

***FAITH, LOVE, AND HOPE—
THE STRUCTURE OF A HOLY LIFE FOR THE CHURCH LIFE***

Message 1

I. Faith, love, and hope are the structure of a holy life for the church life.

1 Thessalonians 1:3, 9

3 Remembering unceasingly your work of faith and labor of love and endurance of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, before our God and Father.

9 For they themselves report concerning us what kind of entrance we had toward you and how you turned to God from the idols to serve a living and true God.

II. The work of faith:

A. The faith of the believers is actually Christ entering into them to be their faith.

Romans 3:22 Even the righteousness of God through the faith of Jesus Christ to all those who believe, for there is no distinction.

Galatians 2:16a And knowing that a man is not justified out of works of law, but through faith in Jesus Christ...

B. Faith comes:

1. Through the Word of Christ.

Romans 10:17 So faith *comes* out of hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.

Galatians 3:2 This only I wish to learn from you, Did you receive the Spirit out of the works of law or out of the hearing of faith?

2. By looking away unto Jesus.

Hebrews 12:2a Looking away unto Jesus, the Author and Perfector of our faith...

3. Through exercising our spirit of faith to speak for the Lord.

2 Corinthians 4:13 And having the same spirit of faith according to that which is written, "I believed, therefore I spoke," we also believe, therefore we also speak.

Proverbs 11:25b ...and he who waters will also be watered himself.

C. Nothing is impossible to faith.

Matthew 17:20b ...for truly I say to you, if you have faith like a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, Move from here to there, and it will move; and nothing will be impossible to you.

Mark 10:27 Looking upon them, Jesus said, With men it is impossible, but not with God, for all things are possible with God.

III. The labor of love:

A. Through love we enjoy the Lord whom we have received.

John 14:21 He who has my commandments and keeps them, he is the one who loves Me; and he who loves Me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and will manifest Myself to him.

Song of Songs 2:3, 4

3 As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons: In his shade I delighted and sat down, and his fruit was sweet to my taste.

4 He brought me into the banqueting house, and his banner over me was love.

B. God is love; we love because He first loved us.

1 John 4:8, 19

8 He who does not love has not known God, because God is love.

19 We love because He first loved us.

Luke 15:4

Which man of you, who has a hundred sheep and has lost one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness and go after the one which is lost until he finds it?

IV. The endurance of hope:

A. A hope, with numerous aspects, for this age, for the coming age, and for eternity.

1 Peter 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has regenerated us unto a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

Titus 1:2 In the hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised before the times of the ages.

B. Our hope is the Person of Christ Himself.

Colossians 1:27b ...Christ in you, the hope of glory.

2 Thessalonians 3:5 And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God and into the endurance of Christ.

SALVATION IN SANCTIFICATION

Message 2

I. God chose us from eternity past unto salvation in sanctification:

A. Sanctification is the process by which we are *separated, set apart (to God), made holy.*

B. Sanctification has two aspects: positional (objective) and dispositional (subjective).

Ephesians 1:4 Even as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world to be holy and without blemish before Him in love.

2 Thessalonians 2:13 But we ought to thank God always concerning you, brothers beloved of the Lord, because God chose you from the beginning unto salvation in sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth.

II. The entire Trinity of the Godhead operates to carry out this salvation in sanctification.

1 Peter 1:2a Chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father in the sanctification of the Spirit unto the obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ...

III. We receive the sanctifying Spirit, which regenerates us (makes us sons of God) and gives us an entrance into the kingdom of God, when we receive the Lord and believe into His name.

Romans 3:24-25a

24 Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus;

25 Whom God set forth as a propitiation place through faith in His blood...

Hebrews 13:12 Therefore also Jesus, that He might sanctify the people through His own blood, suffered outside the gate.

John 1:12-13

12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the authority to become children of God, to those who believe into His name,

13 Who were begotten not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

John 3:5-6

5 Jesus answered, Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

IV. It is crucial that we experience the sanctifying Spirit in order for the full salvation of God to be carried out in our entire being—spirit, soul and body.

1 Thessalonians 5:23 And the God of peace Himself sanctify you wholly, and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Romans 12:2 And do not be fashioned according to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of the mind that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and well pleasing and perfect.

2 Corinthians 3:18 But we all with unveiled face, beholding and reflecting like a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord Spirit.

