


Saints!



What does the Bible say?

Sunday, May 4 at 8:00 & 10:45 + Monday, May 5 at 7 PM

Third Sunday of Easter – 2014

Wednesday Bible Classes – Beginning on May 7 at 11 AM & 7 PM

Introduction: Dear friends in Christ: Since the topic of “saints” has been in the news recently, we are focusing on that topic today! Rather than speak about the opinions of people, who are sinners – *just like us*, let’s turn our attention to *what the Bible says about saints!*

1. **The Word “Saint” in the Bible:** It is found 67 times in the NASB – 7 times in the OT and 60 times in the NT. The Greek word “ἅγιος” is the source of our English word “saint,” which can also be translated “holy.” Therefore, “saints” are “holy ones” – it’s *not* that they are sinless, *but God sees them as such through Jesus!*
2. **How People Become Saints:**
 - a. If it was up to us *none of us could be a saint*; here are two reasons: (1) “all have sinned” (Rom. 3:23), so we are not holy and (2) we are “helpless” (Rom. 5:6) to make ourselves holy! So God took action for us and for all: “God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions...” (Eph. 2:4-5 NIV)
 - b. The Theological Dictionary of the NT states: “On the holy stump of the OT people of God the new branches from the Gentile world have been

engrafted (Rom. 11:17), and they are sanctified [thus made holy] by the stump. The stump is obviously Christ... (Rom. 12:15).” (Vol. I:106)

- i. ^{NAS} **1 Corinthians 6:11** “...but you were washed [cleansed of your sins], but you were sanctified [set apart from the sinful world], but you were justified [made right in God’s sight] in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and in the Spirit of our God.”
 - ii. ^{NAS} **Ephesians 5:25** “...Christ...loved the church and gave Himself up for her; ²⁶ that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word [that’s baptism], ²⁷ ...that she should be holy and blameless.” (Eph. 5:25-27 NAS)
 - iii. ^{NAS} **Colossians 1:22** “[God] has now reconciled you in [Jesus’] fleshly body through death, in order to present you before Him holy and blameless...”
 - iv. ^{NAS} **1 John 1:7** “...the blood of Jesus... cleanses us from all sin.” (1Jo 1:7 NAS)
 - c. So “it is not by nature but by divine calling that Christians are “ἅγιοι” [holy]; they owe their membership of the holy [Christian] community to the call of divine grace in Christ...” (Vol. I:107)
3. **Some Biblical References to “Saints”:**
 - a. These saints are physically alive:
 - i. Ananias answered the Lord regarding Saul: “I have heard from many about this man,

how much harm he did to Your **saints at Jerusalem...**” (Acts 9:13 NAU)

- ii. Paul explained what he did: I locked up “many of the **saints in prisons...**” (Act 26:10 NAS)
- iii. Paul called himself a saint: ^{NAS} **Ephesians 3:8** “To me, the very least of all saints, this grace was given...”

b. Paul addressed many of his letters to saints:

- i. ^{NAS} **Romans 1:7** “...to all who are beloved of God in Rome, called *as* saints...”
- ii. ^{ESV} **1 Corinthians 1:2** “To the church of God that is in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints...”
- iii. ^{NIV} **Ephesians 1:1** “Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, **To the saints in Ephesus**, the faithful in Christ Jesus...”
- iv. ^{NAS} **Philippians 1:1** “Paul and Timothy, bond-servants of Christ Jesus, **to all the saints** in Christ Jesus who are in **Philippi**, including the overseers and deacons...”

4. These Qualities Characterize Saints:

- a. They fear the Lord: “...the time *came* for the dead to be judged, and *the time* to reward Your ~~bond-servants~~ [slaves] the prophets and **the saints** [namely] **those who fear Your name**, the small and the great...” (Rev. 11:18 NAU)
- b. Fellow-believers delight in them: David prayed: “As for the **saints** who are in the earth [not dead,

but alive], They are the majestic ones in whom is all my delight.” (Psalm 16:3 NAS)

- c. They are equipped and serve: Jesus “gave some *as* apostles, and some *as* prophets, and some *as* evangelists, and some *as* pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the **saints** for the work of service...” (Eph. 4:11-12 NAS)
- d. They live above accusation: “...do not let immorality or any impurity or greed even be named among you, as is proper among **saints...**” (Eph. 5:3 NAS)
- e. They keep obeying and trusting: “Here is the perseverance of the **saints** who keep the commandments of God and their faith in Jesus.” (Rev 14:12 NAS)
- f. God will finally defeat their enemies: “...they ...surrounded the camp of the **saints** and the beloved city, and fire came down from heaven and devoured them.” (Rev 20:9 NAS)

Conclusion: When it comes to questions like: ♦why do we exist, ♦what is sin, ♦how are people saved, and ♦who are saints, *may our only trusted source be God’s Holy Word!*

On the basis of the Bible, Martin Luther taught that we – *as Christians* – are, *at the same time*, both saint and sinner! Thus, *in the sight of each other*, we are sinners; but, ***in God’s sight through Jesus, we are saints!*** Therefore, *let us rejoice in God’s wonderful gift of salvation through Jesus!*

And all God’s people said: **Amen!**

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Having been saved thru Jesus, let us live for Him and share the good news!
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