

Sunday 1 November 2020 - All Saints

Sermon Notes

Who is a Saint?

- What name or image comes to mind? Our 'own' saints - James, Mary, John (all from the Bible), Eligius (later)
- Or those in a stained glass window:



- Martin and George, dressed as medieval knights
- A strange idea - and not at all Biblical
- We find real saints in Paul's letters and in Revelation (see today's NT reading).
- Here's an example - Paul to the church at Corinth:

[From Paul] to the church of God that is in Corinth, to those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, together with all those who in every place call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, both their Lord and ours ...
(1 Corinthians 1:2)

- Everyone in the church is called to be a saint
- But what does that mean? Saint = sanctus (latin) = holy (as in *The Sanctus* - Holy, holy, holy ...)
- Even though Paul referred to them as saints, he was often telling them off for disobeying his teaching, for arguing, for criticising him etc.
- So it turns out they were just like us - ordinary people who often failed.

Saints today (talking about us)

- Holiness is an attribute of God and we, as saints (= holy ones) are called to share in that holiness, thereby getting closer to God.

- Jesus showed us the way, in his life and teaching.
- Take the Beatitudes at the start of the Sermon on the Mount. Blest are the meek, the poor in spirit, those who mourn etc - all counter-intuitive and only making sense according to God's values, not the world's.

The All Saints message

- Have confidence in our calling to follow Jesus and come closer to God
- While called to be special, we remain who we are with our own individual blend of good and bad
- Jesus was one of us. He showed us what faithfulness to God is really like, taking to its extreme by dying on the cross for us.
- Consider one another as saints too
- Look at the world and see how much it needs the Christian message, for which we are the messengers
- We're not just called to be saints - we are saints. Believe it or not.

JRE / 26.10.20