



Our Eternal Position in Christ

Let's suppose for a moment that I died tonight and stood before the LORD God who is the Supreme Judge of the Universe. No doubt He would ask me, "Wil Pounds, why should I let you into my heaven? You are a guilty sinner. How do you plead?"

My response would be, "I plead guilty, Your Honor."

My advocate, Jesus Christ, who is standing there beside me speaks up for me. He says, "Your Honor. It is true that Wil Pounds is grievous sinner. He is guilty. He deserves eternal punishment for his sinfulness. However, Father, I died for him on the cross and rose from the dead. Wil Pounds has put his faith and trust in Me and all that I have done for Him on the Cross. He is a believer. I died for him, and he has accepted Me as his substitute."

The Lord God turns to me and says, "Is that true?"

I will respond to Him, "Yes sir! That is the truth. I am claiming the shed blood of Jesus Christ to cleanse me of all my sins. I have put my faith in Jesus to save me for all eternity. This is what You have promised in your word. Jesus said, 'For God so loved the world (and this includes Wil Pounds), that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.'"

The Lord God responds: "Acquitted! By order of this court, I demand that you be set free. The price has been paid by My Son."

The truth is we all "fall short" in our effort to attain a relationship with the holy God. We need someone to rescue us and set us free. That person has to be a substitute for us because sin requires the death penalty. We need someone who is holy and just in the eyes of the LORD God. Only He can satisfy the holy eyes of God. God in His rich mercy toward us sinners provided someone.

GOD'S PROVISION OF SALVATION FOR THE SINNER.

The Apostle Paul wrote, ". . . being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus; whom God displayed publicly as a propitiation in His blood through faith. This was to demonstrate His righteousness, because in the forbearance of God He passed over the sins previously committed; for the demonstration, I say, of His righteousness at the present time, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has

Our Eternal Position in Christ

the present time, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus" (Romans 3:24-26).

Jesus Christ is the sinless perfect Son of God who came and died as our substitute on the Cross. The Cross was the place of judgment. At the cross our sin debt was paid in full.

Based upon that punishment of sin on our behalf God extends to us His grace and saves us. God doesn't play make believe. He does not legalize a fiction of the imagination. The judicial act by which a holy and righteous God gives us a right standing before Him is called justification.

The *Westminster Shorter Catechism* says, "Justification is an act of God's free grace, wherein he pardons all our sins, and accepts us as righteous in his sight, only for the righteousness of Christ, imputed to us, and received by faith alone."

God declares the believing sinner that he has been made forever right and acceptable to God. This is the sinner's new position before the LORD God. It has been accomplished by God's grace.

We believe and accept the finished work of Christ, and God puts His righteousness to our account. He declares us acquitted. He declares us righteous based on the death and resurrection of Christ. We are not declared righteous on account of our faith because that would be a meritorious work, and God does not justify the sinner by works. Saving faith is like coming with empty open hands to receive the righteousness of Christ.

Justification is a legal standing with God based upon Christ's death and resurrection and our faith in Him. We are declared to be righteous by God. Therefore, justification is the legal and formal acquittal from guilt by God who is Judge. God pronounces the sinner as righteous, who believes on the Lord Jesus Christ.

Because God is a holy and just God He cannot condemn the person He has before justified. Romans 8:33 says, "Who will bring a charge against God's elect? God is the one who justifies." The ground of our justification is secure in the person who died for us. The Apostle Paul adds, "who is the one who condemns? Christ Jesus is He who died, yes, rather who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us" (v. 34). Our justification is unchanging and unchangeable because of the secure foundation upon which it stands. Because Christ is righteous and you have believed on Christ, you are now declared legally righteous.

This pardon and righteousness comes only to those who have put their faith in Jesus Christ as their personal Savior.

In that great transaction something wonderful has happened. God welcomes us into His family. We come to an intimate love relationship with Him. We can now enter into His holy presence because we are now clothed in Christ's perfect righteousness.

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"He [God] made Him [Christ] who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him" (2 Corinthians 5:21). The one person who was sinless, who had never experienced sin, was made sin on our behalf. Jesus took all our sin and guilt upon Himself at the cross and died in our place. He did it in order "that we might become the righteousness of God in Him." No wonder God declares our salvation work finished. My sin debt had been paid in full at the cross of Christ. Now God gives me His perfect righteousness.

This is now the actual standing of the Christian before God. It is our unchanging position.

GOD'S PROVISION OF A NEW POSITION BEFORE HIM.

We are reconciled to God by Jesus Christ.

Every believer has been placed in an eternal position before God. God has "reconciled us to Himself." We are no longer His enemies. We are now considered His friend. II Corinthians 5:17-18 reads, "Therefore if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come. Now all these things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ, and gave us the ministry of reconciliation." Our old position has been exchanged for a new one. We are a new creation. God made it. Our spiritual birth placed us in our new position. We are now identified with Jesus Christ. This is true of every believer.

We are made the righteousness of God through being in Christ.