1 Thessalonians 4:3-4

3 For this is the will of God, your sanctification; that you abstain from fornication;

4 That each one of you know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor.

Romans 6:13, 19

13 Neither present your members as weapons of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as alive from the dead, and your members as weapons of righteousness to God.

19 I speak in human *terms* because of the weakness of your flesh. For just as you presented your members as slaves to uncleanness and lawlessness unto lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness unto sanctification.

V. Salvation in sanctification is carried out not only by our experience of the sanctifying Spirit, but also by our belief in the truth, that is, in the Word of God as the truth.

John 17:17 Sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth.

2 Timothy 3:15-16a

15 And that from a babe you have known the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise unto salvation through the faith which is in Christ Jesus.

16 All Scripture is God-breathed...

John 1:1, 4

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

4 In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.

John 6:63 It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing; the words which I have spoken to you are spirit and are life.

VI. Salvation in sanctification, through the sanctifying Spirit and through our belief in the truth, is the divine procedure for us to obtain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ as the goal of His eternal purpose.

2 Thessalonians 2:14 To which also He called you through our gospel unto the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Hebrews 2:10 For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things and through whom are all things, in leading many sons into glory, to make the Author of their salvation perfect through sufferings.

John 17:22a And the glory which You have given Me I have given to them...

Colossians 1:27 To whom God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

Philippians 3:21a Who will transfigure the body of our humiliation to be conformed to the body of His glory, according to His operation...

2 Thessalonians 1:10a When He comes to be glorified in His saints and to be marveled at in all those who have believed...

Romans 8:29-30

29 Because those whom He foreknew, He also predestinated *to be* conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the Firstborn among many brothers;

30 And those whom He predestinated, these He also called; and those whom He called, these He also justified; and those whom He justified, these He also glorified.

OUR HEART TO BE ESTABLISHED BLAMELESS IN HOLINESS

Message 3

I. The definition, position and function of the heart:

A. Our heart is a composition of all the parts of our soul—the mind, the emotion, and the will—plus one part of our spirit—the conscience.

Hebrews 4:12 For the word of God is living and operative and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing even to the dividing of soul and spirit and of joints and marrow, and able to discern the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

John 16:22a Therefore you also now have sorrow; but I will see you again and your heart will rejoice...

Acts 11:23 Who, when he arrived and saw the grace of God, rejoiced and encouraged them all to remain with the Lord with purpose of heart.

Hebrews 10:22a Let us come forward to *the Holy of Holies* with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience...

B. Our heart with its condition before God is related to the condition of our spirit, soul and body before God.

Matthew 5:3 Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of the heavens.

Psalms 78:8 That they might not be like their fathers, a stubborn and rebellious generation, a generation that did not set their heart right, and whose spirit was not faithful to God.

C. The heart is the entrance and exit of life, the “switch of life.”

Romans 10:10a For with the heart there is believing unto righteousness...

2 Corinthians 3:16-17

16 But whenever *their heart* turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away.

17 And the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.

Proverbs 4:23 Keep your heart with all vigilance, for from it are the issues of life.

Matthew 12:34 Offspring of vipers, how can you, being evil, speak good things? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.

II. Our heart needs to be established blameless in holiness.

A. Our heart is changeable.

2 Timothy 4:10 For Demas has abandoned me, having loved the present age, and has gone to Thessalonica...

Jeremiah 17:9 The heart is deceitful above all things, and it is incurable; who can know it?

B. Our heart needs to be renewed continuously.

Ezekiel 36:26 I will also give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you; and I will take away the heart of stone out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh.

2 Corinthians 4:16 Therefore we do not lose heart; but though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner *man* is being renewed day by day.

Titus 3:5 Not out of works in righteousness which we did but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Spirit.

III. Cooperating with the inner operating of the sanctifying Spirit by dealing with our heart:

A. God wants our heart to be soft.

Ezekiel 36:26 I will also give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you; and I will take away the heart of stone out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh.

Matthew 13:4a And as He sowed, some *seeds* fell beside the way...

B. God wants our heart to be pure.

Psalms 73:25 Whom do I have in heaven *but You?* And besides You there is nothing I desire on earth.

Matthew 5:8 Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

2 Timothy 2:22 But flee youthful lusts, and pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

C. God wants our heart to be loving.

Ephesians 6:24 Grace be with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in incorruptibility.

