

St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Perth
September 6th, 2020
Baptismal Sunday
Worship Leader: Rev. Stephen Dunkin

Introductory Song: "Jesus, Strong and Kind" by CityAlight
 (Click on the link below to play the hymn. The lyrics are on the screen.)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T5Y8s-Sz_ac&feature=youtu.be

1. Jesus said that if I thirst
 I should come to him
 No one else can satisfy
 I should come to him

3. Jesus said that if I fear
 I should come to him
 No one else can be my shield
 I should come to him

2. Jesus said if I am weak
 I should come to him
 No one else can be my strength
 I should come to him

4. Jesus said if I am lost
 He will come to me
 And he showed me on that cross
 He will come to me

Chorus x 2

Chorus

For the Lord is good and faithful, He will keep us day and night
 We can always run to Jesus, Jesus strong and kind

Call to Worship

How can a young person stay on the path of purity?

By living according to your word.

I seek you with all my heart;

do not let me stray from your commands.

I have hidden your word in my heart

that I might not sin against you.

Praise be to you, LORD;

teach me your decrees.

With my lips I recount

all the laws that come from your mouth.

I rejoice in following your statutes

as one rejoices in great riches.

I meditate on your precepts

and consider your ways.

I delight in your decrees;

I will not neglect your word.

(Psalm 119:9-16)

Prayer of Invocation

Father, as enter into this time of worship, we pray that it will not just be the doors of this church that are opened, but the doors of our minds, hearts and spirits. May they be opened wide so that you, the King of Glory, may enter in. Reveal yourself to us as the Lord, strong and mighty, able to do battle with the powers of darkness that wage war against our souls. Reveal yourself as the One who raised Jesus **Christ from the dead and seated him at your right hand in the heavenly realms, far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every name that is invoked, not only in the present age but also in the one to come.** Reveal yourself mighty to save us, your people, from our sins and make this your Church victorious **against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.** We welcome you Lord God Almighty – the only King of Glory. In the mighty name of Jesus we pray. Amen

Hymn #299:

“Holy, Holy, Holy”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8jGql3QiRdI1>.

1. Holy holy holy
 Lord God Almighty
 Early in the morning
 Our song shall rise to Thee
 Holy holy holy
 Merciful and mighty
 God in three persons
 Blessed Trinity
2. Holy holy holy
 All the saints adore Thee
 Casting down their golden crowns
 Around the glassy sea
 Cherubim and seraphim
 Falling down before Thee
 Which wert and art
 And evermore shalt be
3. Holy holy holy
 Lord God Almighty
 All Thy works shall praise Thy name
 In earth and sky and sea
 Holy holy holy
 Merciful and mighty

God in three persons
Blessed Trinity

Call to Confession

The psalmist models a transparent faith with these words: “Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my thoughts. See if there is any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.” We express our longing for God’s leading by our own transparent confession.

Prayer of Confession

Holy and merciful God, in your presence we confess our sinfulness, our shortcomings, and our offenses against you. You alone know how often we have sinned in wandering from your ways, in wasting your gifts, in forgetting your love. Have mercy on us, O Lord, for we are ashamed and sorry for all we have done to displease you. Forgive our sins, and help us to live in your light and walk in your ways, for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Savior. Amen.

Silently confess your sins to the Lord

Assurance of Pardon

Through Jesus Christ forgiveness of sins
is proclaimed to you.

In Christ we have redemption through his blood,
the forgiveness of our trespasses,
according to the riches of his grace.

The Lord’s Prayer

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.
Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the Evil One.
For Thine is the Kingdom, the power and the glory,
Forever and ever. Amen**

Baptismal Hymn:

“Welcome to the Family”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p5G4OLBpYqc>

CHORUS

Welcome to the family,
we're glad that you have come to share your life with us,
as we grow in love, and may we always be to you what God would have us be,

a family always there, to be strong and to lean on

VERSE

May we learn to love each other more with each new day,
may words of love be on our lips in everything we say.

May the Spirit melt our hearts and teach us how to pray,
that we might be a true family.

CHORUS

Baptism of Nora Jean Echlin born April 21st, 2020

Responsive Reading Psalm 138

I will praise you, LORD, with all my heart;
before the “gods” I will sing your praise.

