

**A PURE HEART**  
**Hebrews 12:14; 13:12; John 17:15-17;**  
**I Thessalonians 4:3.**

**LESSON 149 -- Primary Course**

**MEMORY VERSE: “Be ye holy; for I am holy” (I Peter 1:16).**

**Christ’s Prayer**

One evening just before Jesus crossed the little brook Cedron that led to the Garden of Gethsemane, He prayed to His Father in Heaven. Jesus knew that one of His friends, a disciple named Peter, would very soon turn against Him for a time. And another man, Judas, who also once loved Jesus, would soon come to the Garden followed by a band of men and officers to take Jesus. In the darkness of the night, with touches and lanterns they would find Him there and lead Him away. But Jesus was ready for the hard trials, which were ahead. His Father had heard Him; when He prayed, “Father, the hour is come. . . . I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.” Then He prayed for the disciples and do you know that Jesus prayed for you that night? He did, for He prayed for all people who would someday be saved from their sin. He prayed that God would keep them from sin, and He also prayed that they would be sanctified.

**Sanctification**

What does it mean to be sanctified? Is it not enough to be saved from our sin? A very great change comes into our heart when Jesus saves us. All our sins are forgiven and we do not tell any more lies; we do not steal; we are good and kind.

Did you ever see a little baby become angry and scream and cry when something did not please him? He is born with that nature within him and he cannot help it. Every child born into the world has a sinful heart. Then as he grows older he may say naughty words. Soon he disobeys his parents; and when he goes to school, perhaps he takes things which belong to others, or is unkind to his playmates. But his parents teach him to pray, and take him to Sunday School. He learns that he must be saved. When he prays and asks Jesus to forgive his sins, Jesus saves him. How happy he is now! He asks his mother to forgive him for being naughty. He takes back the things he stole He does not commit sin.

But he needs to be sanctified wholly, for he still has that same nature or disposition within him with which he was born. Of course, he lives a good life every day, for he prays and asks Jesus to keep him from sin. He does not get angry when things go wrong, but sometimes he feels something inside of him that almost causes him to say unkind words. He needs to have his very nature changed and Jesus can do that, too.

Did your father ever cut down a tree and leave just the stump in the ground? In the spring of the year you notice that green shoots are growing on that stump. The roots are still in the ground, and the stump is alive. It needs to be dug out of the ground — stump, roots and all. Perhaps your father digs a deep hole and removes the old stump. Then it cannot grow again. Just so it is with that old nature of ours. It needs to be taken out of us. Sanctification takes out the old “root” of sin and it does not show up again as long as we keep Jesus in our heart.

Jesus puts a hunger into our heart for sanctification after we are saved. If we pray earnestly, promise Him our whole heart and life, He will sanctify us. Then the heart is made pure and holy. A sweet love for Jesus comes into the heart, even greater than we received at salvation. Heaven is a clean and holy place, and those who expect to enter there must also be holy. If we are not holy here, we will never be holy hereafter. Jesus said, “Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God” (Matthew 5:8). Paul said that without holiness no man should see the Lord. In another lesson we learned of a great company of people in Heaven all dressed in fine linen clothes, clean and white. Their hearts were pure and clean. We want to be in that great company of the redeemed who sing “Alleluia” to God.

**Examples of Sanctification**

After David was saved he prayed that he might be sanctified (Psalm 51:7). The Bible also tells of the time Isaiah, the man of God, was sanctified (Isaiah 6:1-8).

We learned a long time ago of a young man named Jacob who saw the ladder, which reached from earth to Heaven. That was the night Jacob slept alone out in a field, and used a stone for a pillow. Beautiful angels were going up and down the ladder, which Jacob saw in his dream. Do we remember who stood at the top of the ladder? It was God, and He talked to Jacob. Jacob was in trouble with his brother and had to leave home for that reason, but God said, "I am with thee, and will keep thee" (Genesis 28:15). We believe Jacob was saved from his sins that night.

Many years later, as Jacob went to meet his brother Esau, he feared that his brother was still angry with him. All night long Jacob prayed; and just as the morning light began to appear, he received the answer to his prayers. He was sanctified. When his brother saw him, he came running to meet Jacob and kissed him. Jacob was freely forgiven for the wrong he had done.

But sanctification was not only for the men who lived many years ago and whose story is told in the Bible. We read in I Thessalonians 4:3, "This is the will of God, even your sanctification." It is for us today, and Jesus is sanctifying those who earnestly seek Him.

### **Very Important**

Try to imagine that your parents are going away on a journey and you are to stay with friends until they return. You kiss your mother and father good-bye; they pick up their suitcases and are ready to go. Then they turn to you and say, "Don't forget what we told you to do." They remind you once more to be sure to do certain things while they are away. Their last words are very important and must not be forgotten.

Is it not interesting to notice that just before Jesus was crucified, He prayed that the disciples, and all of us, might be sanctified? Then after His resurrection when He was ready to step upon the cloud and go to Heaven, He told the disciples who were sanctified wholly to wait in Jerusalem for the baptism of the Holy Ghost. Surely all of Jesus' words are important, and especially his last words. It is very important that every Christian seek God for sanctification and also for the baptism of the Holy Ghost.

### **QUESTIONS**

1. For whom did Jesus pray? John 17:15-20.
2. Will anyone see God without holiness? Hebrews 12:14.
3. Is it God's will that we be sanctified? I Thessalonians 4:3.
4. How long did Jacob pray? Genesis 32:24.
5. Why is it necessary for us to be holy? Hebrews 12:14.