



## To Be A Saint

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I would like to speak to you this morning about sainthood. How many of you are saints, actual saints? I think I saw about three of four hands. Some of the hands are about half- way up. Hopefully after this sermon you will figure that out.

H.M.S. Richards once said, "I've done a lot of study and I've concluded that there will be no black people in Heaven." He went on, "And further more I've concluded that there will be no white people in heaven." Now you might be thinking, "Where is he going with this?" He continued and said, "From my study the only people who will be in heaven will be red people. They have been washed in the blood of the Lamb." And he was right! There aren't going to be any white people or black people, we're all going to be red people in heaven, washed in the blood of the Lamb. Jesus' blood completely covers us. This actually is the description of a saint because a saint is not somebody who is really superior. Webster's Dictionary defines a saint this way: a holy person; a person who is exceptionally meek, charitable, patient. The Biblical definition of a saint is somebody who is washed in the blood of the Lamb. Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb? You ought to know if you are or aren't. Have you asked Him to forgive your sins? You should know if you're a saint or not. A saint is one who is covered with Jesus' blood."

Come to Colossians 1:14 (KJV). It's speaking about Jesus Christ. It says, ...In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins. That's where your redemption is. It's in the blood of

Jesus Christ. Jesus' own blood blots out our sins. Wouldn't it be nice if we could pick out the saints because they had an actual halo over their heads and it was all lit up. Then you could say, "Yes, there's one, there's one over there!" We would know, wouldn't we? Well, we can know who the saints are. There are Christians who believe that saints are those who will walk on the streets of gold up in Heaven right now. Others think there is no such thing as a saint today. And let's not forget the belief in the most popular secular Saint is one that kids talk about at Christmas time: Saint Nicholas. But I will tell you the truth: many saints are alive right now. In fact, a saint is somebody who has been born again and accepted Jesus as their Savior. Look at Psalm 16. This will tell you where the saints are. Where do saints live? Do you know the address of a saint? Psalm 16:3, "But to the saints that are in the earth, and to the excellent, in whom is all my delight." The saints are here in the earth. The saints are right here, the excellent ones, the ones that He regards, His children. A saint is a precious child of God.

So, the saints are alive now, aren't they. The Saints live right here on this earth right now. They are the Godly people now living in the land. They are Godly because they are covered with the blood of Jesus, not because of their own efforts. Do you know of someone who you would consider a saint? I do. I've known many that I was just sure they were saints because they were so saintly. Of course they would not admit they are saints. You can ask anybody, "Are you a saint?" And most will probably say, "Well, I don't know." Well, yes, we should know. Here's a statement from My Life Today, p. 273. "God takes none to heaven but those who are first made saints in this world through the grace of Christ." We are made where? Right here in this old sinful world. How are saints made? "Through the grace of Christ". By His grace; not by our works but by His grace. That's how we are made into saints.

So Saints are created. Are you simply amazed at the creative ability of God that He can create the worlds out of nothing? Well, I would submit to you that when God makes a saint, that's even a greater feat because when He makes a world, He makes it out of nothing, but when He makes a saint He makes it out of something that is unsaintly, less than nothing. So He starts with something really bad. That's an amazing thing. If the truth were known, some of the greatest saints in this world have been some of the greatest sinners, and we are all sinners. In fact, there are saints are right here in our church today.

1 Corinthians 14:33, "For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints." The saints are in the congregation. They congregate together. They attend church if they are physically able. They do not skip church to do their own thing. Saints put God first in priority. That's what the saints do! Psalm 89:5, "And the heavens shall praise thy wonders, O LORD: thy faithfulness also in the congregation of the saints."

The Saints assemble to worship God in church. They like to assemble. They love to congregate together to worship God. Psalm 149:1, "Praise ye the LORD. Sing unto the LORD a new song, and his praise in the congregation of saints."

The saints assemble together to worship. That's what you have done here this morning. You have assembled together. You love to assemble together to worship the Lord, right? That's a saint. They assemble together. They come as often as possible. How many of you remember when you first came alive in Christ and made your decision to follow Him all the way that if the doors of the Church were open you wanted to be there - you longed to fellowship with believers! A saint commits to be in church for every service.