**I will bow down toward your holy temple
and will praise your name
for your unfailing love and your faithfulness,
for you have so exalted your solemn decree
that it surpasses your fame.**

When I called, you answered me;
you greatly emboldened me.

**May all the kings of the earth praise you, LORD,
when they hear what you have decreed.**

May they sing of the ways of the LORD,
for the glory of the LORD is great.

**Though the LORD is exalted, he looks kindly on the lowly;
though lofty, he sees them from afar.**

Though I walk in the midst of trouble,
you preserve my life.

You stretch out your hand against the anger of my foes;
with your right hand you save me.

**The LORD will vindicate me;
your love, LORD, endures forever—
do not abandon the works of your hands.**

Ministry of Music: "I Will Trust My Saviour Jesus", CityAlight
(Click on the link below to listen to the Ministry of Music.)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GB9eXtwfAAg>

I will trust my saviour Jesus
When my darkest doubts befall
Trust Him when to simply trust Him
Seems the hardest thing of all

I will trust my saviour Jesus
 Trust Him when my strength is small
 For I know the shield of Jesus
 Is the safest place of all

Jesus, only Jesus
 Help me trust You more and more
 Jesus, only Jesus
 May my heart be ever Yours

I will trust my saviour Jesus
 He has said His way is best
 And I know the path He's chosen
 Leads to everlasting rest

Jesus, only Jesus
 Help me trust You more and more
 Jesus, only Jesus
 May my heart be ever Yours
 Jesus, only Jesus
 Help me trust You more and more
 Jesus, only Jesus
 May my heart be ever Yours

Oh on that cross, how it was seen) Sing 3 times
 I can go now ever trusting in the One who died for me)
 What could I bring, for Your gift is complete)
 So I trust you, simply trust you, Lord, with every part of me)

Jesus, only Jesus
 Help me trust You more and more
 Jesus, only Jesus
 May my heart be ever Yours
 Jesus, only Jesus
 Help me trust You more and more
 Jesus, only Jesus
 May my heart be ever Yours

Scripture Reading:

Philippians 1:1-6

1 Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus,

To all God's holy people in Christ Jesus at Philippi, together with the overseers and deacons:

2 Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

3 I thank my God every time I remember you. 4 In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy 5 because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, 6 being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

This is the Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Prayer for Illumination

Lord God,
 help us to know your ways;
 teach us your paths.
 Lead us in your truth, and teach us,
 for you are the God of our salvation;
 for you we wait all day long.
 Through Christ, our Lord. **Amen.**

(Based on Psalm 25:4-5)

“Saints, Sinners and Overseers”

Philippians 1:1-6

Rev. Stephen Dunkin



When you hear the word “saint”, what comes to your mind? Do you think of a very holy person – the kind of person who has been elevated to sainthood because they have lived a remarkable Christian life? Examples would be St. Augustine of Hippo (354 - 430AD) who was one of the greatest theologians in church history and whose works continue to be referenced right up to the present. Then there is St. Patrick of Ireland (Fifth century AD) who was responsible for introducing the Christian faith to Ireland with his scriptural and evangelical teaching. Of

course, who isn't aware of St. Francis of Assisi (1182 – 1226AD) who gave up wealth to lead a simple life of caring for the sick and poor.



Maybe you prefer to think of someone, not from the Church's ancient past, but from recent times like Mother of Teresa of Calcutta (1910 – 1997) who gave her life for the sick and dying, and who has been venerated the world over by Catholics and Protestants. She lived a sacrificial and exemplary Christian life and was canonized as a saint by Pope Francis in 2016.



