Those Whom the Lord Has Made Saints

Pastor Matthew Ude

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Psalm 3

I used to work at a job where I would spend a lot of time driving around in a truck with a guy named Sean. One day I was explaining to Sean how the Bible uses the word saint to mean all those who are made holy in the blood of Christ, in other words all believers. “Saint Sean,” he said, “I like the way that sounds.” We should all like the way it sounds. We should all treasure the fact that scripture calls us saints.

To be a saint means that by faith through the death of Christ I am set apart. I am distinct from the nations of the world. Although we are no better than those from whom we have been set apart, yet by the grace of God we are different. All too often we forget what a blessed privilege it is to be called sons of God. Yet there is nothing that should give us greater joy than to be numbered among God’s holy ones. Psalm 3 reminds us what it means to be called a saint.

Those Who Were Out Numbered

Psalm 3:1-2 LORD, how they have increased who trouble me!

Many are they who rise up against me. Many are they who say of me, "There is no help for him in God."

When we look back on the saints of the past, it would be difficult to find a time frame in which the true Church, was not outnumbered and surrounded. Even King David in the midst of his reign as King in Jerusalem writes **“Many are they who rise up against me.”**

Certainly, the words, **“how they have increased who trouble me!”** describes our own day. There are men who despise Christianity, treating it as barely even worth their notice. There are scientist who snicker at any poor fool who would actually believe the world was created in six days. There are men such as Joel Olsteen who so pervert the gospel that it is no wonder that atheists consider it a joke. And even among ourselves we too often act as if they are right, speaking out of pride and arrogance, instead of out of love and humility, speaking derogatory words of division instead of words that build up in love. Certainly, they have increased who trouble us.

What are we going to do? It doesn’t seem possible that we can ever survive under such conditions. It doesn’t seem possible that we can ever find a way through. Under similar persecution King David and with him all those who have gone before found refuge in one fact. **“Salvation belongs to the Lord.”** In this truth we find that we do not need to retaliate; to

fight fire with fire, we do not need to rant and rave back at the world. We can lay aside all doubt and anger and continue simply speaking the gospel in love and humility, waiting patiently for the Lord's deliverance, as is the example of all the saints who have gone before. The Lord failed not them, neither will He disappoint us.

Those Who Were Lifted up
Psalm 3:3-4 But You, O LORD, are a shield for me, My glory and the One who lifts up my head. I cried to the LORD with my voice, And He heard me from His holy hill. Selah

David describes here how when he was weary and tired almost ready to give up, without reason to lift up his head, the Lord gently placed His hand under his chin to lift up his head to see into the eyes of the Savior. How often hasn't the Lord done the same for us just when we need it the most lifting up our heads, through another saint who is journeying with us, through the remembrance of those who have gone before, through the words of strength left behind as they climbed through the same small dark tunnels. But above them all He lifts up our head to see His eyes of clearest love through His word.

Those Who Slept in Peace
Psalm 3:5-6 I lay down and slept; I awoke, for the LORD

sustained me. I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people Who have set themselves against me all around.

There is a TV show in which a sadistic murderer kept a young girl in a small locked room. The girl had a morbid fear of snakes, and her torturer covered the floor of the room with snakes. The snakes weren't poisonous, but the girl didn't know that, and even if she had I'm not sure it would have been much of a comfort to her. The girl was locked in that room for two weeks, do you think she was able to sleep at all?

David having just admitted that he was surrounded by his enemies, declaring that he was trapped in a room with his worst fears, nevertheless, lays down to sleep in peace, confident that he will awake again. Nor is David the only one. Daniel walked among the lions without fear. Three men warmed themselves in the furnace without pain. Paul and Silas sang contentedly in shackles. Martin Luther returned to preach in full view of the public, fearing not the ban of the emperor or the wrath of the pope. All these lay down and slept in peace under the very eyes of those who hated them, for they **"considered Him faithful who promised."**

On the other hand what does God say about the wicked, **"'There is no peace,' says my God, 'for the wicked.'"** Despite

all they faced, despite all the troubles that surrounded them the saints of the past lay down to sleep in peace, knowing that God was protecting them. We too lay down to sleep in peace even though ten thousands of our enemies surround us. The wicked may sleep but not in peace, even though no one pursues them, but we with all the saints of God rest in peace with God even if the snakes are venomous.

Those Who Were Blessed

Psalm 3:7-8 Arise, O LORD; Save me, O my God! For You have struck all my enemies on the cheekbone; You have broken the teeth of the ungodly. Salvation belongs to the LORD. Your blessing is upon Your people. Selah

"Your blessing is upon Your people." What makes for a successful life? Money, fame, riches, loving family, prosperous career, doing a lot of good things? One lady in the gospels thought that whoever had given birth to Christ and raised him to be such a fine prophet, well that certainly was a fairly good accomplishment. But what does Jesus say "more than that blessed are they who hear the word of God and keep it."

God's blessing is upon all His saints as it was upon Jacob. Against whom Balaam could utter not a single word of evil, but only the eternal blessing of God. And he had to cry out in envy,

“Let me die the death of the righteous, And let my end be like his!” We cry it not in envy but in Joy to be numbered with those blessed of God, who went before and have received the blessing. In the end to die with this simple remembrance: Through Jesus Christ they and you have received that blessing.