



Whether you realize it or not, for the past several years, evangelicals have been engaged in an intense ongoing discussion about the doctrine of sanctification (the process of becoming more like Christ). Scripture’s teaching on sanctification matters greatly. It impacts and reflects what we believe about God, salvation, preaching, Christian fellowship, and a host of other doctrines. Today, popular church leaders and whole churches have adopted a view of sanctification that requires them to do little more than “remember the gospel” and “consider who you are in Christ.” In *Sanctification: The Christian’s Pursuit of God-Given Holiness*, I think Mike Riccardi captures Scripture’s emphasis very well – the Christian’s duty to aggressively pursue the holiness that is graciously given by God.

I remember the first time I read this book. Riccardi, a pastor at Grace Community Church in Los Angeles, succinctly communicated the contribution of grace and faith to holiness. The impact of this book on my own thinking far exceeded the book’s slim size. Page 40 is worth the price of the book in my opinion! I am sure you will be blessed in reading it this month.

— Omri Miles

Heart-Shepherding Helps

1. **Scripture Memory.** Consider memorizing some of the following passages having to do with sanctification:
 - a. John 14:21
 - b. 2 Corinthians 3:18
 - c. Philippians 2:12-13

2. **Self-Examination.** Consider your response to your own sin. Do you tend to think of God’s grace in such a way that diminishes your own responsibility to aggressively pursue holiness at all costs (Matthew 5:27-30)? Do you focus on your own striving for holiness in such a way that makes Christ and the gospel an afterthought or periphery considerations (1 Corinthians 1:30-31)?

3. **Counseling Implications.** Believers need to hear different counsel from us depending on that person’s need at that moment (see 1 Thessalonians 5:14). Think about the past few opportunities you had to counsel, encourage, or instruct another believer. Did your instruction give appropriate weight to the gospel and its implications as well as personal obedience?

Suggested One-Month Reading Plan:

18.5 pages per week (less than 3 pages/day)

Week 1: Monday, May 29 - Sunday, June 4

Foreword – 3 pages

Chapter 1 – 5 pages

Chapter 2 – 12 pages

Week 2 : Monday, June 5 - Sunday, June 11

Chapter 3 – 8 pages

Chapter 4 – 13 pages

Week 3: Monday, June 12 - Sunday, June 18

Chapter 5 – 3 pages

Chapter 6 – first 11 pages

Week 4: Monday, June 25 - Sunday, July 2

Chapter 6 – remaining 15 pages