We are made the righteousness of God in Jesus Christ because He was made sin for us. Second Corinthians 5:21 is emphatically clear about our new righteousness position with God. The Apostle Paul states this position when he gave his testimony in Philippians 3:7-9: "But whatever things were gain to me, those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ. More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish in order that I may gain Christ, and may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from the Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith."

We have a perfect position forever.

Though our present condition is not perfect. We are saved sinners. However, the Christian is perfected forever in position before God. We have been set apart to God. Hebrews 10:14, "For by one offering He has perfected for all time those who are sanctified." The word "sanctified" means "set apart." We have been set apart for God's purpose.

We have the fullness of Christ.

The fullness of Christ becomes our unchanging portion. John 1:16 says, "For of His fullness we have all received, and grace upon grace." Paul relates the same truth in Colossians 2:9-10 when he says, "For in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form, and in Him you have been made complete, and He is the head over all rule and authority." The "fullness" is the sum total of all Christ is. It is that number or quality that is complete in itself. Christ is the fullness of the Godhead bodily. "For it pleased the Father that in Him should all fullness dwell" (Colossians 1:19).

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Paul tells us in Ephesians 2:6 NIV, "God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus." This is the source of our strength to live the Christian life. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ" (Ephesians 1:3). We dwell within the very source of every spiritual blessing with which the Father has blessed us.

This complete standing belongs to every believer. God sees us as perfected in His Son. It is not the bestowment of righteousness. Justification causes no one to be righteous. It is a forensic or declared righteous. We are judged righteous by God based upon the perfect righteousness of Christ. The believing sinner becomes righteous in God's sight when he is in Christ. We are justified by God freely, or without a cause.

This righteousness from God is possessed on a faith principle in and answers to faith in Christ. It belongs to all who believe on Christ. We are all "being justified freely." We do not come into possession of it by being good. It is freely of God's grace through faith in Christ. God is Himself just and righteous in His dealing with us who do no more than believe on Jesus. Our justification rests solely on the redeeming death of Jesus Christ.

The believer is declared righteous because he is in Christ

Our source of spiritual life

Because we have been set apart positionally to God we are to be increasingly set apart in our daily lives. In our position before God no one is more sanctified than anyone else. We are to grow spiritually drawing our daily strength from our positional standing before God. Indeed, that is the only way we will grow spiritually. Our eternal position effects our daily condition in this life.

The risen Christ is the Vine and we are the branches. The life in the vine is increasingly supplied to the living branches. The healthy life of the branches is conditioned upon their abiding in their position in the vine. The fruit of the vine is produced in the branches. Our positional source is the Vine. The Vine has everything to do with the development and fruitfulness of its branches. The responsibility of the branch is to abide where it was born. It must abide in its living position for spiritual source of life. The life of the Vine is the life of the branch. The life of Christ is the life of the believer. The source from which our Christian life flows is the Vine. We draw our strength from our position on the Vine.

This new perfect position is our source for all spiritual life and growth. Our daily Christian life is the product of this position in Christ. We are in Christ and Christ is in the presence of the Father.

All that Christ is becomes the Christian's possession because of the fact that he lives in Him. The believer cannot be perfectly in Christ and not partake of all that Christ is.

Our present condition is variable. We are still sinners. As we walk by faith our eternal position effects our daily condition. However, our present condition in no way effects our heavenly position. Our fellowship with God is affected, but not our position before Him. Unconfessed sin damages our intimacy and fellowship. "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9).

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Our Eternal Position in Christ

The Amplified version of Ephesians 6:10 reads, "Be strong *in the Lord* –be empowered through your union with Him; draw your strength from Him." This speaks of our drawing our daily strength from our position before the throne of God. We grow spiritually as we abide in Christ. When we are abiding in Christ we are drawing from our Christ centered position. Our "life is hid with Christ in God" (Colossians 3:3).

We abide when we "reckon" on Christ. "In the same way, count [consider, reckon] yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus" (Romans 6:11, NIV). "Be constantly counting upon the fact that you are dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus." We are to rest our faith on these great positional truths. We appropriate God's power by faith in Christ. We exchange our weakness for His strength.

"But we all, with unveiled face beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit" (2 Corinthians 3:18). We are gradually conformed to His image, who is Himself the "express image of His [God's] person" (Hebrews 1:3). When Christ returns we will be just like Him (1 John 3:2).

Are you appropriating spiritual food and resources from your position in Christ? This is the active side of abiding in Christ. We abide in Christ by resting our faith in these great Biblical facts. I abide in my position in Christ. God the Father has provided everything we need in the Christian life in Christ. He is constantly removing our false security to cause us to trust in Him alone.

By faith in the blood of Jesus every sin was covered.

By faith in the work of Christ on the cross the old man is put off.

By faith in the heavenly position in Christ, the new man is put on.

In this passage of Scripture it is crucial for us to bear in mind that we have been describing the Christian life. It begins with a spiritual birth. If you are not bearing fruit it may be because you have never been born again. That is where this kind of life begins. We are always ready to help you put your faith and trust in Jesus Christ as your personal Savior. Click here to find out more about trusting in Christ as your Savior.

If you need help in becoming a Christian here is [A Free Gift for You](#).

Title: Our Eternal Position in Christ

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Our Eternal Position in Christ

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