**Can We Be Sanctified?**

John 17:13-21

I John 1:9

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| **Slide** | **Sermon** |
| 1 | Title Slide |
| 2 | Introduction  I have always had trouble with the idea that any person could be sanctified. But sanctify simply means “set apart to do God’s work in the world.” When I became an ordained minister in the United Methodist church part of the ritual told me I was set apart to preach and teach, to order the church and to care of all those under my leadership. So, for a long time I thought being set apart was for ministers, missionaries, evangelists, etc. And even at that I felt, “God, how can I be set apart when I am just as human and sinful as those not ordained?” |
| 3 | But in our scripture from John (17:13-21) we hear Jesus praying for his disciples; the 11 remaining, but also for anyone who believed he was God’s son, the Messiah, sent by God to save the world. Jesus made it a point to list all of us in his prayer (verse 20 “but also on behalf of those who will believe in me through their (disciples) word, that they may be one”). So what Jesus is saying is that he sets apart (sanctifies) every person who believes in him as Lord and Savior and promises to serve Him. In *Experiencing God*, Blackaby tells us that God will always sanctify you before he sends you out. |
| 4 | Jesus set aside the twelve disciples when he sent them out 2 x 2 and made them holy by the Truth. As they related to Jesus, the Truth (John 14:6), Jesus said to them, “I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you know me, you will know my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him.” The disciples were refined by that Truth and were prepared to be sent out to preach the gospel.  To prepare them and let all Truth permeate the disciples’ lives, Jesus:   1. Challenged their ambitions.  Luke 9:46-48 – 46An argument arose among them as to who would be greatest. 47But Jesus, aware of their inner thoughts, took a little child and put the child by his side.48 Then said to them, “Whoever welcomes this child in my name, welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me; for the least among you is the greatest.” 2. Chastised their lack of faith. Matthew 17:19-21 – 17Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and said, “Why could we not cast it out?”20 He said to them, “Because of your little faith. For truly I tell you if you have faith the size of a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there,’ and it will move and nothing will be impossible for you.” 3. Refuted Satan’s influence. Matthew 16:23 – 23But he turned and said to Peter, “Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; for you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things.” 4. Denounced their pride. Matthew 26:33-35 – Peter said to him, “Though all become deserters because of you, I will never desert you!” 34Jesus said to him, “Truly I tell you, this very night before the cock crows, you will deny me 3 times.” 35Peter said to him, “Even though I must die with you, I will not deny you.” And so said all the disciples.   So these are a few ways Jesus prepared the disciples so that they could be sanctified. Then Jesus sent them out in such power that their world was never the same again. |
| 5 | So, as you look for God working in your life and as you try to nurture your love relationship with God, know that God will prepare you for what God has in store for you!  Satan will try to convince you that your sin renders you useless to God. That is a lie from the author and father of all lies. As soon as you sin, the Deceiver will whisper, “You failure! You are now of no use to God!” That can bring a deep sense of defeat and hopelessness to a Christian.  Yet there is no freedom compared to the freedom of a soul set free by God’s Grace. When God’s people allow God’s truth to realign them to God’s will and God’s standards, then the power of God will be released through them the same way it was released through those first disciples! |
| 6 | The Truth will set you free. The Truth is: “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” (I John 1:9)  And when we experience this forgiveness we are restored to usefulness to God.  The word “sanctify” doesn’t mean you are better than others, that God likes you best.  It means you are set apart for the work God has for you. As you discover that work, you grow your love relationship with God, allowing God to root out the part of your life that will impede that work God has for you. We are all sinners, but through our confession and the growth in our love relationship with God, we will be forgiven and set apart for the purpose and work God has for us. Don’t let Satan or your past or the voices in your head tell you that you are not good enough to win the battle!  Christ has already prayed for you that as you and Christ are one, you are also one with God! And in that oneness, you are sanctified and ready to serve!  Amen |