

# Session 5: Sanctified

## QUESTION 1:

*What's something unique about you  
that few others can claim?*

## THE POINT

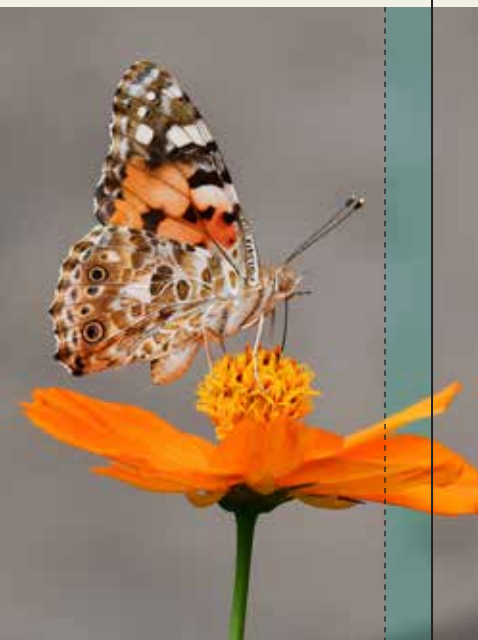
We are set apart in Christ  
to live holy lives.

## THE BIBLE MEETS LIFE

Are you familiar with the book *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*? My children are because my wife and I often read the book to them. In the story, the caterpillar had a hunger that could never be satisfied. But one day everything changed. He no longer crawled on the ground nor did he feel that intense hunger. Instead, he was fulfilled and had wings with which to fly. Then the author revealed that he was never created to remain a caterpillar; he was designed to be a beautiful butterfly.<sup>1</sup>

I felt empathy for this caterpillar and maybe you do too. Like this caterpillar, we were never designed to remain hungry and unfulfilled. Instead, we were designed to live in a relationship with God through the sacrifice of Christ. We were designed to live set apart from the ways of a sinful world; we are set aside to become something greater.

In 1 Corinthians 6, Paul sought to help us understand the process of being set apart from the rest of the world. That is what it means to be sanctified.



# WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?

## 1 CORINTHIANS 6:9-11

<sup>9</sup> Don't you know that the unrighteous will not inherit God's kingdom? Do not be deceived: No sexually immoral people, idolaters, adulterers, or males who have sex with males, <sup>10</sup> no thieves, greedy people, drunkards, verbally abusive people, or swindlers will inherit God's kingdom. <sup>11</sup> And some of you used to be like this. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.

In the first session (pages 11-18), we gained an understanding of the word *holy*, a rich word that applies to God who is set apart, separate, and unique from His creation. But God is not the only one who is holy; as His children, we too are to be holy and set apart from the world around us. "But as the one who called you is holy, you also are to be holy in all your conduct; for it is written, Be holy, because I am holy" (1 Peter 1:15-16). To be holy is to be sanctified, and the Christian life is a life of growing in sanctification.

The beauty of being sanctified and set apart in Christ is that we are no longer enslaved to sin as we once were. When we are in Christ, the Father sees us as righteous; we are no longer counted as unrighteous. Paul listed some specific sins and reminded the Corinthians, "some of you used to be like this." It was a humbling reminder that they were justified not by their actions, but because of Christ's death and resurrection.

Paul was also sending a warning that their lives should no longer look like their old way of living. We are sanctified and set apart from the old way of life. We will only find death in sin, but we find life in Christ. When we come to Christ, everything changes!

### QUESTION 2:

***How would you describe your life before you encountered Christ?***

Paul used three key words to describe that change:

- 1. Washed.** We are washed clean of our sin through faith in Christ. "The blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin" (1 John 1:7).
- 2. Sanctified.** We are set apart by God and declared holy. "By this will, we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all time" (Hebrews 10:10).
- 3. Justified.** We are considered righteous in the sight of God. The righteousness of Christ is attributed to us. "He made the one who did not know sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God" (2 Corinthians 5:21).

All this happens at the moment we believe and trust in Christ, the One who lived a perfect life, died a sinner's death, and rose again to give us new life. Justification is a one-time event, but sanctification is a daily process. Our sanctification continues throughout our lives as we grow more and more like Christ.

## 1 CORINTHIANS 6:12-17

<sup>12</sup> “Everything is permissible for me,” but not everything is beneficial. “Everything is permissible for me,” but I will not be mastered by anything. <sup>13</sup> “Food is for the stomach and the stomach for food,” and God will do away with both of them. However, the body is not for sexual immorality but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. <sup>14</sup> God raised up the Lord and will also raise us up by his power. <sup>15</sup> Don’t you know that your bodies are a part of Christ’s body? So should I take a part of Christ’s body and make it part of a prostitute? Absolutely not! <sup>16</sup> Don’t you know that anyone joined to a prostitute is one body with her? For Scripture says, The two will become one flesh. <sup>17</sup> But anyone joined to the Lord is one spirit with him.

Paul had been reminding the Corinthians that they were set free in Christ, but they were misinterpreting that freedom. Paul quoted one of their slogans twice—“Everything is permissible for me”—but both times he gave a truth that went against that slogan: “not everything is beneficial” and “I will not be mastered by anything.”

What did Christ set us free from? Slavery to sin. We are free *not* to sin, but some in the Corinthian church wrongly took that freedom to mean they were free *to* sin.

Specifically, some in the Corinthian church were abusing the gift of sex and engaging in sexual immorality. Paul referenced a statement that the Corinthian believers were using in rationalizing their immorality: “‘Food is for the stomach and the stomach for food,’ and God will do away with both of them.” Eating food is a natural part of life and something to be enjoyed, and they viewed sexual pleasure the same way.