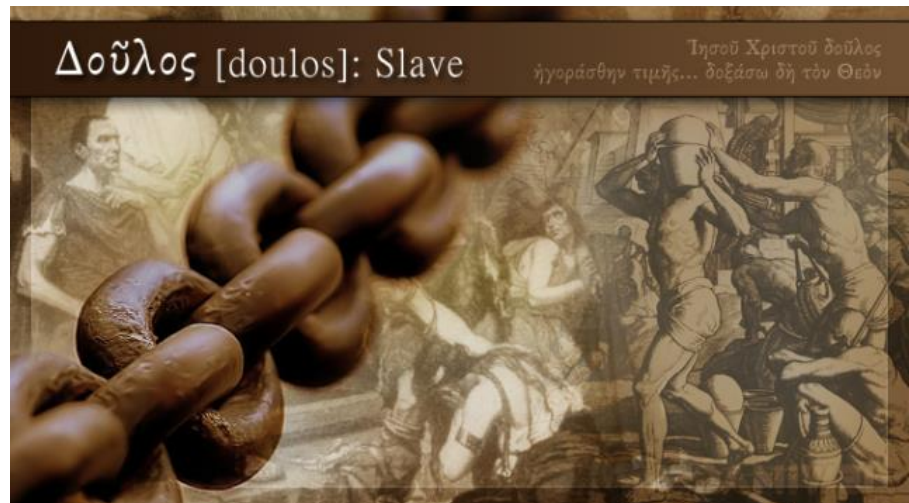
Maybe, when you think of a saint you picture none of these but think of a saint as any virtuous person who has lived an outstanding Christian life like Billy Graham, Elizabeth Elliott or Ravi Zacharius. Or you may think of a saint as some pompous person who pretends to be very good and holy but it is really just a put on show.

The idea of what a “saint” is in Christianity has evolved over time. In the ancient church, a saint was a martyr; that is a person who died for their faith. However, when the persecution of Christians stopped in the fourth century when Constantine was emperor of Rome, then the monk who lived in some desolate place tended to take the place of the martyr. In this sense a saint was seen as someone very close to God who could intercede before God for plain ordinary Christians and through whom divine power flowed. Eventually, the presence of miracles and a life of heroic holiness became the criteria for a becoming a saint.

Based on all of this, it would appear that the term “saint” or “saints” is reserved for a select few super Christians whose level of holiness and heroic Christian living are far above anything we normal Christian folk could ever hope to achieve. We see saints as being in a class all by themselves. Saints are super Christians and we only expect to see one or two major saints emerge per century. Even minor saints are considered pretty rare. Most people we might put in the category of being saints we don’t even want to be like! We can’t stand their “holier than thou” ways. At best, we figure they are deluded. At worst, they are charlatans or frauds.

Here is the real question we need to ask ourselves: “Is any of what we have talked about so far biblical?” What, in the light of scripture, is a saint? I want to make very clear that being a saint really has nothing to do with any of the different types we have looked at so far. We refer to the New Testament writers and the apostles as saints and while most of them died as martyrs, the term “saint” as it is used in the New Testament never refers to martyrdom – that is, to dying for one’s faith. Paul, who we frequently refer to as St. Paul, was indeed a saint, but he never refers to himself as such. In Philippians 1 verse 1 he refers to himself as a **servant of Christ Jesus**. The translation of “servant” here is acceptable, but it is weak. The Greek word is **doulos** and it is better translated as “slave” or “bond servant”. A **doulos** was

a person who was owned. He or she was of a lower social status than a master or a free person. A **doulos** was even lower than a servant. To be a slave in New Testament times was very different than the kind of slavery that we are familiar with and which was so prevalent in North American society. As I have already said, a slave was a piece of property and as such belonged to someone else. A slave could purchase her freedom – or she could choose to remain in the service of her master.



Paul was a Roman citizen and as such he was considered a free man. However, while outwardly he was free, inwardly he was in chains. His inner life was in bondage. Paul gained his real freedom when he surrendered his life to Jesus Christ on the road to Damascus. Now he was completely free, yet he chose to remain a **doulos**, a slave, a bond servant of Jesus.

When Paul referred to himself as a **doulos** of Jesus Christ, it implied three things.

1. Absolute Obedience to Jesus Christ.

Paul knew no law but his Master's word. He considered himself to have no rights of his own. He was bound to Jesus Christ in unquestioning obedience.

2. Absolute Humility.

He thought, not of his rights but of his duties; not of his privileges but of his obligations. He was a man who had lost himself in the service of God.

3. Absolute Loyalty.

I am sure that Paul had many interests, but the greatest interest and aim of his life was to please God. He did not make decisions based on his own profit or preferences. His concern was to do the will of the One who had saved him.

