Benefits of Being a Saint

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[0:00] Welcome to Built on God's Word, the preaching and teaching ministry of Highland Park Baptist Church in Bartlesville, Oklahoma.! Elder Tom Holland teaches on 1 Corinthians 1, verses 4-9.

! A lot of problems. A lot of problems.
And in the church in Corinth, his favorite word was saint, to describe believers in that church.
Saints. Writing by inspiration of the Holy Spirit, the Apostle Paul frequently used the word saint to describe believers.
To describe Christians. We know that the Roman Catholic Church is filled with men bearing the title saint.
[1:12] They were granted that by the Pope or whatever. Didn't necessarily equate to saintly conduct, but in any event, they have a lot.

It was certainly a favorite word, though, of Paul, because he used it some 60 times in the Corinthian letter.
And that probably includes both Corinthian letters. Now, I said last time, we can be certain there were three Corinthian letters. One didn't make it into Scripture. There may have been four, a fourth one.
We haven't found that one. It hadn't been turned over by an archaeologist's spade yet. But I think we're content with two that belong in the canon of Scripture.
And like I say, the church at Corinth was fraught with problems. But it certainly didn't stop the Apostle Paul from acknowledging them as saints.
[2:12] Because he says in there that they've been sanctified. They were in the process of being made holy by the Spirit of God and by the Lord Jesus Christ.

And to Paul, anyone who called on the name of the Lord Jesus Christ in faith and in trust was qualified to be referred to as a saint.
Now, Paul was adamant that the members of the Corinthian church were saints based on this fact that they were being sanctified.
That is a word meaning being made holy like Jesus. They were sanctified because of their trust, however meager, in Christ.
Trust is a very important word in the New Testament. Trust is used when we talk about believe or believe or have faith. Trust is also part of that definition.
[3:14] Trust is a very important word in the New Testament.

They're saved in a manner that sets them apart as men that are being made holy by the indwelling Spirit of God, who is the very definition of holiness.
Now, before we go much further, I think it would be helpful, let me read the verses that we're going to cover tonight. And we may cover some of these in future lessons.
But I'm going to read to you out of the ESV, 1 Corinthians 1, verses 4-9. I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God which was given you in Christ Jesus, that in every way you were enriched in Christ.
That in every way you were enriched in Him, in all speech and all knowledge, even as the testimony about Christ was confirmed among you, so that you are not lacking in any gift as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ, who will sustain you to the end guiltless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.
[5:09] God is faithful by whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. And as I briefly mentioned above, the main emphasis on this letter by the Apostle Paul is to seek godly and holy living.

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And Paul begins by pointing out in verse 2 that these individuals that were residing and worshiping in the church in Corinth had been or were being sanctified by Christ Jesus.
They had placed their trust in the finished work of Christ. As such, they had been gifted with grace. And that gift allowed them to be called holy and to possess, according to Paul, and he's good authority on this, a holy nature.
That language is consistent with the works of Paul in many of the 13 books that he wrote that are included in the canon of Scripture.
[6:29] Paul also wrote this to the church of Philippi some years after 1 Corinthians. He said this in Philippians 1, verse 6, something that most of you will have read and even perhaps memorized, where Paul says this, I am sure of this, this is writing by inspiration, this is the Holy Spirit speaking through Paul, I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.

And what day is that? The day he will be revealed for who he is. So what is our supreme goal for tonight? Well, the answer is that we should be Christ-like.
We should be like Jesus. That kind of just rolls off, but it's a tall order, isn't it? It's a tall order. But in Scripture, we're commanded to have his mind, to have his attitude.
We're supposed to think like he thinks. That's a tall order. Because he's God in human flesh. To behave like he behaves.
It reminds me of the words of the Apostle John. In his first epistle, I love 1 John. But in 1 John 2, verse 6, John wrote these words, Whoever says he abides in him ought to walk in the same way in which he walked.
[8:17] Walk in a manner that's worthy. Walk as Jesus walked. Now, I think most of us would remember the words of Christ to the woman caught in adultery.

It's a familiar passage of Scripture. I've always amazed. You know, adultery is an evil thing. But it takes two people.
And you never hear about the man caught with the woman. I think he drifted into the crowd. But we remember those words of Jesus to the woman caught in adultery.
That is a passage filled with all kinds of truth. Here is a woman that was working as a prostitute. She was earning a living as a prostitute.
And there was a very pious crowd of men that gathered around. And they said, You know, she needs to be stoned to death for what she's doing.
[9:27] Take her to the Master. Of course, there was a trick in that. We're going to trap Jesus in this. So they take her to the Lord. And how would you like to be confronted with this?

