

THIS IS WHO WE ARE!

ROMANS
12:1-2

What does the word “consecrated” mean?

The Hebrew word *qadash* [175 occurrences of this word] means to be set apart or consecrated

Consecration was used by God to prepare his people for major events like the giving of the Ten Commandments [Exodus 19:11], the call to observe the Sabbath [Exodus 31:13], and before the people entered the Promised Land [Joshua 3:5], when he set apart the prophet Jeremiah in the womb [Jeremiah 1:5]

I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. ² Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect. [Romans 12:1-2]

[1] It's Personal - Surrender

I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. [Galatians 2:20]

I have now concentrated all my prayers into one, and that one prayer is this, that I may die to self, and live wholly to Him. - C.H. Spurgeon

[2] It's a Partnership - Unity [Acts 2:42-47]

[3] It's a Process - Sanctification

Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. ¹⁸ As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. ¹⁹ And for their sake I consecrate myself, that they also may be sanctified in truth. [John 17:17-19]

Pursue peace with all men, and the sanctification without which no one will see the Lord. ¹⁵ See to it that no one comes short of the grace of God; that no root of bitterness springing up causes trouble, and by it many be defiled; . . . [Hebrews 12:14-15 - Original NIV]

Genesis 2:3 Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified [*qadash* - consecrated] it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made. [NASB-1995]

Exodus 19:10-11 . . . the Lord said to Moses, “Go to the people and consecrate [*qadash*] them today and tomorrow, and let them wash their garments ¹¹ and be ready for the third day. For on the third day the Lord will come down on Mount Sinai in the sight of all the people. [ESV]

Exodus 31:12b-14a The Lord spoke to Moses, saying, ¹³ “But as for you, speak to the sons of Israel, saying, ‘You shall surely observe My sabbaths; for this is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations, that you may know that I am the Lord who sanctifies [*qadash*] you. ^{14a} Therefore you are to observe the sabbath, for it is holy to you. [NASB-1995]

Joshua 3:5 Then Joshua said to the people, “Consecrate [*qadash*] yourselves, for tomorrow the Lord will do wonders among you.” [NASB-1995]

Jeremiah 1:5 “Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, And before you were born I consecrated [*qadash*] you; I have appointed you a prophet to the nations.” [NASB-1995]

Acts 2:42-47 And they devoted themselves to the apostles' [1] teaching and the [2] fellowship, to the [3] breaking of bread and the [4] prayers. ⁴³ And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. ⁴⁴ And all who believed were together and had all things in common. ⁴⁵ And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. ⁴⁶ And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, ⁴⁷ praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved. [ESV]

Discussion Questions/Prayer

[1] CONSECRATION: What does the Hebrew word *qadash* mean? [Read Genesis 2:3, Exodus 19:10-11, Joshua 3:5, Numbers 7:1, and Jeremiah 1:5] What do these verses show us about how God used the call to consecration with the people of Israel? [Hint: Preparation]

[2] SURRENDER: [Read Exodus 31:12b-14a and Galatians 2:20] What's the significance of the Sabbath? Do you have a time during the week when you have a personal Sabbath when you spend time with God, focus on rest, and take time to be aware of how God is working in you and through you? Peter Scazzerro explains that, “We stop on Sabbaths because God is on the throne, assuring us the world will not fall apart if we cease our activities.” [Emotionally Healthy Spirituality]. Do you trust God enough to slow down and practice Sabbath Rest?

[3] UNITY: [Read Acts 2:42-47] What were the early church's five key components [disciplines] that led to their success? How did their commitment to these disciplines affect their relationships with each other and their reputation in the community?

[4] SANCTIFICATION: [Read Hebrews 12:14-15] According to these verses what are the key objectives to growing in our sanctification personally and as a community?

[5] PRAYER: Pray for God to continue to work in us and through us as we walk side-by-side as the body of Christ pursuing unity and living in a manner worthy of the calling of our Savior.

This is Who We are! [Discussion Question Notes]

Please use the discussion questions on the main notes sheet as you lead. These notes provide some help for some of the questions, but they do not cover every part of the discussion questions.

[1] What does the Hebrew word Qadash mean?

The Hebrew word 'qadash' means to be set apart or consecrated. It is used to describe the act of being made holy or dedicated to God. When something or someone is 'qadash', it is separated from common or ordinary use and is devoted to a sacred purpose. This word is often associated with the process of sanctification and the setting apart of individuals, objects, or places for divine purposes. In the context of the document, 'qadash' is mentioned in relation to consecration and preparation for significant events in the Bible, such as the giving of the Ten Commandments, the observance of the Sabbath, and the entrance into the Promised Land.

[2] SURRENDER: What is the significance of the Sabbath?

Observing the Sabbath holds significant importance in the context of consecration and the relationship between God and His people.

The word Sabbath comes from the Hebrew word *shavat*, which means "to rest from labor".

The Sabbath is a day of rest and worship that was commanded by God in the Old Testament. It is a day set apart from the rest of the week, dedicated to honoring and communing with God.

