

Welcome friends to another broadcast of "Morsels for Zion's Poor"

It is quite common to hear religious men and women talk about "saints" as if this title defines someone who has reached the pinnacle of "Christianity". Of course, the Roman Catholic Church has, for years, taught that only a relative few, exceptionally holy and devoted men and women, have ever reached this lofty perch. In fact, from time to time, they add someone to the list of those they have deemed worthy of the honor of being called a "saint", but even then, only after a lengthy process of judging their merit relative to others, upon which, they have bestowed this lofty designation in times past.

We may view this process with amusement or disdain but in reality the concept that there are different levels of being a Christian, is quite a universal consideration among many. There is a widespread notion that it is possible to be a believer without a total commitment to CHRIST. Some define it as accepting HIM as SAVIOR but not as LORD. I have also heard this phenomenon described as a "carnal Christian". The implication is that a man may possess some basic level of salvation while not having a heart that delights in the things of CHRIST. Still others say that a man can be a believer but can "get filled with the HOLY GHOST" and become a "spirit-filled Christian" which is different from just being a plain Christian.

Salvation is often presented as something a man can choose when he gets ready. He can "ask JESUS into his heart" and automatically he becomes "saved". Nothing could ever overturn that which he had "allowed" GOD to do for him. His ticket to heaven was punched forever. This is proudly described as "once saved, always saved". It is quite common to see a multitude in this tradition, professing faith, without any manifestation of love for the things of CHRIST in them. They curse without remorse, drunkards continue their drunkenness, adulterers and fornicators are undeterred in their lust, gossip mongers and backstabbers all continue with business as usual after a brief period of euphoric reform. Sometimes they are described as "backsliders" and with a wink and a nod they are assured of a salvation based on their "decision for CHRIST."

Such a concept is entirely foreign to that which the scripture reveals. The LORD JESUS told Nicodemus that a man must be "born again" in order to enter the kingdom of heaven. Paul said, *"therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."* The work of regeneration is a work wrought by the HOLY SPIRIT in all of those whom HE calls to eternal salvation. A man is either "born again" or he is not. There is no middle ground. Either the SPIRIT has begun a work in us or we are yet in our sins.

All of GOD's children, who have been brought out of darkness and into the light, and who have been given a revelation of the glorious redemption of JESUS CHRIST, are the "saints" of GOD. The word "saint" literally means "holy one" or "one set apart". We have been sanctified by CHRIST and set free from the law of sin and death. So when the scripture mentions "saints" (62 times in the N.T.) it is not a reference to a class of "super" Christians but the name given to all of those whose sin debt is forever cancelled by CHRIST, who have been called by the gospel and indwelt by HIS SPIRIT. They have certain characteristics:

Saints are not perfect but are being perfected. *"Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended (i.e.; attained perfection): but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."* We are not yet what we shall be, but thank GOD we are not what we once were, either.

Saints have a language all their own. *"the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered."* The children of GOD can be prevented from many things, but they will always pray. *"Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father."*

Saints are compelled to believe and follow CHRIST. As Peter said, *"Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life."* While each person who is a saint has chosen to follow CHRIST, each one is unable to choose to follow another. The HOLY SPIRIT draws men to CHRIST and causes them to declare as Peter did, *"thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."* Can the true children of GOD embrace another savior? Can they bow before another LORD? HE has bound them to HIMSELF with cords of love that cannot be broken.

Thy free grace alone,"#11 **If you would like a free transcript of this broadcast email us at forthe poor@windstream.net**