

March 7, 2010 – Names of God – YHWH M’KADDESH

This morning, we’re resuming our corporate worship focus on the “Names of God” and how God reveals different aspects of His nature and His character through His different Biblical names.

In past weeks, we’ve looked at the names:

YHWH, ELOHIM, ADONAI, EL SHADDAI & YHWH RAPHA.

Today, we’re going to focus on the name YHWH M’KADDESH.

This is another compound, or “two-part” name for God.

YHWH, as we’ve already seen, is God’s most personal name, rooted in a Hebrew verb that means “to be” or “I Am.”

M’KADDESH is derived from the Hebrew word *kodesh* (*qodesh*), which means “holy, set apart, consecrated, or sanctified”

YHWH M’KADDESH is typically translated in our English Bibles as “the Lord who sanctifies you.”

Or “the Lord who sets you apart,” or (NIV) “the Lord who makes you holy.”

Sanctified, set apart, consecrated, holy... Biblically, these words are basically synonyms, they have the same basic meaning.

The first Biblical occurrence of *any* form of the word “sanctify” is Genesis chapter 2.

Immediately following the account of the six days of creation, the Bible says that:

Genesis 2:3

God blessed the seventh day and **sanctified** it,
for on it He rested from His work of creation.

He *sanctified* the Sabbath day; He *set it apart* from other days.

It was to be a *holy* day, a “different” day.

The first occurrence in scripture of the *name* YHWH M’KADDESH is found in the book of Exodus, chapter 31.

This is roughly 3 months after God has used Moses to deliver the people from captivity in Egypt. They’ve experienced God as YHWH RAPHA – their healer.

God has provided them manna to eat and water from a rock to drink.

God then leads them to Mt. Sinai. The people are camped at the base of the mountain, while God has called Moses up to the top.

This is when God gave Moses the 10 commandments.

He also gave Moses an extensive set of laws for the people, as well as instructions for the building of the Tabernacle. That’s the setting. Then,
...

Exodus 31:12-13

Then the Lord said to Moses,

“Tell the Israelites: You must observe My Sabbaths,

for this is a sign between Me and you throughout your

generations,

so that you will know that **I am the Lord who sanctifies you.**

(literally, “**YHWH M’KADDESH**”).

The *next* occurrence of this name is in the book of Leviticus.

And it’s the same basic setting. In the midst of God continuing to reveal instructions for various offerings and more laws & statues for His people, God tells Moses:

Leviticus 20:8

“Keep my statutes and do them; **I am YHWH M’KADDESH.**”

So... laws to keep, days to observe, sacrifices to offer - activities & behaviors that are gonna set them apart, make them *different* from their surrounding culture.

It’s *in this context* that God declares Himself to be YHWH M’KADDESH – the Lord who sanctifies you, sets you apart, makes you holy & consecrated & different.

“Sanctified” is an interesting concept. If you look through scripture, you’ll find various *days* that are “sanctified” (for feasting or fasts),

places that are “sanctified” (Mt. Zion, Jerusalem, tabernacle),

things that are “sanctified” (various items used in temple worship),

as well as *people* who are “sanctified” (both individuals and whole people groups).

And what do all these have in common?

Contact with GOD. Interaction with GOD.

All of these are *used* by GOD, dedicated to His purposes, to His service. You see, “sanctified” or “holy” is about being “set apart” or “different.” But not just *any* kind of different. Not “set apart” for any old reason at all.

To know God as YHWH M’KADDESH means to be:

Set apart in ways that *reflect* God’s *character*.

Set apart in ways that are *useful* in God’s *service*.

Holiness is more than *just* purity – it’s purity with a ***purpose!*** God says:

“Be holy because *I*, YHWH your ELOHIM, am holy.” (*Leviticus 19:2*)

We are to be holy because that reflects *God’s* holiness. *And* to...

2 Timothy 2:21

...be an **instrument** for noble ***purposes***, **sanctified**, **useful** to the Master, ready for every good work.

