

# **Faith Walk! - Sermon Discussion**

**Date** : 8 May 2022  
**Sermon Title** : Saints  
**Speaker** : Rev Reuben Ng  
**Text** : 2 Corinthians 5:17, 21

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## **INTRODUCTION**

We tend to use the term 'Saint' in reference to people like Paul or Peter and John, the disciples who were with Jesus and had performed miracles in their time on earth. Our brothers and sisters in Christ in the Catholic tradition have a different view on 'Saints'. 'Saints' are selected through a complicated process where only the names of those who have passed on for at least five years may be proposed for consideration and investigation to ensure that the person had lived an exemplary lifestyle, as well as, there must be at least two miracles attributed to this person post mortem. The Bible however, teaches that the all believers of Jesus Christ are saints and this means that in God's eyes, we are all saints!

## **Some Bible verses referring to Believers as Saints**

Apostle Paul to whom 13 (or 14 if we include Hebrews) out of the 27 books in the New Testament are attributed, wrote the following about saints (ESV):

Romans 1:7 - To all those in Rome who are loved by God and called to be saints:

1 Corinthians 1:2 - To the church of God that is in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints....

2 Corinthians 1:1 - To the church of God that is at Corinth, with all the saints who are in the whole of Achaia:

Ephesians 1:1 - To the saints who are in Ephesus,...

Philippians 1:1 - To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are at Philippi,...

Colossians 1:2 - To the saints and faithful brothers in Christ at Colossae....

2 Thessalonians 1:10 - when he (Jesus) comes on that day to be glorified in his saints,....

1 Timothy 5:9-10 - if she has brought up children, has shown hospitality, has washed the feet of the saints,....

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Philemon 1:4-5 - I thank my God always when I remember you in my prayers, because I hear of your love and of the faith that you have toward the Lord Jesus and for all the saints,

Hebrews 13:24 - Greet all your leaders and all the saints.

If Apostle Paul who had a tremendous encounter with Jesus, received tons of revelations, schooled in scriptures as a Pharisee and strong in his doctrine and teachings was moved by the Holy Spirit to identify and call different churches and individuals as saints in his letters to them, it must mean that in God's view, anyone who is in Christ and believes Jesus is Son of God, and who follows Him is also called a saint. Hence, if Apostle Paul were to write to our church here in Commonwealth, he would address us as saints too!

## **Definition of Saint – Holy and set apart**

Paul was writing these letters to all who were still growing in faith to encourage them as they were shaky in their faith, yet he called them saints. He wrote to churches to instruct them because they were still lacking in knowledge about Christ, yet he called them saints. He also wrote letters to churches to correct them because they were doing things wrong, e.g. the church in Corinth was divided and had issues on morality, yet he called them saints.

## **So, what qualifies those Paul wrote to, or us, that we may be called saints?**

It is not going to church, reading and reflecting on Bible passages 7 days per week according to our "Transformed By The Word" reading plan, or serving more or tithing/giving more or praying or fasting that make us saints. No man can make another man or himself into a saint. Even in the Catholic tradition, the process is not for them to make someone into a saint but to help them identify who is a saint.

- There is only one person who can qualify us to be saints - Jesus Christ!

## **How Jesus qualifies us to be saints**

"For our sake God made Jesus to be sin who knew no sin..." (2 Corinthians 5:21a)

- Jesus who existed in the beginning with God before all things or time had never sinned. Even when He was tempted with sin by the devil, He resisted and rejected the sin and overcame the devil and did not sin.
- But 2000 years ago, for our sake, God placed all the sin of the entire world that rebels against God over and over again, on Jesus while He was on the Cross. God made Him to be sin who knew no sin in order to pay the debt of sin for you and me. We must recognize that it is a big deal that Jesus has done to have all our sins taken and placed on Him!
- Jesus had completed the work while on the cross because He said it is finished. (John 19:30) He has completely removed all our sins. There is no need for us to

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do more. It is wrong to think that we need to do a little more, such as pray more, read the Bible more etc. to be accepted as holy.

Although Jesus has completed the removal of the sins in us qualifying us to be saints, it is still incomplete as there is something else needed as can be seen in 2 Corinthians 5:21b.

