

“We Are: The Faithful Saints”

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August 7th, 2022

Scripture

Colossians 1:1-7

“Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timothy our brother,

2To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ who are at Colossae: Grace to you and peace from God our Father.

3We give thanks to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you, **since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and the love which you have for all the saints**; because of the hope laid up for you in heaven, of which you previously heard in the word of truth, the gospel which has come to you, just as in all the world also it is constantly bearing fruit and increasing, even as it has been doing in you also since the day you heard of it and understood the grace of God in truth

7just as you learned it from Epaphras, our beloved fellow bond-servant, **who is a faithful servant of Christ on our behalf**, and he also informed us of your love in the Spirit.”

Ephesians 1:1-2

“Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, **To the saints who are at Ephesus and who are faithful in Christ Jesus**: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.”

Sainthood

Catholic Saints

1. The process to make someone a saint cannot normally start **until at least five years after their death** (This is to allow time for emotions following the death to calm down, and to ensure that the individual's case can be evaluated objectively).
2. Once the five years are up, or a waiver is granted, the bishop of the diocese where the person died can **open an investigation into the life of the individual**, to see whether they lived their lives with sufficient holiness and virtue to be considered for sainthood
3. The Congregation for the Causes of Saints **scrutinizes the evidence of the candidate's holiness, work and signs that people have been drawn to prayer through their example**. If the Congregation approves the case, it is passed to the Pope. If the Pope decides that the person lived a life of "heroic virtue", they can then be called "venerable".
4. To reach the next stage, beatification, **a miracle needs to be attributed to prayers made to the individual after their death**. The prayers being granted are seen as proof that the individual is already in heaven, and hence able to intercede with God on others' behalf.

5. Then there is a **canonization ceremony where the Pope conducts a special Mass**, reading aloud the individual's life history and then chanting a prayer in Latin that declares the person a saint.

Christian Saints

Saint – *Hagios* -> literally means “different” but describes something sacred or holy.

Faithfulness

Faithful -> from *pistis* meaning “reliable, sound and sure, or worthy of trust”

If your spouse is faithful, what qualities do they possess?

Proverbs 20:6

“Many **claim to have unending love**, but a faithful person who can find?”

What does it mean to be faithful?

It sounds like it is a rare quality...

Proverbs 28:20

“**A faithful man will abound with blessings**, but he who makes haste to be rich will not go unpunished”

Perhaps those with a bounty of blessings is a key...?

Not necessarily earthly blessings, though...

God's Faithfulness to Us

The Bible is filled with passages about the Lord's faithfulness...

Lamentations 3:22-23

“The **steadfast love of the Lord never ceases**; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; **great is your faithfulness**”

Psalms 37:28-29

“**For the LORD loves the just and will not forsake his faithful ones**. Wrongdoers will be completely destroyed; the offspring of the wicked will perish. The righteous will inherit the land and dwell in it forever”

Psalms 136:1

“Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good, **For His faithfulness is everlasting**”

Proverbs 2:7-8

“He holds success in store for the upright, he is a shield to those whose walk is blameless, **for he guards the course of the just and protects the way of his faithful ones**”

2 Timothy 2:13

“If we are faithless, **he remains faithful**, for he cannot disown himself”

Even if we fall short in our faith...

Our Faithfulness to God

We know God is faithful to us...**what about the reverse?**

Psalms 26:1-3

“Vindicate me, Lord, for I have led a blameless life; **I have trusted in the Lord and have not faltered**. Test me, Lord, and try me, examine my heart and my mind; for I have always been mindful of your unfailing love and **have lived in reliance on your faithfulness**”

We are faithful **when we live in reliance on God**

1 Corinthians 4:1-2

“Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. **Moreover, it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.**”

Paul and his ministry partners said that faithfulness **was a condition of their usefulness**

The Spirit **produces** faithfulness

Galatians 5:22-23

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, **faithfulness**, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law”

Faithfulness is an enduring quality of the Spirit

Faithfulness grows over time...

Luke 16:10-12

“**He who is faithful in a very little thing is faithful also in much**; and he who is unrighteous in a very little thing is unrighteous also in much. "Therefore, if you have not been faithful in the use of unrighteous wealth, **who will entrust the true riches to you?** "And **if you have not been faithful in the use of that which is another's, who will give you that which is your own?**”

When we are faithful, God gives us the most important possessions...

Outside of God and your relationship with Him, **what is most important to you?**

House?

Car?

Retirement income?

Money in the bank?

The most important should be the people in your life!

Matthew 6:25-26

“For this reason, I say to you, **do not be worried about your life**, as to what you will eat or what you will drink; nor for your body, as to what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? "Look at the birds of the air, that they do not sow, nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. **Are you not worth much more than they?**”

The people are the greatest gift

Who are the Faithful Saints?

Those who trust in God above all others and all things

Proverbs 3:1-7

“My son, do not forget my teaching, but **let your heart keep my commandments**; For length of days and years of life and peace they will add to you. Do not let kindness and truth leave you; Bind them around your neck. Write them on the tablet of your heart so you will find favor and good repute in the sight of God and man.

