

TOUGH TIMES, TOUGHER FAITH
II Thessalonians Series #9
November 2nd, 2025

TEXT: II Thessalonians 2:13

CONSIDER THIS: One of the most wonderful, most beautiful words is **sanctification**. It is the central theme of both I and II Thessalonians. Christian, this word is a powerful testimony of how much God loves you now, how much He has always loved you, and how much He will love you forever! Sanctification is the word which gives meaning and purpose to your life every day.

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

II Thessalonians 2:13

I. SANCTIFICATION!

DEFINITION: The word sanctify or sanctification means “to set apart”. Other related/connected words are “holy”, “saint.” Sanctification has three aspects.

1. **Positional Sanctification:** This is the permanent status/identification you are given the moment you are saved. It is permanent and it does not change. You are forever “set apart” as God’s child, as a co-heir with Christ, as a citizen of Heaven. Your position/identification is that of a “holy saint” (even when you don’t live like a saint!) **NOTE: Sanctification and Justification** are closely related but they are not identical. Justification is a legal declaration that believers are righteous in God’s eyes. This is because at the moment of salvation the perfect righteousness of Christ is applied to the Christian. It is Christ’s righteousness (perfect, holy, sinless) but it counts for us. (See Romans 3:21-26; 4:1-8). But at the same moment of justification, the new Christian is given a new position as being forever set apart unto God as His child. This is **positional sanctification**.
2. **Progressive or Practical Sanctification:** This is not a position, it is a process by which a Christian grows to become more like Christ, more spiritually mature with the godly wisdom that comes with spiritual growth, and more consistent in keeping/obeying God’s commands for living as a Christian should. Progressive sanctification is the process by which God transforms us so that we live righteously as a reflection of God’s legal declaration that we are righteous in Christ. This process can include times of failure (three steps forwards, two steps back), and it continues until the day we enter heaven. (See Philippians 2:12)
3. **Completed Sanctification or Glorification:** Home at last! The moment we die our battle with sin is over. We are forever perfected, ready to live in our heavenly home. (Philippians 1:6; I John 3:1-3)

II. GOD'S PART, YOUR PART

- A) At the heart of Paul's ministry to the Thessalonian church was his teaching (in person and by written letter) about sanctification.
- I Thessalonians 1:6,9; 2:12; 3:12-13; 4:1-8; 5:23-24
 - II Thessalonians 1:3,11-12; 2:13-14,17; 3:13
- B) God starts our sanctification (Jeremiah 1:4-5; Philippians 1:6), He helps our sanctification (II Thessalonians 2:16-17) and He finishes our sanctification (II Thessalonians 5:23-24; I Corinthians 1:7-8).
- C) Christian, your part of sanctification is to joyfully obey God's commands **in every aspect of your life and relationships** (I Thessalonians 1:9) as you wait expectantly for the Lord's return (I Thessalonians 1:10).

KEY: Your life's purpose and meaning, and the ultimate measure of success in anyone's life is this: To grow in Christ. No other human accomplishment or achievement can ever rise to this level.

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

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