

1. Intro
 - a. What do you think of when you think of a saint? (**What is a saint?**)
 - i. Some super group of Christians; people who go all in for Jesus
 1. Halos, Mother Teresa
 - ii. In the 17th century, the vatican developed a standard for sainthood
 1. Be a catholic, perform 2 miracles, die, people champion your sainthood, the vatican reviews your life, hopefully declares you blessed, and booyah: you're a saint.
 - b. But what does the Bible say about it?
 - i. If that's your framework, you are going to have your mind blown today because being a saint is described very clearly and differently in the Bible
 - ii. And since at Revolve we want to revolve around the Bible, not around a church tradition, we want to know what the Bible actually says
 - iii. So today we want to talk about what it means to be a saint & how that relates to our sermon series, "Identity Crisis"
2. *Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, To the saints who are in Ephesus, and are faithful in Christ Jesus (Ephesians 1:1 ESV)*
 - a. **God calls us "saints"** → all followers of Jesus
 - i. **"To use a word that applies to all Christians in a way that suggests there is a special, elite class of Christians, is wrong"** - Jerry Bridges
 - b. positional identity
 - i. Pyramid illustration
3. *...he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. (Ephesians 1:4 ESV)*
 - a. Consequences and Implications of being a saint: Not options → the purpose of being chosen. These are positionally true, guaranteed, as a follower of Jesus
 - b. **A Saint is Holy**: set apart; moral purity;
 - i. positionally, God views physically pure, morally without fault
 1. Not perfect example, but it's like the parent who can't see their child's wrong. God sees you as he sees Christ
 - ii. consecrated for a set purpose → from the word cut, set apart, unique
 1. The word for saint relates back to being "set apart for someone"
 2. We think of guys like Paul being set apart, but it is us too..
 3. Scott Harrison's story → you are set apart for a unique purpose
 - a. generally, glorifying God with a worshipful & obedient life
 - b. specifically, works God planned in advance for you to do
 - iii. **In Christ, you are holy**
 - c. **A Saint is Blameless**: refers to the sacrificial lamb (explain)
 - i. In Christ, God views believers positionally to be without blemish
 - ii. Satan = the accuser, but no more → Satan has no more ammo on you
 1. Yesterday, today, tomorrow...forever
 - iii. ex: Double jeopardy
 - iv. **In Christ, you are blameless**

4. *In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. (Ephesians 1:7-10 ESV)*

a. **A Saint is Redeemed:**

- i. Saint refers to being set apart for God
 1. How this happens is that we are Christ's own possession
- ii. Possession? Yes - he bought you w/ his blood
 1. And that is the heart of what the word Redeemed means
 2. "You are not your own, for you were bought with a price."
- iii. The Bible likens sin to slavery:
 1. Passover → those w/ the blood would be passed over and freed
- iv. God calls this process in the OT redemption - being freed to leave slavery and live as free worshippers of God
 1. Similarly, with Jesus' death, his blood purchased us from slavery
- v. **In Christ, you are purchased out of slavery**

b. **A Saint is Forgiven:**

- i. Think about the worst things you've ever done
 1. The affair, the drugs, the theft, whatever it might be → the shame
- ii. We try to remove that guilt by denying our sin, justifying our sin, blaming others for it, minimalizing it, hiding it, punishing ourselves, or trying to make it right with God → every effort fails
- iii. In Christ, however, a saint is completely forgiven → eternally forgiven
 1. No matter what you've done or will do
 2. Jesus died for all of it → you are forgiven. Period.
 3. He doesn't hold your sin over your head as a bargaining chip
 4. He loves you despite your sin

iv. **In Christ, you are forgiven**

c. **A Saint is Unified to God:**

- i. Because of all of these things, we can be unified with God
- ii. Without being a saint, we are separate from God
 1. And if we are separate from God we are still in our sin
- iii. Without being a saint, the opposite of these things is true
 1. Not forgiven, a slave to sin/addiction, guilty, impure
- iv. We cannot be in God's presence with those identities
 1. We need a new identity - that of a saint - to be unified with him

v. **In Christ, as a saint, you are unified with God**

1. Just like in the Garden of Eden

d. Essentially, positionally speaking, God views us just like Jesus

- i. Not that you are God as Jesus is God, but that in terms of righteousness, the positionally "right-ness" of Christ is imputed (given) to you

