

Seated In Christ

By David A. DePra

Seated In Christ

Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, (Eph. 1:20)

And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: (Eph. 2:6)

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: (Eph. 1:3)

Paul says that Christ is seated at the right hand of God in the eternal spiritual realm, i.e., heavenly places. He then says that WE are seated together in those heavenly places IN Christ. Then he says that because of this, we have been blessed with all spiritual blessings that belong to Christ.

Paul doesn't say maybe. He doesn't hope for someday. He is saying that these things are FACT – right now. They are as final as is the finished redemption that made them possible. If you are IN CHRIST, then everything Paul says in these verses are the Truth for YOU personally.

Now, note carefully. Paul doesn't say we are seated in heavenly places beside Christ, or because of Christ, or separate from Christ. No. We are seated IN Christ.

Now perhaps you think that Paul was only speaking in a legal sense. Maybe you think that he is telling us that because Christ paid the price for sin that God then had legal justification to imagine that we are seated with Christ. In other words, maybe this is only a legal or, "positional," Truth. In other words, we aren't REALLY seated in Christ in heavenly places, but it is a nice thought that we can use if we get depressed. We can imagine ourselves as a part of the legal and positional Truth of the Redemption.

First of all, there is no such thing as legal or positional Truth. You will never find any such distinction made in the Bible. There is just, well, there is just TRUTH. Period. What I am saying is this – the only reason there are legal and positional aspect of Truth is because there is the living Truth. Legal and positional Truth are terms and vehicles WE have invented for the purpose of trying to explain Truth. But despite this sincere attempt, we must never attempt to separate Truth into compartments. No. There is just Truth. And the Truth IS – Paul says we are, right now, seated IN CHRIST in heavenly places. If we are IN CHRIST at all, then this is likewise a great Truth.

Here is where the problem comes in – the problem is that it doesn't seem TO US like we are seated with Christ in heavenly places. How could this possibly be so when we have such difficulties, failures, and even sin? Well, read the epistles. Does it sound like Paul is naïve to those things in the lives of those who are in Christ? No. He talks about them all the time. And yet he insists and demands that the absolute Truth is that if we are in Christ, we are seated in Him in heavenly places – we are seated where Christ is seated because we are IN HIM.

Seated in Christ

As natural people born in Adam, we have no Truth in us, and no spiritual life in us. For that we must be born again. But even after we are born again, we will continue to think in old patterns, and often we will walk according to the natural sense. And we know that naturally and physically, we are not seated in heavenly places. If we try to use our natural senses, or our emotions, or anything about our natural selves, we will have no frame of reference for being seated in heavenly places in Christ. Even if we say we believe it is true, if left to our natural senses, we will never actually SEE it is true.

What is impossible in the natural realm is normal in the spiritual realm. Thus, it is entirely possible for your natural man to be completely oblivious to what is a fact as to

the new creation in Christ – to the fact that you are seated in Christ at the right hand of God. This is not merely a nice thought, or an allegorical illustration. It is reality. You ARE seated in Christ at the right hand of God – in spirit you absolutely are.

So HOW are we seated in Christ in heavenly places? Well, the question, and the verse itself tell us: We are seated in Him in HEAVENLY or SPIRITUAL places. In other words, this is spiritual, and not physical. But never think that this makes it less real. No. It makes it MORE real.

Is the realm of God MORE real than this physical realm? Sure. That is not to say that the physical realm is our imagination. But the point is that the realm of God is eternal. The physical realm is not. Do the math. Which realm is more real?

Paul is saying that if you are in Christ, then you are ONE with Him in spirit. Consequently, you are seated in Him where He is seated, at the right hand of God. This Truth is established in the definition of salvation itself. Salvation is Christ in us. We are made one with Christ, and because He is LIFE, in Him we have LIFE. Note that this is not just a legal classification. No. If you have salvation – if you are eternally alive – then it is because you are one with LIFE HIMSELF. Thus, we see that salvation is not a THING that is given us. It is a Person with Whom we

have become ONE. We have life eternal because we are one with Life Himself.

So, when Paul says we are seated in Christ in heavenly places, he means exactly that – it is real and it is the Truth. Christ is seated in heavenly places at the right hand of God – and if we are spiritually one with Him, then we too are seated in exactly that place. This is not just a nice thought, or, "positional Truth." No. It is THE Truth. It is Truth that not only beyond the physical, but it is Truth that supersedes the physical.

Soul and Spirit

We are seated in Christ because of our oneness in spirit with Christ. We are not seated there physically, but spiritually, which, according to God, is more real than anything physical could ever be.

But it is here that it is essential that we see that in each believer there is a separation or division between SOUL and SPIRIT – between the earthly and the spiritual in Christ: When you came to Jesus Christ by faith He joined you to Himself and you became ONE in spirit with Him. This is what Paul was referring to when he wrote:

He that is joined to the Lord is one spirit with Him. (1 Cor. 6:17)

Paul is actually describing the core of Christianity itself – the essence of what a Christian IS. A Christian is one in whom Christ dwells – one who is made one with Christ in spirit. Christianity is, “Christ in you, the hope of glory” (Col. 1:27) – and it is by making us one with Himself in spirit that Christ dwells in us.