Guys, this gets *extremely* practical, in a *hurry!*

Sanctification is about my *LIFE* – my *behavior*, my *choices*, whatever I *do!* – reflecting the character of God!

This is calling on me to worship God through the way I think and act, day after day.

Everything I do can bear witness to YHWH M’KADDESH and the “sanctification” that He is accomplishing in me, for His glory.

Now... to protect us from getting off track right here, I want to point out

a couple of potential misunderstandings regarding sanctification and personal holiness.

One misunderstanding is that this means I have to *earn* my right standing with God. When you start talking about people's behavior and doing "good works," sometimes we start thinking this means I earn my way to Heaven, that the way I'm made right with God is by doing good things or doing more good works than bad works.

I don't think you ever hear that misunderstanding taught here at this church.

Because it's not true. The Bible says:

Galatians 2:16

We know that a person is **not** justified by works of the law but **through faith** in Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 2:8-9

For by grace you have been saved **through faith**, and this is **not** your own doing; it is the **gift** of God - **not** the result of works, so that no one can boast.

Salvation is a gift from God, a grace that we not deserve.

We are all rebels, we have sinned by rebelling against God and preferring other things to God time after time. We all deserve to be rejected by Him.

But God, in His love, sent His one and only Son, Jesus Christ, to live the perfect, righteous life that we have all failed to live, to die a sinless death that pays the price for our sins and absorbs our punishment.

God then raised Jesus from the dead to demonstrate the complete

sufficiency of His sacrifice. And now, forgiveness for our sins and the righteousness of Christ is offered to us, as a gift.

When we embrace that gift, through faith, we are saved. Right then. For all time.

We are, at that moment, “justified” – made right with God.

Not by our works, but by God’s grace, by what He has done.

And I believe that’s what you consistently hear us teaching here at the Glade.

But grasping this reality of God’s *grace* opens the possibility of *another* misunderstanding, from the *opposite* end of the spectrum.

A person *could* see God’s grace and be tempted to respond:

“Well, if I’m saved by grace, and I’ve been made right with God through Christ, then I’ve got my ticket to Heaven. I’ll just put that in my pocket and live however I please. If I’m *not* justified by my works, then my behavior is irrelevant!

I mean, I’m not going to do anything *too* blatant, I don’t want people *criticizing* me or judging me, so I’ll keep the questionable stuff under the radar... but, if I’ve saved by grace, then that means I can live any way I want.”

The Bible does NOT teach this mindset. In *fact*, the Bible gets very blunt about this:

1 John 2:4

The one who says, "I have come to know Him," and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.

James 2:17

So faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead.

Now... sometimes people find this confusing. They hear the Bible say “faith without works is dead,” and then “by grace are you saved through faith, *not* as a result of works,” and they think those 2 verses contradict each other. But they DON'T.

I *know* they don't, first of all, because they're both in the Bible, and the Bible is true.

Period. So, when I find things in scripture that are difficult for me to understand,

I *don't* assume there's something wrong with the Bible! (very arrogant!)

If there's anything “wrong,” it's with me – my understanding, my comprehension.

And secondly, in this case, I don't *see* any contradiction here at all!

If you look at the whole counsel of scripture,

it teaches that grace through faith alone is the instrument of our justification,

but that genuine faith does not *remain* alone, but necessarily results in good works.

Genuine faith by necessity produces fruit, it results in sanctification. The Bible says:

Romans 6:22

Now that you have been set free from sin and have become

slaves of God,

(now that you've been saved by grace through faith)

the **fruit** you get leads to **sanctification** and its end result, eternal life.

The "fruit" of God rescuing me from sin, through faith in Christ is sanctification!

If I am a Christian, then God's *Holy* Spirit lives in me. And the "fruit" of the Holy Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, self-control... *behaviors!*

Holy, sanctified behaviors!