5. **You are probably thinking, "but I neither feel (nor act) like a saint."**

- a. Positionally all that stuff is true, but in the day to day it might not feel true
 - i. **Your faith and emotions must be driven by fact**
 - 1. **train diagram**
 - ii. So positionally speaking you are...
 - 1. A saint, but you might act like a sinner
 - 2. Blameless, but tempted to live under a rock of guilt
 - 3. Forgiven eternally, but still reap consequences
 - 4. Redeemed from slavery, but tempted justify addiction
 - iii. I have one more solid truth...
 - b. **A Saint Still Struggles with Sin**
 - i. See, we are not there yet - we are a work in progress, so we also talk about progressive sanctification
 - ii. **progressive sanctification: the process of being made more like Jesus**
 - iii. Fact: saint and sanctify are from the same word in the original language
 - 1. A saint is someone who has been sanctified & is being sanctified
 - iv. Illustration of the pool of water
 - v. Romans 7; esp. 7:24, *"Who will deliver me from this body of death?"*
 - vi. Philippians 1:6, *"And 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."*
 - c. **Sanctification explains the tension of why although you are a Saint, you feel like a Sinner**
6. Implications for today
 - a. Positionally, there is no condemnation for those in Christ Jesus
 - i. No more trying to impress God
 - ii. No more dodging Satan's accusations
 - iii. No more reason to "work"
 - iv. You are as forgiven by God as you will ever be if you follow Jesus
 - b. Practically, this should spur us on to Gospel-driven effort and change
 - i. The process of change looks like this:
 - 1. Truth → conviction by Holy Spirit → surrender → Holy Spirit power → faith-fueled effort for change
 - 2. If you start w/ effort, you will fail. Jesus has to be the one to do it
 - 3. Normally, however, we cut off the process of change at one of those steps
 - ii. **The identity of being a saint should compel us to change**
 - c. *For the grace of God has appeared...training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age... (Titus 2:11-12 ESV)*
 - i. **In light of the Gospel, we are COMPELLED to change by the power of God**
 - d. Don't let God call you holy and not strive for it
 - e. Don't let God call you blameless and still constantly beat yourself up

- f. Don't let God call you blameless and then willfully do shameful things
- g. Don't let God call you redeemed and then voluntarily embrace slavery (addiction)
- h. Don't let God call you forgiven and then refuse to forgive others
- i. Don't let God call you unified and then treat him like he is a distant, annoying relative you want nothing to do with
- j. Gospel-Driven because all of our change is rooted in the Gospel
 - i. You have no power to change without God
 - ii. I want you and me to "live our faith out loud", but without relying on the Holy Spirit we are incapable, but that doesn't excuse discipline
 - iii. Don't diminish your own responsibility.
- k. *When it comes to growth in godliness, trusting does not put an end to trying - Kevin DeYoung***
 - i. There are those who try to change without the Holy Spirit...and fail
 - ii. And there are those who don't even try
 - iii. But I truly believe that if we grasped our identity, it would change us
 - iv. Change begins w/ the renewing of our mind, like Paul says
 - 1. Not positive thinking, but being changed from the inside out
- l. The positional truth of being a saint should spur us on to practical change**
 - i. *"I worked harder than any of them, though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me." - 1 Cor 15:10*
 - ii. **Action stems from identity**
 - 1. Truth yields action.
 - 2. Your local church doesn't determine how you live
 - a. forsaking sin, inviting friends, sharing your changed life
 - 3. Your changed heart in Christ → your new identity does
 - iii. When you embrace your new identity, you WILL live differently
 - iv. If you aren't living differently, then you don't truly know who you are
 - v. **You are a saint. Live like one.**