As we will discuss later, it is because we are one with Christ Himself in spirit that we are able to experience all that Christ has done, and all that Christ IS. Note that this is not a matter of God giving us things BECAUSE of Christ. No. It is a matter of God giving us Christ Himself – in Whom God has given all things!

But for now, let’s put that great Truth aside, and get back to the separation between soul and spirit. We are joined to the Lord – our human spirit to Christ by His spirit – and are made one with Him in spirit. But we are NOT joined to the Lord physically. Our body remains outside of that spiritual union. And our soul – our earthly nature – is not joined to Him. That too remains outside of this spiritual union during this age.

Humanity is body, soul, and spirit. For those in Christ, the body and soul remain outside of our spiritual union with Him during this age – they remain earthly. The body is the part of your earthly makeup that you can see. The soul is the part of your earthly

makeup that you cannot see – although you can see the impact. The soul includes the emotions and natural mind – it is the, “psyche man,” as it says in NT Greek.

Now, what this means is that we are seated in Christ by virtue of our spiritual union with Him – because we are baptized into Him and made one with Him in spirit. But our body and soul man are NOT seated in Him during this age. This is why if we try to realize this Truth using our natural senses and earthly nature that we are going to come up lacking.

The only way in which to begin to come into a realization of being seated in Christ is to come into a realization of Christ Himself. There is no other way – indeed, there is no other way to experience any thing that is of God. God has given us all things IN CHRIST, and therefore, it is only as Christ is unfolded to us that those, “things,” that God has put in Christ can be unfolded.

It was the great cry and passion of the apostle Paul that believers come into an inward realization of Jesus Christ. He said, “I travail until Christ be FORMED in you.” (Gal. 4:19) The word translated, “formed,” here means, “to inwardly realize or express.” So, in other words, this is NOT about coming, “to look like Jesus,” or about, “doing what Jesus would do.” No. Rather, it is about coming into an inward realization of Jesus Christ to the point where our minds are

renewed according to Christ such that Christ will be able to live and move through us.

Here we see the source of all good works in the Christian life. It is NOT us living according to a list of laws or principles. Rather it is our own righteousness – it is our natural man -- coming under the work of the Cross unto death so that the life of Jesus may flow through us.

So, we have this great separation of soul and spirit in each believer. The earthly nature is under the work of the Cross – so that the Christ who is united with us in Spirit might be manifested. The earthly nature is not eradicated. Rather, the earthly nature, which is NOT united with Christ; not seated in Christ – God wants to bring that earthly nature under the government of the Christ in whom we are seated spiritually.

Understanding that each believer has TWO natures – the earthly and the new nature in Christ – is essential to understanding much of the Truth of the New Testament. It is certainly essential to understanding the Truth of HOW we are seated in Christ, and the Truth about how that works.

Victory

This Truth about being seated in Christ at the right hand of God is the basis of so much in the Christian life that one hardly knows

where to begin. But if nothing else comes into view through this Truth, then there ought to at least be one thing that is evident: To be seated in Christ above all is the place of absolute final and complete victory.

When Jesus Christ finished His Redemptive work, He ascended to heaven and sat down at the right hand of God. All that God wanted Him to do was FINISHED. And now, we are seated IN HIM.

You will notice that there is no suggestion by Paul that we ought to be TRYING to claw our way into this position. We are not TRYING to be seated. We ARE seated. Indeed, it is absolutely IMPOSSIBLE for you to be IN CHRIST without being seated where Christ is seated. If you are IN CHRIST, you are in this position of victory because He is in that position.

So what this means becomes quite evident: Instead of trying to win any victory, we need to operate from a victory already WON. The battle then, rather than win a victory, is to BELIEVE. Our battle is never to win ground or gain position. Rather, our battle is to believe and HOLD FAST to what Christ has already given us, and to the reality of being seated in Christ.

Now, what this means from a practical standpoint is this: Instead of asking God for a victory, ask Him to bring you into

conformity with Christ. Instead of begging God to do what He has already promised, ask Him to show you what He has already promised, and to do whatever it takes to bring you into oneness with Him over it. Instead of getting depressed over your present trial, realize that the victory is already certain – and that what God wants is for you to refuse any less.

Victory in Christ is not so much that I have gotten out of a trial or solved it. Rather victory in Christ is when the trial can do nothing to get between myself and God. The obstacles in the Christian life we encounter all boil down to some version of ONE obstacle: Unbelief. That is why the Bible is able to say that FAITH is the victory.

If we realize that we are seated in Christ, then we will see that this is the battle: Unbelief vs. faith. For if we see we are seated in Christ, we will know the real battle is already won. Not maybe. It is. Thus, the real battle is that we believe God and surrender and embrace His victory – which amounts to letting God have victory over US. We must be shaped by God in accordance with His will and purpose. Then we will reign and rule with Him from the seat of Christ.

It is one thing to be seated IN Christ, but another to actually reign and rule with Him from that seat. If I would reign and rule, the seat must become a throne. What makes this

possible is that I be changed. To the extent that Christ rules in me, I rule through Christ.

This is overcoming. Overcoming happens when I refuse to allow any form of unbelief to come between myself and God – I, "come over," unbelief with FAITH. And the basis for this is that I see that I am already seated in Christ.