Sanctification is a necessary process on the way to eternal life.

God intends sanctification for His children,

just as surely as He intends eternal life for His children...

This is an instance where God's will for your life is NOT hard to figure out...

1 Thessalonians 4:3, 4, 7

For this is the will of God, **your sanctification**... (there it is, God's will for your life!)

that each of you should learn to control his own body in a way that is **holy** and honorable. For God has not called us to impurity, but to **sanctification**.

Now... does it happen instantly? No. It's a process.

Hebrews 10:14

For by one offering He has perfected forever those **who are being sanctified.**

The Bible teaches that we “are *being* sanctified.” Sanctification is a *process* that won’t culminate in perfection until I see Jesus. Until then, I’ll be “in process.”

I’ll still battle vestiges of my old person. I’ll have peaks and valleys.

Some days, my choices and my behavior and my thinking will be holier than others.

But the Bible promises believers that:

2 Corinthians 3:18

We all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord,

are being changed into His likeness from one degree of glory to another,

for this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.

Step by step, from one degree to the next, we become progressively more like Christ.

This is **sanctification**. *And we’re told to keep continually pursuing it!*

The Bible says:

Pursue peace with all men, and the **sanctification** without which no one will see the Lord. (*Hebrews 12:14*)

There **IS** a sanctification, a process of becoming holy, *without* which, nobody is gonna see Jesus! It’s *that* essential!

Sanctification is NOT how we are made right with God. (that's by grace thru faith)

But sanctification IS a necessary outcome of genuine, saving faith. The Bible says:

1 Peter 1:15-16

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.”

There's just one problem... **We CANNOT do this.** *We can't!*

When you really start to grasp what God is requiring here, it will make you want to just collapse in a heap and give up. Just lay down and quit.

It's hopeless! I CAN'T DO THIS! The Bible *tells* us that:

There is no one who is righteous, not even one. (*Romans 3:10*)

There is no one holy like YHWH. (*1 Samuel 2:2*)

You alone are holy. (*Revelation 15:4*)

This is where the name YHWH M'KADDESH can become music to your ears!

Because, you see... **just because I can't do it, does NOT mean it can't be done.**

NOTHING is impossible with *GOD!*

The verse we just read about being changed into His likeness from one degree of glory to another? It says that “this **comes from the Lord**, who is the **Spirit!**”

The **Holy Spirit** living *in* you is the One who does this! The Bible says that:

Ephesians 5:25-27

...Christ loved the church (that's you & me!) and gave Himself up for her,

so that **He** might **sanctify** her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word.

He did this to present the church to Himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but **holy** and **blameless**.

That's our *destiny* as believers, to be presented holy and blameless and sanctified before Christ!

1 Thessalonians 5:23-24

May the **God of peace** **Himself** **sanctify** you *completely*.

May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

He who calls you is faithful; He will surely do it.

That's a *very* decisive statement, and very precious promise from YHWH M'KADDESH. God says to us:

Leviticus 20:8

“Keep my statutes and do them; (*An impossible demand!*)

I am YHWH who sanctifies you.” (*An absolute certainty!*)

(A divine promise! An assured destiny!)

This Old Testament name of YHWH M'KADDESH is perfectly fulfilled for us in Jesus Christ. He is the *embodiment* of YHWH M'KADDESH!

Through the power of His Holy Spirit, He is changing us into His own likeness.

Our God – through Christ – *IS* the LORD WHO SANCTIFIES US!

PRAYER:

Father, thank You for this magnificent name,

that reveals Your precious promise to sanctify us, to make us more and more like Christ, to set us apart for Your glory, and for Your service.

So Father, we claim Your promise, and ask You *do it* in our lives!

Take our lives – our hands & our feet, our lips & our minds – and make them holy and useful to You.

Give us the desire to pursue Your sanctification in us.

Holy Spirit, bear Your fruit in our lives.

Lord Jesus, change our hearts, more and more, to be like You.