

What Matters Week 6 Sermon Given All Saints Day

Text: Hebrews 12:1-2, others

- What's a saint?
 - Cover the biblical definition
 - The Roman Catholic definition and differences between them
 - What have we as saints been given, what all saints can expect to receive (now remember we aren't saints because of what we have done, but because of what Christ has done for us.)
 - So remind your spouse this week
- Explain *Simul iustus et peccator* (I did use the Latin, though you obviously need to explain it to others.) At the same time we are both saints/justified, and sinners.
 - 1 Corinthians 6:11
 - Titus 3:5
 - Ephesians 5:26
 - Romans 3:23-24 (all are sinners, but are being justified by his grace—"saints")
- Salvation begins for us when faith grasps what Christ has done for each and every one of us
- Each day, each moment, we either are living out the sinner part of us, or we are living out the saint part of us. This is a constant battle for all of us, as the Spirit within us wages war against the sinful lusts and desires within us. You can be screaming at your spouse and the phone rings and you answer with an angelic sounding, "Hello." Because you have this war waging within you.
- Hebrews 12:1-2
 - Look at the faith of other saints, look at the cloud of witnesses that can help us move forward in our faith
- Yet what entangles us? What keeps us from living as saints? What are the things that drag us back to the sinner side of us. Let's look at the things that drag us down.
 - The first and primary sin is a break of the first commandment: I am the Lord your God, you are to have no other gods before me.
 - Yet this is the root of all our sin. Because our sinful nature desires to be placed first
 - We constantly put ourselves before God and other people and things.
 - We make life about me. Quote Toby Keith song, "I wanna talk about me."
 - What goes with our sin of putting ourselves first, is this sin of comfort/security.
 - The sin of our comfort/security
 - We wouldn't consider buying a car without AC. Why? Because our comfort is one of our top priorities. Because our comfort is the most important thing. So many of us have made security and comfort our god, our idol.
 - The Sending Place has been told by people that they would love to go on a short-term mission except they just can't deal with 3rd world bathrooms. So you would rather stay comfortable in your bathroom

than proclaim the gospel and equip leaders in another country? There are perfectly good reasons to not go on a short term mission, your comfort is not one of them.

- Illustration of someone in congregation who is doing things that make her very uncomfortable, but is doing some great work among us and will do so overseas because she is listening to the call of God on her life, despite how uncomfortable and stretched she feels.
- Walking by sight and not by faith
 - Most churches in America are at a plateau or dying. Most churches in America walk by, set their budgets by, determine their ministry by sight, and not by faith. I do not believe that this is a coincidence.
 - If your church's vision, its mission, does not take you saying, "Lord, increase our faith," your mission and vision is made by men, not by God. If you can handle it yourself, you are walking by sight, and not by faith. This is a great sin of Americans and the church in America, who far too often only set their budgets, ministries, and mission by sight, and not by faith.
 - I believe many churches fail not because they stepped out and did great things based on faith and not sight, but because they played things too safe, did what they "could" do, what they thought would succeed.
 - [Explain how your church's vision is from God and takes walking by faith and not by sight-if you think it is.]
- Luke 4:16-30 Hoarding/Entitlement
 - This Gospel shows entitlement on the part of the Nazarenes. They hear Jesus speak of how great the Gospel is and that it is for everyone in the world-and they rejoice! No, they want to kill Jesus. They think God's promise is only for them, their ethnicity, their families.
 - They were hoarding the blessings, gifts, grace and mercy of God for themselves, and were willing to kill Jesus because He dared say it is for everyone. Jesus dared say the Gospel and God's grace are for everyone, yet the Nazarenes wanted to hoard the blessings of God for themselves. And this is one of the greatest sins of their, and any, generation: hoarding the gifts, grace, and mercy of God for ourselves.
 - If you've learned nothing from this *What Matters* study I hope it is this: God matters. People matter. God has poured His grace and mercy into you so that you can pour it into the lives of others. God has mercifully restored and reconciled us so that we can share that mercy and reconciliation with others.
- GPS Gospel illustration.
 - When we fall into these sins does God reject us, throw us away, say "forget you" and leave you. No.
 - Do you know what I appreciate about a GPS unit? It never says, "You idiot! You just missed your turn again!" It never grows impatient and yells at you as you get yourself more and more lost. It never questions your intelligence, your value, or your worth when you go in the wrong direction. It never says

you are just too lost and you have to go back to where you first started to even hope that you will get to your destination. It never shuts down after it says, "Forget it! I am done talking to you. You just don't listen." It simply says, "Recalculating," and gives you the next step to get you to where you need to go.

- I honestly believe that when Jesus spoke about repentance he was speaking like a GPS unit. God knows every sin, every evil, every flaw, every weakness, every wrong turn we have taken, are taking, and will take. Yet He is still willing to forgive us, love us, and bring us back to the path He has for us. No matter how lost we are, how far we have gotten from our start or our destination, or how turned around we find ourselves, He calls us to recalculate and return to The Way, The Truth, and The Life.
- What's the first turn? Faith and trust in Christ. We'll never get to where we need to go until we place our hope, our trust, our sinful desire to run our own lives off course into His grace-filled hands. Where ever we find ourselves, no matter how lost or disoriented we have become, He will then guide us to the destination for which He has made us.
- I pray that the next time the Holy Spirit whispers into your heart the need to recalculate (and I have no doubt He does so with all of us on a daily basis), that you will listen, repent, and return to the right path. Then you will hear those great words from your Savior, "Welcome to your destination. Well done, good and faithful servant."
- To the praise and glory of Christ, who gives us these gifts freely through His grace, Amen.