

## Notes Chapter 4: Saint: Redeemed by the Son

*According to the New Testament, saints are those who belong to Christ, in whom Christ lives. We are meant to be saints not only when we get to heaven, but right here in this world. — Elisabeth Elliot*

It is easy to see our imperfections, to list the ways we are lacking and feel not good enough. Not enough. Failure. Sinner. These words can imprint on our heart and impact our living.

Can you relate? Do you find yourself defined by failure or by sins that cling so close? What words do you wear comfortably as part of who you are?

In some strange way, we become comfortable with these misplaced identities. Sometimes we swing the pendulum the other way, so we try to work harder, determined to do better. Then end up still falling short.

So, we declare “I’m a sinner” so everyone can just accept me as I am and I can stop trying so hard.

### Identity Theft

We can be comfortable with the “I am a sinner” identity: Because we are all still struggling with sin.

Each day, I fail in a variety of ways.

It is easy to become discouraged and defeated. The apostle Paul understood our struggle: “For I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. . . For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep doing.” (Romans 7:15, 19)

Paul wrestled with sin. It warred within his soul:

“For I delight in the law of God, in my inner being, but I see in my members another law waging war against the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members. Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? (Roman 7:22-24)

Paul knew the person he wanted to be— the person he should be—but he’s aware of his shortcomings. Then in a surprising twist, Paul is overcome with praise: “Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!” (Romans 7:25)

Instead of despair, he knows an important truth: THERE IS A REFUGE FOR SINNERS!!

The OT bears out our deep need for RESCUE!!!

Mini-salvation stories in OT- All pointing to the ultimate rescuer: Jesus Christ!!!

- Noah and his family escape flood by the ark
- Israelites escape the destroying angel by the Passover lamb
- Rahab escaped the destruction of Jericho by a scarlet cord.

Jesus is our ark of rescue, our Passover lamb of protection, our scarlet cord of security. All who are in Christ are SAFE.

Why?— There is therefore no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death.” (Romans 8:1-2).

Satan shows us our sin so we might despair.  
God shows us our sin to lead us to Jesus!!!

We may struggle with sin, but it is NO LONGER our identity if we’re in Christ.

### **Identity Truth**

Scripture guides us to a right understanding of both God and ourselves.

Sin is no longer our defining quality once we come to Christ. We get a new name!!  
No longer sinners we are called saints, which literally means “holy ones”.

You may be thinking “no way, I’m no saint, and I’m certainly NOT holy.”

Truth: A saint isn’t like our typical view of a saint reserved for martyrs or monks who lived exemplary lives.

- Paul used the term saint in various churches— these believers weren’t perfect, they believed wrong things, made sinful choices and Paul’s letters often corrected their wrong theology and erroneous living.

Truth: A saint isn’t someone you become!!

- It’s who you are the moment you come to faith.
- God set you apart, clothes you in the righteousness of Christ, and prepares good works for you to do.

Truth: Every JUSTIFIED sinner is called a saint!

- It isn’t a measure of our works, but of Christ’s works.
- The just judgment of God for our sins was poured out on Jesus— He takes EVERY last drop.

Truth: He not only wipes our slate clean— We have the RIGHTEOUSNESS of Jesus.

- “For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that IN HIM we might become the righteousness of God” (2 Cor 5:21).
- This is why we can rest in the humility of our identity as saint
  - o We didn’t earn it

- We're not working toward it
- It is NOTHING we have done, it is because of who Jesus is!!

### **Identity Transformed**

The already but not yet:

- We've been declared fully righteous
- But— not yet made fully righteous

Getting a right perspective to see ourselves, Living as a saint who struggles with sin vs. living as a sinner desperately trying to be a saint.

Affects our daily lives in 4 ways:

- 1) Our relationship with sin
  - a. In our unbelief, sin was natural
  - b. As a saint, we are uncomfortable with sin— there's a fight within us
  - c. Outside of Christ, we're DEAD in our sin— no sign of life
  - d. Unsaved sinners can't fight sin, because they are enslaved to it.
- 2) We live with HOPE in both our obedience and failure
  - a. We know ALL our good works are done in the Spirit's power
    - i. It's a sign of Christ's work in us
    - ii. New hope awakens: to glorify God in all that we do
    - iii. "I run in the path of your commands, for you have set my heart free"  
(Psalm 119:32)
  - b. When we disobey, we no longer hide
    - i. We mourn our sin and repent, knowing Jesus' blood is ENOUGH for ALL our failings.
    - ii. Saints approach the throne of grace with confidence instead of fear
- 3) Understanding God's free grace allows us to live graciously toward others
  - a. We patiently and lovingly deal with the failings of others
  - b. We recognize the patience of our Savior toward us
  - c. Saints have no room for the judgment of other
  - d. Saints humbly confront the wrong in others, pointing them to mercy and grace
  - e. Saints are kind and tender, filled with hope in the Spirit's work
  - f. Live in true community with others
- 4) Saints are people of profound JOY!!
  - a. They understand they have been rescued
  - b. Out of all the earth they have been called, saved, redeemed, and adopted in to the family of God.
  - c. Salvation— full, unmerited, free— is the foundation of JOY.

So, take you eyes of yourself, it is Christ who holds us fast. Rest secure in HIM!! The cross is ENOUGH, Jesus is enough. His robes of righteousness cover you completely. Your identity is in him. Believe it, live in it, and rejoice today in this truth: *He calls you saint!*