

Prayer of Preparation: Gracious God, help us to stand firm and hold fast to our faith. *Amen.*

According to Paul, a saint is someone who claims Christ and spends their lives doing Christ’s work here on earth. Just in case your wondering who’s a saint, I’m here to tell you it’s the person you see in the mirror each morning. It’s all of us who join together in faith; it’s us who proclaim faith in Jesus.

It’s us in all of our imperfections. It’s us in all of our struggles to be who God calls us to be. It’s us, the people who call ourselves the church...we are the saints.

I want you to look to your left. Now look to your right. Those people you see are saints as well. We come in all colors, shapes, and sizes. We speak different languages. We worship in different ways...and we are all saints. We are surrounded by saints and we are the saints.

Paul says it this way,...*your faith is growing abundantly and the love of every one of you for one another is increasing. Therefore we ourselves boast of you among the churches of God for your steadfastness and faith...*

Paul says that we are to see ourselves as saints. Are we surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses; the saints who have gone on to heaven? Yes, indeed we are. Their spirits fill this place. But sometimes we forget that our spirits, our sainthood, fills this place as well. So today is about remembering who we are as saints well as those remembering those saints who have gone on before us.

Paul says to us saints: *God will make you worthy of his call and will fulfill by his power every good resolve and work of faith, so that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you and you in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.*

Saints of God, here’s my advice to all of us: ***stand firm and hold fast.***

- Teaching Sunday School: ***stand firm and hold fast.***
- Reading scripture on Sunday mornings: ***stand firm and hold fast.***
- Packing bags of food for children to eat over the weekend: ***stand firm and hold fast.***
- Cooking Thanksgiving dinner for the community: ***stand firm and hold fast.***
- Serving in the food pantry: ***stand firm and hold fast.***
- Serving in the clothes closet: ***stand firm and hold fast.***
- Knitting hats, gloves, blankets, and scarves: ***stand firm and hold fast.***
- Meeting one Monday a month to make sure the congregation is being cared for: ***stand firm and hold fast.***
- Leading family worship: ***stand firm and hold fast.***
- Calling members to check in: ***stand firm and hold fast.***
- Calling the sheep back to the fold: ***stand firm and hold fast.***
- Manning the security station: ***stand firm and hold fast.***
- Lifting your voice in song: ***stand firm and hold fast.***
- Media team: ***stand firm and hold fast.***
- Ushers: ***stand firm and hold fast.***
- One Board: ***stand firm and hold fast.***
- Choir: ***stand firm and hold fast.***

Brothers and sisters in Christ, in all that you do for the kingdom: ***stand firm and hold fast.***