

# Yes, For All the Saints

Presented by Pastor Scott Walters on 11/03/19  
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I remember seeing a rebroadcast of a NOVA program on the Terracotta Army the other night. It was amazing. The Terracotta Army is a collection of sculptures depicting the armies of CHIN SHE HWONG, the first emperor of China. He ruled at a time when various provinces were at war with one another. A great military leader, he conquered province after province and created one nation, launching the Qin dynasty, for which China probably was named.

CHIN SHE HWONG had an expansive vision for his country. His public works projects included the unification of diverse state walls into what later became the Great Wall of China and a massive new national road system.

One of the emperor's greatest concerns was his own death. He undertook a futile search for an elixir of immortality, which he did not find. Realizing that he would in fact die one day, he used his wealth and power to build a city-sized mausoleum for himself. Craftsmen created a life-sized terracotta army to guard it. The purpose of the warriors, cavalry, soldiers, and horses was to protect the emperor in his afterlife. The army took years and years to build.

By the time CHIN SHE HWONG died in 210 B.C., his mausoleum was surrounded by more than 8,000 soldiers, along with chariots and horses. When you see the pictures and diagrams of the terracotta warriors and horses, you cannot help being amazed at how China's first emperor focused his resources on himself and his experience of the afterlife.

Two hundred years later and 4,000 miles away, a Jewish rabbi named Jesus of Nazareth began teaching people about another kingdom, called the kingdom of God. Like Qin Shi Huang, Jesus was bringing people together, but not in a nation of physical boundaries. Jesus was welcoming people into a kingdom that would extend over every national boundary and unite people across time.

Rather than teaching people to amass fortune and power in this life or creating a false sense of security for the afterlife, Jesus taught his followers to be generous with love, forgiveness, and kindness. He taught them to be careful about those things that would draw them away from God's kingdom.

John, the exiled Christian, on the Aegean island of Patmos received a beautiful vision as well. But it was a vision inspired by faith in Jesus. It is a vision of a renewed creation and a new People.

To me, the verse that packs the punch is verse 3, "See, the home of God is among mortals. He will dwell with them as their God; they will be his peoples, and God himself will be with them.

You see, it isn't just a matter of finding the secret password into heaven as it was for the Chinese emperor, CHIN SHE HWONG

To God; to Jesus; and to the Christian faith down the centuries, this life is also of importance. How we conduct ourselves in matters of faith and general living is important. That's why the church has recognized the reality of saints from the time of New Testament.

- ❖ Original Meaning of Saint.
- ❖ Typically we think of a saint as some old man or woman from a different millennium that has a gold halo immediately in back of their head.
- ❖ Each of us, I believe, could produce our own list of saints; Glen Siferd, Harvey Schweppe, Harriet Swanson, Don Engel, Georgianna Drewa and Wolfe

And any number of parishioners I've walked along side of.

- What is the claim that I make of their behalf to be saints?

## **Yes, For All the Saints**

- Not perfection—with moral perfection or intellectual perfection.
- It is a person who saw that ultimately the we is more compelling than the I