

All Believers Possess This Inheritance But Must Meet These Conditions

The word “saint” has traditionally been used to refer only to Christians who reach a high degree of dedication to God. However, the following Scripture throws the gate wide open all those who love the Lord:

“To the church of God which is at Corinth, to those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all who in every place call on the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both their Lord and ours” (1 Cor. 1:2).

In this verse, three simple criteria are offered for sainthood:

- Belonging to “the church of God”: The word “church” is from the Greek word *ecclesia* (pronounced ek-klay-see'-ah), meaning “called-out ones.” Therefore, it is comprised of all those who have been truly called out of life of sin into a life of consecration to God;
- Being “sanctified in Christ Jesus”: The word “sanctified” has a double meaning: first, being cleansed from the defilement of sin; and second, being dedicated to the purposes of God;
- Calling on “the name of Jesus”: in other words, living a life of communion with the Savior of all mankind.
- “sanctified by the truth” (Jn. 17:19)
- “sanctified by faith” (Acts. 26:18)
- “sanctified by the word of God and prayer” (1 Tim. 4:5)
- “sanctified ... in the name of the Lord” (1 Cor. 6:11)
- “sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all” (Heb. 10:10).
- “sanctified by the Holy Spirit” (Rom. 15:16)

- “sanctified by God the Father” (Jude 1)
- “sanctified” by the blood of Jesus (Heb. 13:12)

So all who have been born again, regardless of denominational affiliation, are not only invited, but included in “the assembly of the saints” (Ps. 89:5). Wow! In an age of much spiritual compromise, isn’t this a challenging idea to embrace?

‘Sanctified’ People Become ‘Saints’

Sainthood and sanctification are inseparably interwoven, because a saint is simply someone who is sanctified. This initially comes as a gift from God. As soon as we confess Jesus as Lord of our lives, a number of sanctifying influences work together to present us “holy unto the Lord.” At that glorious moment of spiritual rebirth, we are made holy.

However, claiming sainthood from the very start of our walk with God is almost like asserting that an acorn is really an oak tree. It is, but it isn’t. It may have the identity and the potential, but to really be an oak tree in a manifested way, that acorn has to “fall into the ground and die” (John 12:24), then spend a good deal of time growing.

And so it is with us. All believers have the identity and the inheritance of being saints, but to really be saints in a valid and viable way (to fully realize this inner potential), we must die to self, die to the world and die to sin.

Then we must spend a good deal of time growing in God, yielding to His nature and fulfilling His will. Then we emerge in the very character of the “King of saints” Himself (Rev. 15:3c). This should be our goal every single day. {eo}

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