

CHRIST'S SACRIFICE ONCE FOR ALL

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Old Testament Lesson; Daniel 12:1-3

Gospel Lesson; John 5:25-29

Sermon Text; Hebrews 10:11-18

Day after day every priest stands and performs his religious duties; again and again he offers the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. But when this priest had offered for all time one sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God. Since that time he waits for his enemies to be made his footstool, because by one sacrifice he has made perfect forever those who are being made holy. The Holy Spirit also testifies to us about this. First he says: 'This is the covenant I will make with them after that time, says the Lord. I will put my laws in their hearts, and I will write them on their minds.' Then he adds: "Their sins and lawless acts I will remember no more." And where these have been forgiven, there is no longer any sacrifice for sin.

These are your words heavenly Father, lead us in the way of truth, for Your Word is truth. Amen.

Today is All Saints' Day, so I think it is good for us to begin by defining what a saint is. If you were to go to your dictionary, and look up the definition to the word '*saint*', you would find a few different definitions. I will share a few of them with you this morning, and then tell you which ones we will be talking about and

which ones we will be not talking about. One of the first definitions that is mentioned in the dictionary for the word '*saint*' is '*one who is noted for piety and virtue*'. So, putting that into a sentence, we might say something like this: *That woman is a saint, because she has put up with her husband for all of these years.* Or, vice versa, *That man is a saint, because he has put up with his wife for all of these years.* That is not the way that we are looking at the word '*saint*', today! 😊

Another is the way that we began our service today, as we thought about '*all who have departed in the faith*', especially those whose funerals were here, this last year.

But, today in my sermon, I am going in a little different direction. Well, here is my definition of the word '*saint*'. '*It is the person who is sitting next to you.*' Now, before you fall out of your pew laughing hysterically, let me share with you some of the ways in which the word '*saint*' is used in the New Testament.

-In Acts, chapter nine, we are told that Peter went to visit the saints in Lydda. He was going to see living people. He was going to see people who believed in Jesus, as their Savior.

-In Acts, chapter 26, the Apostle Paul is making a reference for himself, and also for the Christian faith. He is referring back to when he was Saul. He says he put the saints in prison. At that time in his life, he was opposed to those people who believed in Jesus, as their Savior. He wanted to put those saints in prison.

-We also look at the way in which the Apostle Paul begins two of his letters, or two of his epistles. In the book of Ephesians he says, 'to the saints in Ephesus, to the faithful in Christ Jesus.'

-He begins his book of Philippians by saying, "to all the saints in Christ Jesus at Philippi."

In those four ways, the way that the Bible is defining the word '*saint*', '*somebody who is living, somebody who believes in Jesus as their Savior*'. Hence, by definition this morning, '*the person who is*

sitting next to you'.

Just a few moments ago, we confessed our faith, using the words of The Third Article, of the Apostle's Creed and its explanation. We said, "I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints..." There is that word, again. The word saints. Well, what is it that we mean, when we say, "I believe in the Holy Christian Church", and "I believe in the communion of saints"? Well, let's look at those four words, "the holy Christian Church". Why do we say, "the holy Christian Church"? If you ever watch Sunday Night Football on NBC, at the very beginning of the game, the starters on offense and defense, introduce themselves. Their face quickly comes up on the screen, they say who they are, and then they say what college or university they played for. I don't know if you have ever noticed this before, but if there is ever a player who graduated from or played at Ohio State, do you know how they introduce themselves? They say their name, and then they say, "thee Ohio State University". They say that not only because they are proud of their university, but they are telling you there is only one Ohio State. Now, don't run me out of the church, this morning. I am not a Buckeye fan. ☺ But, the point is this. We believe in the Holy Christian Church, because there is only one. We could say Thee Holy Christian Church.

Why do we say the holy Christian Church? The reason we say that is because it is made up of holy people. It is made up of saints. The Bible says in the book of Ephesians, "Christ loved the Church and gave Himself up for her, to make her holy."

That is why we say the church is holy, because Christ has made us holy.

Why do we say the Holy Christian Church? Well, we say that because **our faith rests on Christ**. What we believe is built on the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus, Himself, as the chief cornerstone. Therefore, when we say we believe in the holy

Christian Church, what we are saying is we believe in the communion of saints, that is, the gathering of all who believe in Jesus, as their Savior, and confess Him by word and deed.