5Trust in the LORD with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight. Do not be wise in your own eyes; Fear the LORD and turn away from evil.”

They exhibit extreme trust in God in all circumstances, even dire ones, all the way to the end of their lives

They live their life differently than the world around them by **keeping His commandments**

They live biblically...

Jesus's Examples of Faithful People

Matthew 24:42-46

“Therefore, **be on the alert**, for you do not know which day your Lord is coming. "But be sure of this, that if the head of the house had known at what time of the night the thief was coming, he would have been on the alert and would not have allowed his house to be broken into. "For this reason, you also must be ready; for the Son of Man is coming at an hour when you do not think He will.

45"**Who then is the faithful and sensible slave whom his master put in charge of his household** to give them their food at the proper time? "**Blessed is that slave whom his master finds so doing when he comes.**”

Faithful saints are personally ready for the Lord to appear

Matthew 25:19-21

“Now after a long time the master of those slaves came and settled accounts with them. "The one who had received the five talents came up and brought five more talents, saying, 'Master, you entrusted five talents to me. See, I have gained five more talents.' "His master said to him, '**Well done, good and faithful slave. You were faithful with a few things I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.**'”

Faithful saints are “on the job” committed and working in the Lord's mission

Jesus is the Example of the Faithful Saint

Hebrews 3:1-2

“Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of a heavenly calling, consider Jesus, the Apostle and High Priest of our confession; **He was faithful to Him who appointed Him, as Moses also was in all His house.**”

Jesus was faithful to the Father -> Moses was faithful, as well.

What do Faithful Saints Do?

Psalm 30:4

“**Sing the praises of the LORD, you his faithful people; praise his holy name**”

Faithful saints continually praise the Lord.

2 Chronicles 16:9

“For the eyes of the LORD range throughout the earth to strengthen those **whose hearts are fully committed to him**”

Faithful saints commit their heart to the Lord

John 15:1-11

“I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit, He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit, He prunes it so that it may bear more fruit. You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you.

4"Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in Me. **"I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing.**" If anyone does not abide in Me, he is thrown away as a branch and dries up; and they gather them and cast them into the fire and they are burned. "If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.

8"My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be My disciples. 9"Just as the Father has loved Me, I have also loved you; abide in My love. **"If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love; just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love.**" These things I have spoken to you so that My joy may be in you, and [that] your joy may be made full.”

Faithful saints DO remain (abide) in the Lord

1 John 2:15-19

“Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world. The world is passing away, and also its lusts; **but the one who does the will of God lives forever.**

Children, it is the last hour; and just as you heard that antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have appeared; from this we know that it is the last hour.

They went out from us, but they were not really of us; for if they had been of us, they would have remained with us; but they went out, so that it would be shown that they all are not of us."

The Pretenders do NOT remain -> the Pretenders eventually leave

If the local church does not have the **spiritual gift of discernment**, they can remain a long time, though.

The church usually becomes a social club

God will sometimes prune and remove people from the church

Peter's List of Faithful Qualities

1 Peter 4:7-11

"The end of all things is near; therefore, be of **sound judgment and sober spirit for the purpose of prayer**. Above all, keep **fervent in your love for one another**, because love covers a multitude of sins. **Be hospitable to one another** without complaint. As each one has received a special gift, employ it in **servicing one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God**. Whoever speaks, is to do so as one who is speaking the utterances of God; whoever serves is to do so as one who is serving by the strength which God supplies; **so that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ**, to whom belongs the glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen."

1) Prayerful People

James 1:2-6

"Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, **knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance**. And let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing. But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him. **But he must ask in faith without any doubting**, for the one who doubts is like the surf of the sea, driven and tossed by the wind."

2) Love for One Another

John 13:34-35

"A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."

3) Hospitable to One Another

It is the Greek word *Philoxenos* -> literally meaning "loving of strangers" -> **quality required of an Elder**

Only found in Elder qualifications and in 1 Peter 4...

4) Serving One Another

Mark 10:42-45 (about James and John wanting to sit on Jesus's left and right in the Kingdom)

“You know that those who are recognized as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them; and their great men exercise authority over them. But it is not this way among you, but **whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant**; and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be slave of all. **“For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.”**”

Jesus's Life was an example of committed service to His friends

5) For the Purpose of Glorifying God

Philippians 4:11-13

“Not that I am speaking of being in need, **for I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content. I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need. I can do all things through him who strengthens me**”

Paul says that he became faithful by learning to be without and in hardship.

He can do all things -> meaning that he can endure all circumstances because of Jesus who strengthened him.

We are Faithful because You made us Faithful Jesus

Prayer

“Through Christ you have been saved from the wrath of God. However, now you can begin to know Him, enjoy Him, walk with Him, have fellowship with Him, etc. Once you start becoming more intimate with Christ in prayer and once you get to know His presence, your faithfulness to Him will grow along with your desire to please Him.”

Communion

Benediction