The surest steps toward happiness in this world are the church steps. All Saints go to church but not everyone in church is a saint. What was Jesus' custom found in Luke Chapter 4:16? "And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read." He went to church on the Sabbath day and participated. So that's a good custom. That's what the saints do.

Saints are a giving people. Come to Psalm 50:5. Here's another habit that the saints have: "Gather my saints together unto me; those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice." God's saints sacrifice for God's church. Have you sacrificed everything for the One who loves you from the foundations of the earth? Your time, your means, your cherished possessions and someday perhaps your very life? Saints are a giving people. That's why they're so happy!

Psalm 149:5, "Let the saints be joyful in glory: let them sing aloud upon their beds. Do you sing in bed? You hear of folks who sing in the shower. But the saints sing in their beds. What an amazing thing! Your wife wakes you up and you're singing.

The next time you look in the mirror, look to see if you resemble a saint. The saints have a lot of joy. They sing on their beds. They're happy. Happier faces are seen on bottles of Iodine than on some so-called Saints. We are not refugees from a pickle jar. We are saints! Saints are supposed to smile and be happy people and they sing aloud upon their beds. True happiness is a blend of gratitude, service, obedience, and saintly contentment or patience. I truly believe that God's remnant people have the capability of being the happiest people on the earth. Do you? We ought to be because we know Jesus, don't we? Knowing Jesus as a personal friend and Saviour is the basis of joy. We have something to do, someone to love, something to look forward to and a heaven that is coming soon. Our basis of gladness is Christ. Psalm 132 speaks about the saints. Psalm 132:9, "...let thy saints shout for joy." The saints are indeed a happy people.

Saints are also sort of blind! God gives Saints special eyes that when they look at someone they admire something in them. They can find good even in the worst criminals. They pray for them. This delivers them from the burden of judging or condemning others.

Saints are thankful people. "Who is the greatest saint in the world? It is not he who prays most or fasts most; it is not he who gives most alms, or is most eminent for temperance, chastity, or justice; but it is he who is always thankful to God, who wills everything that God wills, who receives everything as an instance of God's goodness, and has a heart always ready to praise God for it." - William Law Saints serve. Psalm 79:2 speaks about the saints under great peril and persecution. It calls them a certain term. "The dead bodies of thy servants have they given to be meat unto the fowls of the heaven, the flesh of thy saints unto the beasts of the earth." There's a synonym. What's the synonym in this verse for "saint?" It's "servant." We are servants. Saints are servants. That's the service of sainthood. A saint is somebody who serves the Lord and his fellow brothers and sisters. Someone has said, "A saint is like a wheelbarrow. They only go when they are pushed." That's not true! A saint is somebody who does serve, somebody who is willing, who wants to serve, who volunteers. That's a saint.

A farmer dug a pond to water his flocks. He was disappointed because in the summer his pond was dried up and in the winter it was frozen like a lake of ice. It did not serve his needs. How does God look at us? When He really needs a servant, do we ice over, do we dry up? Saints are servants of God, people that

God can trust.

A genuine saint is like a good pocket watch, he has an open face, busy hands, and is made up of pure gold. He is well regulated, and is full of good works. His goal is to be a blessing to his Master. He is connected to His Master by the golden chain of love. And a saint will never quit! They are patient! Revelation 14:12 says, "Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." Saints remain! They don't quit! They are patient.

Saints do not retire. Now, there are some of you here today that are retired. But a saint does not retire from Jesus. Some churches are plagued with 'retired Saints'. Too many saints wish to be counted in, but not counted on. Can Jesus count on you? God's church is not supposed to be a retirement home for saints but an opportunity for saints to serve.

Saints are in the perfecting mode. God gives pastors, God gives teachers to the churches. Why? One reason is listed in Ephesians 4:11,12, "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; 12 For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ."

So it's for the perfecting of the saints. Do saints need perfecting? Indeed, we all need the Heavenly perfection that is freely offered. The church is a hospital for sinners, not a club for impeccable faultless saints. Who is it that perfects us? Jesus Christ our Redeemer. He is willing to cover us with His Perfection! Do you want the perfection He is offering you today? Choose His perfection for your life!

