

1 Thessalonians 4:1-8

“Be Sanctified!”

Scripture: 1 Thessalonians 4:1-8

Memory Verse: 1 Thessalonians 4:3a *“For this is the will of God, your sanctification.”*

Lesson Focus: God wants us to be saved, but He also wants us to be SANCTIFIED. We are going to teach the kids what sanctification means as we comb through several Scriptures in the Bible that talk about it. At the end, we will challenge the kids to respond either to be saved or to be further sanctified.

Activities and Crafts: Happy Father’s Day picture, Word Search of different terms from lesson, Bring it Home Discussion for 3rd – 5th.

Activity for 1st and 2nd Graders: Father’s Day craft

Starter Activity: S-A-N-C-T-I-F-I-C-A-T-I-O-N Relay

We will provide you with a bunch of Scrabble letters to play a relay game. Break your kids up into at least two groups and have them be on one side of the area. On the other side of the area, put out piles of letters for each group. Then have the kids one-by-one race to fetch letters to spell out the big Bible word, “SANCTIFICATION”. The first child will need to find “S”, and when he comes back, the next child will need to run and find the “A”, etc. Write the word on the white board in big letters so each kid knows which letter to get next. The first team to spell it out wins! We will provide you with two sets of letters that have enough of each to spell it out. As an alternative, introduce the word by playing a game of “Hangman” with the kids (or do both!). See below for some discussion Qs to explain the word and transition into the Bible study:

Sanctification is a big Bible word that we are going to learn about today in our study. It means being made holy, clean, pure, or “set apart” for God.

Teachers: Consider bringing in three dishes. Have one be clean and pure, while the other two are filthy and dirty. Hold one clean and one dirty up (we will bring in the third dirty dish into the lesson at the end) to the class and ask them these questions below:

Q: Which of these would you “set apart” to eat from? Why?

Q: What needs to happen to this dirty one? A: It needs to be cleaned!

As we continue reading this letter from Paul, Sil, and Tim to these Christians in Thessalonica, we will see that God wants them and us (all Christians) to be sanctified or cleaned from the inside out. Let’s have a look!

Bible Study:

1 Thessalonians 4:1: Paul, Sil, and Tim urge these believers to “please God”.

Q: What does it mean to be pleasing to someone?

A: It means that you love them so much that you live in a way that makes them happy!

Q: Who are some people that it is good to be pleasing to?

A: Parents, teachers, coaches, etc. **Teachers:** Since this is Father’s Day weekend, consider mentioning ways in which the kids can be “pleasing” to their Dad’s.

The Bible says that we love God **because He first loved us!** (**1 John 4:19**) *

Q: How did God show His love for us? **Teachers:** Consider reciting **John 3:16** with the kids together to answer this question!

Remember the dirty dish from before? That is how God sees us because of our sin! It doesn’t matter how good of a kid you are! You have sinned and are therefore dirty and need to be cleansed!! Yet God offers to cleanse us through simply trusting in His Son, Jesus! When you first believe and trust in Jesus, He begins to cleanse you from the inside out. You are saved and belong to Him now and as a newborn child of God, your new aim is to be pleasing to your God and Savior!

1 Thessalonians 4:2: Paul, Sil, and Tim remind them of the commandments that they taught them directly from Jesus Christ.

Q: What is a commandment? A: Instruction or teaching that is to be obeyed.

Remember that if our aim as Christians is to be pleasing to God, we need to know what God wants from us so that we can please Him! Fortunately, He has told us!

Q: Where do you think God has told us what He wants from us? A: The Bible of course!

One place where God was very clear on what He wanted was “*The 10 Commandments*”.

Q: Who knows what some of those are? **Teachers:** These are in **Exodus 20** and while we won’t go through them in detail, review them beforehand so you can correctly respond to the kids! Also point out the 5th, “*honoring your father and mother*”, for Father’s Day!

Elsewhere in the Bible, someone asked Jesus what the “greatest” commandment was.

Read Matthew 22:36-40: Jesus “simplified” the 10 into 2.

Q: What word was common between those two commandments?

A: Love! Love God and love others! The whole Bible teaches us about love!

God wants us to love Him and love others! That is at the heart of the Christian life. We even saw that last week in our memory verse where Paul, Sil, and Tim prayed for those believers to abound in love for one another (**1 Thessalonians 3:12**).

1 Thessalonians 4:3a: Here is our big Bible word that we started our lesson off with. God is very clear here that He wants us to be SANCTIFIED. Remember that this refers to being cleansed from the inside out and “set apart” for God. And if we love God, we will want to be SANCTIFIED! (**Teachers:** At this point, please teach through the other verses that discuss sanctification below and then come back to our text in v. 7 to skip over the section about sexual immorality).