One With Christ

The fact that we are ONE with Christ clears up so many misconceptions we have about Christian Truth. For example, most Christians limit Christ's redemptive work as something He did FOR US. Well, He did do it for us – but we must take this Truth beyond that. Not only did Christ die and become raised FOR us, but we die and are raised WITH HIM. This is vital to see. Indeed, if you are saved, you were first planted into the death of Christ, and as a result, planted into His resurrection. (see Romans 6:5) Indeed, you were permanently united with Him – your human spirit was made one with His Spirit. Thus, we see again that we were made one with Him in these things – which is beyond simply having Him do them FOR US.

Paul says this over and over:

I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless, I live; yet not I, but Christ lives in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live

by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me. (Gal 2:20)

No one was more aware of the fact that Christ died FOR him than the apostle Paul. In fact, he says so right in this verse – he says, Christ, "gave Himself for me." But note the Truth Paul says Christ made possible by giving Himself for us: I am crucified WITH Christ. In other words, when Christ died for us, this made it possible for US to die in Him. Christ made it possible for us to be united with Him in His death so that our old nature could die in Him, and we could be raised with Him a new creation.

Incidentally – this is a bit off subject – if you read Galatians 2:20 you are reading a description of what happens when a person actually experiences and realizes the Person of Jesus Christ. More and more that person – that person's very life – will proclaim, "Yet NOT I, but Christ!"

This is important to see because in this day and age Christianity has become the opposite. Believers are being told that it is God's goal to bring them into a realization of THEMSELVES – that God wants to them to discover who THEY ARE. Of course, most will say that you discover who you are by discovering who Christ is – but the suggestion is that God's REAL GOAL and God's REAL PURPOSE is for you to discover

who YOU ARE – but He will reveal Christ to you in order to accomplish this, “real goal.”

This kind of thinking is of anti-Christ. God’s purpose is to reveal Christ to us – not to use Christ to reveal US to US. You cannot come into freedom by discovering yourself. You cannot find purpose by discovering how valuable you are to God. Freedom comes from discovering the priceless value of Christ TO YOU – and through a progressive inward realization of Jesus Christ.

Read again the words of Paul in Galatians 2:20. It is a summary of what happens if a person encounters Christ and experiences Him. This is not theology. It is not doctrine. It is the **ONLY POSSIBLE OUTCOME** when a believer is crucified with Christ and begins to discover Him. That life will proclaim: YET NOT I, but CHRIST!

One might ask: What other outcome could we possibly imagine if we actually see, and experience, the Living Son of God – the Christ who lives in us?

Back to where we left off – Paul also speaks in Gal. 2:20 of the fact that, yes, Christ died FOR him, but that because Christ died FOR him, it is possible for him, and us, to be united with Christ IN His death – to become one with Him in His death. This is what Paul goes on to explain in Romans 6

was the result of being PLANTED together with Christ in death and resurrection:

For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin. Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him: Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dies no more; death hath no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he lives, he lives unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. (Rom 6:5-11)

If Christ had merely died FOR us – then it might be said that He satisfied the legal requirements of the law. It might be said that He bore our penalty for sin FOR US. And the Bible DOES teach this. But none of that – if it were all there was to the Truth on this matter – would set us free from sin. None of it would gender new life in us. Only if we have died WITH Christ does His death put to death sin in us. Only if we have been raised WITH Christ, is HE OUR LIFE. Our spiritual union with Christ is the basis for all freedom from sin, and the basis for all victorious living.

Christianity is CHRIST IN US, the hope of glory.

In Romans 6-8, it becomes clear as to the core of salvation. Salvation is NOT your body, or your flesh, or your natural senses, being made brand new. No. Your spirit is made brand new by virtue of union with Christ. You are saved in your SPIRIT. Then, of course, the rest of you is supposed to be progressively brought into subjection. But my point is this: If you are saved, you are ONE WITH CHRIST in spirit. Thus, it is not possible for you to be anything less than seated in Christ – because HE is seated. Nothing can change that, take away from it, or add to it. The challenge is therefore simple: To SEE and BELIEVE and LIVE in this Truth.

If there is a single Truth about the Redemption that must form the basis of our walk with Christ it is found in these passages – that it is finished in Christ. We are not trying to WIN any victory. We are seated AS VICTORS in Christ. We are not trying to work, earn, merit, or battle our way into the throne room of God. No. The entire message of the gospel is that Jesus Christ has conquered every enemy and won every battle – and if we are IN HIM all of those victories become ours.

The picture of being SEATED is quite wonderful. Can we see REST and

COMPLETION in that picture? Sure. Christ SAT DOWN after He ascended. There is more meaning in this than we might imagine. And if we are in Him we are seated as well.

Now, if you see what I'm getting at, you will recognize that this is the basis teaching of the NT, and the continual illustration of the OT – that we are to live and operate FROM VICTORY. We are not trying to win victory – we are living FROM victory. In other words, we are to live and walk by FAITH – and if faith means nothing else, it is a certainty that the victory of Jesus is finished.

Complete In Christ

It is a fact that God has absolutely NOTHING for us except it be in His Son. Of course, this is great news, because God has wrapped up ALL in His Son, meaning that, as Paul states, God blesses us with ALL spiritual blessings in Christ. The obvious conclusion is that if Christ is in you, you have all that God has given in Christ. You lack nothing.

