

SERMON FOR NOVEMBER 7, 2021

TEXT: REVELATION 7: 9-17

THEME: GOD'S HALL OF FAME

9 After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands, **10** and crying out with a loud voice, "Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!" **11** And all the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, **12** saying, "Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to our God forever and ever! Amen." **13** Then one of the elders addressed me, saying, "Who are these, clothed in white robes, and from where have they come?" **14** I said to him, "Sir, you know." And he said to me, "These are the ones coming out of the great tribulation. They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." **15** "Therefore they are before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple; and he who sits on the throne will shelter them with his presence. **16** They shall hunger no more, neither thirst anymore; the sun shall not strike them, nor any scorching heat. **17** For the Lamb in the midst of the throne will be their shepherd, and he will guide them to springs of living water, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes."

In the name of Jesus:

Today is a day in which we honor the Lord and remember the saints that have gone before us. As human beings, we like to honor those who have gone before us. That is why we construct Hall of Fame buildings and museums, to reflect upon the talents of those inducted into the Hall of Fame, and to honor them for their achievements. The state of Ohio has its share of Hall of Fame

Museums, the Pro Football Hall of Fame in Canton, the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in Cleveland, the Motorcycle Hall of Fame in Pickerington, and the Varsity O, the Hall of Fame for Ohio State athletes.

The Bible has its own Hall of Fame. The Hall of Fame chapter of the Bible is Hebrews 11, where the apostle Paul lists just some of the saints that are found in the Old Testament. Saints such as Abraham, Noah, Moses, David, are listed, but there are more, the unnamed ones who lived by faith. They are: “**35** Women received back their dead by resurrection. Some were tortured, refusing to accept release, so that they might rise again to a better life. **36** Others suffered mocking and flogging, and even chains and imprisonment. **37** They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were killed with the sword. They went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, afflicted, mistreated— **38** of whom the world was not worthy—wandering about in deserts and mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth.**39** And all these, though commended through their faith, did not receive what was promised, **40** since God had provided something better for us, that apart from us they should not be made perfect.”

In our text for today, these among others, including all of the faithful, the believers, the saints, those who have gone before us, and those we who will join them, sing praises to the Lamb of God who was slain. John writes:

“After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands, **10** and crying out with a loud voice, “Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!” All praise to Jesus, for He is the One who saves sinners!

Sinners. Sinners who deserve no good thing from God. Sinners who can't help or save themselves. Sinners who are by their very nature lost and condemned, born enemies of God. Sinners, who are in need of a Savior.

This is why Jesus came into this world. He is the Savior long promised and the Savior sinners so desperately need. Jesus described His mission in these words: “The Son of Man came not to be served but to serve and to give His life as a ransom for many.” Christ came to save sinners! He came to those afflicted with sin. If you are anxious and afraid, if you doubt or are despair. Christ came to be your ever present Help in your times of trouble. Jesus lived on earth to walk the walk that you walk, live the life that you are called to live, only Jesus did it perfectly. He loved the Lord His God with all of His heart, soul, mind and strength. He loved His neighbor as Himself. Jesus was sent from heaven to do the will of the Heavenly Father who sent Him to earth to save sinners.

God's Hall of Fame consists only of sinners, sinners who have not only confessed their sins but also have confessed their faith in their Savior, Jesus. Sinners who are now saints, sinners who have been and are saved by God's grace through faith in Jesus Christ. Sinners whose lives reflect the love and life of Jesus, the Savior of sinners.

You have been baptized. You have been given faith in Jesus. You are now one of the saints whose name is written in the Book of Life. God the Holy Spirit is at work in and through you, so that your life like the saints of old reflects the love and life of Jesus. The life of the saints of God, is one which is marked by the cross. Jesus said as much when He told His disciples: "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. **25** For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. **26** For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what shall a man give in return for his soul? **27** For the Son of Man is going to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay each person according to what he has done."

On this All Saints Day we give thanks to God for what Jesus has done for His saints! And as His saint, you are called to live your life for Jesus. The life of the saint is a walk marked by the cross of Christ. It is a walk of trial and tribulation. Jesus promised as much when He said that in this world you will

have trials and tribulations, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world. The saints of old have walked that walk. And you, the saints of God in this life walk that walk of faith in this world as you continue to trust in Jesus as you go through the hills and valleys of life. And then, like the saints of old, remaining faithful to Christ in all things, even unto death, you will receive the crown of everlasting life.

So what a wonderful picture this is that John paints for us in his vision of heaven in the book of Revelation. Listen to what John writes: “These are the ones coming out of the great tribulation. They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.¹⁵” Therefore they are before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple; and he who sits on the throne will shelter them with his presence.¹⁶ They shall hunger no more, neither thirst anymore; the sun shall not strike them, nor any scorching heat.¹⁷ For the Lamb in the midst of the throne will be their shepherd, and he will guide them to springs of living water, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.”

Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ honored us in His life by living and dying and rising again that we might be saved. And so we sinners, in turn, now honor Christ today as we seek to do His will on earth, living the life He calls us to live, sharing His love and spreading His Good News of salvation for

everyone. And we look forward to that Day when all of the saints will hear the words every saint longs to hear: “Well done, good and faithful servant.” For the saints serve God, they trust in Jesus, and they live lives honoring Him who died and rose again. Yes, salvation belongs to our God, and on that Day we will rejoice, for Christ has gathered His saints from all times and from all places, to live with Him forever.

Amen