The belief that what we do physically has no bearing on our spiritual lives came from a heresy called Gnosticism. One aspect of this heresy was the idea that the only thing that

mattered was the spiritual. Our bodies were not important. But Paul spoke against it. “However, the body is not for sexual immorality but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body.” We cannot separate body and spirit. Our physical bodies belong just as much to Christ as our spirits do.

### QUESTION 3:

***What are some benefits and responsibilities of union with Christ?***

Believers are one with Christ, and marriage is a picture of the oneness we share with Christ as His church (Ephesians 5:22-32). In marriage, a man and woman become one flesh; in the same way, we are joined with the Lord through the Holy Spirit. “Don’t you know that your bodies are a part of Christ’s body?” Consequently, the actions of our body affect our whole being.

This truth underscores just how set apart we are from the world. We are not one with the world; we are one with Christ. Therefore, since we are one with Christ and His Holy Spirit lives within us, our actions should reflect that.



“SANCTIFICATION, SAINT, HOLY, AND HOLINESS—

THEY SPEAK OF DAILY LIFE.”

*David Powlison*

BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE

## 1 CORINTHIANS 6:18-20

<sup>18</sup> Flee sexual immorality! Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the person who is sexually immoral sins against his own body. <sup>19</sup> Don't you know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, <sup>20</sup> for you were bought at a price. So glorify God with your body.

In verses 12-17, Paul stressed that what we do physically—in this case, sexual sin—does matter. So now he offered a course correction: “Flee sexual immorality!” *Flee* means to run away, not just walk away; and do it immediately!

In fleeing *from* temptation, it is essential to consider what we run *to*. We cannot flee aimlessly from sin, but must run ferociously toward Christ. Paul instructed Timothy, “But you, man of God, flee from these things, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance, and gentleness” (1 Timothy 6:11).

God is glorified when we pursue the things of Him. First Peter 2:9 declares: “But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his possession, so that you may proclaim the praises of the one who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.” God called us out of our sin to belong to Him. Consequently, we should bring glory to God.

### QUESTION 4:

***How should we understand Paul's challenge in verse 20?***

Fleeing sexual immorality and faithfully pursuing righteousness may seem like a challenge, but it's not insurmountable. We never face temptations alone (1 Corinthians 10:13).

Because we trust and belong to Christ, His Holy Spirit is always right there with us. “Your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God.”

As we rely on the indwelling Holy Spirit, let's also remember the price God paid to redeem us. We take better care of things when we pay a lot of money for them. Many of us spend weeks, even months, selecting a house and securing a way to buy it. On the other hand, we buy a snack at the convenience store without much thought. On an infinitely greater scale, God chose to purchase you and me and it cost Him greatly: the death of His Son. We are wise to take special care of what belongs to God.

### QUESTION 5:

***What are specific ways Christians can live set apart for the glory of God in today's culture?***

In submitting to Christ, we submit in both body and spirit. We are set apart—sanctified—in Christ, and our bodies are no longer to be used as vessels for sin. Instead, our bodies are to be vessels to glorify Christ.

## ANATOMY OF OUR TEMPLE

*What are some ways we can glorify God with the different parts of our temple (body)?  
Record your answers on the corresponding body part below.*

**EYES**

---

---

---

---

---

**BRAIN**

---

---

---

---

---

**MOUTH**

---

---

---

---

---

**HANDS**

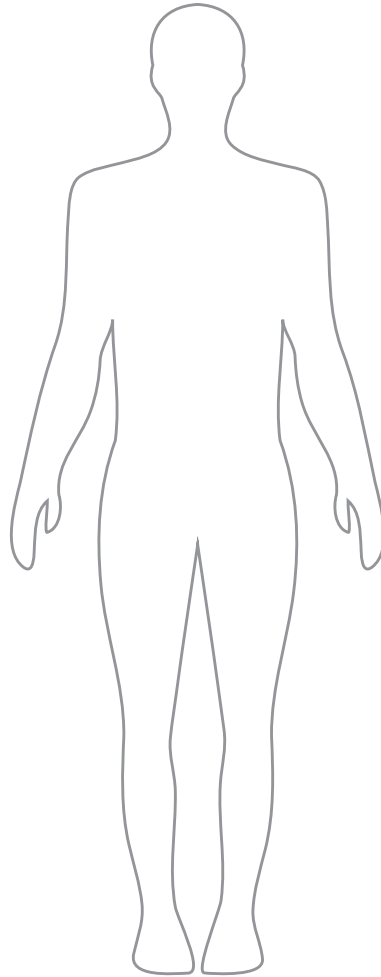
---

---

---

---

---



**FEET**

---

---

---

---

---

## LIVE IT OUT

We were never designed to remain “caterpillars.” God set us apart for something far greater. As Christ transforms us, we must let Him continue the sanctification process in us.

- ▶ **Offer thanks to God.** Reflect on how your life has changed because of Christ. Thank Him for setting you free from the former way of life. Pray for the Lord to continue His good work in you.
- ▶ **Memorize Scripture.** Memorize 1 Corinthians 6:19-20 and repeat it to yourself when you need to flee from temptation: “Don’t you know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought at a price. So glorify God with your body.”
- ▶ **Walk alongside others.** Making the daily choice to live a holy life is much easier when you walk alongside other believers. Surround yourself with others who also choose to live their lives for Christ. Your Bible study group is a good place to start.

Just as God is holy, He has called us to be holy. This is the work of God through His Holy Spirit. **It is the work of sanctification by which we grow each day to reflect Christ.**

1. Eric Carle, *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* (New York: Philomel Books, 1969).