

## SAINTS AND SONSHINE

A little boy was fidgeting in his seat in church. His mother, pointed at the stained glass windows in which were figures of angel-like beings and said, "Look at the saints and be quiet!" The boy did as ordered and after looking at the windows for a while, his face suddenly brightened. It dawned on him who saints are and he was so excited that he blurted out, right as the Minister was beginning his sermon, "Mom, I get it! Saints are what the light shines through!" The other parishioners tried to shush up the boy but the Minister said, "My friends, you have just heard the sermon for today!" And with that he pronounced the benediction.

From the mouths of babes ..... Well, I can't give you a more practical definition of "saint" than that. But perhaps a little more background would be helpful. In the New Testament, the Greek word "*hagios*" is the typical Greek word translated "*saint*." It is interesting that it is always found in the plural (except for Philippians 4:21, which says, "Greet all the saints in Christ Jesus," a plural context).

No individual is ever called "Saint Matthew" or "Saint Paul" in the Bible. Every believer is "sanctified in Christ Jesus and called to be holy" (1 Corinthians 1:2), for God has "called us to be saints" (Romans 1:7). Now Paul can write to "all the saints in Christ Jesus at Philippi," or wherever we happen to live.

Again, our "sainthood" is conferred by God's grace, not our merit. We are to live in ways that express our status, but we cannot earn it. It is a designation which God bestows upon all His children whether or not they always look and act like our idea of what a saint is.

The "sermon" by the little boy that day is a message that all God's children need to take to heart. A saint truly is one through whom God's light shines! A good text for the lad's message would be Jesus words in Matthew 5, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven." (Matthew 5:16) Saintly Sonshine – the world needs more of it!

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