

All Saints Observed / November 2, 2025

Revelation 7:14-15

"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. 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."

Washed in the Blood of the Lamb

The feast of All Saints is an annual reminder of the goal of our faith, and the means by which we reach that destination. We journey in faith and enter the presence of God through the washing of the blood of the Lamb. Jesus said, *"I am the way and the truth and the life, no one comes to the Father except through me."* All who come to Jesus come to the Father; now through faith, more closely through death; fully and forever when He calls us to share in His resurrection to everlasting life. The feast of All Saints reminds us that saints are not exceptionally good people, not even good people. Saints are sinful people who have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Saints are sinners who saw their sins, confessed their sinfulness and responded to Jesus' call to come to Him for forgiveness, healing and life. Jesus calls, *"Come to me all who are weary and heavy laden and I will give you rest."* We observe the Feast of All Saints in remembrance of those who rest in heaven's peace and of those with whom we share this earthly pilgrimage. All believers in heaven and on earth are saints made holy by the washing of Jesus' blood. In Him we rest in God's peace.

The feast of All Saints and our text from Revelation teach us two things. First, that all believers, baptized into Jesus' death and resurrection are saints, made holy in forgiveness through the washing of His blood. Second, that whether we are in the body or out of the body in death, we are in the loving presence of God for the sake of Jesus. In life and in death the Lamb is our Shepherd. He leads us to springs of living water in the word, the washing of baptism, the bread and wine of holy communion. He gives us comfort in our sorrows, strength to bear our burdens, hope in the presence of death and the promise of eternal peace. One day for His sake, God will wipe every tear from our eyes. The Feast of All Saints and the beautiful vision in Revelation, teach us that Jesus gives us the peace of a good conscience towards God in life through washing of forgiveness and entrance into His Father's presence when we pass out of this life. Our text shows us that when we pass from this life, He will bring us to Himself to rest in His peace awaiting the

fulfillment of faith with all believers in our share of His resurrection to a new and eternal life.

This vision from Revelation has brought comfort to countless believers over the ages as they endured the tribulations of life, endured persecution for the sake of Jesus, struggled with their own sinfulness, grieved the death of loved ones and faced their own deaths. It is a vision of believers passing out of the tribulation of life and into the presence of God, who shelters them with His presence, provides for their every need and wipes every tear from their eyes. What great comfort, consolation and hope these verses give! *“They shall hunger no more, neither thirst anymore; the sun shall not strike them, nor any scorching heat. For the Lamb in the midst of the throne will be their shepherd, and He will guide them to springs of living water.”* It is a vision of heaven’s peace. Who wouldn’t want to go to such a place?

When asked how they think they can get to heaven, the majority of people refer to being good as the cause of salvation, just as most people think we become saints by being good. When people consider death or approach the time of their death, they often worry whether they have been good enough to go to heaven. There’s nothing to worry about, no one is good enough to go to heaven. All sin and fall short of the glory of God. Only one is good enough to go to heaven, Jesus our God and Saviour. He earned our place in heaven through His sinless obedience and sacrificial death. He makes us saints, holy in the sight of God, through the washing of His blood in baptism, received through faith in Him. He brings us to stand in the presence of the Father, now through faith, clothed in robes made white in His righteousness. He receives all who believe. He calls us to believe that He may bring us and all believers into His presence forever in heaven’s peace in His resurrection to life everlasting. Believe and receive Him now!

This vision from revelation shows how and why people go to heaven. Not by being good, but by being clothed in robes made white in the blood of the Lamb. Jesus told a parable about a man who responded to the invitation to a wedding banquet, but who was ejected, because he was not wearing the garments required to enter the banquet. It has nothing to do with dress codes for wedding banquets in first century Palestine. It is a parable akin to our text from Revelation, in which people enter the presence of God in garments made white in the blood of the Lamb. Our sinfulness does not prevent our entrance into heaven. Christ shed His blood to redeem us from our sins. He washes away our sins. Even now He covers our sinfulness with the garment of His righteousness. Our self-righteousness

prevents us from entering heaven. We enter heaven for the sake of Jesus' blood and righteousness.

The man in Jesus' parable represents those who seek entry to heaven, because of their presumed human righteousness. The man in the parable represents those who think they are saints because there are good and seek entrance to heaven because of their personal goodness. We enter heaven clothed in garments made white in the blood of the Lamb, for the sake Jesus' righteousness. The people in John's vision are saints, because Christ made them saints; holy in the forgiveness of sin, righteous in the covering of His righteousness. People go to heaven not by their holiness, but by the blood of the Lamb. His blood and righteousness are the reason people go to heaven.

We access Jesus' righteousness through believing in Him as our God and Saviour. In our lesson from Ephesians last Sunday, St. Paul emphasized this point repeatedly, twice saying 'by grace we are saved through faith. He wrote, *"And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast."* We are His workmanship created new in Christ Jesus. Our boast is Jesus. His blood is our righteousness, our beauty and our glorious dress! We enter God's heaven not by works done by us, but by the work Christ did for us. His sinless obedience and sacrificial death! We enter heaven by the grace of God in Christ Jesus, in whom our sinfulness is covered with the robe of His righteousness and for whose sake our sins are continuously washed away in the baptismal flood of His shed blood.

This vision shows people entering heaven clothed in white robes and holding palm branches in their hands. The palm branches remind us of Palm Sunday and Jesus' entrance to Jerusalem, welcomed as the Christ and received as the Saviour. The palm branches represent the faith of believers, through which we receive Jesus as our Saviour, by which we confess Him as our Lord with our lips and with our lives. The action of the saints washing their robes in the blood of the Lamb represents the action of believers in consciously and intentionally accessing the means by which God blesses us with the forgiveness of our sins and the covering of Jesus' righteousness. These are the words of scripture, the water of holy baptism, the bread and wine of holy communion. We access these means of grace by hearing the word, reading the word, receiving the word of absolution, eating and drinking the word in holy communion. Jesus said, *"I am the living bread that came from heaven. If anyone eats of the bread that I give he will live forever."* We live in Christ by consciously and intentionally accessing Him in the word, the water, the bread and wine.

We go to heaven because of Jesus' blood and righteousness. The saints access Jesus through faith and in Him received the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit. We access Him daily by actively seeking Him in word and sacrament. We receive forgiveness in time, strength and encouragement for daily living and life in eternity. We receive Jesus' blood and righteousness through the word, the washing of baptism and the nourishment of holy communion. We go to heaven when we die, because the blood of the Lamb was active in our lives through a living faith. We wash our robes and make them white in His righteous blood by returning to our baptismal promise in repentance and the absolution of our sins. We wash our robes in Christ's righteous blood through the frequent and faithful use of the scriptures in study, prayer and meditation. We wash our robes and make them white through the receiving of Christ's body and blood in Holy Communion. We access Jesus and wash our robes in His righteous blood by taking His word to heart, living in it and believing it.

God bless us with a living and active faith that we may daily wash our robes in Christ's righteous blood. God bring our faith to fulfillment with all saints on the day of Jesus Christ in the resurrection to life everlasting. In His Name. Amen