

SAINTS or SINNERS

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The traditional churches teach that people are sinners. By this they mean that people go their own way instead of God's way, and this is true of anyone who chooses to run their own life without reference to God at all. Anyone who does not want to follow God has a right to do this, because God has given us freewill and He therefore respects this right. They stand condemned in God's sight and at the judgment they will have no Advocate to defend them so their end is eternal death. (John 3:18)

The Bible teaches that whoever believes in God's only Son, Jesus, is not condemned but is saved to eternal life. Those who are members of God's family, the Church, are called saints. (2Corinthians1:1, Ephesians1:1, Philipians1:1, Colossians1:4) This is not because they are especially holy, although God does call us to be holy. Believers are called saints because we have been made holy through the blood of Jesus which is totally effective for the forgiveness of our sins. Saints are sanctified ones. Christ is in us, and we are abiding in Him so when God looks at us He sees only His Son, Jesus. This is the extraordinary miracle of the Gospel. If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! All this is from God... (2Corinthians5:17)

The Bible teaches that no-one who is born of God will continue to sin, because God's seed remains in him; he cannot go on sinning, because he has been born of God. (1John3:9) Yet some traditions insist that we are still sinners when we are born again, but this cannot be. How do we explain our mistakes if they are not sins?

God knows our frailties. He has not wiped them away because we must learn to surrender to Him. Our mistakes keep us from getting proud and hardened to His soft voice. We need to depend on His gentle disciplining and He promises a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have submitted to His training. (Hebrews12:11)

This is a new covenant that God has made with His people... their sins and lawless acts I will remember no more. (Jeremiah31:34 & Hebrews10:17) The death penalty has been paid, once for all, and this is why there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved. (Acts4:12)

Jesus has paid a high price for our redemption, and He has not left us as orphans to fend for ourselves. He has sent His Holy Spirit to convict us of sin and righteousness. (John16:8) When He convicts us that we have gone astray from His holy path we should be quick to repent and He will cleanse us of all unrighteousness. (1John1:9) Repenting is turning away from our way and going God's way instead. We begin to be righteousness-conscious, wanting to please only Jesus. Every day we are becoming more like Him and He is sinless because He always did the Father's will.

I believe it is an insult to Jesus to say we are sinners when He has gone to so much trouble to enable us to be like Him. I want to be the new creation He has made me – the old has gone and the new has come. Paul says we are to regard no-one from a worldly point of view and to be reconciled to God. Then we are His saints.