

THE MYSTERY OF SAINTHOOD

1. The Meaning of Holiness

- a) Holiness is an essential characteristic of God the Holy Trinity
 - * God the Holy Trinity is the Holiness in itself
 - * God the Holy Trinity is the Source of Holiness
 - * God the Holy Trinity is the Norm of Holiness
 - * God's Holiness is about His transcendency, His characteristic of being totally "non-earthly", "non-worldly"
- b) all religions have a sense of Sacredness
 - * because of man's natural nostalgia for holiness in which he participated through Adam and Eve
 - * the pagan religions expressed man's natural instinct for holiness in speculative forms
 - * the pagan sacredness was an impersonal one

2. The Holiness in the Old Testament

- a) the Old Testament reveals the personal dimension of sacredness
 - * God reveals Himself with the name :"I Am"
 - * God enters a dialogue with the patriarchs and Moses
- b) the Old Testament reveals that holiness belongs to God only, for only He is Holy by essence
 - * Holiness is extended through association to:
 - + people
 - + things set aside for His service
 - + places set aside for Him
 - + times set aside for Him

3. The Holiness in the New Testament

- a) it is fully revealed in the Person of Jesus Christ
 - * Jesus is the Holy One
 - + see Mark 1, 24
 - + see Luke 1, 35
 - + see Acts 4, 27 & 30
- b) holiness by association is restored to its original form that of the fulfillment and perfectness of the human nature being reunited with God
 - * Jesus calls us to that perfection in Him
 - + see Matthew 5, 48
 - * Jesus tells us that man's holiness by participation is possible in Him
 - + see John 15, 5
 - * Holiness is revealed as the interior quality of "BEING IN CHRIST"
 - + see Galatians 2, 20
- c) The New Testament holiness has an ecclesiological dimension
 - * it is possible only in Christ
 - * it is possible in the Church the Mystical Body of Christ, the realm of Holiness
 - * it begins in Baptism, when we become POTENTIAL SAINTS
 - + see 1 Peter 2, 9
 - * it depends on OUR ABIDING IN CHRIST

* The Church, the Mystical Body of Christ, includes both the Triumphant and the Militant Church

4. The Adoration and Veneration

- a) God the Source of Holiness is ADORED ONLY
- * He only is Holy by essence
 - * He only is the Source of life
 - * He only is the ultimate Source of salvation
 - * as we adore God, we express our total dependence on Him as our Source of salvation and eternal life
 - + see Exodus 20, 2-5
 - + see Matthew 4, 10
- b) The Saints can be venerated, respected and honored
- * their holiness is by participation in God's holiness through the Holy One, Jesus Christ
 - * venerating, respecting and honoring them, we proclaim the teaching about "GOD'S IMAGE AND LIKENESS" which was restored in us by Jesus Christ
 - + because of His Incarnation and Restoration of the human nature, MAN CAN PARTICIPATE IN HOLINESS
 - see Leviticus 19, 2
 - see 2 Peter 1, 4
 - + "living in Christ" man can become "an icon of the Lord Jesus Christ"
 - + the Saints are guides and encouragements about the possibility of "life in Christ"
 - they are guides towards "the peak" of the "full stature" of man in Christ, the New Adam
 - = the restored humanity in Him
 - = the humanity in communion with God
 - = the heavenly humanity
 - they are encouragements that Christ's promises can be fulfilled in our own lives
 - = the Saints were just as human as we are
 - = they had similar weaknesses
 - = they had similar limitations
 - = Christ made their lives righteous, just as He promised, and He can do it in our lives also
 - we follow their example of:
 - = faith, as we read in Hebrews 13, 7
 - = self-denial (see Philipians 3, 14)
 - = prayer
 - = love
 - = hope
 - = standing for God's truth...

5. The Holy Scriptures talk about THE ROLE OF THE SAINTS

- a) they are God's friends
- * see John 15, 14
 - * see James 2, 23

- b) they are partakers of God's inheritance
* see Colossians 1, 12
- c) they are members of God's household
* see Ephesians, 19
- d) they are judges with the Judge
* see 1 Corinthians 6, 2
* see Matthew 19, 28

6. The Saints are not dead but active in the Communion of Saints

- a) they died physically only
- b) they are very much alive
- c) they are part of the Triumphant Church in the Communion of Saints
* see Hebrews 12, 1
* see Hebrews 12, 22-23
* see Revelation 7, 9-11
- d) they are still praying WITH and FOR US
* they did it here
+ see Philippians 1, 3-4
+ see 1 Thessalonians 1, 2-3
+ see 2 Timothy 1, 3
+ see James 5, 16
* why would they stop now, when they are in God's presence?

7. Is their veneration Scriptural?

- a) the Bible shows a condemnation of the adoration of Saints
* see Acts 10, 26
* see Acts 14, 15 as a result of 14, 11-13
* see Revelation 22, 8-9
- b) the Bible shows cases of Honor and Veneration of God's Holy people
* Christ is ultimately adored in the venerated Saint
* see 2 Kings 1, 13
* see 1 Kings 2, 15
* see Acts 16, 29