Q: Why do you think God wants us to be holy, clean, sanctified, “set apart” for Him?
A: Because He wants us to be more like Himself: The One who is holy, pure, and perfect!
* (**Read 1 Peter 1:15-16**) *

Fortunately, this is something that God helps us with throughout our lives! While God expects us to read the Bible, pray, and keep His commandments to love Him and others, He helps us and empowers us the more we do so. (**Read Philippians 2:13**)

Many of you may have phones or electronic devices that need to be charged. (**Teachers:** Consider using your phones for this illustration) Q: What happens if you don’t charge those devices? A: They run out of battery and are useless!

In a similar way, we all “plug into” something. The more we plug into the things of God through prayer, reading/listening to the Bible, worship, serving others, the more God will SANCTIFY us by His power. But the more we plug into the things of the world (bad TV shows, addictions to video games), the more we will be drained/stained as Christians.

1 Thessalonians 4:7-8: Back in our text, this call to be sanctified is NOT to be rejected!

Q: What does it mean to reject something? A: It means to refuse it, like a food that you don’t like that you might refuse to eat. *

You must not reject SANCTIFICATION like a food that you don’t like! Some people think that we can just go on willfully sinning and doing whatever we want after we “get saved”. But if that is what we believe we are actually rejecting God Himself! That is a dangerous place to be!

Key Point: Bring in that 3rd dish now and write “sinner” on both dirty dishes and “Jesus” on the perfect dish. Point out that all of us have sinned and need to be cleansed and forgiven our sin (**Romans 3:23 or Isaiah 64:6**). When we first believe in JC, we are forgiven and are now seen as “saints” (erase “sinner” and put “saint” on one of the dirty dishes). This is final and will never change and represents many of you today! But notice you are still dirty! That is because we still sin. But God wants us to “BE SANCTIFIED” and cleanse us to make us look more and more like that perfectly clean dish, Jesus Christ! This is a process that we cooperate with Him on our whole lives thru living His way! *

Q: But what do you think happens to this “sinner” dish that never truly believes in Jesus and refuses to be cleaned or sanctified? A: Just like you would throw out a dish in the

trash that is stained and will not or cannot be cleaned, such sinners who reject God will also be thrown out into hell! Yikes! May that not be the case for you!

Q: What kind of dish are you?

- 1) If you are a believer in Jesus Christ, then you are a “saint”, though you may still sin and make mistakes. Yet He is cleansing you. Continue to love Him, follow Him, and be pleasing to Him like it said in v. 1!
- 2) If you are not a believer in Jesus Christ, then you are a “sinner” and in danger of hell. Believe and receive in Jesus today! He wants you to be saved! How can you be saved?

ABCs of salvation:

- Admit that you are a sinner and have broken God’s law (**1 John 1:8**)
- Believe that Jesus Christ took your sins and punishment upon Himself when he died on the cross (**John 3:16, Romans 5:8**)
- Confess and turn from your sin and to Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior (**Romans 10:9-10**)

Teachers: If any of your kids respond to this gospel call, please be sure to pray with them and talk about it with their parents afterwards. Also see “New Believer’s Packets” in the drawers of your cabinets and give one to any kids who respond.

Bring It Home

Download at: <https://rmcalvary.org/volunteering/childrens-ministry/family-resources/>

Lesson Theme: “Be Sanctified!”

Scripture: 1 Thessalonians 4:1-8

Memory Verse: 1 Thessalonians 4:3a *“For this is the will of God, your sanctification.”*

Teachers/Parents: We taught the kids about the big Bible word “sanctification” today. Ask your kids if they remember what object we used to teach them about this process of God cleansing us from sin (dirty dishes). Would you ever want to eat a meal that was served to you on a filthy, dirty dish? Why not?

Discussion Questions:

- 1) **Read 1 Thessalonians 4:1.** It says that we are to walk and to please God. What does it mean to walk in a way that is pleasing to God?
- 2) Dads: With it being Father’s Day weekend, think about ways in which your kids could walk in a way that is pleasing to you. Ask them if they have any ideas in which they can be pleasing to you!
- 3) In **1 Thessalonians 4:2** the text refers to commandments given directly from Jesus Christ. What commandments specifically did Jesus give us? (Hint: **Read Matthew 22:36-40**)
- 4) **Read John 14:15.** What is a commandment? If Jesus is our Lord and King and He commands us to do things, are these merely optional?
- 5) In the first part of **1 Thessalonians 4:3**, God says His will for us is that we be sanctified. What does this mean?
- 6) **Read 1 Thessalonians 4:7-8.** Who does God give to Christians?
- 7) Elsewhere in the Bible we read about how the Holy Spirit helps in our sanctification. **Read Galatians 5:16-25.** What are the deeds of the flesh? What are the fruits of the Spirit?
- 8) What is one way in which you can be sanctified, walk in the Spirit, and bear fruit of the Spirit this week?