

The Way of the Cross

The Lord Who Sanctifies

Death is the way to life (John 19:16-17; Luke 9:23; John 12:24). It is the way to abundance, the way to living out our purpose and being fruitful. We are called to be *living sacrifices*, to die in some way while we are still physically alive and breathing. The command to God's people in the Old Testament was to consecrate themselves, to be holy (Leviticus 20:7-8). We are to be holy because God is holy in His character and nature. In fact, holiness is the summary word of God's reality. The process and journey of becoming holy like God is called sanctification, and it is a work of God in our lives. He is *Yahweh M'Kaddesh* – the LORD who sanctifies you. We are to die to anything God says is sin in thought or action, and to say yes to anything He says is holy. We are to take up our cross and die daily, with the help of healthy, Biblical community, so that we can become increasingly more like Him.

VISION FOR THIS WEEK

To daily die to sin and be made holy by the power of the Holy Spirit.

GET THINGS STARTED

What is your reaction to words like *holy* and *sanctify*? Why do these words tend to have a negative connotation in the church world or among Christians, and how have these words been misused or misrepresented? What do you believe is God's intent or heart with these words and concepts?

GO DEEPER WITH SCRIPTURE

1. From John 12:24, how does a seed die to bear much fruit? How does death lead to abundance within the Kingdom of God? How are we to die, and what are we to die to?
2. According to Leviticus 20:7-8, God is the one who sanctifies us and makes us holy. So, what is our role in becoming holy? What does it mean to take up our cross *daily*, like Jesus took up His cross (Luke 9:23; Romans 6:11)?
3. What does it look like to be a *living sacrifice*, in Romans 12:1?

MAKE IT PERSONAL

1. What needs to die in you in this season of your life? Where do you need to experience holiness, sanctification, and consecration in your thoughts, desires, motives, choices or actions? What do you think are the biggest barriers to you embracing the process of becoming holy in those areas?
2. What is one step you can take this week towards saying no to sin and saying yes to becoming like God? What habit or routine needs to change for you to take that step?
3. What does your spiritual community look like, and who can you turn to for help in the sanctifying process and journey?

PRAYER AS A GROUP

Take time as a group, in a attitude of prayer, to ask God to sanctify you. Ask Him to reveal anything in you that needs to be made holy. Ask Him for fresh measures of courage and strength to separate from those patterns of your heart and mind that do not align with the character and nature of God. Invite Him to help you take the necessary steps to become holy, just as He is holy.