

Many of us have come to know **St. Patrick** as the mythical Roman Catholic saint who “christened” thousands of Irish heathen into the arms of the Catholic Church and chased all the snakes out of the Emerald Isle. As with many myths, there is some basis in truth. But what is the truth? Patrick certainly is a “**saint**,” not because of the Roman Catholic church’s designation, but because he is a “saint” in the true biblical sense of the word. Though the Catholic church has claimed him as their own, Patrick was in his grave 175 years before he was ever mentioned in any catholic writings, nor did they send him. Over time, such a web of superstition was spun around this servant of God and preacher of the Gospel, that his real identity has been distorted in the minds of millions. **So, how did Patrick become a saint?**

Patrick was born in either present day England or Scotland in the late 4th century. At the age of sixteen, he was kidnapped by pirates and sold into slavery to a Druid chieftan named Milcho. After several years in distress as a slave, Patrick recalled his Christian upbringing and spiritual guidance from his parents and recognized his desperate need for his soul to be saved. Upon turning from his sinful ways and trusting Jesus as his Lord and Savior, Patrick was **born again** and became a “**saint**.” Anyone who is saved by exhibiting “**...repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ...**” (Acts 20:21), resulting in a new life of holiness by obedience to God’s word is a “**saint**” according to the scriptures. “**Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.**” (John 3:3) “**Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.**” (2 Corinthians 5:17) Patrick himself, in The Confession of Patrick, describes his conversion by saying, “*Before I was humbled, I was like a stone lying in deep mire. He that is mighty came, and in his mercy raised me up, and indeed lifted me high up, and placed me on top of the wall. And from there I ought to shout out in gratitude to the Lord for his great favors in this world and forever.*” The Bible further explains his conversion experience and describes what it means to be born again:

“...and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh: That they may walk in my statutes, and keep mine ordinances, and do them...” (Ezekiel 11:19-20)

Sometime after his conversion, he was able to escape his captors and returned home to his family for a happy reunion. Later, Patrick received a clear and personal call from the Lord to preach the Gospel of salvation in Ireland, the land of his former captivity. Patrick described a dream which the Lord used to call him in these words: “*...I saw a man as if coming from Ireland...with numerous letters, one of which he gave me, and I read the beginning of the epistle, containing the Voice of the Irish. And while I was reading the beginning of the epistle I thought in my mind that I heard the voice of those who...shouted thus: ‘We beseech thee, holy youth, to come and live amongst us.’ And I was greatly pained in my heart, and could not read very much more; and thus I was proved.*” Thus, around the age of forty, Patrick began his magnificent work for the Lord on the Emerald Isle.

One particular highlight of his ministry took place just a year after his arrival in Ireland. Patrick, according to the **Encyclopedia Britannica**, challenged the royal Druidic authority by lighting the Paschal Fire on the night of Easter Eve during the pagan festival of Tara. It was a blasphemous act to the heathen Irish to light any fire during the festival, let alone the Paschal fire, before Easter. The people were in a rage. The King of Ireland, amazed at his daring, said: “*If we do not extinguish this flame, it will sweep over all Ireland!*” As a result of Patrick’s bold move, he desired to meet Patrick, and sent for him. The infuriated druid priests declared they would destroy the preacher by sorcery if he dared to come; but that didn’t stop Patrick. He marched boldly into the presence of the monarch and told him that Christ was the light of the world and preached Jesus crucified and risen from the dead with such persuasive eloquence that the king humbled himself, repented, believed the Gospel and trusted Christ to save him from his sins.

