself this: What is it about you that would make it “difficult” for God to love you? Each of us has countless things that should make us unlovable in the mind of a pure and perfect God, yet He still loves us!

I. GOD’S WILL IS YOUR SANCTIFICATION

But we ought always to give thanks to God for you, brothers and sisters beloved by the Lord, because God chose you as the firstfruits to be saved, through SANCTIFICATION by the Spirit and belief in the truth.

II Thessalonians 2:13

- A) Sanctification is the central theme of both letters to the Thessalonian church. To sanctify/sanctification means to be set apart. The words *holy* and *saint* come from the same root word as sanctify (set apart). In sanctification, God sets you apart from sin and draws you unto Himself.

Christian, the fact that God wants you to be sanctified is testimony of His great love for you. He wants you to be near to Him, and He doesn't want there to be anything in your life that hurts or hinders your close fellowship with Him.
O, how great is His love for you!

- B) Our sanctification begins and ends with God (Jeremiah 1:4-5 and I Corinthians 1:7-9). But the Christian has a huge responsibility/opportunity to grow and make progress in the process of sanctification. This is what it means to “live the Christian life” (Philippians 2:12-13).

II. RELATIONSHIPS MATTER

- A) One of the best ways of describing the process of sanctification is to say it is growing to become more like Christ, and that our relationships, **ESPECIALLY THE DIFFICULT ONES** are central to this (see John 13:34-35, and Mark 12:28-34).

The mission and purpose of Grace Community Church is to glorify God by building
biblical relationships with God,
with each other, and with our neighbors so that
we might reflect Christ.

UPWARD ... INWARD ... OUTWARD

- B) One of the greatest sources of confidence for Paul about the sanctification of the Thessalonians was that he could see how their Christian love for one another was growing

(I Thessalonians 3:11-14 → the key to blamelessness.
See also II Thessalonians 1:3).

Q: Christian, if someone were to look for evidence in your life that you are growing in sanctification, what would your relationships (especially the difficult ones) indicate?

- C) We must avoid the mistake of giving ourselves a pass on poor relationships by pointing to all the good things we are doing. Jesus taught that even our worship is tainted if we ignore relationships we have damaged (Matthew 5:23-24). And if the damage was done by the other person, we must have a spirit of mercy (Ephesians 4:30-5:2).

KEY: Yes, some relationships can be difficult, discouraging, exhausting, disappointing and frustrating, but the process of obeying scripture sanctifies us, and it can result in great joy when relationships are restored.

III. SANCTIFICATION THIS WEEK

FIND 5 New Testament commandments for living the Christian life. **THINK** about what obedience to those commands would look like in your life. **PRAY** to God for His help in joyfully obeying those commands. Then **DO** them.

Example: Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive.

Colossians 3:12-13

<p>The process of growing in sanctification is what equips Christians to have a faith that is tougher than the toughest of times.</p>
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