

Are You a Saint?

On June 16, 2002, some 500,000 devotees gathered in Rome to witness Pope John Paul II proclaim the Capuchin monk Padre Pio, a saint. This event is a fresh reminder of how much the Roman Catholic Church has departed from the teaching of the Bible, as can be seen by the following comparison.

Who are the saints?

To most Roman Catholics, the Saints are the comparatively few departed Catholics who had been canonized by the Vatican.

But the Bible says that all true believers are saints. For example, the apostle Paul writes, "To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ which are at Colosse." He addresses Christians by the titles "saints," "faithful" (believers), and "brethren." Clearly he considered all believers in Christ as saints.

When are they called saints?

Rome says, only after their death, when their case is studied and an official proclamation is made by the Pope.

The Bible says, all Christians are saints during their lifetime. On innumerable occasions the living Christians are called "saints" in the New Testament, even though they were subject to error and sin.

Why are they saints?

Rome says, because they practiced heroic virtue. They attained their own salvation by their prayers and good works.

The Bible says, all Christians are "sanctified (made saints) through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all" (Hebrews 10:10). They are saints because of the work of Christ for them, not because of their religious efforts. Christians are called to live holy lives not to become saints but because they are saints already.

How are the saints recognized?

Rome says, you need an infallible magisterium to identify true saints, and that only after a complicated and lengthy procedure is followed which includes the proof of miracles.

In the Bible the disciples of Christ freely call each other "saints." They are not recognized by some supernatural power but by their faith in Christ, godliness and love for one another.

Dear reader, I ask you in all seriousness, "Are you a saint?" I hope you can answer with confidence, "Yes, I am a saint, by the grace of Christ."