

## Consecrated to God for God (*saints*, v1)

- a. *Saints* means “holy ones”
- i. Used substantively mostly of impersonal things, although a few times of people and often of God’s name
    1. Temple and Tabernacle are holy (Lev 16:20,33; 1 Ch 29:3; Ps 5:7)
    2. The altar is holy (Ex 29:37;
    3. The ground is holy (Ex 3:5)
  - ii. Used adjectively of predominantly persons
    1. God’s character (Ps 22:3; 99:9; Is 6:3; Rev 4:8)
    2. Angels (Mark 8:38; Luke 9:26; Rev 14:10)
    3. Humans (Ezra 8:28; Ps 16:3; 34:9; Rom 1:7)
  - iii. The basic idea refers to the quality possessed by things or persons that could approach a divinity.
    1. Used in the NT of John the Baptist (Mark 6:20)
    2. prophets (Luke 1:70; 2 Pet 3:2)
    3. apostles (Eph 3:5)
    4. children (1 Cor 7:14)
  - iv. When this term is used of persons, it does not connote an *inherent* or *intrinsic* holiness or uniqueness, for the word is also used of pagan cult prostitutes, whether they are male or female.
    1. Note Phil 3:12 – he has not laid hold of *perfection*, but Christ has laid hold of him
    2. Though this letter is addressed to “saints” Paul makes it a point to show that they should live as holy ones, not live in sin.
    3. So, in the NT, all believers are saints, not that they can possess or claim divinity, but that they have appropriated Jesus Christ’s work of His holiness into their lives by faith.
- b. Holiness Comes Only “In Christ”
- i. Believers have his righteousness; we are blameless before God through Him
  - ii. not inherent, but imputed (1 Cor 6:11; Titus 3:3-7)
  - iii. union with Christ (our life for His, His life for ours...grace)
    1. Keep an eye out for these phrases: “in Him” or “through Him” or “by Him” or “in Christ” etc.
    2. It is our union with Jesus Christ, not some gifting of our own or an inherent position of power that makes us holy ones
    3. The presence of His Spirit within us moves us to live lives like unto Him
- “It is no good giving me a play like Hamlet or King Lear, and telling me to write a play like that. Shakespeare could do it — I can’t. And it is no good showing me a life like the life of Jesus and telling me to live a life like that. Jesus could do it — I can’t. But if the genius of Shakespeare could come and live in me, then I could write plays like this. And if the Spirit could come into me, then I could live a life like his.”- William Temple
- iv. all are equally blameless, righteous
    1. There is no distinction between more holy ones and less holy ones in Christ
      - a. Even overseers and deacons ☺
        - i. Only place in the NT where overseers and deacons are mentioned in a greeting
        - ii. Most likely Paul mentions these here to authorize their authority within the Philippian church
        - iii. He is recognizing them as leaders so that they can lead
      - b. This is evidence that the early church had offices of authority already established and distinguishable from the greater Body (not holier, notice, but distinguishable)
    2. Phil 3:9
      - a. Righteousness not from Law but from God by faith
      - b. All who believe, i.e. saints, are made righteous with the righteousness that comes from God
      - c. Cf. 1 Cor 1:30-31; Eph 2:3-10

- c. Holiness Gives Us Access to the Father through the Son
  - i. given ability to enter His presence
    - 1. seated in the heavens with Christ (Col 3:1-4; Eph 2:6)
    - 2. We can enter within the veil (Heb 6:19-20)
    - 3. We can draw near to God b/c of Christ (James 4:8; Heb 10:22)
  - ii. set apart to be in His presence

The saving love of God is God's commitment to do everything necessary to enthrall us with what is most deeply and durably satisfying, namely himself. Since we are sinners and have no right and no desire to be enthralled with God, therefore God's love enacted a plan of redemption to provide that right and that desire. The supreme demonstration of God's love was the sending of his Son to die for our sins and to rise again so that sinners might have the right to approach God and might have the pleasure of his presence forever."

- John Piper, *God is the Gospel*, 13-14

- iii. only through the Son
  - 1. we are saints "in Christ Jesus" alone  
ILLUST: Isaac Newton staring into the reflection of the sun in a mirror. Burned his retinas into temporary blindness. The physical body cannot endure staring into the sunlight, neither can our sin-stained souls endure staring into the holiness of God. We need a Son Filter in order to gaze upon the glory of God: His name is Jesus.
  - 2. Heb 10:19ff
  - 3. Heb 7:19

- d. Holiness preaches of God's glory
  - i. set apart *to serve the living God*
    - 1. Heb 9:13-14 – the purpose of our "sanctification" (to make holy) is to serve the living God through the cleansing of the blood of Christ
    - 2. 1 Pet 1:14-19 – we are not to be conformed to the lusts of the world, but to be holy for the One who called us is holy and has ransomed us by His precious blood
  - ii. given spiritual gifts to serve Him in serving one another
    - 1. 1 Pet 4:10-11
  - iii. LIGHTHOUSE MIRRORS: Mirrors chosen, shaped, and placed near the source of the light reflect the glory of the light out into the troubled seas. As holy ones, we are chosen, shaped, and placed near to the light of God's glory so that we might reflect His beauty to the world. To sum up Dwight Moody, lighthouses don't blow horns, they shine forth light.

"In order for the Christian gospel to be good news it must provide an all-satisfying and eternal gift that undeserving sinners can receive and enjoy. For that to be true, the gift must be three things. First, the gift must be purchased by the blood and righteousness of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Our sins must be covered, and the wrath of God against us must be removed, and Christ's righteousness must be imputed to us. Second, the gift must be free and not earned. There would be no good news if we had to merit the gift of the gospel. Third, the gift must be God himself, above all his other gifts."- John Piper, *God is the Gospel*

We can approach the Holy God by faith in Jesus. In Christ we are consecrated to God for God, and we have access into the throne room of grace by the blood of Jesus. Let us rejoice that we are made holy by His sacrifice. And look around you, fellow believers, for you are surrounded by holy people, purchased by holy blood. Jesus has broken the power of sin and of death, presenting us to the Father blameless and without sin by His own doing. He is glorious to redeem us and to draw us near to Himself, not merely in forgiveness, but with the intimacy of His own Holy Spirit within us.

So let us live holy lives, worthy of the calling of being near to Him, remembering the price which was paid to the glory of God the Father, through the blood of the Son, by the power of the eternal Spirit: the Holy God who reigns forever and ever. Amen