And Jesus, of course, you remember He was down writing in the... There's all kinds of speculation what He was writing, but He looks up and He says, Let whichever one of you is without sin cast the first stone.
Boy, I wouldn't want to hear that. I don't want to hear that. And it says, Jesus went back and started writing more.
And these guys begin to depart quietly. They drop their rocks. And they left. And it says, The older followed by the younger.
The old guys had some wisdom here. We don't want to get caught in this trap. And from the oldest to the youngest. And so the Lord goes to the woman and they have a conversation.
[10:39] And she has to be just shaking in fear and petrified. And the Lord told her, said, You need to stop sinning.

He would tell each of us that. And I can't argue with him over that. But that's good advice for all of us, isn't it?
He told the woman, Stop sinning. And by the way, when he tells someone, Stop sinning. That's reserved for believers.
An unbeliever doesn't have the capacity to accomplish that. So he's boldly saying something about this woman. You need to stop sinning.
And then he asks her, he says, Is there anyone left to condemn you? And I think, if Hollywood's right, it was at that point she looked up and looked around her and said, No one, Lord.
[11:46] Because those guys had all drifted away. No one's left to condemn me. And Jesus said this, Neither do I condemn you.

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Go and sin no more. And I always thought that was a very personal and very poignant comment that he made to her.
But then I found out in the original, it says this, Jesus said, From now on, I hold no sin against you. Would that make you feel good? I hold no sin against you. You are holy in my eyes. Now, go and live a holy life.
Wow. Wow. I can tear up thinking about that. I really can. See, the problem is, Jesus knows me and I know me. I might be able to fake some of you guys out.
[12:56] Not Mike, but... Christians are those whose sins are forgiven. Christians are those who have no condemnation.

I fell in love with Romans 8.1 when I read that.
There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. No condemnation. We need to do business with that passage.
It's an important passage and has application to every believer. I taught on that when I was on the VOM board. I retired last May. They want me to come back as the Ameritas member.
I don't know if I'll do that or not. But these were my dear brothers and sisters in Christ, but it was an interesting audience.
[14:03] Essentially Wesleyan guys. In these verses, we learn who we are in Christ. Saints.

No condemnation. Left for us. Sanctified. Being made holy. And we're to live lives commensurate with who we are and just as important or more so, whose we are.
Remind me later, that's a great bumper sticker. Who do I belong to and whose am I? Who owns me? So we see great benefits for being a saint, being sanctified, and belonging to Christ Jesus.
They touch the past. They touch the present. They touch the future. Some past benefits of grace in 1 Corinthians 1, verses 4 and 6.
I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that was given you in Christ Jesus. Even as the testimony about Christ was confirmed among you.
[15:26] The first and perhaps greatest benefit of being a saint is that of salvation. It is by grace, as we pointed out in verse 4, salvation has been confirmed in Christ.

Of course, grace is a very important word. But grace was also used in that culture as a Christian greeting. People didn't so much say hello or how are you, they would walk up and say grace or grace to you.
Grace extended a greeting of peace kindness and unearned merit. Because if you, under the grace of God, you didn't earn it.
You didn't work for it. You didn't toil for it. It's unearned, undeserved. That's what makes it grace.
And there are things that cannot coexist with grace.
Grace really doesn't need to live side by side with guilt. If you're under grace, He's taking your guilt from you.
[16:47] Remember what He told the woman caught in adultery. Grace does not exist with human obligation. Lord, I'll do certain things if You'll give me Your grace.

We don't bargain that way. We owe God out of gratitude, not out of obligation. God saves us by grace. Why?
Because that brings Him ultimate glory. Ultimate glory. Well, there are present benefits of grace.
Verse 5 and the first part of verse 7, that in every way you are enriched in Him. in all speech and in all knowledge so that you are not lacking in any gift.
Here the Holy Spirit mentions three things that bring us present blessings. And I'll probably expand on these in a future lesson but not tonight.
[17:52] But there are three things as we live out our present Christian life. and that's our speech, our knowledge, and the gifts that we have.