**New Creation in Christ** - 2 Corinthians 5:21b continues with "...'so that'..."

**Parallel between the finished work of Creation, and the finished work of Christ on the Cross:**

6 <sup>th</sup> day of the week (Fri)	7 <sup>th</sup> day of the week (Sat)	1 <sup>st</sup> day of the week (Sun)
<b><u>The finished work of Creation</u></b> (Gen 2:1-2)	God rested (Sabbath)	New week for Adam & Eve
<b><u>The finished work of Christ on the Cross</u></b> (Good Friday)	Christ buried (rest)	Christ resurrected (Easter)
2 Cor 5:21: God made Jesus to be sin	so that	In Him we become the righteousness of God – we become saints
2 Cor 5:17: In Christ, the old has passed away	behold	New Creation

When we obey God's command to be baptized, we are submerged in water, symbolic of us dying in Christ so the old is gone. We are then lifted out of the water, symbolic of us rising with Christ as a new creation.

Because of the finished work of Christ on the Cross, we become the righteousness of God. Christ has taken our sins and in exchange given us His righteousness so it is solely based on what Jesus has done that we become saints. What we do does not define us, so, even though we may sometimes do things which displease God, our identity is no longer a sinner but a saint in Christ.

## **CONCLUSION**

We are not sinners saved by grace. But rather, we WERE sinners saved by grace but now ARE saints living in and by grace. We can help each other live more and more like a saint by remembering our new identity in Christ. Saints resist sins. As a saint, you and I are set apart, therefore let us choose not to sin but to live a saintly life reflecting the righteousness of God that we have become, as a new creation in Christ!

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## **A. Review Sermon Application**

***Purpose: Reflect on how you have been embodying God's truth.***

1. a. How successful have you been in fulfilling what you/your group had committed to do for the last FaithWalk!?
- b. What were some challenges you faced and what would you like to celebrate?
  
2. The sermon concluded with "Saints resist sins."
  - a. How have you been tempted with sins since hearing this sermon on 8<sup>th</sup> May?
  - b. What were the struggles and successes you experienced in resisting them?

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## **B. Relate Sermon Content**

***Purpose: Relate with the Truth and Resolve for Transformation.***

3. Read 2 Corinthians 5:21, then 2 Corinthians 5:17 slowly. Consider your old ways before believing in Jesus as Son of God and following Him, and what you are today.
  - a. In what ways has God made you a new creation?
  - b. What are some qualities in you that have changed as God made you a new creation?
  - c. A saint is holy and set apart for God. How set apart for God are you in your
    - (i) Time and purpose?
    - (ii) Talents and gifts?
  
4. 'We can help each other to live more and more like a saint.'
  - a. What are some saintly qualities that you have observed in your small group members? Take time to affirm each other so you may be encouraged to persevere in living more and more like a saint.
  - b. The finished work of Jesus when he became sin for us is so that we might become the righteousness of God.
    - (i) What is one step you need to take to live more and more like a saint – holy and set apart, able to resist sins?
    - (ii) How can your small group members help you achieve 4b(i) above? Note your progress for the following week(s) till your next meeting and be prepared to share at your next meeting to help one another grow.

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## **C. Testimonies and Prayer**

***Purpose: Give glory to God and seek Him.***

5. Share your testimony on how knowing your identity (new creation) as a saint in Christ has helped you resist sins.

OR

Give thanks to God for the finished work of Jesus on the cross when He took away all your sins so that you might be the righteousness of God through the help of the Holy Spirit.

6. With a prayer partner, bring all that have been shared to the Lord, asking for the Holy Spirit's empowerment to be holy and set apart both in your being and doing.

Pray for our church to take our identity as "saints", the new creation in Christ seriously, by remembering that it has cost our Lord a great deal to take our sins upon Him who has no sin, so we might be the righteousness of God.

## Optional items:

Suggested worship songs:

1. Yet Not I But Through Christ In Me – CityAlight  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zundjUFazfg>
2. You Alone – Don Harris [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0xDgW\\_LGdZs](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0xDgW_LGdZs)
3. Refiner's Fire – Brian Doerksen  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=OfH9j-TLg3U>

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