

## **YOUR POSITION IN THE FAMILY OF GOD**

### **Your Position Is Determined By God, Not By Man**

Now we know that in all things God works for good with those who love him, those whom he has called according to his purpose. Those whom God has already chosen he set apart to become like his Son so that the Son would be the first among many children. And so, whom God has set apart he has put right with himself, and he shares his glory with you

When the right time finally came, God sent his own Son, Jesus Christ. He came as the son of a human mother and lived under the Jewish Law to redeem those who were under the Law so that they might receive adoption as God's children. Some received him and believed in him; so he gave them the right to become the children of God.

You did not become God's child by natural means, that is, by being born as the child of a human father; God himself is your Father. Jesus has said, "No one can see the Kingdom of God without being born from above. No one can enter the Kingdom of God without being born through water and the Spirit. What is born of human nature is human; what is born of the Spirit is spirit."

To show that you are his child, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into your heart, the Spirit who cries out, "Daddy! My Daddy!" God's Spirit joins himself to your spirit to declare that you are God's child. So then, you are no longer a slave but a child. Since you are his child, God will give you all he has for his children.

It is God himself, then, who has made you sure of your life in union with Christ. It is God himself who has set you apart, placed his mark of ownership on you, and given you the holy Spirit in your heart as the guarantee of all that he has in store for you.

### **You Are Freed From The Law And Sin**

In union with Christ, you were circumcised with the circumcision made by Christ, which consists of being freed from the power of the sinful self. Scripture says that sin controls everyone, so God's promises will be for anyone who has faith in Christ Jesus. The Law was in charge of you until Christ came in order that you might then be put right with God through faith. Now that the time for faith is here, the Law is no longer in charge of you. When you are in union with Christ Jesus, neither circumcision nor the lack of it makes any difference at all; what matters is faith that works through love.

You are to think of yourself, therefore, as dead so far as sin is concerned but living in fellowship with God through Jesus Christ. Now you have been set free from sin and are the slave of God. Your gain is a life fully dedicated to him; the result is eternal life. Now you are free from the Law because you died to that which once held you prisoner. No longer do you serve in the old way of a written law but in the new way of the Spirit. There is no condemnation now for you when you live in union with Christ Jesus. The

Law of the Spirit, which brings you life in union with Christ Jesus, has set you free from the law of sin and death. Freedom is what you have. Christ has set you free! Stand, then, as a free person and do not allow yourself to become a slave again.

In union with Christ, you have become rich in all knowledge. No one can boast in God's presence. But God has brought you into union with Christ Jesus and has made Christ to be your wisdom. By him, you are put right with God; you became God's holy child and are set free.

If Christ lives in you, the Spirit is life for you because you have been put right with God, even though your body is going to die because of sin. If the Spirit of God who raised Jesus from death lives in you, then he who raised Jesus from death will also give life to your mortal body by the presence of his Spirit in you.

### **Your Position Is Important To God's Work**

In union with Christ, God always leads you as a prisoner in Christ's victory procession. God uses you to make the knowledge about Christ spread everywhere like a sweet fragrance. You are like a sweet-smelling incense offered by Christ to God which spread among those who are being saved and those who are being lost. For those who are being lost, it is a deadly stench that kills, but for those who are being saved, it is a fragrance that brings life.

Christ is without sin, but, for your sake, God made him share your sin in order that in union with him you might share the righteousness of God. Because Jesus Christ did what God wanted him to do, you are purified from sin by the offering that he made of his own body once and for all. By means of the physical death of his Son, God has made you his friend in order to bring you holy, pure, and faultless into his presence.

Since you are joined to Christ, you are a new being; the old is gone, the new has come. God did all this through Christ. He changed you from an enemy into his friend and gave you the task of making others his friends also. Our message is that God was making all mankind his friends through Christ. God did not keep an account of their sins but has given you the message that tells how he makes them his friends.

You have, then, complete freedom to go into the Most Holy Place by means of the death of Jesus. He has opened for you a new way, a living way, through the curtain, that is, through his own Body. Give thanks to the God and Father of your Lord Jesus Christ! In union with Christ, he has blessed you by giving you every spiritual blessing in the heavenly world. It is by God's grace that you have been saved. In your union with Christ Jesus, he has raised you up with him to rule with him in the heavenly world. In union with Christ and through your faith in him you have the boldness to go into God's presence with all confidence. You have courage in God's presence because you are sure that he hears you if you ask him for anything according to his will. He hears you

whenever you ask him. Since you know that this is true, know also that he gives you what you ask for from him.

### **Take Your Rightful Position In The Family Of God**

Yes, you are a citizen of heaven, and you eagerly wait for your Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, to come from heaven. He will change your weak mortal body and make it like his glorious body, using that power by which he is able to bring all things under his rule.

You have come to the joyful gathering of God's first-born children, whose names are written in heaven. You have come to God who is the judge of all people and to the spirits of good people made perfect. You have come to Jesus who arranged the new covenant and to the sprinkled blood that promised much better things than does the blood of Abel. Be careful, then, and do not refuse to listen to him who speaks.

You love him although you have not seen him, and you believe in him although you do not now see him. So rejoice with a great and glorious joy that words cannot express because you are receiving the salvation of your soul, which is the purpose of your faith in him.

Through the living and eternal Word of God, you have been born again as the child of a parent who is immortal, not mortal. You are of the chosen race, the Kings' priests, the holy nation, God's own people chosen to proclaim the wonderful acts of God who called you out of darkness into his own marvelous light. At one time, you were not God's child, but now you are his child. At one time, you did not know God's mercy, but now you have received his mercy.

In view of this, what can you say? If God is for you, who can be against you? Certainly not God who did not even keep back his own Son but offered him for you! He gave you his Son; will he not also freely give you all things? Who will accuse God's chosen child? God himself declares you not guilty! Who, then, will condemn you? Not Christ Jesus who died, or rather, who was raised to life and is at the right side of God pleading with him for you! Who, then, can separate you from the love of Christ? Can trouble do it or hardship or persecution or hunger or poverty or danger of death? No, in all these things you have complete victory through him who saved you! I am certain that nothing can separate you from his love: neither death nor life, neither angels nor other heavenly rulers or powers, neither the present nor the future, neither the world above nor the world below. There is nothing in all creation that will ever be able to separate you from the love of God, which is yours through Christ Jesus, your Lord.

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