

## A P P L I E D

These questions are for Small Groups and families who want to discuss these truths together.

1. **When you think of the word “sanctification” what ideas come to mind?**
2. **In our world today, do you think Christians are known for their good conduct. Why or why not?**
3. **Read Romans 12:1-2. Why do you think it is important for Christians to think about how we grow into spiritual maturity?**
4. **Read back over the three illustrations about how we can think about spiritual growth. What would be the result of thinking about sanctification like a cruise ship?**
5. **What would happen to you if you viewed the process of Christian growth as a rowboat? Which of these two incorrect ideas tend to pollute your thinking the most?**
6. **How does the image of the sailboat help you get a better grasp on the process of sanctification?**
7. **Read Philippians 2:12-13. Why is it significant that Paul tells them to work and tells them that God is at work in them? How would you explain this passage to a new believer?**

# LIVING HOPE BAPTIST CHURCH

**SERMON SERIES: ReNew Your Belief**

Sermon Message: How Am I Supposed to Act?

October 9, 2011

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Public Reading: Romans 16:17-19

Next Week's Text: Matthew 19:3-6

## TO THOSE BEING SANCTIFIED...

IT IS HOW WE \_\_\_\_\_ OUR SPIRIT

**Matthew 4:4** "Man shall not live by bread alone but on every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God." (Pew Bible page 809)

IT GIVES US \_\_\_\_\_

**Psalms 119:105** "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path." (Pew Bible page 514)

IT \_\_\_\_\_ US AGAINST THE ENEMY

**1 John 2:14** "I write to you young men, because you are strong and the word of God lives in you and you have overcome the evil one." (Pew Bible page 1021)

**Psalms 119:11** "Thy word I have hid in my heart, that I may not sin against Thee." (Pew Bible page 512)

NOTE: You can check out Pastor Jason's thoughts at [pastorjasonpettus.blogspot.com](http://pastorjasonpettus.blogspot.com) or on Twitter at [www.Twitter.com/pastorjpettus](http://www.Twitter.com/pastorjpettus).

A copy of today's message is available at the kiosk in the lobby immediately following the service. Suggested donation for CDs is \$2. First time guests get today's CD free by turning in your guest card at the Welcome Center.

## CHRISTIAN CONDUCT

We believe the Holy Spirit, as the third person of the triune God, is the active agent in our sanctification and seeks to produce His fruit in us as our minds are renewed and we are conformed to the image of Christ. Though sin remains a reality, as Christians are led by the Spirit, we grow in the knowledge of the Lord and endeavor to keep His commands. We believe that a Christian is called to do everything to the glory of God, to make disciples of all nations, to pursue love and do good to everyone, to be a faithful steward of all that God has entrusted to him/her, and to obey the Word of God in all matters of faith and life.

## U N P A C K E D

It has been said that Christianity is not just a set of ideas to believe but rather a life to be lived. Indeed, the Gospel of Jesus Christ aims at much more than simply adjusting our thinking and helping us get into heaven. It is meant to transform our daily existence. Our lives should be different as we grow to be more and more like Jesus.

So how is it that Christians grow into spiritual maturity? First, **the Spirit works** to produce fruit in our lives. As our doctrinal statement says, “He is the active agent in our sanctification.” This means that we do not grow apart from God working in us. Romans 12:2 tells us, “Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind.” This command is in the passive tense, indicating that we are to receive this renewal rather than cause it to happen. We receive it through the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives. He is the key to us growing as Christians.

At the same, **we must work** to bring about transformation in our own lives. Through the power of the Spirit, “we grow in the knowledge of the Lord and *endeavor* to keep His commands.” This means that sanctification does not come about without us working at it and committing ourselves to discipline and sacrifice (1 Cor. 10:31).

It is important to keep a balanced perspective about how we grow as Christians. An illustration involving three different kinds of transportation can be helpful. On the one hand, growing in Christ is not like taking a cruise on a ship. On a cruise ship, you simply get yourself on board and then someone else does all the work. To think about sanctification like a cruise ship would be to overemphasize the work of God in such a way that you bear no personal responsibility for your lifestyle. This is wrong because sanctification requires work on your part. On the other hand, growing in Christ is not like a row boat. On a row boat, you do all of the work and your success is completely dependent upon you. Thinking like this will lead you to underestimate the power of God and leave you spiritually frustrated. Both of these ideas are incorrect because they are out of balance.

A better image for thinking about the process of Christian growth is to **imagine a sailboat**. On a sailboat, you have a lot of work to do. You have to adjust the rigging and ready the sails. However, you are ultimately dependent upon the wind to get you where you want to go. There is a cooperation at work that mirrors the process of sanctification. You must discipline yourself and work toward obedience but growth will only come about when God “blows” you in the direction He wants you to go. This image parallels Paul’s command in Philippians 2:12-13, “work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you.”