Paul wrote Colossians to pound this point home – that IN CHRIST are all things that God has for us. He said, "You are COMPLETE IN HIM." (Col. 2:10) He also said, "IN HIM are did ALL the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." (Col. 2:3) Yet many of us don't believe this. Perhaps we don't realize that we don't believe it. But according

to Paul's epistle to the Colossians, we MUST believe it or we are going to run into great spiritual problems, and actually be ripe for deception.

Let me give one example of how sincere Christian people can, without even realizing it, deny this great Truth that God has given us all things in His Son – and only in His Son. Right now, there are millions of professing Christian people who believe that, yes, when we are saved, Jesus Christ comes to live in us through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. But those same folks also believe that at that point you do NOT have everything God desires to give you, and certainly, you do not have all that you need for the Christian life. They insist, and teach, that you must go on to receive a, "second blessing," in the form of a baptism with the Holy Spirit. Christ dwells in you through salvation, they agree, and He does this through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit – but you must go on to receive an, "overflow." Otherwise, you do NOT have everything God intends for you.

Can we see what this is actually saying? It is saying that Jesus Christ in you is NOT enough; is NOT all that God has for you, and that despite the presence of the living Christ in you, you continue to LACK MUCH that you could have otherwise. In fact, I have had people who believe this error become so upset over the Truth on this matter that there

was one guy who actually blurted out to me, "I cannot believe that you think that Jesus is enough! I cannot believe that you think that when you receive Christ that you receive all that God has for you!" I'm sure that he did not hear his own words or realize the utter nonsense of them. And yet in them is an admission, isn't there? It really is what he believes – that in Christ we continue to lack, that we NOT complete, and that we don't have all blessings from God – but that we need MORE.

The Biblical Truth on this matter is so clear, and so up front, that it is amazing how people are able to completely by pass it in favor of their experiences, demands, and insistence. The Bible teaches that when we are saved, we receive the one and only baptism with the Holy Spirit, and that through this, we are made one with Christ through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. We are, at that point, and forever, COMPLETE IN CHRIST. We have, at that point, everything God has to give us. What continues to be necessary is our growth IN CHRIST. We DO have to come to actually experience and know all that God has given us in Christ – that is a process. But for this we don't need a second blessing. Rather, we need the work of the Cross through the Holy Spirit so that the Christ who is in us might come to be known TO us, revealed IN us, and seen through us.

We must come to terms with this Biblical Truth: Are we complete IN CHRIST, or are we NOT? If we are, then we became complete in Christ when Christ came to dwell in us. If we don't believe we are complete in Him, then we need to at least be honest about our rejection of Biblical Truth – because Paul says we are complete IN CHRIST. But NOT by a second blessing in addition to Christ. But complete IN HIM because He dwells in us, period.

All Things In Christ

You will find that everything that God has given us is given to us -- in Christ. The Bible says this over and over, with a few of those statements quoted below. But we miss this Truth because we get so used to some of these Biblical phrases that they lose their meaning to us. Furthermore, we are blinded by tradition and religion – and so we are programmed to interpret these simple verses in other ways. But Paul was inspired by God to write Truth. And that great Truth is this: That all things are given to us IN CHRIST.

What does that mean? It means that it is only if we are spiritually one with Christ are these things given to us, and possible for us through coming to know Christ. And it means that if you are not in Christ, there is no possibility for you to experience what is of Him. But there is an important enlargement to these facts. Even if I am one with Christ

through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit – which IS salvation – then I must grow to know and experience Christ Himself if I want to know all that God has given me IN HIM. But if I try to know and experience the things of God through some other means I will be deceived, and I will not be walking in the Truth that is in Christ.

Read Colossians 2. You will find there FOUR warnings to this effect. All that God has given us in HID, found in, wrapped up in, the Person of Jesus Christ. And Christ is IN US. Thus, we must grow to know Him. That is our only access to the things of God.

All things are given in Christ, and nothing is given outside of Him. All that God has, and is, is wrapped up in His Son. Thus, get Christ and you get all things. Refuse Christ and you are left with nothing. The NT could not be clearer about this:

***In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins:
(Col 1:14)***

For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And you are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power: In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ: (Col 2:9-11)

***Christ, in whom are hid all the treasures
of wisdom and knowledge. (Col 2:3)***

***Being justified freely by his grace
through the redemption that is in Christ
Jesus: (Rom 3:24)***

***...the love of God, which is in Christ
Jesus our Lord. (Rom 8:39)***

***...to them that are sanctified in Christ
Jesus... (1 Cor 1:2)***

***But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of
God is made unto us wisdom, and
righteousness, and sanctification, and
redemption: (1 Cor 1:30-31)***

***For as in Adam all die, even so in
Christ shall all be made alive. (1 Cor
15:22)***

***Now thanks be unto God, which always
causes us to triumph in Christ.... (2 Cor
2:14)***

***Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is
a new creature: old things are passed
away; behold, all things are become new.
(2 Cor 5:17)***

***For we are his workmanship, created in
Christ Jesus unto good works, which God
hath before ordained that we should walk
in them. (Eph. 2:10)***

***... according to the promise of life which
is in Christ Jesus, (2 Tim 1:1)***

***Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the
grace that is in Christ Jesus. (2 Tim 2:1)***

Christians by the thousands, while agreeing with what these verses say, miss the Truth wrapped up in them. These verses are NOT saying that God merely GIVES US these things because of what Christ has done. NO. Rather, we are being told that God gives us CHRIST HIMSELF – and IN HIM are all these things!