Psalms 42:1-2a

1 As the hart pants after the streams of water, so my soul pants for you, O God.

2 My soul thirsts for God, for the living God...

2 Corinthians 3:16 But whenever *their heart* turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away.

D. God wants our heart to be at peace.

Acts 24:16 Because of this I also exercise myself to always have a conscience without offense toward God and men.

1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness

Colossians 3:15 And let the peace of Christ arbitrate in your hearts, to which also you were called in one Body; and be thankful

THE COMING OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST AND OUR GATHERING TOGETHER TO HIM

Message 4

I. First and Second Thessalonians were written in the light of the Lord's coming.

1 Thessalonians 1:10 And await His Son from the heavens, whom He raised from the dead, Jesus, who delivers us from the wrath which is coming.

1 Thessalonians 2:19 For what is our hope or joy or crown of boasting before our Lord Jesus at His coming? Are not even you?

1 Thessalonians 3:13 So that He may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all His saints.

1 Thessalonians 4:17 Then we who are living, who are left remaining, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air...

1 Thessalonians 5:4-5a

4 But you, brothers, are not in darkness that the day should overtake you like a thief;

5 For you are all sons of light...

2 Thessalonians 2:1b ...with regard to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him.

II. Our gathering to Him (the rapture at the end of this age) is not an accidental event; it is the consummation of an inward process of maturation, the visible manifestation of the Christ whom we have reaped in our Christian life.

Revelation 3:3 Remember therefore how you have received and heard, and keep *it* and repent. If therefore you will not watch, I will come as a thief, and you shall by no means know at what hour I will come upon you.

2 Corinthians 4:7 But we have this treasure in earthen vessels...

Colossians 1:27 To whom God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

2 Timothy 4:22a The Lord be with your spirit...

Matthew 13:44 The kingdom of the heavens is like a treasure hidden in the field, which a man found and hid, and in his joy goes and sells all that he has, and buys that field.

Matthew 13:23 But the one sown on the good earth, this is he who hears the word and understands, who by all means bears fruit...

Mark 4:26-29

26 And He said, So is the kingdom of God: as if a man cast seed on the earth,

27 And sleeps and rises night and day, and the seed sprouts and lengthens—how, he does not know.

28 The earth bears fruit by itself: first a blade, then an ear, then full grain in the ear.

29 But when the fruit is ripe, immediately he sends forth the sickle, because the harvest has come.

Revelation 14:4b ...These are they who follow the Lamb wherever He may go. These were purchased from among men *as* firstfruits to God and to the Lamb.

1 Corinthians 3:9b ... you are God's cultivated land, God's building.

1 Corinthians 3:12a, 13, 14

12a But if anyone builds upon the foundation [Jesus Christ] gold, silver, precious stones,...

13 The work of each will become manifest; for the day will declare *it*,...the fire itself will prove each one's work, of what sort it is.

14 If anyone's work which he has built upon *the foundation* remains, he will receive a reward.

2 Corinthians 3:18

18 But we all with unveiled face, beholding and reflecting like a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord Spirit.

Philippians 3:21 Who will transfigure the body of our humiliation to be conformed to the body of His glory, according to His operation by which He is able even to subject all things to Himself.

1 Corinthians 15:52 In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we will be changed.

2 Thessalonians 1:10a When He comes to be glorified in His saints and to be marveled at in all those who have believed...

III. We should long for the Lord's coming and be prepared to be gathered together to Him.

1 John 2:28 And now, little children, abide in Him, so that if He is manifested, we may have boldness and not be put to shame from Him at His coming.

2 Corinthians 5:10a For we must all be manifested before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things *done* through the body according to what he has practiced,...

1 Corinthians 3:15 If anyone's work is consumed, he will suffer loss, but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.

Luke 21:34 But take heed to yourselves lest perhaps your hearts be weighed down with debauchery and drunkenness and the anxieties of life, and that day come upon you suddenly as a snare.

Matthew 24:43 But know this, that if the householder had known in which watch the thief was coming, he would have watched and would not have allowed his house to be broken into.

Song of Songs 1:6b ...*But* my own vineyard I have not kept.

Song of Songs 8:6a Set me as a seal on your heart, As a seal on your arm; For love is as strong as death, Jealousy is as cruel as Sheol.

Matthew 5:8 Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

Song of Songs 8:14a Make haste, my beloved...

Revelation 22:20 He who testifies these things says, Yes, I come quickly. Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!