Saints do have problems. In 1Corinthians 1 Paul is writing to ...the sanctified... (vs 2). But in verse 11 he says: ...there are quarrels (contentions) among you. Saints have contentions. Did you ever have an argument in your house? Did you ever have contention in your house? A saint has not lost the capability to sin but is developing a growing distaste and even a hatred for sin. They are getting away from sinful ways more and more. You've heard of the book Pilgrims Progress. Some so called "Christians" can't be called pilgrims because they never make any progress. Saints are making progress. Maybe it's slow sometimes, but they are making progress.

Mrs. EG White says in Adventist Home, p. 16.2: "If you would be a saint in heaven, you must first be a saint on earth. The traits of character you cherish in life will not be changed by death or by the resurrection. You will come up from the grave with the same disposition you manifested in your home and in society. Jesus does not change the character at His coming. The work of transformation must be done now. Our daily lives are determining our destiny."

Basically it sounds like this earth is the garden where the saints are grown, doesn't it. This is where it happens. It happens right here in the church. God cannot make a bad person do good any more than you could make a coyote act like a happy little puppy dog with a wagging tail, or a vulture behave like a dove. But if you choose to be like Jesus and if you daily behold Him, you will slowly but surely become a kind Christlike Saint. God doesn't make you what you don't want to be. But if you ask Him then He can make you - He can change you. He is so willing to grow you in His garden!

"Through divine strength the weakest saint is more than a match for him (Satan) and all his angels." - The Faith I Live By. Pg. 318. There are weak saints, but even the weakest is more than a match for the

devil. So, some saints are weaker than other saints because they have not grown as much. Maybe they haven't been in the Truth as long. Maybe they haven't been Christians as long. They have chosen Jesus as their Savior but they're still growing to be more like Him. And that's what we want to do: to be more like Jesus.

Saints are a praying group. Revelation 5:8 speaks of the prayers of the saints. A true Saint is like a field of ripening corn: The riper he grows, the lower he bows his head. Have you ever driven by a corn field? There's a farmer's field on Brookfield Road and in the fall of the year those corn heads begin to go down and they bow down to the earth. When they are fully bowed it is time to harvest the crop. The saints bow their heads in prayer.

Saints are humble. You've probably noticed that. If you ask saintly folk, "Are you a saint?" They often answer, "No, I'm not a saint." Well, they are. Paul said in Ephesians 3:8 that he was the least of the saints. Martin Luther said he was a worm. Now, did Martin Luther call himself a worm because he enjoys being wormy? The saint does not call himself a worm because he enjoys being wormy, but because there is simply no other way graphic enough to express the richness of God and the meagerness of man. He was humble. Saints are humble.

So if you would like to see a saint, go home and look in the mirror. If you see the marks of Jesus growing in your face, you are His child. Saints are obedient. Revelation 14:12, "Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." So, why do they keep the commandments? Because they love Him. Because they love Jesus. A saint is somebody that loves Jesus. I want to give you several special blessings that God wants to give to you. Special blessings are in store for the saints:

Psalm 37:28, "For the LORD loveth judgment, and forsaketh not his saints; they are preserved for ever: but the seed of the wicked shall be cut off."

Psalm 34:9, "O fear the LORD, ye his saints: for there is no want to them that fear him."

You are one of His saints. You really are if you are His child. A saint is a child of God. A saint is someone who has been born again, has accepted Jesus Christ as their Savior. Stephanie and recently Jackie were just baptized. Are they saints? Yes, the Bible says so! Have you given your life to God? You are saved. Now, you may do some unsaintly things sometimes, but if you are striving to love Jesus more, to surrender your life to Him more, to fulfill more of His purpose in your life, then you're a saint. That doesn't mean that you will always do everything perfectly. But you are a saint if Jesus is your focus, your love, your joy. If you enjoy attending church, if you enjoy fellow shipping together, if you enjoy assembling together, congregating together, all of these things we have talked about, then you're a saint. Why? Because your Father in Heaven says so.

So, will there be white people in heaven? Will there be black people? No, there will just be red people, saved by the blood of Jesus Christ. Saints because of His blood. That's what entitles you to sainthood. When the saints enter through the gates of Heaven, I'll tell you, I want to be there, don't you? But right now God's saints are here, right here in church, in His service and for His service, and praising God for the wonderful and amazing transformation into the likeness of Jesus Christ!

