

Tuesday Evening Bible Study Group Notes

“Saints”

Scripture Reading: Ephesians 1.1 - 2.22

Key Verse: “. . . *To the saints who are also faithful in Christ Jesus: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.*” Ephesians 1.1&2

Last study we saw that ‘Christian’ is a name first coined by the Roman population of Antioch as an insult and this name caught on as the world’s sneer for those who trusted in Jesus Christ. God, through the New Testament writers 61 times, call us ‘saints’. It comes from a Greek word meaning ‘separate from the common, hallowed’. The same word is elsewhere translated 161 times holy, as in the name ‘*Holy Spirit*’. In our reading this word is used with respect to us. We will consider it in the extended metaphor of the building of the *holy dwelling* (Ephesians 2.22)

As Saints We Are His Workpiece

Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, to the saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus. Eph 1:1

Consider our definition of ‘saint’ and look at what God is doing. These men and women were called to be ‘separate from the common’ in Ephesus and made to be faithful in Christ Jesus. This is conversion indeed. How did God do it? Mark these words in Ephesians 1.4 Chosen, 1.5 Marked Out, 1.7 Redeemed by the blood of Christ. They were still at Ephesus, because God’s plan is as yet unfinished. Ephesus was the quarry. These men and women were the stones of His temple. They were ‘in Christ’. All those who today have by faith put themselves ‘in Christ’ also are living stones in God’s quarry.

As Saints We Are In His Workplace

Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints. Eph 1:15

An employer is responsible for the conditions and conduct of the place of employment. It is God who determines these policies.

Paul in prison in Rome had heard of the faith of the saints in Ephesus and immediately recognised them as fellow-labourers in the Gospel. He fell to his knees in prayer that God would give them an eye of awareness equal to their task. Ephesians 1.17-23 This included, seeing the hidden plan of God’s work 1.18, the nature of the power that God has ordained 1.19, the kind of strength that God exercises 1.20, the authority that God has determined 1.21 and the certainty of its fulfilment 1.22&23.

As Saints We Are His Workmanship

The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints. Eph 1:18

Verse 18 says we are an inheritance. The ‘His’ here is clearly the Lord Jesus.

See verse 11 which says that we in Jesus have obtained an inheritance.

Wuest tells us that the best texts give ‘we were made an inheritance’.

Inheritance here means a choice by lot, the lot being the category of those who are ‘in Him’ as the context demands.

Ephesians 1.14 says we are his possession. The word ‘possession’ means an asset kept aside as an investment. The saints then are His asset, His inheritance which He is fashioning to His glory, to adorn the building, His home in glory. Each stone has the touch of the master’s hand. It is His artistry, His finesse, His perfection, His workmanship.

There is a great deal of difference between the world’s concept of a saint as a specially religious person who lives an exceptionally good and worthy life, and God’s view of a saint, as any one who has surrendered their own righteousness and trusted in the Lord Jesus alone for pardon and cleansing for sin, and is destined for glory. Are you one of God’s saints?

It is related that Oliver Cromwell’s government ran out of silver coinage. He sent his men to a cathedral to see if they could find any silver. They reported that the only silver they could find was the silver statues of saints standing in the corners. “Good,” he replied, “We’ll melt down the saints and put them into circulation.”

As Saints We Are His Workforce

Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God. Eph 2:19

‘Strangers’ here means aliens, and foreigners means a sojourner or refugee, but we have been granted the same citizenship rights as God’s holy ones and are members of His household. What does it mean to be a citizen of the kingdom of Heaven?

As a citizen I must be loyal. See 1 Peter 1.15&16

As a citizen I must contribute to the Kingdom. See Ephesians 4.11&12, Mark 13.34

As a citizen I must live as befits my community. See Romans 12.4-21

As a citizen I must speak up for my King. See 2 Corinthians 5.20.

As a citizen I look forward to a reward which God has promised at the end of the day. See 2 Timothy 4.6-8.

Welcome

Glen Park Gospel Church

Lower Road, Eltham North

Sundays 10.30 am

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