If you're a follower of Christ, you have a gift. Some have more than one. I have the gift of gab, I guess. I teach. We'll expand on those later.
But I really like this future. There's future blessings of grace. In verse 7 to 9, as you wait for the revealing of the Lord Jesus Christ who will sustain you until you sin again.
It doesn't say that, does it? He will sustain you to the end. What end? The end of days. He will sustain us until that day when we enter into our future home.
God's grace provides for us future benefits. Now, we delight in the past. We delight in the present. But future benefits are beyond our imagination.

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[19:22] Theology is probably pretty close to mine. And I heard a sermon. It's by actually John MacArthur's replacement. John, of course, went home to be with the Lord a year ago.

And it was on what is life in the millennial reign of Christ going to be like. We're going to live in that period of time.
Everybody in it that's a believer will be alive during the millennial reign. Millennial means a thousand. It's the thousand years that Jesus will be on earth in Jerusalem ruling and reigning and we're going to be worshiping Him I'm sure we'll travel and see Him.
We're going to be living on this earth. I've heard some great sermons on that including the one I'm referring to. Great benefits during the millennial reign of Christ.
In many respects we can say the best is yet to come. I want to be real careful and not say your best life now but the best is yet to come during that thousand year millennial reign.
[20:38] When it starts out there's only believers on earth. Amazing. And in this day we eagerly await future grace. John Piper wrote a book called Future Grace.

One day we're going to enter into our future home that will be a day unlike any we've ever experienced. That is why sacred scripture says we are awaiting eagerly the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ.
I don't know about you guys I wake up one o'clock two o'clock I get up I can go I don't have to turn any lights on I've got it all memorized I go sit I can see the stars right now the moon the full moon but I can see the stars and I can sit there and just ponder looking up at that and praying but what a day that's going to be I love looking at the night sky I realize the Lord can be back at any moment it's equally thrilling for me to see a sunrise or a sunset have my mind focused on the return of Christ I love thinking about things like that there are five things that I think would be a joy for all of us to ponder concerning the return of Christ
I give these as a suggestion first of all it means that Christ will be exalted he's going to be exalted! he's going to be exalted Satan's going to be locked away in a chain in the bottomless pit for a thousand years Christ will be exalted Satan will be defeated now he's going to get released for about 30 minutes at the end of the thousand years and then Jesus will dispose of him forever and I really like this having served on the voice of the martyrs board for 26 years I've been with martyrs in foreign countries I've been with men that spent decades in prison even as close as Cuba they have a brutal prison down there they still have guys in there that were in the Bay of Pigs landing that was almost what 80 years ago they're still in prison it will be a day of justice for those who've been martyred
[23:29] Jesus knows all about the martyrs every one of them it also means that those who reject Christ will be dealt with surely and heaven will be our home you know it's ironic in the midst of finishing this lesson last Saturday I knew I didn't want to go downstairs and watch the OU game so I was finishing up last Saturday and Diane who had no idea what I was working on I mean she knew I was doing a lesson but she came up and she said I wrote this earlier today I thought I'd give you a copy then she wandered off and here's what she sent me and this is a quote from A.W.

Pink he's a great guy to read he's with the Lord but he wrote books he thought it was a failure and then 50 years later everybody started buying his books wonderful books he wrote this and this is what Diane handed me as I was working on this I was looking for a way to close the lesson and she hands me this grace has been defined as the unmerited favor of God and if it's unmerited then no one can claim it as their absolute right can't make that claim if grace is unearned it is undeserved none are entitled to it that's why it's by grace that we receive it if grace is a gift then none can demand it when do you go and demand a gift from someone therefore as salvation is by grace the free gift of
God then he bestows it on whom he pleases boy that is great I'm so glad she handed that to me don't tell her I said that she wouldn't know why I didn't say that but she really nailed it with that in mind let's close with a word of prayer father we think about you often and we have to come around and think about your grace bestowing that which is undeserved unmerited lord we think about past grace that's got us to this point we think about the grace that we have now we're breathing your air we're enjoying your cool weather that's coming and we certainly enjoy future grace where we will live for a thousand years under the banner of grace we will see you in Jerusalem we'll worship you lord let that day come but until then may we occupy about the things which you've instructed us are necessary to do as we look forward to spending eternity with our lord and until that day may we live our lives in anticipation of grace befitting a saint of god and we pray this in jesus name amen to

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