

## *“The Saints at Corinth”*

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*“To the church of God that is in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints together with all those who in every place call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, both their Lord and ours.” (1 Cor. 1:2)*

Read 1 Cor. 1:1-3

How unfortunate that the Corinthian church has been identified by their modern counterpart as *“The Carnal Corinthians.”* A tremendous injustice has been committed against the body of Christ and the sure work of God when we identify His people by their performance and not their position. Such is tragic to the unity of the body for in so doing we alienate and divide by removing from her roles those whom God accepts and embraces.

There is no question as to the real and glaring inadequacies and noted failures of this first century fellowship, but this is not what identifies the saints of God.

Paul begins his letter to the Corinthians according to standard epistolary format by identifying from whom (“Paul and Sosthenes” v. 1), to whom (“To the church of God in Corinth” v. 2), and an opening benediction (“Grace and peace” v. 3). The letter appears to be a cyclical letter that was to be circulated among “All those who in every place call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Throughout the letter, he is pointed and direct, yet never does he divorce his call to put off *what they are doing* from *who they are in Christ*. Such a disconnect leads to spiritual despair and moral failure.

Before launching into personal matters of failures of conformity, he establishes his base by noting who they are in Christ and how they are to see themselves.

He calls this *“carnal”* fellowship, “To those sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints.” There is no question as to how Paul views this glorious fellowship of kindred spirits. He writes to those who have been set apart as holy by being positional in Christ. These are called by God to be “saints.” God calls His people, “saints.” He calls them “the sanctified.” He called us to this and this is what we are, saints.

If this is how He calls His own, how can we His people do less? The sanctified have been and continue to be such. This is something done to them and for them. It is not something to work for, but to work from. This is the ongoing, unalterable, condition of His people . . . regardless as to their inabilities and moral failures.

Such truth does not dismiss moral failure and “carnal” acts, but it does enable us to put it into perspective. Such “sin” never counts us out. Such sins are not excuses to continue in such. We are to press ahead and look to Him who alone is the sufficiency and satisfier of our thirsty souls.

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This is the truth that transforms. No struggle on our part can ever make us more or less than what we already are in Christ, “sanctified saints.” This is what removes from us the burden of a performance based means of acceptance before a God who is incapable of being placated by the puny efforts of a self-righteous and deceived people. Let us claimer after Him who alone is the sole basis of our acceptance before the Father. May we never divorce who we are in Him from how we are viewed by our Father. May we begin to see ourselves and those around us as the sanctified of God, called to be saints.