

Your Identity In Christ

You Are A Saint

The Bible demonstrates that those who are in Christ have a rich spiritual identity. This involves being a saint. Yet, while it is common for people to identify as “Christians,” many may be unfamiliar with what it means for Christians to be among the ones who are identified as saints. Still, we see this concept plainly taught in the pages of Scripture (1 Corinthians 1:2). Therefore, if you are going to fulfill your true purpose in Jesus Christ, you must embrace your identity as a saint and all this involves.

1) God is holy. The terms “holy,” “sanctify,” and “saint” are deeply connected. The general idea of them is to be set apart. Yet, before we can grasp how any of these terms are used in connection with God’s people, we must first understand how they are used concerning God. For, God is often proclaimed as being holy (Exodus 15:11; Isaiah 6:3; Revelation 4:8)! In this, we should see a couple aspects of God being holy (set apart). First, God is set apart in that He is far above everything and everyone else that exists – whether in the spiritual or the physical realm (1 Samuel 2:1-2; Psalm 105:1-3). Second, God is set apart from everything that is evil and is committed to everything that is good and right (1 John 1:5; Titus 1:2). Therefore, God’s holiness then becomes the standard for what is right and wrong (as it is His word that is truth, John 17:17; Leviticus 11:44-45; 20:26). Because God is holy, whatever is brought into His immediate presence or fellowship must be sanctified (set apart, i.e. 2 Chronicles 7:16). Then, God’s holiness means that He hates sin (Proverbs 6:16-19) and cannot be in fellowship with those living in sin (1 John 1:5-7; Isaiah 59:1-2)!

2) God has provided a way for you to be set apart from sin and devoted to Him. The reality is that you (and all people) have sinned so as to separate yourself from this holy God and deserve His wrath (Romans 3:9-18, 23; Revelation 21:8). Under the old law, God had provided a system of animal sacrifices to atone for sin. Yet, these could never take

away sins (Hebrews 10:4). Instead, God has presented Jesus as the way of atonement for your sins so you can be sanctified and made holy (Romans 3:23-26). Indeed, Jesus Christ was willing to pay the price of your redemption so you could be holy before God with the cost of His life (Ephesians 5:25-27; Colossians 1:21-23)! Then, not only has God provided this way for you to be sanctified, but He has also called you to experience this sanctification through the gospel of Christ (the message of the New Testament, 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14; 2 Timothy 1:9-10).

3) You have been set apart. One who is a saint has heard this call of the gospel of Christ and responded in faith-filled obedience to its message. Consider the Corinthians as an example (who Paul called “saints” in 1 Corinthians 1:2). Acts 18 records Paul’s work to preach the gospel of Christ in the city of Corinth. Many who heard this message, believed, and were obedient in baptism (v. 8). As a result, these who had been guilty of much sin that separated them from God were now washed from their sins in Jesus’s blood, set apart from their sin and devoted to God, and declared righteous before God (1 Corinthians 6:9-11). This same thing has happened for all who have believed and obeyed the gospel of Jesus Christ (John 8:31-32; 1 Peter 1:18-25). Therefore, upon your baptism, you also were washed of your sins, set apart from your sin and devoted to God, and declared righteous before God! Now, as a saint you are part of God’s holy nation of people who are set apart from their past sinful ways and devoted to Him – called out of the ways of darkness into the marvelous light of God (1 Peter 2:9-10)! As a result, you can now experience the fellowship with God and with those who are in fellowship with God (1 John 1:5-7)!

4) You must now live as one set apart. Being a saint who has been made holy by Jesus’s blood is not something you can now take for granted. For, it is not just a one-time procedure of how God works on your life. Instead, God calls each one who has been set apart

to Him to live in this distinct way that is separated from sin and devoted to Him (1 Peter 1:13-17; 4:3-4; Romans 6:19-22)! Your focus must be to continue to learn God's holy ways and let Him mold you through His word as you eagerly pursue His holiness (Hebrews 12:14; 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1). Therefore, you must carefully evaluate every aspect of your life to see whether it is fitting with someone who has been set apart from the sinful ways of the world and been given in sacrificial devotion to God or not (Romans 12:1-2)! Do not let any area of your life be exempt from this evaluation (1 Peter 1:13-17, including your conduct, thoughts, words, habits, entertainment choices, character, clothing, work, relationships, etc.)! For, there are things that are not proper for God's holy people (Ephesians 5:1-5; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-8; 1 Timothy 2:9-10). While this does *not* mean you will never sin, it *does* mean that you are committed to getting and staying away from sin as you let God continue to work in your life through His powerful word as you wait for the return of Jesus (Philippians 2:12-16; 2 Peter 3:10-13)!

Being in Christ (a Christian) means that you are a saint. But, as we have seen, this is not an empty title or merely a way of describing yourself. Instead, this means that you have been set apart from your sins and devoted to God's service. Now, you must live as one who has been set apart in this way and pursue the holiness of God in every area of your life.

Thought Questions

(2 Timothy 3:16-17)

Teaching: What did you learn from this lesson?

Rebuking: What are some ways this lesson challenges you to live differently?

Correcting: How does this lesson help you make positive changes for Christ?

Training & Equipping: How can you apply this lesson to be trained and equipped in God's service?

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