This ought to change our thinking about much. For example, it means that salvation isn't a THING – it's a Person. In Romans, Paul writes, "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus...." John says, "In him was life; and the life was the light of men." (John 1:4) Jesus Himself said, "I am the resurrection and the LIFE." (John 11:25) And then, right to the point, John adds, "God has given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. " (1 John 5:11) In short, if Christ is in you, LIFE is in you. If Christ isn't in you, you are dead. It's all about being IN HIM, and Him being in us.

If Christ is THE LIFE, then all that is OF LIFE ETERNAL is found in Him. Paul says this direction to the Corinthians: "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and

sanctification, and redemption: That, according as it is written, He that glories, let him glory in the Lord." (1 Cor. 1:30-31) So again, all of the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are in Christ.

It is our failure to understand the centrality of Christ – which is what we are talking about as to our experience – it is our failure on this point that often leads the body of Christ off the track. We don't really believe we are complete in Him, and so we try to find completion in something else – and then give God credit for it. We don't really believe that all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are in Christ, and so instead of asking God to reveal to us Christ, we ask God for information. So much confusion and trouble in the Christian life results from trying to apprehend and attain to the things of God – without realizing that we really need is to know Jesus Christ, and to experience HIM.

How often in my Christian life I have asked God to tell me this or that, or to help me to understand Him – and I thought that this was merely a matter of God feeding me information, or teaching. What I needed was to know Christ. Now, I'm not saying that there isn't a time or place for God to tell us stuff, or that we cannot know teaching without knowing Christ. No. But what I am saying is that if everything God has for us is found IN CHRIST, then anything we receive apart from that will be temporary at best, and

will almost certainly be a hollow shell in comparison to knowing HIM.

If you want to know God's purpose for you life, it will be unfolded to you and Christ is unfolded to you. That is the general principle. How often in trials we forget this! The trial itself is nothing more than a situation – if we seek and surrender to God – wherein God will be able to reveal to us, not just teaching or information, but more of Christ. Thus, instead of asking God how to get OUT of a trial, we need to ask God to do whatever it takes to reveal Himself to us through the trial. You will find when God gets you to that place that the trial will become somewhat anticlimactic as a thing unto itself. This is about knowing and experiencing what God has for us in Christ.

Now, I've said all of this to get back to the Truth of our being seated in Christ. We must understand what this means, and what it does NOT mean. First, what it does NOT mean: It does not mean we are given a throne LIKE His throne. Neither does it mean we are given THINGS. Rather, it means we are given CHRIST. We are ONE with Him. Thus, we are seated IN HIM where HE is seated on the right hand of God. Thus, as God moves IN CHRIST, doing HIS will, and HIS purpose, we will experience this – and perhaps be used in this – because God is doing it in Christ.

Contrast this over and again the error of thinking that we need to get God aboard OUR program. No. And I'm not even talking about rebellion here. I'm talking about US trying to get God to do HIS WILL. We push and struggle and beg and cry – trying to get God to do what we think He has already promised. For some reason it doesn't occur to us that we don't have to beg God to do what He has already done, or said He wanted to do. Rather, we have to realize that we are seated in Christ – and that God wants to do His will more than we want Him to do it. Thus, what is the problem? That we might believe and rest and become completely sold out to God's will. Then you see, God can move because we will move with Him.

Do we still think that God will conform Himself to us? That He will accommodate our thinking? That He will come on over to our way of doing things – even if we think they are good? He won't. God wants to develop in us the mind of Christ. He wants to reveal to us HIS Truth. He wants to form us together with Christ. Nothing will change this purpose of God. But if we let Him do this, over the course of time and experience, the fact that we are seated in Christ will become a reality that governs us.

God has given us all things freely in His Son. Being seated in Christ is one aspect, or perhaps better said, one way of describing this. Thus, being seated in Christ gives us

NOTHING apart from Christ. It gives us NOTHING that we can use independent of Christ. Rather, because we remain ONE WITH CHRIST – which is the basis of our being seated in Christ to begin with – being seated means that we must come under the authority of Christ, and if we do, we will move as He moves.

The Word of Faith Heresy

The Word of Faith heresy, as taught today on almost every Christian network, is based upon a complete misrepresentation of this Truth about our being seated in Christ. Those who teach this heresy will often quote the scriptures that tell us about being seated in Christ. But they deny the means by which we ARE seated, and more importantly, they deny the means by which we are to reign and rule with Christ.

And what is that means? The Cross. Only if we come under the on-going work of the Cross will we who are seated in Christ be able to actually move with Him in His authority. Why? Because without the work of the Cross, we would use Christ for our own ends – or at least try to. And we might not even realize what we are doing.

Anyone can say they WANT God's will, or that they WANT to do God's will. But God wants to cause us to BECOME His will. In other words, we have to be formed together

with Christ. Now note: It isn't that we are formed together with Christ SO THAT we can be seated in Christ. No. We are formed together with Christ BECAUSE we are seated in Christ. But until there is some measure of being formed together with Christ – developing HIS mind and HIS heart; having a eye that is single to the will and glory of God – until that is happening, we might be seated in Christ, but we won't be able to operate WITH Christ, especially in faith, or with the goals of God.

