

GOD'S LOVE IS OUR ROCK

Isaiah 54:10 For the mountains may move and the hills disappear, but even then my faithful love for you will remain. My covenant of blessing will never be broken," says the Lord, who has mercy on you.

THIS WEEK WE START A NEW SERIES: CULTIVATE

- This series is about the fruits of the Holy Spirit. We're allowing God to work in our lives to cultivate the fruits of the Holy Spirit in us.
- Definition of *cultivate*: prepare and use. Try to acquire or develop (a quality, sentiment, or skill)¹
 - All who believe, live in repentance, and follow Jesus, are saved.
 - Everyone, in Christ, is justified.
 - We are all being sanctified.
 - The Trinity
 - Jesus said it is better for the Advocate [Holy Spirit] come to work in our life then have Him stay. (See **John 16:7**)

HOW WE ACCEPT JESUS AND RECEIVE THE HOLY SPIRIT IN OUR LIVES:

Acts 2:38-41 ³⁸Peter replied, "Each of you must repent of your sins and turn to God, and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. Then you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. ³⁹This promise is to you, to your children, and to those far away—all who have been called by the Lord our God." ⁴⁰Then Peter continued preaching for a long time, strongly urging all his listeners, "Save yourselves from this crooked generation!" ⁴¹Those who believed what Peter said were baptized and added to the church that day—about 3,000 in all.

- o Justification
- o Sanctification

THERE IS A BATTLE

Galatians 5:16-17 ¹⁶So I say, let the Holy Spirit guide your lives. Then you won't be doing what your sinful nature craves. ¹⁷The sinful nature wants to do evil, which is just the opposite of what the Spirit wants. And the Spirit gives us desires that are the opposite of what the sinful nature desires. These two forces are constantly fighting each other, so you are not free to carry out your good intentions.

- o Just because we struggle, that doesn't mean we aren't saved. (See **Romans 7**)
- o Take off the old self and put on the new self!

Ephesians 4:21-24 ²¹Since you have heard about Jesus and have learned the truth that comes from him, ²²throw off your old sinful nature and your former way of life, which is corrupted by lust and deception. ²³Instead, let the Spirit renew your thoughts and attitudes. ²⁴Put on your new nature, created to be like God—truly righteous and holy.

- o He gives us a new heart. (See **Ezekiel 36:25-27**)
- o He performs heart surgery on us.
- o We have to do our part and let the Holy Spirit lead us.

A LICENSE TO SIN?

- Why would we want to keep sinning if we were wanting to be saved from sin?
 - If we want to live in sin, is there a heart change?
 - When we do sin, we repent and give it to God.
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WHAT IS YOUR NEXT STEP?

- Have you been justified? Have you repented, believed in, and called on, the name of Jesus?
 - Are you putting on Christ in your life and trying to cultivate the fruits of the spirit in your life?
 - Have you been believing lies about where you are? Have you been struggling because of a specific sin you're wrestling with?
 - Do you believe God has justified you, and loves you, and will work with you?
 - Have you been using God's grace as a means to live in sin? Do you need to repent from those things?
 - Do you need to pray to Him? Do you need to worship Him for justifying you? Do you need to sit and think? Whatever you need to do, God is waiting, and He loves you.
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QUESTIONS TO CONTEMPLATE AND DISCUSS WITH YOUR LIFE AND GROUP, FAMILY, AND FRIENDS:

1. What stood out to you in the message, and why?
2. Where are you at with your assurance in your justification? Are you having an easy time standing in your hope when it comes to you being justified through Christ, or have you been struggling?
3. What is something that stood out to you when Christian talked about sanctification?
4. What area in your life do you feel like God is working in right now? What area is He sanctifying?
5. Read Galatians 5:16-17. Ask: When you feel the battle inside you between what God wants you to do and what your flesh wants you to do, what goes through your mind? What is a truth you can cling to in those moments in order to take off your old self and put on the new?
6. When Christian talked about the heart change that takes place in your life when you start following Jesus, what in your life were you thinking about, and how are you processing that, now?
7. Don't forget to take prayer requests in your group!

Resources: Consider going through *Experiencing God* this summer!

Passages to prepare for next week, Cultivate! Week 2: Love

This week, read Galatians 5:16-26; 1 Corinthians 13; Matthew 22:36-40; 1 John 2:3-11

As you read, ask yourself these questions:

- What is the passage saying about God, mankind, and how the world works?
 - What do I learn about myself from this passage?
 - What response does this require of me in my thinking, believing, and doing?
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¹Definition of *cultivate* taken from Google Dictionary.