The significance of observing the Sabbath can be understood in several ways:

- A. Rest and Refreshment: The Sabbath provides a designated time for individuals to rest from their work and find physical and mental rejuvenation. It allows people to recharge and find balance in their lives.
- B. Communion with God: By observing the Sabbath, individuals have the opportunity to focus on their relationship with God. It is a time to worship, reflect, and draw closer to Him. It provides a space for spiritual growth and connection with the divine.
- C. Reminder of God's Creation: The Sabbath serves as a reminder of God's creation of the world in six days and His rest on the seventh day. It acknowledges God as the ultimate Creator and sustainer of all things.
- D. Symbol of Covenant: Observing the Sabbath is a sign of the covenant between God and His people. It signifies their commitment to follow His commandments and live in obedience to Him.
- E. Community and Fellowship: The Sabbath also promotes community and fellowship among believers. It is a day to gather together, worship collectively, and engage in acts of kindness and service towards others.

Overall, observing the Sabbath is significant as it provides a dedicated time for rest, worship, and spiritual growth, while also symbolizing the covenant relationship between God and His people. It fosters a deeper connection with God and promotes community among believers.

Extra of Romans 12:1-2: To present our bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God means complete and total surrender. It's the difference between what a chicken and a pig bring to a bacon-and-egg breakfast. The chicken makes a contribution; the pig gives everything. What we often try to do with God is give an egg here and an egg there, but God wants sacrifice—the ham and bacon. Only total surrender can be called true worship. [TESB]

[3] UNITY: What were the five key components [disciplines] of the early church that led to their success? [Acts 2:42,47]

- A. Teaching
- B. Fellowship
- C. Breaking of bread
- D. Prayers.
- E. Outreach [Evangelism]

The early church was known for four activities that should be foundational for every kingdom-minded local church. First, they had devotion to the apostles' teaching. Thus, believers learned God's perspective (based on his inerrant Word) on every matter so that they could obey him, experience spiritual growth, and make kingdom impact. Second, they devoted themselves to fellowship—mutually sharing the life of Christ within the family of God. A disconnected Christian is a disobedient and unfruitful Christian. Third, the church regularly prioritized worship, reflected in the breaking of bread (i.e., the Lord's Supper) and prayer (2:42). Fourth, they were engaged in evangelistic outreach because every day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved (2:47). Everyone was involved in evangelism; they weren't merely letting the apostles take care of it. [TESB]

How did their commitment to these disciplines affect their relationships with each other and their reputation in the community? [Acts 2:43-47]

- A. And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. [43]
" . . . the kind of miracles that Jesus performed were now being performed through the apostles; as "wonders and signs" validated Jesus as God's promised Messiah, they now confirm the ministry and the message of the apostles as coming from God. The result, awe." [ECNT]
- B. All who believed were together [Unified] and had all things in common . [44]
"They remained owners of their property while being willing to use their possessions for the common good." [ECNT]
- C. And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, [46a]
day by day. Greek associations typically met once a month. Except for the most radical sects, the daily sharing here is unusual in antiquity and most resembles how people treated members of their own family. [CBSB]
- D. . . . they received their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God . . . [46b-47a]
"In other words, the believers in Jerusalem shared meals both on the occasion of their daily visits to the temple and in private houses. These communal meals presumably took place in the late afternoon and early evening, the time of the main meal also in Greek and Roman culture. The food that was consumed would have been bread, legumes, eggs, perhaps olives, dates, and figs, and sometimes fish." [ECNT]
- E. Having favor with all the people. [47b] [Good Reputation]
- F. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved. [47c] [Growth]
"The meetings of the believers in the temple and in their homes were so attractive that unbelievers started to attend. As individual people came to faith in Jesus Christ, the church grew numerically, at a regular pace." [ECNT]

"Luke's formulation carefully preserves the primacy of God in the "success" of the Jerusalem Christians. It is the Lord who increased the number of believers. God is the author of the salvation of the new converts" [ECNT]

[4] According to Hebrews 12:14-15, achieving sanctification involves two key aspects:

A. Pursuing peace with all people: The passage states, "Pursue peace with all men." This means actively seeking and promoting peace in our relationships with others. It involves striving for harmony, reconciliation, and treating others with love, respect, and kindness. By pursuing peace, we contribute to an environment that fosters sanctification.

B. Guarding against bitterness and defilement: The passage continues, "See to it that no one comes short of the grace of God; that no root of bitterness springing up causes trouble, and by it many be defiled."

Here, we are urged to be vigilant and cautious about allowing bitterness to take root in our hearts. Bitterness can lead to trouble and defilement, causing harm not only to ourselves but also to others. To achieve sanctification, we must guard against bitterness and its negative effects.

In summary, according to these verses, sanctification is achieved by actively pursuing peace with others and guarding against bitterness and defilement. By cultivating a spirit of peace and avoiding bitterness, we create an environment conducive to growth in holiness and the pursuit of God's will personally and as a community.