**Sanctify the Lord God in Your Hearts**

*1 Peter 3:15*

**Introduction**

1. By inspiration, Peter instructs us to ***“sanctify the Lord God in your hearts” (1 Peter 3:15)***.
2. This is an absolute necessity for Christians. It is not just a suggestion.
3. There are a couple of reasons for the need to ***“sanctify the Lord God in your hearts” (1 Peter 3:15)***:
   1. **We cannot be pleasing to God without doing so.**
   2. **We cannot continue to be pleasing to God without doing so.** (*If we wish to be continually pleasing to God – which all Christians are expected to and should have the desire – we must take this action, or else we will fail under the weight of the world.*)
4. What does it mean to ***“sanctify the Lord God in your hearts” (1 Peter 3:15)***?
5. Sanctify the Lord God in Your Hearts
6. Sanctify
   1. Sanctify – *hagiazō* – to make holy, i.e. (ceremonially) purify or consecrate (Strong).
      1. “To render or acknowledge, or to be venerable or hallow” (Strong).
      2. “To separate from profane things and dedicate to God” (Strong).
   2. ***“in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy” (ESV)***.
      1. In our hearts, we are giving honor to the Lord according to His holy nature.
      2. ***“Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name” (Matthew 6:9*** – model prayer).
      3. Thus, He is to be separate in our hearts from all profane things.
         1. **This does not mean we compartmentalize, keeping the profane things in one place, and the Lord in another.**
         2. **This means we completely separate ourselves from the profane life so as to allow the Lord to inhabit our hearts.** (**cf. 1 Peter 1:13-16** – *We gather our thoughts so as to not allow them free range, we are serious, and free from outer distraction, and we obey the Lord rather than being caught up in lusts.*)
      4. **We regard God as holy by being holy ourselves.**
7. Christ as Lord
   1. ***“sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts” (NASB)***.
      1. We are to regard the Lord as holy, **but we are also supposed to set him apart in our hearts *as Lord*. (sanctify – set apart)** *(Which is in part how we regard Him as holy.)*
      2. Lord – *kyrios* – supreme in authority, i.e. controller (Strong).
   2. Why do you call me “Lord, Lord,” and don’t do what I say? (**cf. Luke 6:46-49**)
      1. **Most are eager to talk about Jesus as Savior, but few will acknowledge Him as Lord (Which is why most will miss heaven.).**
      2. **(v. 46)** – The verbal acknowledgment of Jesus’ authority in your life means nothing if you do not submit in obedience.
         1. Many talk about Jesus as “the Lord of their life.”
         2. **However, He is not, because they don’t allow Him to rule by doing as He says.**
      3. **(v. 47-49)** – Only those who build their lives on Jesus’ words by continually following them will be able to withstand the pressures, trials, tribulations, and temptations of life.
   3. ***“All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth” (Matthew 28:18)***.
      1. Yet, He does not force anything upon us – free-will.
      2. **We must decide to follow Him ourselves, and allow Him to control our lives.**
8. Reverential Fear
   1. When we sanctify the Lord in our hearts, we acknowledge Him as One who is not common, **and is not to be approached in a casual manner.**
   2. **Cf. Hebrews 12:18-29** – comparison of approaching God under the OT and NT.
      1. **(v. 18-21)** – Approaching God under the OT.
         1. Scene of Mount Sinai.
         2. **The mount quaked with God’s holiness.**
         3. Sinful man could not approach, lest they die.
         4. **Terror, trembling, darkness, and death.**
      2. **(v. 22-24)** – Approaching God under the NT.
         1. Scene of Mount Zion – heavenly Jerusalem.
         2. Saints of all times whose names are securely registered in heaven.
         3. Just men made perfect through the atoning blood of Jesus.
         4. **Approach God confidently through the Mediator – Jesus.**
         5. **Comfort, confidence, hope, redemption.**
      3. **(v. 25-29)** – Although the approach is available, better, and confident, it is the **SAME God that we approach** – must do so carefully and acceptably.
         1. Must not refuse Him who speaks from heaven.
         2. There is a time when the earth will be shaken again – *even the scene of Mount Sinai pales in comparison to what the scene of the judgment will be when the wrath of God is poured out on those who refuse Him.*
         3. **(v.28) – Because of this we must revere and fear God by serving Him acceptably.**
         4. **(v. 29) – If not, He will consume us!**
   3. The world wants to approach God in a relaxed manner. The Christian should never entertain the thought of doing so!
9. ***“sanctify the Lord God in your hearts” (1 Peter 3:15)***. 🡪
10. To avoid sin…
11. When Suffering for Doing Good
    1. When we follow Jesus, the world will hate us for it (**cf. John 15:18-19**).
       1. **When this occurs there will be the temptation to deny the Lord (As Peter did.).**
       2. **We must sanctify the Lord God in our hearts so this doesn’t happen. 🡪**
    2. **1 Peter 3:13-17**
       1. **(v. 13-14)** – When doing good, we give no reason for others to harm us. Normally it won’t happen. However, if it does, and we are threatened, we shouldn’t be afraid.
       2. **(v. 15-16)** – Instead of being afraid, we should sanctify the Lord in our hearts, ***remembering to fear Him instead of man.***
          1. **(v. 15a** – refers to OT text) – ***“The Lord of hosts, Him you shall hallow; Let Him be your fear, and let Him be your dread” (Isaiah 8:13)***.
             1. ***“We ought to obey God rather than men” (Acts 5:29* – Peter to Sanhedrin council.)**
             2. ***“And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell” (Matthew 10:28)***.
          2. This will cause us to stand firm in our conviction **(v. 15b).**
          3. This will cause us to continually have good conduct **(v. 16).**
       3. **(v. 17)** – It is a better thing to suffer for God, than for doing evil.
          1. **Cf. 4:14** – The Spirit of God rests upon us. God is glorified.
          2. **Cf. 4:16** – It is not cause for sorrow, but rejoicing.
12. When the World Seeks to Entice
    1. When we ***“sanctify the Lord God in [our] hearts” (1 Peter 3:15),*** when the world seeks to pull us in to their immorality we will be able to refuse it.
    2. ***“But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king’s delicacies, nor with the wine which he drank” (Daniel 1:8).***
       1. Daniel’s decision was a result of his sanctifying the Lord in his heart.
       2. **Because he regarded God as holy, as his Lord, and feared only Him he chose to serve God.**
    3. **1 Peter 4:1-6**
       1. **(v. 1)** – Our decision to cease from sin often can lead to suffering (as stated before).
       2. **(v. 2)** – Because we have sanctified the Lord in our hearts, we have decided to always do His will.
       3. **(v. 3-6)** – The world will mock us, and think it strange that we have stopped sinning thus.
          1. Their judging is meaningless to us. They will answer to God (**v. 5).**
          2. We may be judged by them, but we will live to God because we have sanctified Him in our hearts **(v. 6).**

**Conclusion**

1. The life of a Christian is one devoted to God in every way.
2. In order to continue to live acceptably before Him, we must ***“sanctify the Lord God in [our] hearts” (1 Peter 3:15).***
3. **By doing so, we will allow ourselves the ability to remain faithful in suffering, and in temptation to be like the world.**