

Saints

Definition:

Every true believer in Christ. members of the body of Christ. All the saved of the New Testament era are saints (Greek: *hagioi*) by virtue of their position “in Christ.”

Translation:

The term *saint* in the NAS and NIV is the translation of Greek *hagios* (231 times in the N.T.; 60 times translated *saints*); a term that is frequently translated “holy” in those translations. KJV “saint” is sometimes replaced in the NAS by “holy one.”

A few references:

To all who are beloved of God in Rome, called as saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Romans 1:7

Paul, called as an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Sosthenes our brother, to the church of God which is at Corinth, to those who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus, saints by calling, with all who in every place call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, their Lord and ours. 1 Corinthians 1:1-2

Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, to the saints who are at Ephesus, and who are faithful in Christ Jesus. Ephesians 1:1

Paul and Timothy, bond-servants of Christ Jesus, to all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, including the overseers and deacons. Philippians 1:1

In the Bible

The term *saint* is correctly applied to anyone who believes Jesus Christ is Lord. To believe in Jesus demands obedience and conformity to His will. A saint bears true and faithful witness to Christ in speech and life-style. To be a saint is a present reality when a believer seeks to let the Spirit form Christ within (Romans 8:29; Galatians 4:19; Ephesians 4:13).

The NT refutes the idea of a special class of “saints.”

Although it is true that in experience some believers are more “holy” than others, yet in their position before God all believers are “sanctified,” i.e., saints by virtue of what they are “in Christ.”

Origin of a special class of “saints”

In the Book of Revelation the word *saints*, occurs 13 times, where tribulation and martyrdom are said to be the lot for many of them.

Some began to consider those who were martyred for their testimonies to be “true” saints (i.e., the epitome of true believers).

Soon these “true” saints were accorded special honor, and then even worship.

As a result, the term came to be applied only to such special people.