After the king’s conversion, he no longer saw Christianity as a threat to his nation, and allowed Patrick to serve the Lord and carry out the Great Commission as commanded by Jesus: “**Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.**” (Matthew 28:19-20) Patrick went on to plant hundreds of churches and baptized by immersion untold thousands of converts after they repented and trusted Jesus Christ alone for salvation. Thus, Ireland became a stronghold of true spiritual revival and biblical Christianity for centuries to come. Contrary to the myth, the true St. Patrick was a bible-believing, bible-preaching evangelist, and it was the unadulterated Gospel of the Son of God that lifted the Irish out of the darkness of paganism into the glorious light of the Truth. It is curious then that this man of God is celebrated today as an icon for false, works-based religion (Roman Catholicism), with activities that for many are filled with drunkenness and debauchery. By doing so, the memory of this man is truly dishonored, as it is the opposite of what his life stood for. His story has been hijacked and has been turned into myth to distract from the simplicity of the Gospel of salvation by faith in Christ Jesus and the revival that really happened in Ireland centuries ago.

So, we see how Patrick became a saint at the time of his conversion and the mighty works he performed for the Lord as a result. **How about you? Are you a “saint”?** **Have you been born again by the spirit of God and given a new heart? Have you been forgiven of your sins?** The Bible says, “**Be not deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.**” (1 Corinthians 6:9-10) “**But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone; which is the**

second death." (Revelation 21:8) If you have sinned but only one time in your heart, you are guilty before God and in danger of his judgment. **"For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all."** (James 2:10) A holy God must judge sin and the punishment is eternity in hell. **"For the wages of sin is death."** (Romans 6:23) **"The wicked shall be turned into hell..."** (Psalms 9:17)

God, in his love and mercy has provided for us a way to be forgiven by sending his Son, Jesus, to die a bloody death on the cross as our substitute. **"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."** (Romans 5:8) During his life on earth, Jesus perfectly kept all of God's commandments and then was punished on the cross to satisfy the demands of God's justice for your sin, taking your place. **"But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities...and with his stripes we are healed."** (Isaiah 53:5) He was buried, and rose again from the dead on the third day, conquering death and proving his death was acceptable to God as a payment for sin. **"...he [God] hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him [Jesus] from the dead."** (Acts 17:31) This is the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the Gospel preached by Patrick. In order to be **born again** and forgiven by the blood of Christ, it is required that you obey the first words of Jesus' earthly ministry: **"Repent ye, and believe the gospel."** (Mark 1:15)

YOU MUST REPENT! **"Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."** (Luke 13:3) Repentance is humbling yourself and admitting your guilt and spiritually lost condition before God. It is recognizing that you have sinned against him alone, that your sin has separated you from him, and that you deserve hell because of your sin. It also means to be sorry for your sin and rebellion against God, confess it, and hate it. **"For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation."** (2 Corinthians 7:10) Surrender, and turn from going your own way in life to going God's way by submitting to Jesus as your Lord. Repentance also means to recognize

that you have no merit, good works, or attributes that play a role in your salvation. Until you realize you are lost and utterly helpless to contribute anything to your salvation, you will not receive grace and forgiveness. **"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast."** (Ephesians 2:8-9) You must recognize that your only hope of redemption is to trust solely in the atoning blood of Jesus Christ as a payment for your sins.

BELIEVE THE GOSPEL: **"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."** (Acts 16:31) Believing is more than just acknowledging that Jesus Christ exists; it's even more than acknowledging that he died and rose again. **"...the devils also believe, and tremble."** (James 2:19) True belief is placing your complete confidence and trust in Him alone and His ability to save you by his death and resurrection. You must believe with all your heart that Jesus is the Son of God, and that He died on the cross to save you. **"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness."** (Romans 10:9-10) If the Lord is gracious enough to bring you, like Patrick, to a place of repentance and desperation, recognizing that you are in need of salvation, you must cry out and call upon the Lord Jesus and ask him to forgive you for your sins and save you. **"...and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."** (Romans 10:10,13) Today may be your day of salvation, friend. Do not wait! You are not promised tomorrow! The author begs you on Christ's behalf to repent, to believe the Gospel, and call upon the Lord Jesus Christ to save you before it's eternally too late! **"How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation."** (Hebrews 2:3)

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How Patrick Became a SAINT