This was how Paul saw himself, but how did he view normal, ordinary, everyday, run-of-the-mill Christians? He called them "saints"! Can you believe that? In Philippians 1:1 he addresses his letter, depending on which translation you look at, **To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi**, (NKJV) or **To all God's holy people in Christ Jesus at Philippi** (NIV). In Romans 1: [7](#) **To all who are in Rome who are loved by God and called to be saints**. In 2 Corinthians he writes: **To the**

church of God which is at Corinth, with all the saints who are in all Achaia. In Ephesians 1 he writes **1 To the saints who are in Ephesus, and faithful in Christ Jesus.** You see, Paul did not write to “the saint” in Philippi or Rome or Ephesus. No, he addresses his letter to “**all the saints**”. There must have been hundreds of them. I suggest to you this morning that if Paul would write a letter to Perth today, he would address it “**to the church of God in Perth, together with all the saints at St. Andrew’s**”. Every person here this morning who knows Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord is a saint.



You may object to what I have just said. “Surely Paul must have been referring just to the elders– the spiritual leaders of the church and not just to us regular folk.” I would have to disagree with you. Here is the full address of this letter. “**To all the saints in Christ Jesus at Philippi, together with the overseers (or elders) and deacons.** Paul refers to every believer in Philippi as a saint and that even included the elders or spiritual

leaders of the church – hard as that may seem to believe!

Let me try to clarify what this word “saint” means. If we are all saints, then it would be helpful to know exactly what it means. That is, it would be helpful to know exactly what we are. As we have already seen, it is a hard word for us to use because it has so many misleading connotations. The best translation here and elsewhere in the New Testament is “**God’s holy people**”. All believers in Christ are God’s holy people. Peter, writing to all the believers in the area we now call Turkey, says to them:

9 But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. 10 Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

The saints are the people of God; and all God's people are called to be "holy". In 1 Thessalonians 4 we read: **7 For God did not call us to be impure, but to live a holy life.** That word "holy" means "to be set apart, special, different". God wants his children to live lives that are "set apart" – lives that are different from the lives of the unbelievers who live around them.

You may be wondering why I am making such a big deal of one little word. Well, let me try to explain. I have heard it said that **"you are what you eat"**. I once knew a lady who fed her cat ice cream. It was the biggest, fattest cat that I have ever seen in my life. When my daughter Jessica was in high school, she used to catch her school bus in front of a Country Style Donut shop. She said that there was a couple – a rather large couple – a grossly overweight couple – who stopped at the store every morning while she waited for the bus. The husband would go in to the donut shop and buy a dozen donuts. Then they would drive away and as they drove; they would be munching on the donuts. That couple literally were what they ate!



Well, you also **are what you think!** I believe this to be every bit as true as the first saying. If you think you are **kind**, then you will most likely be kind! If you think you are **stupid**, you will most likely be stupid and have little or no self esteem. If you think you are a **peacemaker**, then you will most likely be a peacemaker. If you think you are a **slob**, then you will most likely live like a slob.

How do most Christians see themselves? They certainly do not see themselves as saints! How many times have I heard people say: "Well, I am certainly no saint!" I have also frequently heard Christians say: "I am a sinner saved by grace." Let me ask you: What do sinners do? Sinners sin! Sinners expect to sin. When you expect to sin, you usually do. When I see myself as "a sinner saved by grace", then I become very proficient at sinning. Sinning comes naturally. It is inevitable. However, Scripture tells us that when we invite Jesus Christ into our lives, we enter a new category. We become part of the people of God. We are called by a new name. We are called **"saints"** or **"God's holy people"**. We are no longer sinners saved by

grace who continually sin. We are **saints** who occasionally **sin**. Our focus is on what God wants us to be. Our focus is on being His Holy People and not on what we were – sinners.

What a difference that makes! As sinners there is only one outcome and it is not a pleasant one. As saints we have a whole new inheritance. We have a new position. In Ephesians 2 we read:

6 And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, 7 in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus.

This is truly an incredible statement. Romans 8 tells us that God's Spirit prays and intercedes for us.

