**The Greatest - Wk 4 – The Greatest Process**

 **We are starting the New Year on the greatest principles in scripture!**

**\*\* The Greatest Reason - We exist for the glory of God.**

**Rom 11:36 - For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen**

**If you have ever wondered what the meaning of life is, it is this.**

**\*\* The Greatest Command – over everything in the Bible.**

**Mark 12:30Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’ 31The second is this: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no commandment greater than these.”**

**This is to be the desire of our life and everything in 2024.**

**\*\* The Greatest Purpose - The great commission**

**Mark 12:30Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’ 31The second is this: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no commandment greater than these.”**

**If you have ever wondered what your purpose in life is…**

**\*\* The Greatest Gift – The Holy Spirit!**

**Acts 1**:**8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”**

**“Power” dunamis - the explosive miraculous power of God.**

**Today - a great work that God does in us.**

**The Greatest Process – sanctification**

**It comes from the Latin – *sanctus* – meaning to set apart as holy, to make holy, or dedicate as sacred. It means to consecrate.**

**Hebrews 10:9 Then he said, “Here I am, I have come to do your will.” He sets aside the first to establish the second. 10 And by that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.** **11 And every priest stands daily at his service, offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. 12 But when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God, 13 waiting from that time until his enemies should be made a footstool for his feet. 14 For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified.**

**1. We are sanctified forever - by the will of God thru Jesus**

**Heb 10:10 we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.**

**You are made holy immediately in Christ - forever (sanctified)**

**By the cross of Jesus – we are set apart as holy. You are holy!**

**2 Corinthians 5:21 For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.**

**The great exchange. Jesus the perfect one – took our sin for the imperfect us, so we could be made perfect in Him.**

**2. We are being sanctified in this life - by the will of God thru the HS**

**Heb 10:14 For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified.**

**You are being made holy (being sanctified)**

**Nearly every NT letter deals with this.**

**This is the great process of growth in a Christian.**

**Romans 8:18-30**

* **The Father's - work of election**
* **The Son’s (Jesus) - work of justification**
* **The Holy Spirit's - work of sanctification**
* **All leading to our glorification.**
* **This is the work of our redemption & salvation - a now and to come**

**1 Thessalonians 5:23 Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.**

**Working on our Spirit – eternal state**

**Working on Soul – emotional state and will**

**Working on Body – fleshly desires and habits**

**We are Sanctified (holy) and being sanctified (becoming holy)**

**\*\*Set apart forever right now – and being set apart every day.**

**1 Corinthians 6:9 Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality, 10 nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. 11 And such were some of you. 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. (ESV)**

**But I don’t feel Holy.**

**\* You Are Free - free from shackles of addiction, attitudes, & actions**

**In Christ we are in a new position with God and given the HS who works to break the chains of the enemy off of us!**

**\*\*\* BUT HOW???**

**A few standout thoughts about - Walking in SPIRITUAL MATURITY**

**1. Spiritual growth happens INSIDE OUT not OUTSIDE IN**

**It is not a matter of will power – but the Spirits power.**

**Philippians 2:12 Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, 13 for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.**

**\*\*\* Maturity is not based on how you look in front of others**

**Phil 2:12 …not only as in my presence but much more in my absence…**

**It is reflected when you’re away from other Christians.**

**\*\*\* Maturity is something one must be intentional about**

**Phil 2:12 …work out your own salvation with fear and trembling….**

**We are not working for our salvation – we are working it out.**

**\*\*\* Maturity does not start with you – it is God’s work in you**

**13 for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.**

**God works in (to convict, draw, and change our will) we then work it out (live it).**

**Phil 2:13 for it is God who works in you to will and to act…**

**\*\*\* God changes our desires – he changes our “want to” (to will)**

**The first change that happens is this… our desires. As our will gets aligned with God’s will - we begin to desire his desires.**

**If you struggle with temptation what is at the core of your will?**

**Phil 2:13 for it is God who works in you to will and to act…**

**\*\*\* God changes our actions**

**God works in us and then thru us. Conflicting desires are temptation**

**This isn’t behavior modification. God does not want your behavior; he wants your heart & will – the root.**

**Phil 2:13 for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose.**

**God initiates the change and gives us the power to change.**

**Ephesians 3:16 that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being, 17 so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith - that you, being rooted and grounded in love, 18 may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, 19 and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. 20 Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, 21 to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.**

**2. Spiritual growth is a PROCESS, not an EVENT**

**Change does come, but it happens over time, not overnight**

**Paul’s prayer for spiritual maturity is the process of sanctification that we are now – “set apart to a new life”**

**Ephesians 4:14 Then we will no longer be like children, forever changing our minds about what we believe because someone has told us something different or because someone has cleverly lied to us and made the lie sound like the truth. 15 Instead, we will hold to the truth in love, becoming more and more in every way like Christ, who is the head of his body, the church.**

**This process takes time – our whole life. More and more.**

**2 Peter 3:17 You therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, take care that you are not carried away with the error of lawless people and lose your own stability. 18 But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.**

**\*Grow in Grace – God’s gift of favor and salvation**

**\*Grow in knowledge – understanding of who God is & living it**

**3. The goal of Spiritual growth is PROGRESS, not PERFECTION**

**Romans 8:29 For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. 30 And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.**

**Our destiny is to look like Jesus. All that we go through, all that God allows us to experience (good and difficult)**

**God is more concerned about your direction than your perfection**

**Stumbling and struggling vs. submitting**

**Proverbs 24:16 For the righteous falls seven times and rises again, but the wicked stumble in times of calamity.**

**Righteousness / maturity – is not defined by our ability to be perfect – but by our ability to get back up when we fall**

**Philippians 3:12 Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already arrived at my goal, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. 13 Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, 14 I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus. 15 All of us, then, who are mature should take such a view of things.**

**If you consider yourself mature – this is the point of view to have.**

* **I have not arrived – but I press on!!!**
* **I may struggle – but keep looking forward!**
* **I may stumble – but I keep my eyes on Jesus!!**