God wants to take the fact that we are ONE with Christ and work that through our system until we actually are able to LIVE LIKE IT. He must break our self-will. He must get us to the point where we let go of our lives into His hands. In short, even though we are seated in Christ, we can't do much from that place until Christ has His way WITH US personally.

The Word of Faith heresy is based on a denial of this Truth – it is based on a denial, omission, and neglect of the personal work of the Cross in the believer. This heresy teaches that we have, "the authority of the believer." And all we need to do is SPEAK or CONFESS that authority, and it will happen. Of course, they say that doing so is an act of faith. But any time we divorce the THINGS of God, or the POWER of God, from the Person of Christ Himself, and turn it all into a system, we are in error. No. Christ IS the power of God -- and you cannot use Christ,

who is the power of God, as if He belongs to you. No. You belong to HIM.

I realize that I am oversimplifying this. But reigning and ruling in the authority of Christ is NOT a matter of us merely believing it is true as a fact, or only speaking it. The real basis of this Truth is RELATIONSHIP with Christ. In other words, it is only to the extent that He is able to move through us – necessitating that we are under HIS authority -- that HIS authority can possibly operate through us to God's glory. And that is made possible only by the personal work of the Cross.

I don't want to sound negative or as if I am condemning the church today. But nevertheless, it is a fact that very few people preach the work of the Cross. One highly visible ministry that preaches the message of the Cross," minimizes the PERSON who died on it as the means of our living today. They focus on what Jesus DID FOR US. They make the Cross equal to, or even more central than the Person Himself. No. It ought to be about WHO Jesus IS IN US right now. Indeed, all that Jesus IS today includes all that He has done. He IS, "Christ crucified," and, "Christ raised." Come to Christ and you will not only meet the Cross but you will find new life. Nothing else is possible if you truly come to Him.

Likewise, very few people preach the centrality of Jesus Christ. The essence of Christianity, “Christ IN you,” and the purpose of God to bring us into an inward realization of Christ, are rarely mentioned. And those few that do preach these Truths usually make these Truths mean something they don’t mean. Or they are reduced to doctrines to memorize. Today the love of many – the love for the Truth – really has gone cold.

It is an absolute inescapable fact that wherever God is working by His spirit – and certainly IN the people He is working – there is going to be a growing preoccupation, or not obsession, with the Person of Jesus Christ. This is the purpose that Jesus Himself said would be the work of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit would never start movements around the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit would never make people be preoccupied with the Holy Spirit. The purpose for which the Holy Spirit was given was to bring God’s people into an inward realization of Jesus Christ – and to make Christ the center, the source, and the goal of ALL. This is not maybe. It is the central Truth for the age.

We must come back to the Person of Jesus Christ – which is where any REVIVAL would bring us through repentance. Until we do, the fact that we are seated in Christ will not even occur to us.

So, contrary to the Word of Faith heresy, rather than think I can take hold of authority in Christ and use it – even for something I think is GOD’S will – what I need to do is let God take hold of ME. If I do, He will begin a work IN ME – making me able to function to His glory. Then I will be able to bring the presence of Christ into any situation. But this won’t be a matter of me using some power. It will be a matter of me ministering LIFE.

Can we see the Truth here? We haven’t been given any POWER to use. Rather, we have come under the power of resurrection LIFE – but only if we have yielded to the work of the Cross. Then, if resurrection power is in us – if Christ is freely moving in us – He can work through us. But we are not deciding anything. We are just being used.

Word of Faith almost NEVER talks about the necessity of the work of the Cross. You will never hear those false preachers talk about this. And because they don’t, their teaching puts things on a completely wrong basis.

For example, I hear people saying, "In the name of Jesus, I speak victory into this situation." Well, that’s sounds good, doesn’t it? I mean, if we really are seated in Christ in victory, shouldn’t this work? Well, the fact is, it doesn’t usually work. If you don’t agree, then go ahead and try it. You will not get very far.

The reason this doesn't work is most often because you are not called, "to speak victory." Rather, we are called to surrender to His victory. And then you will be out of the way, and Christ, who is the victory, can move through you. But you see, most of still think that this is about positive confession, or about trying really hard to believe. It is not. It is about God getting hold of someone to the extent where they bring the presence of Jesus Christ into a situation – not through some gimmick, or through mere words, but because they have come under His authority for themselves in their personal lives.

Now, on an even more practical level, we must understand that there is absolutely NO authority given to anyone except the authority to do the will of God. In other words, if you are seated IN Christ, you have authority to do only what Christ would do. But again, we must see something important about this. If that were all there was to it, then we should be able to work great miracles once we knew the will of God. We would have the authority to do the will of God, and if we did it, wonderful things would happen. But anyone who really wants to face the Truth will have to admit that we are most often without power EVEN to do the will of God. Is this because the Bible isn't the Truth? What is wrong here?

What is wrong here is that this isn't about DOING God's will – it is about BEING God's

will, that is, being in a relationship with God only possible through the on-going work of the Cross. If you want God to use you with great authority, then YOU must be out of the picture.