27 And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for God's people in accordance with the will of God.

When I think about what is being said here it is truly incredible. The Holy Spirit is praying for me – Saint Stephen – in accordance with God's will. That is truly an awesome thought!

In 1 Corinthians 6 it tells us that as believers we should never go before a civil magistrate in a dispute with another believer.

1 If any of you has a dispute with another, do you dare to take it before the ungodly for judgment instead of before the Lord's people? 2 Or do you not know that the Lord's people will judge the world? And if you are to judge the world, are you not competent to judge trivial cases?

When I consider the implications of what is being said in all of the above passages, it is mind boggling. As saints we have a tremendous inheritance. Too bad we don't claim that inheritance and take full advantage of it. We are like the man who stood in line to inherit a substantial fortune. When the letter came from the lawyer informing him of this, he never read the letter advising him of his new status and never claimed it. Either that, or he read it but concluded: "This cannot possibly apply to me." That man spent the rest of his life living as a pauper.

In closing this morning, I want to leave you with a promise that is made to all the saints in every period in the history of the Christian Church. Philippians 1:

6 Being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.



The confidence that is spoken of here has nothing to do with you. It has nothing to do with me. It has everything to do with God. In every saint – in every believer – God has initiated a good work. What God starts he always brings to completion. He always finishes the job. Until the day that Christ returns, he will continue to be at work in you. Don't ever forget that. Don't ever forget who you are. You are a saint. You are one of God's Holy People. Don't miss out on any

portion of the inheritance that is rightly yours as one of God's holy people. You can be confident of what God wants to do in and through you.

Hymn 461:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UKByTfiHOFE>

1. Be Thou my Vision O Lord of my heart
Naught be all else to me save that Thou art
Thou my best thought by day or by night
Waking or sleeping Thy presence my light
2. Be Thou my Wisdom and Thou my true Word
I ever with Thee and Thou with me Lord
Thou my great Father I Thy true son
Thou in me dwelling and I with Thee one
3. High King of heaven my victory won
May I reach heaven's joys bright heaven's Sun
Heart of my own heart whatever befall
Still be my Vision O Ruler of all

“Be Thou My Vision”

Offering

Presenting our tithes and offerings is an act of worship. I want to encourage you to write a cheque and drop it in the mail to the church using your envelope, if you have one. (St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, PO Box 161, 1 Drummond St W, Perth, ON K7H 3E3) We also have another option for you for giving and that is you can make an e-Transfer. This note from our treasurer.

E-transfers are now accepted. Please note the new email address for this purpose only. standrewspertoffering@gmail.com Please include your Offering Envelope # in the message section of the INTERAC transfer page you fill in. If you wish any part of your donation to go to a specific fund (eg Presbyterian Sharing) please mention this in your message.

Invitation to Offering

With joy, we offer our gifts to God
as a sign of our deep devotion and his covenant faithfulness.

Offertory Prayer

Lord, to each of us you have bestowed gifts. You have given us time, abilities and wealth. May we not be like the unfaithful servant, who buried what was given him because he was afraid of his Master. But may we be like those faithful servants who are able to say to you: "Lord, You gave me much and these are the results." And may we hear from your lips: **'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!'** In Jesus name. Amen

Closing Hymn #300:

(Click on the link below to play the hymn.)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x1JilxU-F7o>

"Father, We Love You"

1. Father we love You
We worship and adore You
Glorify Thy name in all the earth
Glorify Thy name
Glorify Thy name
Glorify Thy name in all the earth
2. Jesus we love You
We worship and adore You
Glorify Thy name in all the earth
Glorify Thy name
Glorify Thy name
Glorify Thy name in all the earth
3. Spirit we love You
We worship and adore You
Glorify Thy name in all the earth
Glorify Thy name
Glorify Thy name
Glorify Thy name in all the earth

Benediction

Go out in love, reconciled to one another in Christ.
Lay aside the works of darkness
and put on the armour of light.
Live honourably,
fulfilling the law through love for all.

And may God mark you out for salvation;
May Christ Jesus be present among you always,
And may the Holy Spirit reconcile you to one another
and fulfil the law of love among you.

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.