

JOHN PAUL AND JOHN MCKNIGHT: TWO UNPROFITABLE SERVANTS

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Luke 17:1-10

“So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants; we have done that which was our duty to do.” Luke 17:10

Today Popes John II and John Paul XXIII are to be declared “saints” by the Roman church. The church claims a “treasury of the church,” said to contain surplus merits of Christ, His mother and saints. These merits—more than their contributors needed to enter heaven—are held by the church, which feigns to dispense them to sinners on earth, reducing their time in purgatory.

Today’s “sainting” of two popes affirms that they accumulated excess merit. This claim and the accompanying ideas of purgatory, a treasury of merit and papal ability to transfer that merit should be examined by Scripture. The biblical record is quite different.

1. Everyone who has been born again is a saint. In sixty-one New Testament texts, believers in Jesus Christ are called “saints.” Taken together they argue strongly that anyone who truly believes in Jesus Christ is a saint. This is not due to any merit in the believer, for even the apostles lamented that they yet had sin and were “wretched” (Rom. 7:24).

2. Only God knows who the saints are. He chose them in Christ before the foundation of the world (Eph. 1:1, 4). The prophet foretold that Christ would see them when His soul was made an offering for sin on the cross (Isa. 53:10). In Christ’s great prayer of intercession, He prayed for them that they might be kept from the evil one (John 17:9, 15, 20, 21). On the cross Christ prayed for them, saying “Father, forgive them,” (Luke 23:34). Christ died as their substitute, bearing their sins in His body (Isa. 53:4-6, 11-12; I Peter 2:24). They are raised from spiritual death in His resurrection (John 11:25; Col. 3:1; Eph. 2:1, 5-6). Angels are sent forth to be their servants (Heb. 1:14; Luke 16:22). “The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his” (II Tim. 2:19). He “knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished” (II Peter 2:9).

3. God alone makes a saint. No human can do it. No human institution can do it. No church can do it. Only God through Jesus Christ gives salvation unto man (Acts. 4:12; Titus 3:5).

4. All humans are unprofitable servants (Luke 17:10). None has done his duty. “. . . We have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin . . . there is none righteous, no, not one . . . there is none that doeth good, no, not one . . . for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God” (Rom. 3:9, 10, 12, 23). “Verily, every man at his best state is altogether vanity” (Psa. 39:5).

5. Christ is the only servant in whom profit is found. He was absolutely sinless (I Peter 2:22, 23; Heb. 4:15). He always pleased the Father in heaven (John 8:29; Matt. 3:17; 17:5).

6. All who are in Christ partake of His righteousness by means of faith (Rom. 3:21-4:25). God accepts them because Christ took their sin in order to save them from its defilement and destruction (II Cor. 5:21; I Cor. 15:3; I Peter 2:24).