Now, before you break your arm, patting yourself on your back, saying that you can kick up your feet, take life easy, eat, drink, and be merry because you are a saint, I am here today to remind you also that you are a sinner. One theologian put it this way. We are a saint and a sinner at the same time. In the book of Colossians it says,

“Once you were alienated from God
and were enemies in your minds,
because of your evil behavior.”

The saints in Rome were trying to distinguish being saints and sinners. They thought that if we sinned more, maybe God will consider us to be saints more, because we will be forgiven more. The apostle Paul reminds them, “By no means. We died to sin. How can we live in it any longer?”

Which gets us to our scripture reading for today, dear saints in the Lord. As we look at our scripture reading, we see that it should remind us of the Old Testament sacrificial system. It reminds us of the work that the priests did, in sacrificing animals for the sins of the people. Each day the priest was to sacrifice a one year old male lamb, without blemish or defect. And, the priest was to do the same thing in the afternoon. One person once calculated the number of sacrifices that were made on behalf of the sins of the people (not individual sins, but the sins of the people). 1,100 lambs, 113 bulls, 37 rams, and 30 goats were sacrificed each year, on behalf of the sins of the people. The work of the priest was never done. In the tabernacle and in the temple there was no chair for the priest to sit in, because his work was never done. He was constantly, from the time he came on duty, until the time he stepped off duty, he was sacrificing animals and sprinkling their blood, to pay for the sins of the people. What clear indication is there that the sacrifice of

animals could not take away people's sin? Those sacrifices were unending.

Today, as we look at our text, and as we see what our High Priest has done for us, we see that **He made one sacrifice for sin**. Notice what Jesus did, after He made that one sacrifice for sin, by dying on the cross. **He sat down at the right hand of the Father**, because His work was done. After making just that one sacrifice for all sin, by His death on the cross, He made full and complete payment for all sin. The Lord now says,

“I will remember your sin no more.”

A young man once borrowed the family car, without his parent's knowledge. He thought he could get it back safely into the garage without their knowing about it. He did not take into account that he was going to get rear-ended just two intersections from home. He brought the family car back home, put it in the garage, had the garage door go down, and thought to himself all night long, what it was that he was going to say to his dad. His dad came home. The young man explained everything that happened. He brought him out to the garage, showed him the damage, and said, with sincerity, “I am sorry.”

His dad said, “The insurance will pay for the damage to the car. But, there is a broken trust between us, that would have stayed broken, but you confessed your sin. You confessed your wrong doings. You said you were sorry. That trust is now restored.”

A week later, that son was beating himself up because of the sin that he committed. So, he went back to his dad and asked, “How can you forgive me, because of the accident?”

His dad was reading the newspaper. He did not even look up and said, “What accident?” That father had chosen not to remember that sin, anymore.

Dear saints, that is what God has done for you. God has forgiven you of your sin. He said,

“I will remember your sin no more.”

Why is it then that we struggle with forgiving those who sin against us? Oh sure, we know that when we pray the Lord's Prayer “Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us” we are thankful that God forgives us of our sin, and remembers our sin no more. But why is it that we struggle with forgiving others, when they sin against us?

Dear fellow redeemed, and dear saints in the Lord, we know that the Lord has forgiven us of our sin by Jesus' one payment for our sin. He has now sat down at the right hand of the Father, because He has completed His work. Your sins are forgiven. Everlasting life is yours. Let us take what God has done for us, and may we too share that forgiveness (that God has shared with us), with others.

What has Jesus' one sacrifice for sin accomplished? If there is one verse that you take home from today it is verse 14 from our text, where the writer of the book of Hebrews simply says,

“By one sacrifice
He has made perfect
forever

those who are being made holy.”

You know what that is saying? It is saying that **you are a saint**. It is saying that **you are being made holy**. It is saying that **you are a member of the holy Christian Church**. And, in this Christian Church, He daily and richly forgives me and all believers all of our sins. And, at the last day, He will raise up me and all of the dead. He will grant me and all believers in Christ, eternal life. This is most certainly true.

Amen