Does God have the freedom to do anything He pleases in your life – and it won't hurt your faith? Well, if He doesn't have that freedom, then how can you and I expect to be used of God to do anything He pleases?

You know, there is a REASON why the early church had the power they had, and why almost no one has had it since. And that reason isn't that God stopped doing things. The reason is that Christ doesn't have freedom in people. We don't know Him. We don't give ourselves to Him. Often, Christians don't even KNOW they don't KNOW.

The Need for Dependence

Of course, when we speak of coming under the authority of Jesus, we are speaking of, among other things, of being DEPENDENT upon Him. Anyone can, through a sense of DUTY, come under Christ. But that won't be real. And there will be no power. But instead of that, we have to be made dependent upon Him.

You will notice that I said MADE dependent upon Him. I did not say, "ACT as if we are dependent upon Him." Neither did I say,

"memorize the Bible verses that tell us to be dependent upon Him." Neither did I say, "raise your hands, flow some tears, and tell Him how dependent you are upon Him." No. I said we have to be MADE dependent upon Him. In other words, we have to submit ourselves to God in such a way that by the time He is done with us, we will be utter stripped of our own strength, and MADE fully dependent upon Christ.

This isn't a mechanical thing. It isn't merely a, "requirement," that God has placed upon us. Rather, it is the ONLY relationship possible between man and God. What? Do we think that God ought to depend upon us? Or that this is some kind of, "buddy system?" To listen to some today, you would think so. But if you want to be in a relationship with God that is based in TRUTH, then the truth is, God is everything and we are nothing. And therefore, the outworking of that relationship in Truth will be that we must depend upon God for all.

Our dependence upon God for all is TRUTH being lived and experienced. And it is only good for us. And it frees God up to do His will in our lives. Thus, if you want to live a life that is reflective of being seated in Christ, you must be made fully dependent upon God. Only then can the power of God work through you.

Now, many of us might think this is an easy matter. But when you begin to realize exactly what being made dependent upon God involves, then things get serious. For example, do we realize that we must be fully dependent upon Him for our righteousness? For our obedience? Do we realize that in order to be made fully dependent upon God that everything else about us that we might otherwise be dependent upon must be brought to the Cross?

We are talking here about LOSING our lives to find them in Christ. Well, what else would we think was necessary if we are to reign and rule with Christ? Certainly, we cannot reign and rule from OUR lives. We must be one with HIS life. This is a doctrine, and it isn't a merely a nice thought. It is a relationship that, yes, will set us free, but which will cost us everything about ourselves.

As mentioned earlier, God doesn't hand out power, and positions, and THINGS to people, to the disregard of their actual relationship to Christ. No. God's power works only according to His will, and in accordance to our relatedness to Christ. And fundamental to that relationship is our dependence upon Christ. To the degree that we are weak in ourselves, and thus, dependent upon Him, will we be strong in the Lord. Power comes through weakness. It comes no other way.

But again – everyone likes to proclaim how weak they are in themselves. It sort of gives us a religious charge. It actually feeds the pride of some to proclaim how humble and weak they are. Indeed, for some, saying or singing such things can become a mask for a terrible self-sufficiency and self-righteousness. We still trust in ourselves – BUT we say the right things because we don't know what to do about it otherwise.

Well, there is only ONE thing to do about it – present your bodies a living sacrifice to God. Or, to put it another way, ask God to do whatever it takes to make you fully dependent upon Him. That's quite a prayer isn't it? But there is no other purpose that God has in mind. And there is no other way to become rightly related to Him. We are seated in Christ in heavenly places, but if we want to actually reign and rule with Him from that place, then we must become fully dependent upon Him.

And he said unto me, “My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness.” Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore, I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong. (2 Cor 12:9-10)

Paul is describing what will happen when a person meets God and comes under Jesus Christ as Lord. He is not describing what MIGHT happen. No. He is describing what WILL happen every time. You cannot enter into a relationship with Jesus Christ, and know Him, and experience Him, without the impact being that you will be made completely weak and dependent upon Him. Again – what else do we think will happen when a person stands face to face with God Almighty?

Paul emphasized this great Truth over and over:

Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead. (Phil 3:8-11)

How often we get the Truth backwards! We think that God will not allow us to know Him unless we lose everything, or somehow make

ourselves weak. The Truth is, IF we come to know Christ, and IF we begin to enter into the fullness of relationship with Him that God intends, the IMPACT of this upon us will be that it will utterly slay us. We will be made weak.

But if you think about this, it is a great thing. Our strength and self-sufficiency is exactly what HINDERS us. It blinds us. Thus, to know the Truth in Christ will set us free. And it will enable God to work through us with power and authority – resurrection power and authority.

You won't hear this preached by Word of Faith teachers. Instead of the need to come to the Cross and be made weak, they teach that all you need to do is speak out the Truth. Well, like I said before, go ahead and try. See how far it gets you in Christ. At best, you will delude yourself.

Resurrection in Christ

Paul wrote of the purpose of God:

Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places....and has raised us up together and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

We have already seen that Christ was not merely raised FOR us. No. We are raised IN HIM. This spiritual UNION forms the basis of what it means to be IN CHRIST. We are seated in Christ because we were raised from the dead IN HIM.

