

I was working on the devotion for Thursday, October 27 on 1 Thessalonians 4:7-8 and found myself reflecting more on these instructions from the apostle Paul. In verses two and three Paul says, ***“For you know what instructions we gave you through the Lord Jesus. For this is the will of God, your sanctification:”*** He goes on to talk about abstaining from sexual immorality and maintaining self-control, and then proceeds with verses seven and eight, ***“For God has not called us for impurity, but in holiness. Therefore whoever disregards this, disregards not man but God, who gives his Holy Spirit to you.”***

God’s will for you is not to become stagnant but rather to grow in sanctification; to become more and more like Jesus. And this sanctification is something we will never finish on this side of death. Actually, sanctification is not something we ALONE can finish. As Paul says, God gives believers the Holy Spirit. And sanctification is integral since sin has disrupted and broken our relationship with God. Nothing unholy can be in union with God. All who are unholy, impure, unclean, sinful, must be fully sanctified or be cast into hell. And what is even better is that this sanctification is God’s will for those who have been called to believe. Not something we must do to impress Him. As a called child of God, He will see to it, but what does this mean for now?

As we live in God’s already (here through faith) and not yet (meaning Jesus has not returned yet) Kingdom, we must be diligent to nurture and exercise our faith. How do we do that? As Jesus says in John 15, we must abide in his Word. We must continue in faith; continue studying; continue praying; continue to worship, continue serving. As a child of God, we must continue growing. When you are born into this world, a healthy baby is nourished with what is necessary and they grow. As the baby grows older, their needs change but also their understanding of the world around them and who they are. Eventually they need other forms of nourishment. You do not bottle feed a healthy 10-year-old.

In the same way, as Christians, we need to continue being fed and as you are fed, you grow; you are being sanctified. Don’t become stagnant. Study the Word, worship, pray, serve, and never buy into the lie that you have reached the end and thus can retire. There is no retiring in our walk with Jesus. Keep at it and keep growing. To God be the glory, always and forever, Amen.