


# LOOKING UP

March-April 2022



*"...look up, and lift  
up your heads."  
Lk. 21:24*

## *Saint or Sinner?*

BY PASTOR JASON SALMI

In Saint John's Gospel, we find John the Baptist pointing to Jesus and saying, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" (Jn. 1:29) In a powerful psalm of praise, King David exalts in the greatness of God's mercy towards us: "as far as the east is from the west, so far does he remove our transgressions from us." (Ps. 103:12) In these and in many other places, the holy Scriptures make it clear that Christians are saved because God

has taken away our sin, having removed it from us. You, dear Saint, belong to that great multitude which no one can number, that John saw in his Revelation. Through faith in Jesus, you are one of those who, "have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." (Rev. 7:14b).

But it doesn't always feel like that's true, does it? After all, we look at what the Bible says about our sin being totally and completely removed from us and by faith we say, "Amen!" And then we look within ourselves and we

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## **Regular Schedule**

### **Sunday**

9:45 AM Sunday School  
11:00 AM Worship service

### **Holy Communion**

2nd & 4th Sunday of the month

### **Meal**

2nd Sunday of the month

### **Board Meeting**

7:00 PM 1st Tuesday  
of the month

### **Ladies Bible Study**

10:00 AM Wednesdays

### **Youth Group**

TBA

### **Friday Night Bible Study**

7:00 PM Location TBA

still see sin. We still must admit that we miss the mark in thought, word and deed. We continue to find ourselves guilty of sins of commission, as well as those of omission. As a matter of fact, we look into the same Scriptures in which we found such comfort in the proclamation that our sins are removed, and find that John (yes, the same John who wrote the Gospel above) also tells us, "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." (1 Jn. 1:8)

So then which is it? Have our sins been removed, or are we forced to admit that we are still sinners? And the answer is, "Both." The testimony of God's Word is that you, Dear Believer, are simultaneously a saint and a sinner. And that may at first seem hard to reconcile, but it's exactly true. The Apostle Paul gives us a graphic illustration of how this looks as he wrestles with this tension; believing that he is saved, he nevertheless also sees his own present sinfulness:

"So I find it to be a law that when I want to do right, evil lies close at hand. For I delight in the law of God, in my inner being, but I see in my members another law waging war against the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members. Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I myself serve the law of God with my mind, but with my flesh I serve the law of sin."  
(Rm. 7:21-25)

In trying to understand how it can be true that we are both a saint and a sinner at the same time, it's helpful to consider it according to perspective. As we know, changing the place from which we view something can either conceal or reveal things which are there. When considering your own sinfulness, that is viewing yourself according to the way that you live your life. And from that perspective, all of your failures are clearly visible. But God sees you in a different way. He sees you, who have been united with Christ through Baptism (Rm. 6:3-5), only through His Son! When God the Father looks at you, He does not see you based on your own righteousness (or lack thereof), but according to Jesus' righteousness.

Dear Saints, praise God for His Word and the salvation and comfort that comes through it. And when you want to see how you stand before God, do not look at yourself, but look to Jesus and what He has done for you. "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!"

## Looking Ahead

### March 8th

Red Cross Blood Drive

### March 26th

Spring Cleaning

### April 14th

Maundy Thursday Service

### April 15th

Good Friday Service

### April 17th

Easter Worship Service

*"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age." Mt. 28:19-20*

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