If we try to look at ourselves, and search out ourselves, to try to find evidence that we are raised in Christ, we are going to fail. That is because that evidence is not in our flesh. In fact, that evidence is not in ourselves at all. The evidence that we are saved, that we are raised in Christ, is simply this: Christ Himself in us.

Now, I'm sure you have been taught otherwise. You have probably been taught that your fruits are the evidence you are saved. Well, the trouble is, fruit inspection can be quite subjective. Some folks focus on their good fruit and become self-righteous, and others focus on their bad fruit and live in defeat – and everyone one of us have plenty of both kinds of fruit. So which proves what? And then there are others who look to experiences, such as speaking in tongues, as evidence that they are saved. This is nonsense. Anyone who really wants to face the Truth on that particular matter of whether tongues are evidence of anything needs only discover that occult religions have people who speak in tongues. Indeed, it is entirely possible for someone to speak gibberish and to think they are speaking in tongues.

Tongues are a valid spiritual gift. But they are hardly THE evidence God has given us.

The Bible tells us directly what the evidence is of our salvation. It is so simple, and so obvious, that we miss it. In fact, I don't think I have ever heard even one message that directly states this Truth.

Now, again – you probably think I'm going to say that if you repent, and put your faith in Christ, that all you need to do is believe – and that you have to accept by faith that you are saved. Maybe you think that I'm going to say that this is the evidence. Well, all of that is true, if you repent and believe, you will be saved. But we are talking here about evidence – not just about believing. We are here talking about the evidence of your salvation, not merely how you come to be saved.

So, what is this evidence? Well, I said that it was the simplest Truth imaginable. The evidence that you are saved – THE evidence that Jesus Christ is in you – is nothing other than Christ Himself in you. HE is the evidence. In other words, instead of looking at anything about ourselves for evidence that Christ is in us, Christ Himself in us is the evidence.

The Evidence of God

Now, perhaps you think I'm playing with words. I'm not. The NT revelation of Christianity is that if you have Christ in you, His presence in you through the Holy Spirit ought to become so real that Christ Himself will be your evidence:

If we receive the evidence of men, the evidence of God is greater. For this is the evidence of God which he has testified of his Son: He that believes on the Son of God has the evidence in himself. He that believes not God has made him a liar; because he believes not the evidence that God gave of his Son. And this is the evidence that God has given to us: Eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that has the Son has life; and he that has not the Son of God has not life. (1 John 5:9-12)

Jesus Christ Himself – Christ in us, the hope of glory – is the evidence that we are saved. Well, how could it be otherwise? If salvation is Christ in us, then the evidence of salvation is Christ in us. This is so simple, and yet we don't realize it. We don't realize it because Christ is not preached. Christians are not taught to know Him. The Cross is not preached. Our resurrection life in Him is not preached. So Christ is not real to us. Thus, we look for other evidence and get focused upon other things. But John is proclaiming the simple Truth: If Christ is in you – then

you are saved – and thus, Christ in you IS the evidence you are saved.

Here is another way of saying the same thing: If you are alive, the evidence that you are alive is the LIFE. The LIFE is why you are alive. Apply this physically. How do you know that you are alive? Well, because.... you have life. You aren't dead. This is so simple and foundational that we don't even discuss it.

Christ in you is the evidence you are a Christian. Christ in you is the evidence that life is in you. Christ in you is the evidence that you are saved. Christ in you is the evidence that you are seated with Him in heavenly places.

Now, I do realize that it is possible to think you are alive spiritually and be deceived. But that doesn't negate the Truth. It is always possible to distort the Truth and offer substitutes for it. People everywhere think they are alive, and might even think they have Christ in them, but they don't know Him. So the evidence they think they have is false. Yet the words of John are clear: **THIS IS THE EVIDENCE OF GOD: Christ in us.**

The early Christians knew Jesus Christ. He was their evidence. And because they knew Him, and had been made dependent upon Him, Christ was able to move through them in power. They would not ruin it. They would

not use it for their own purposes, or for their own ego. They would not try to use Christ to get rich, or to become popular. They were focused on both DOING and BECOMING God's will to His glory. And if anyone among them departed from this Truth, such people were STOPPED.

And so, if you want to know whether you are raised in Christ, look to Christ. If you doubt that you are raised in Christ, don't look to yourself and try to fix things, come to Christ. If you want to experience resurrection life in Christ, ask God to bring you to the CROSS, and ask Him to make you dependent upon Him. You cannot be raised in Christ unless you die in Christ. You cannot be made dependent upon Christ unless all other dependencies are removed. You cannot reign and rule with Christ until Christ is reigning and ruling in you. This is about relationship, not about religion.

The only Christianity that exists is the one where God and man are made ONE through Jesus Christ. You must be made one with Him in His death, and then one with Him in His resurrection. But if you are, then you will be alive in Christ – you will be one with Life; with resurrection life. You will be seated in Him at the right hand of God. This is not maybe. It is a certainty, and Christ Himself in us is the evidence.

If you are IN CHRIST you have both died with Him and been raised with Him. And right now, you are seated in Christ in heavenly, or spiritual places. There is nothing you can do to make this happen. But all of us do need to discover it. The only way in which to discover and realize what it means to be seated in Christ is to discover and realize Christ Himself.

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