

Foretaste of the Feast to Come **Isaiah 25:6-9**

All Saints Day

We remember and celebrate the lives of many saints in our lives. Anita Adams, Ann Bradley, Barbara Cole, Barbara Crosby, Beverly Allen, Ed Grant, Flynn Hudson, Harold Greiner, Marcia Greiner, Joan King, Elizabeth Holten, Michelle Sunoskie. Just like these small candles, they have been beacons for our lives and made our lives brighter and better. They have finished their journey on earth and rest in heaven, but they have left indelible footprints on our hearts.

Some say, "The Saints are not supermen, nor were they born perfect. When they recognized God's love, they followed it and served others." Like everyone else, they were not perfect. They struggled with doubts and challenges just like we do. They made mistakes just as we do. But they also shared their love with us and followed Jesus Christ as disciples of Jesus Christ. Through their love for us, through their hands serving and loving, we have experienced God's love for us and care for us. In fellowship with them, we have foretasted the feast at the heavenly banquet. I believe God has made a feast of rich food and well-aged wines for them as they enjoy the heavenly banquet at our Lord's table.

I believe all of you have saints who have walked before you and shaped your lives and faith. For me, it was my father who taught me how to love God and God's people. My father was not a typical Korean pastor. Korean churches typically have three worship services and eight prayer meetings + bible studies per week. Some churches have more meetings than others, but my father didn't have many meetings compared to other churches. So I told my father, "well...if I do ministry like you do, ministry should be a piece of cake." He replied, "Does my ministry look easy? Try it when you become a pastor." When I became a pastor, I realized that his way of doing ministry was based on faith in God and an incredibly strong trust relationship with congregation members. When my father passed away, one common testimonies about him was "He was like a father to me!" He sincerely loved God and his church members. He passed away more than a decade ago, but his footprint is on my heart and still guides my way as a pastor. He has shaped my faith and who I am now and I am grateful.

I believe all of you have your saints who lived and died in faith who have shaped who you are. Though their time in this world has ended, our relationship with them does not end. We never lose communion with them. Apostle Paul said, nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord (Romans 8:39). Even death cannot separate us from the love of Christ. It means that although death may separate us from those in the glory of heaven temporarily, we are still able to have communion with all those saints in Christ. In the love of Christ, we can still communicate with the saints who are still living and resting in Christ.

Think of saints in your lives. As you move through this week, who lingers close in your memory? Who has walked with you in a way that inspired and made possible the path that you travel? Also, think of how you are walking through this life in a way that will help make possible the paths of those who follow you. As the saints before you have helped you on this journey, you may be a saint for those who follow.

Look at these small candles we have lit in remembrance of saints in our lives. They have been a beacon that guides our way in this world. The light of faith, the light of hope, the light of love that they have shared with us... these lights are still burning in us and guiding our direction. Just thinking about them makes our hearts warm. We can foretaste the feast to come in heaven

through them. So let us give thanks to God for the many saints in our lives and praise God's love for us.